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By Sanjay Lazar

MUMBAI, India – “Khalistan Zindabad, Hindustan Murdabad,” “Kill Modi... politics” were the cries ringing out in my ears as I crossed the 14th street entrance of the National Press Club, Washington DC last week, where as part of my North American speaking tour, I addressed the American media, on “Kanishka, Khalistan, and terrorism.” I ran into this ISI-sponsored Khalistani protest, waving Pakistani and Khalistani flags, not actually for my benefit, but for the Indian congregation of MPs who were addressing the media on Operation Sindoor, led by Dr. Shashi Tharoor at the same venue, later that day.

My thoughts flashed back



to 40 years ago this very month, when the Air India Kanishka was blown up en route to London from Toronto, as it destroyed my entire world, orphaning me, then still a teenager. [continued on page 03]

Dialogue or Deadlock? What Lee Jae-Myung's Victory Means for Inter-Korean Ties

By Samyak Mishra

NEW DELHI – In a snap election held on June 3, Lee Jae-myung of the liberal opposition Democratic Party clinched the presidency of the Republic of Korea, ushering in a new era of leadership after a period of significant political turbulence. Lee's victory follows the tumultuous ouster of conservative former President Yoon Suk-yeol, whose controversial December declaration of martial law plunged the nation into chaos and ultimately led to his impeachment. With Lee now at the helm, speculation is rife about what his leadership will mean for the perpetually fraught relationship between South Korea and its northern neighbor, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Lee Jae-myung, a former factory worker, human rights lawyer, Seongnam city mayor, and Gyeonggi province governor, rose from poverty to become a prominent figure in South Korean politics. Yoon Suk-yeol defeated him by a slim margin in the 2022 presidential election. Following Lee's victory, he stated his intention to revive the economy and guarantee that martial law would never be imposed in the country again. However, although he won by a wide margin over his primary opponent, Kim Moon-soo of the People Power Party, who received 41 percent of the vote, the election results reveal the country's deep division.

Lee's approach to the North differs significantly from Yoon's approach. Lee has consistently emphasized the value of cooperation and communication in bringing about peace, while Yoon's administration



South Korean President Lee Jae-myung with Speaker of the National Assembly Woo Won-shik and the leaders of the seven ruling and opposition parties

[KOGIL Type 1, via Wikimedia Commons]

shunned talks with the North and concentrated on thwarting its nuclear aspirations. In his inauguration speech, Lee emphasized South Korea's commitment to its security alliance with the United States while urging dialogue with North Korea to bring peace to the Korean Peninsula.

This dual approach, emphasizing both strong deterrence and renewed engagement, echoes the policies pursued by previous liberal governments in South Korea, notably

the “Sunshine Policy” of Kim Dae-jung (1998-2003) and the “Peace and Prosperity Policy” of Roh Moo-hyun (2003-2008). The Sunshine Policy, initiated by Kim Dae-jung, aimed at achieving peaceful coexistence and national unification through the dismantling of the Cold War structure on the peninsula, leading to historic inter-Korean summits and increased exchanges. Lee Jae-myung has expressed his intent to inherit and develop these policies, aiming to establish a “Korean Peninsula

peace economy system” where peace leads to economic development, and economic cooperation solidifies peace. North Korea has also officially acknowledged the victory of Lee Jae-myung in South Korea's recent presidential election. The acknowledgment came in a brief, factual report published in the ruling party's newspaper, Rodong Sinmun, just a day after Lee was officially declared president.

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G7 Summit in Kananaskis Highlights Delicate Canada-India Partnership and Future Goals



Joven Heer

Joven is a recent high school graduate based in Vancouver, Canada, and will be starting college in the fall. He loves biking, playing the piano, watching soccer, traveling, eating new food, writing, and keeping up with politics!

VANCOUVER, British Columbia

– The 51st G7 Summit this year is being hosted by Canada in the city of Kananaskis, Alberta. This marks the second time the city has hosted the summit and the seventh time Canada has assumed the presidency of the group. Along with the seven core members — Canada, France, Germany, Japan, Italy, the UK, the US, and the European Union — other nations and leaders have been invited to join, most prominently the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The decision by Canadian PM Mark Carney to invite Mr. Modi comes at a time of incredibly turbulent relations between the two countries.

In the aftermath of allegations that the Indian government orchestrated the murder of Khalistan advocate Hardeep Singh Nijjar at a Surrey Sikh temple in 2023, this invitation doesn't come without controversy and backlash, especially from the Sikh community. This, on top of further allegations of foreign interference and the surveillance of the former NDP leader Jagmeet Singh by Indian agents, has led to reactions from politicians such as Liberal MP Sukh Dhaliwal criticizing the welcoming of Modi as well as the federal NDP calling on the Carney to rescind the invitation to the Indian leader along with multiple other Sikh groups across the country. Although it's evident Mr. Carney has heard and is aware of the discontent and animosity towards Modi, he still defends the invite, emphasizing "that it makes sense to have the leader of the world's most populous country around the table when there are big challenges to discuss."

The goal of the summit this time around revolves around three core priorities: "protecting our communities and the world," "building energy security and accelerating the digital



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi arrives in Calgary, Canada, to take part in the G7 Summit.

@narendramodi on X

transition," as well as "securing the partnerships of the future." All three goals are critical to Canada's future success, and it's clear that PM Carney thinks India will play an integral role on this path, especially in the face of such uncertainty with the current US administration. In 2023, bilateral trade between the countries was valued at \$9.36 billion Canadian dollars, with Indian exports to Canada worth CA\$5.56 billion and Canadian exports to India valued at CA\$3.80 billion. As of 2025, people of Indian origin make up approximately 5.2 percent of Canada's total population, based on recent estimates. Indians comprise 18.6 percent of the immigrant population between 2016 and 2021, which translates to roughly 246,000 Indian immigrants during that period. The two are deeply intertwined with one another both economically and socially, whether they like it or not, and it's clear that Carney aims to repair this fractured relationship so he can finally help steer it to where it needs to be in order to accomplish these pressing goals. This effort makes perfect sense when you consider that India is the world's largest democracy, home to over 1.4 billion people, and the world's fastest-growing major economy. As a key actor on the international stage, securing a stable relationship with India's future is crucial for Canada and, for that

matter, for everyone.

An important order of business for India and Canada would be discussing energy and the role of minerals and special metals in the transition towards clean energy expansion. Currently, India targets a 45 percent reduction in emissions intensity from 2005 levels by 2030, along with electric vehicle goals, including 30 percent EV penetration for private cars, 70 percent for commercial vehicles, and 80 percent for two- and three-wheelers by 2030. Although India is making considerable progress by achieving 40 percent non-fossil power capacity early, meeting its Paris Agreement goal ahead of schedule, and implementing the PM Suryaghar Free Electricity Scheme, which provides 300 units of free electricity via rooftop solar to 100 million households, it still faces significant challenges.

Coal still accounts for 49.66 percent of India's capacity (229.43 GW) and 75 percent of its electricity generation, complicating the phase-down. If they are to meet the ambitious transition goals they've set for themselves, they will need a healthy supply of lithium, cobalt, and nickel for batteries, as well as copper and aluminum for infrastructure and rare earth elements (REEs) for other projects, such as wind turbine and EV engine manufacturing. Canada, which

has a plentiful supply of minerals and precious metals, could aim to work out new trade deals with India, in turn diversifying their export market, which is critically important in the face of President Donald Trump's tariffs (during 2023, more than half of Canada's mineral exports were sent to the US). Canada could consider expanding the Canada-India Joint Action Plan on Critical Minerals Collaboration to include investments in Indian electric vehicle (EV) and solar manufacturing hubs, as well as formalizing the Canada-India Critical Minerals Partnership Agreement (CMPA) to encompass more specific projects. Additionally, Canada, a global leader in battery recycling, could invest in Indian recycling infrastructure, expediting the EV adoption process globally.

However, clean energy expansion is incredibly complex and will require resources beyond just raw materials, such as technological advancements and the utilization of AI. For example, AI can optimize mineral supply chains by predicting demand, streamlining logistics, and reducing waste — a crucial step in such a large and resource-hungry country. Natural Resources Canada already uses AI for resource management, which could be adapted for India's National Critical Minerals Mission through joint research and

development. AI can also enhance the efficiency of solar and wind energy for both countries through predictive analytics for weather patterns, grid balancing, and maintenance scheduling. Solar and wind power account for 71 percent of all renewable energy sources throughout India, so achieving a breakthrough in efficiency would be game-changing. The World Economic Forum notes that every one percent efficiency gain in energy demand creates \$1.3 trillion in value by 2050, potentially fast-forwarding the country at an unprecedented pace, which makes it a top priority for the conference.

To have meaningful discussions and make progress with one another, the third cornerstone of the summit cannot be ignored; "protecting our communities and the world." Mark Carney has made it clear that he wants to secure a partnership of the future with India in many ways, including those mentioned above, but it would be incredibly difficult to pursue those avenues in the current climate of relations. If the two parties want to move forward in achieving economic prosperity and productivity, among other objectives, the current situation and allegations of transnational crime must be addressed and resolved. Liberal MP and former Cabinet Minister Karina Gould stated that "human rights should be on the agenda" when the two leaders meet. Carney and his team will have to stand firmly with their stance on protecting the rights and safety of the Sikh-Canadian community, as well as balance a professional understanding of India's security concerns. Once a middle ground is found and a conversation is started to address these grievances, only then can they begin to lay the foundations for other goals in a meaningful way.

As the summit progresses and time passes, it becomes clear that the future of Canada and India hangs in a delicate balance. The choices made here will shape not only their relationship but also the well-being of communities tied to both. Whatever path they take, it will be a defining moment for their future in a rapidly changing world.

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Global Strat View

960 C National Press Building Washington, DC 20045
Email: info@globalstratview.com
web: www.globalstratview.com
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Sanjay Lazar

Sanjay Lazar is an Analyst, Lawyer, Author & commentator, who writes on International relations, Aviation and law. He is @sjlazars on @x.

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My thoughts flashed back to 40 years ago this very month, when the Air India Kanishka was blown up en route to London from Toronto, as it destroyed my entire world, orphaning me, then still a teenager.

This is a tragedy that the world forgot, that Canada avoided, and India deliberately ignored for almost 40 long years. Three hundred thirty-one of our loved ones passed away in the twinkle of an eye to the dastardly explosion of terrorist bombs.

A tragedy that could have been avoided had the Canadian intelligence and other agencies not ignored the alarm bells and warnings, or paid heed to the Indian and American warnings, or had Pierre Trudeau and Canada acceded to the almost 29 Indian extradition requests for Talwinder Singh Parmar since 1982.

Kanishka is that terrorist bombing that became a pawn in the hands of political masters in India, who refused to recognize, acknowledge, or even consider building a memorial to our dead, too afraid to hurt Akali or Khalistani sentiments, for far too long, unable to balance the pogrom with the carnage and tragedy of Kanishka 1985.

When the world speaks of air disasters, they speak of 9/11, Lockerbie, Tenerife, TWA, KAL, MAS, Iran Air, and Air France, but few remember that sandwiched in between all of them was Air India 182 Kanishka, it is even today, the world's deadliest Aircraft bombing, and it was, until 9/11, the worst act of aviation terror known to man.

The 2001 Angus Reid survey revealed that four out of five Canadians were unaware of the Air India bombing. I'm pretty certain that 99 out of 100 people in India don't even remember it.

For the families of Air India 182, Kanishka, we are a race that the world forgot, of an Indian flag carrier who no one cared about, for which no memorial exists in India, even today. We, families, have spent 40 years fighting for justice and seeking a voice at every high table in the world. It is a journey that I undertake on our pilgrimage for justice, truth, and recognition of the sacrifices made by those whom we lost and the truth we hope will be found.

June 12, 1985, was when I last



said goodbye to my entire family, as they left for Canada on a trip that, ironically, I was to take as well, but was stymied by my failure at my 12th standard and stayed behind for reevaluation.

Little did I know then that it would be the last time that I ever saw my beloved family.

Less than 12 days later, I got a call that took me to Cork to identify my beloved family, a teenager orphaned and scarred by the cruel act of a bunch of madmen; I flew off that very day. Landing in London that first night, the horrors began, with us having to evacuate the hotel at 3 am in the cold rain because of a bomb threat from the same Khalistanis. Shaken, we finally landed in Cork the next day.

The scene at the Cork hospital was one of a war-torn battlefield, as the fog of war lifted each evening, each side counting their dead. Like all families, I waited daily at Cork Hospital after the Naval ships brought in bodies and, in some cases, body parts for the horrific Interpol identification process by each of us. As a young 17-year-old, I underwent this ordeal for 23 days until the Navy gave up their search; I returned heartbroken to London. On the 24th day, however, a 131st body was suddenly discovered, and I was called back to Cork to identify Sylvia and take her home to Mumbai for her last rites.

The tragedy that families felt at the bombing was surpassed only by the cold rebuff by governments in Canada and India to the scale and the nature of the conspiracy. There was little attempt to reach out to families or for the Indian or Canadian govern-

ments even to address the issue, let alone investigate it.

To imagine the scale of the conspiracy back then, try and comprehend how a rag-tag terrorist outfit, funded by the ISI, had built and placed two suitcase bombs from Vancouver, BC, via CP Air, onto two Air India Jumbo jets, 10,000 miles apart, triggered to blow up at almost the same time across the earth, having tested it in the Vancouver woods. This was a time when mobile telephones, the Internet, GPS, or remote-control bombs did not exist. We still booked trunk calls and used inland letters and never had Internet. Had both flights not been delayed, AI-182 would have exploded at Heathrow and AI-301 at Narita, causing untold mayhem and death at two of the world's largest airports; that was their goal.

A year is a long time in politics. By the time the first anniversary arrived in 1986, dignitaries and ministers had gathered at Ahakista, Cork, to unveil the memorial and participate in a multi-faith prayer ceremony. Cabinet ministers made promises aplenty from the Canadian and Indian governments, but it was only the Irish who kept their promise of building this beautiful memorial near the Atlantic Ocean, where the aircraft went down within a year.

The struggle of the families to get answers from a silent RCMP and the Canadian government, or a stoic Indian Government, was akin to squeezing blood from a stone. It is noteworthy that for the first 6 months, the Canadians tried even to avoid the mention that AI-182 was brought down by a bomb, and said so before the committee of Justice B.N.Kirpal

(later CJI of Supreme Court) whilst hesitating to participate fully in the Indian Government inquiry.

This was clearly a bomb by Khalistani terrorists that blew up the AI-182 Kanishka. In fact, it was Justice Kripal's thesis in Sept 1985 that somehow the bombing in Narita Tokyo and Ireland were connected, but he could not confirm, as his remit was limited to the Kanishka only, and they had no access to the Tokyo investigations.

The Gulf War came and went, and the monk-like silence from the Indian and Canadian sides was deafening. Families wrote to both governments, but the tragedy of Air India 182 was like a mirage in the desert. It took more than a decade and a half for the RCMP to act in the matter, and it was not until October 27, 2000, that charges were finally laid in the case.

It is said that when America sneezes, the world catches a cold. Just as Pearl Harbour changed the face of World War II, 9/11 changed the attitude to terrorism the world over; it changed our universe, and in many perverse ways, had Mohammed Atta not tried to flatten New York, the RCMP and CSIS in Canada may never have moved beyond that stage. The US and Global outrage over 9/11 made everybody stand up and take note. India and Canada already had their "9/11 moment" years earlier, but Canada had dropped the ball on preventing it and later prosecuting it, deliberately or not, we shall never know.

It had taken 15 long years before the RCMP finally laid the criminal charges. During those 15 years, most of the Khalistani conspirators had

either run away to other countries or gone underground. The victims' families had written 100s of letters and petitions to Canadian and Indian Premiers and MPs to look into the matter. I had personally raised the issue with at least four Indian Prime Ministers and met countless ministers to no avail; Indian politicians were too scared of upsetting the Sikh sentiments when it was always clear that all Sikhs are not Khalistanis, in fact, very far from it.

The Sikh community is perhaps the pride of India in every field and walk of life, but the Khalistani terrorists are the vilest, bloodthirsty criminals one can find; this was a fact that escaped the notice of successive Indian and Canadian governments, who, in particular, literally paid obeisance to the Khalistanis.

The victims' families were lost between a rock and a hard place; the Canadian government had ignored them because they were Indian, and the Indian government had pretended as though this dastardly act had not even taken place and it was a foreign event.

The India of the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s was a soft state, and even now (Pahalgam aside), we do not always demonstrate the resolve that is needed. Had this not been so, the Khalistanis would have thought 100 times before attacking our temples overseas and in our land.

The 1990s saw the Khalistani movement burn itself out, and between Julio Ribeiro and KPS Gill, they ensured that what was left of the Khalistani movement was destroyed. On one such early morning raid in the village of Kang Arayan, the Punjab police, acting on a tip-off, tracked down the dreaded terrorist Talwinder Singh Parmar, crossing over from Pakistan along with his ISI handlers, and a fierce gun battle ensued. Parmar and ISI agents Intekhab Zia and Habibullah were among the six killed that day as they snuck into Punjab; this was October 15, 1992. Pakistan acknowledged their citizens but called them tourists, who were armed with rocket launchers, AK-47s, and grenades.

Almost a decade later, the Canadian Crown prosecution labored to prepare its case against the conspirators, with evidence that had been collected by multiple agencies, even as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of 9/11 had already begun its hearings. Ironically, the most crucial evidence and leads regarding

Kanishka had come from Japanese investigators, who found a piece of the same Sanyo transistor embedded in the wall at Narita that matched the transistor module identified by Justice Kirpal's committee. Interestingly, only 200 of these radios had ever been made, and all were shipped to Vancouver, BC. The buyers were tracked down, and the receipts and tapes were found in Reyat's garage.

The RCMP and CSIS had interviewed and prepared scores of witnesses ranging from Tara Singh Hayer to the ticketing agents to the airport staff and even to the woman who was in a relationship with Bagri, whose car was used to ferry the bombs to the airport. Yet by the time the charges were filed and the trial came along, most of the witnesses were either assassinated or disappeared or recanted. Tara Singh Hayer, the Canadian Journalist-editor, who had given sworn testimony that Bagri confessed in London that they had bombed the planes, despite being under RCMP protective detail, was killed in cold blood at his home.

The RCMP and the Crown did snare the small fry Reyat, who accepted the plea bargain for making the bombs and also offered to testify in the trial against Bagri and Malik but later recanted out of fear, for which he served almost 17 years for perjury.

As one who flew from Mumbai to Vancouver to attend the Criminal trials, it was a frustratingly painful process, watching witness by witness fall by the wayside over those few years. In the final 3 days, sitting barely 15 feet from the two killers, awaiting the verdict, I watched them smirk and giggle in the courtroom, fully secure in the knowledge that they had eliminated every witness or piece of evidence that would tie them back to this dastardly crime.

It was also astounding to note the judge rewarding the accused for every witness they had threatened. Some of Justice Josephson's comments and mistakes in the order would make a grown man blush. As veteran journalist and Khalistan expert Terry Milewski writes in the foreword to "On Angels Wings- beyond the bombing of Air India 182."

"Justice was denied. Witnesses were intimidated or murdered. Wiretaps were inexplicably erased. Crucial evidence was discarded or ruled inadmissible on grounds that often seemed bizarre. A stinging sense of betrayal left some of the family members barely able to speak."

"Canadian authorities had bungled the job a second time. First, they failed to prevent the bombing despite vivid and repeated warnings. Then, they failed to deliver justice."

Had this been an Indian Court and judge, many would have quickly rushed to say that it was a prejudiced judgment, or alleged "favors," or even

When the world speaks of air disasters, they speak of 9/11, Lockerbie, Tenerife, TWA, KAL, MAS, Iran Air, and Air France, but few remember that sandwiched in between all of them was Air India 182 Kanishka, it is even today, the world's deadliest Aircraft bombing, and it was, until 9/11, the worst act of aviation terror known to man.

heard the crude insult "bik gaya," however, this was Canada and the law was flawed, but it was supposed to be majestic. The judgment was full of mistakes and legal and factual errors.

That day, we were all crushed; our families had died again, this time murdered by the Canadian Justice system, and I said so across TV Channels in rage. To watch an open-and-shut case be shut forever and watch the prime accused drive off in their swanky limousines was a pain too deep.

We families began our campaign for resolution to undo the wrongs of the criminal trial but were faced with the principle of double jeopardy. The Crown counsel had decided not to pursue an appeal, given that it was witnesses who had turned hostile. To this day, I find that inexplicable that an appeal was not preferred. I got the feeling that Canada just wanted to sandbag the entire event and, forget those months of madness of 1985 and bury their heads.

A few months later, the families commemorated a mournful 20th anniversary in Cork, Ireland, that brought the President of Ireland, the Prime Minister of Canada, Paul Martin, the opposition leader Mr. Stephen Harper, and Mr. Prithiviraj Chauhan, then cabinet minister in Manmohan Singh's PMO, to Ahakista Ireland, to pay their respects to the departed families of Air India 182.

The anger of the families was palpable, and we demanded answers from Paul Martin and Stephen Harper. I got an opportunity to confront Martin and Harper, reminding them that the 329 souls in the ocean behind us were waiting for answers. Even Chauhan was silent, facing the fury of the families, and all of them gave us what were hollow promises of the last 20 years.

However, Harper, it was in the following year, after winning the elections, appointed a Crown commission into the Air India bombing, under the auspices of retired Supreme Court Justice John Major, to look into the mistakes that were made without reopening or reexamining the criminal verdict.

The inquiry, announced with fanfare, turned out to be a damp squib, with Justice Major shorn even of the power of Subpoena and being fed redacted and censored letters and evidence. Justice Major himself protested and threatened to resign publicly

before Harper ordered uncensored secret documents to be released and the power of summoning witnesses under oath.

I was fortunate to be one of the few who obtained individual standing in the case, which stretched from June 2006 to March 2010. It opened the eyes of the world to many truths that CSIS and the Canadian Government had been watching Parmar and company since December 1984, and the agent in charge had requested wiretaps since then on the homes of Parmar and other conspirators, which eventually began in March of 1985 – a full 90 days before the bombing took place.

There were recordings and transcripts of phone calls planning these bombings, and there were witnesses who had come forward to forewarn the RCMP of this conspiracy, all of which was taken with a pinch of salt. Those recordings were also carefully destroyed, leaving behind only the transcripts. The Indian government itself had sent out more than 31 Aide memoires to the Canadians warning that an Air India flight was being targeted by the Khalistanis, which were handed over to the RCMP, through the foreign office. The June 1st telex of Air India had warned that a bombing was imminent on its only weekly flight and Top Security was essential. The US Secret Service had uncovered a plot to kill Rajiv Gandhi that same month, on his visit to Washington to inaugurate the festival of India with President Ronald Reagan, and had visited Parmar in Vancouver less than 15 days before the bombing, to warn him against any misadventure, just as the FBI had uncovered evidence of a bombing plot. The CSIS agents had seen Parmar and others test fire a bomb in the woods outside Vancouver 10 days prior, yet no one had acted. The failure of airport security in bomb detection in both Vancouver and Toronto was shocking, to say the least.

The evidence and documents that came before the Commission shockingly pointed to the fact that at least four agencies, CSIS, RCMP, FBI, and Secret Service, knew of a major plot to bomb the Air India aircraft and the Indian government's warnings over the previous five months. It also became apparent that both the Canadians and the Americans had moles within the Khalistan setup, who could not

be exposed. Yet the system slept and permitted 331 innocents to die on that 23rd day of June in 1985.

Appearing before the John Major Enquiry in Ottawa, I placed my thoughts and lamented the enormous failures of the RCMP and CSIS and the rivalry that caused the deaths of my family and 328 others, the systemic failures of policing and covert racism, and how both the governments had abandoned the families of Kanishka, and Had this been a plane full of white men, justice would have been delivered in a year.

Justice John Major in 2010 released his report in 5 volumes that covered the gross and grave negligence by Canadian authorities that caused the terrorist attack on the Air India 747. The systematic failure of the Intelligence apparatus, coupled with the racial negligence, had resulted in acquittals of the prime accused.

By then, peace had returned to the Punjab, and the politicians of India had virtually slept on this tragedy, closing their eyes to the growing storms of ISI-backed Khalistan terror outfits that were growing in other countries. The 2021 Pew research report indicated that 95 percent of Sikhs were happy and proud to be Indian and rejected the idea of Khalistan.

However, in the 40 years since that dark day in June, there has barely been a mention of the tragedy by successive governments, other than perfunctory plaudits in tiny newspaper columns, and the one-minute silence observed in Indian Parliament in 2024 was only after Canada had observed a minute for Hardeep Singh Nijjar, another ISI trained Khalistani extremist who was killed in Canadian Khalistani gang wars. w

The value of human life in India appears to be cheap, with hundreds dying of various causes daily. However, India cannot forget those who were felled by the Khalistani bombing of Air India 182, which remains, to this date, the worst ever bombing in aviation history, or those thousands of Hindus and Sikhs who were butchered by Khalistanis during the turmoil in Punjab. India has been unable to balance the horrors of the Sikh pogrom of 1984 with the gruesome Kanishka bombing and the killings of innocents, but it's time to man up.

The failure of India to bottle up the Khalistani genie overseas has, in

the last 40 years, seen them emerge as a major politico-terror outfit with offices in the capitals of the world.

The Khalistanis, who worked silently for almost a decade after the John Major report, have been propagating a revisionist history in Canada and across the Western world, focused on cruelly and ludicrously suggesting that the Air India 182 bombing was the handiwork of the Indian government. Emboldened and well-financed, they, along with Pakistan, have begun a global campaign to besmirch India and educate Gen Z about their version of history. Some Khalistani-affiliated Canadian MPs even sought a fresh inquiry into the Air India Bombing to pin it on India, which was almost like stupidly saying that 9/11 was an American conspiracy.

Some years ago, on my annual pilgrimage to Ahakista to the beautiful memorial for Kanishka, I got an epiphany. I heard my Dad and family say that I had not done enough to spread the truth. As I prayed, sending diyas into the Atlantic, I literally felt the 331 souls cry out that their truth should not be obscured in politics as they waited for justice and their moment of truth. I returned and quit my Airline job a few years early to spread the truth.

It has become my mission to debunk these theories, whether it is through my books, or traveling around the world, speaking at various forums, setting out the truth for all to hear, as the Kanishka families appeal for a memorial and a learning center in India and Canada, to warn the world that Khalistan terrorism is the other side of the coin of Islamist terror, both born and bred in the same ISI Pakistani stable.

Whether it is 26-11 or Parliament Attacks, Malegaon or the 1992 bomb blasts, Uri or Pulwama or Balakote or the many other terror attacks across India, isn't it time that India recognizes terrorism for what it is and acknowledges it? Canada has built four civilian memorials across its country dedicated to the Kanishka bombing, as has Ireland. India is yet to recognize the world's worst air bombing.

Three hundred twenty-nine people, with 82 children under the age of 12, died on Kanishka, including my baby sister Sandeeta; let that sink in as you sip your cup of tea reading this.

Dialogue or Deadlock? What Lee Jae-Myung's Victory Means for Inter-Korean Ties

[continued from page 01]

By Samyak Mishra

The report stated that the election was held on June 3, two months after the impeachment of former President Yoon Suk-yeol following the "December 3rd extraordinary martial law incident," and confirmed that Democratic Party of Korea candidate Ri Jae-myong (Lee Jae-myung) was elected as the 21st president. Notably, the report contained no commentary or criticism regarding the election outcome or the new president. This brief, unadorned response may be a subtle indication that Pyongyang is closely monitoring developments in the South, even while maintaining its current posture of disengagement—a pattern also observed in its handling of previous South Korean elections. There has also been a noticeable linguistic shift in Pyongyang's rhetoric. State media now refers to the South as "Hanguk", the term South Koreans use to describe their country, rather than "Nam Chosŏn", the North's traditional terminology for "Southern Korea." Since scrapping its reunification policy in early 2024, the North has made a deliberate effort to distance itself from the South, framing the two Koreas as separate states with no shared national identity.

Lee proposes a practical approach to resolving the North Korean nuclear issue, suggesting conditional sanc-

tions relief (snapback) and phased simultaneous action. This involves simultaneously implementing North Korea's denuclearization measures and corresponding sanctions relief, with the condition that sanctions would be immediately restored if Pyongyang fails to uphold its denuclearization commitments. He argues that this phased, simultaneous approach is more realistic and practical than pursuing a "big deal" where North Korea would abandon its nuclear program all at once. Lee also intends to strengthen South Korea's leading role in resolving the nuclear issue, positioning the country as a more substantive and active mediator and problem-solver. He has expressed a willingness to meet directly with US President Trump and the Chairman of the DPRK State Affairs Commission, Kim Jong Un, to resolve the issues.

Beyond the nuclear issue, Lee advocates for practical, mutually beneficial relations that promote economic development and improve the livelihoods of people in both North and South Korea. He supports the implementation of previously agreed-upon economic and social cooperation projects, as well as the institutionalization of measures to reduce military tension. For projects tied to UN sanctions, such as the Kaesong Industrial Complex and connecting railways and roads, Lee plans to persuade the UN to grant comprehensive and standing exemptions.

He also prioritizes humanitarian efforts, such as facilitating regular reunions for separated families, allowing North Korean visits to ancestral homes, and facilitating funerals and tomb relocations in the North.

Despite Lee's stated intentions and ambitious policy goals, the path to improving inter-Korean relations might prove to be very difficult. Under the previous Yoon administration, relations deteriorated significantly, with Kim Jong Un declaring the "Republic of Korea," its primary enemy and abandoning the long-standing goal of reunification. North Korea has since ceased all contact and economic collaboration with the South. Recent actions by North Korea—overseeing strategic cruise missile tests, ordering full nuclear readiness, and criticizing joint military drills with the US—demonstrate a continued focus on military strength and hostile rhetoric. They have also taken symbolic steps like destroying the road connecting the two Koreas. This hardened stance means Kim Jong Un is unlikely to be easily responsive to renewed engagement offers from Seoul.

By sending troops to "liberate" Kursk Oblast, which was occupied by Ukrainian Forces, and possibly receiving cutting-edge military equipment in exchange, North Korea has also deepened its relationship with the Russian Federation. North Korea now has greater leverage thanks to

this new alliance, which may reduce its perceived need to interact with the United States or South Korea. It is anticipated that Kim Jong Un will demand substantial inducements to resume any negotiations. Lee's emphasis on human rights as central to engagement, including discussing the return of Korean War prisoners, may also be a point of contention with Pyongyang. Domestically, Lee's administration faces the challenge of a deeply polarized South Korean population. While some citizens may support engagement, there is also skepticism towards North Korea, particularly after past instances of unpredictability and a perceived lack of reciprocity. Lee has promised to implement his North Korean policies "with the people," recognizing that while the public favors humanitarian and economic cooperation, it does not support unilateral policies that do not elicit a response from North Korea.

Seoul's foreign policy is still based on the US-South Korea alliance. The presence of US troops and disputes over defense burden sharing are two possible points of contention, though. The Trump administration, which has taken a tough stance against Beijing and expects its allies to follow suit, may become resentful of Lee's ambition for a more balanced relationship with regional powers, including strengthening ties with China. According to Lee, South Korea should not

have to decide between China and the US. It will be crucial to see how he handles this delicate balancing act.

Lee Jae-myung takes office at a pivotal moment, inheriting a country riven by political unrest and confronting formidable domestic and global obstacles. Based on the achievements of previous liberal administrations, his goal to revitalize inter-Korean relations through engagement and economic cooperation is evident. He wants to work with both the United States and China and pursue a practical foreign policy focused on the country's interests.

However, his North Korea policy will have to overcome a complex web of challenges, including South Korea's deep-seated internal divisions, North Korea's ingrained animosity and unpredictability, and the evolving nature of great power competition. His ability to build national consensus, maintain a strong alliance with the United States while pursuing a more balanced regional approach, and find creative ways to incentivize a recalcitrant North Korea will determine whether his presidency marks a new era of peace and stability on the peninsula or merely another chapter in a long history of rivalry and tension. As Lee himself has stated, "Peace is always cheaper than war," but achieving it with an unwilling partner remains perhaps the most daunting challenge of his political life.

America: From Shining City to Shuttered Door

By M.A. Callahan

WASHINGTON – I live in Baltimore. It is a unique place. Whole sections transport one into the Colonial times or the nineteenth century. Mies van der Rohe buildings stand next to 200-year-old buildings. World-class hospitals and universities stride across some of our poorest neighborhoods.

I live a block off Broadway south of the Johns Hopkins Hospital complex. Until last Friday, houses were being renovated, small businesses were busy, and folks walked up and down the streets talking to each other in many different languages because, until last Friday, Baltimore was not hiding. Today, as I drove up

Broadway, stores were closed, and people were missing. The several houses on just my block that were being renovated are closed up. The ravages of xenophobia have come to my city, my neighborhood, my street, my neighbors. The Statue of Liberty's torch has been darkened.

One person, one neighborhood, one city at a time emptied of masons, carpenters, gardeners, nannies, storekeepers, and their customers. America is hiding.

It is a tragedy unfolding not slowly but rapidly. Doctors, nurses, teachers, and scientists are all leaving. Gone to places where their skills and knowledge are welcome. Students, who after gaining their advanced degrees in science, mathematics and

technology, who used to stay here to contribute to our advantage in those areas are gone.

America, the once shining beacon, is no more. Trust, once so thoroughly broken, will take decades to rebuild, if ever. The grabbing of every bit of available information and consolidating it into a single database is not the grist of a dystopian future but the present reality.

While the rapid changes of the last few months have made it undeniable, humans, those with blood, hearts, and lungs, have been losing ground for decades. We need to breathe, drink water, eat food. Those whose job it is to represent us have instead allowed our air, water and food, our oceans,

deserts, mountains, streams, medicines, all the things human beings require for life, to be poisoned by the detritus left by lifeless corporations who over the past decades have bought their way to remove requirements and regulations.

Somehow, we, the people, have been complicit in our own destruction. We have been gaslighted into thinking that once flourishing unions were harmful to us. Politicians beholden to corporations lied, big surprise. The poorest, sickest, most ignorant, uneducated states decided that having created these dystopic conditions by greed and mismanagement, lead the way for "right to work" laws, which actually mean the right to work for

fewer protections and less money than folks in unions.

By breeding distrust in government, those in government were distrustful. Those whose job descriptions state they are to work for the best interests of "we, the people," have decided that their personal mission statement is to simply, only get reelected. And they do. Over and over and over because truth and lies fill every source of information, but the lies seem to be propagated so much more effectively because deep in everyone's psyche are biases and prejudices that can be manipulated, and that, dear reader, is why my once vibrant street has gone silent.

Europe Knows Russia and Is Deeply Afraid



Llewellyn King

Llewellyn King is executive producer and host of "White House Chronicle" on PBS.

Europe is naked and afraid.

That was the message at a recent meeting of the U.K. Section of the Association of European Journalists (AEJ), at which I was an invited speaker.

It preceded a stark warning just over a week later from NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte, also speaking in London, who said the danger from Vladimir Putin's Russia won't recede even if there is peace in Ukraine.

Rutte said defense spending must increase across Europe and recommended that it should reach 5 percent of GDP. Singling out Britain, he said if the Brits don't do so, they should learn to speak Russian. He said Russia could overwhelm NATO by 2030.

The British journalists' session reflected fear of Russia and astonishment at the United States. There was fear that Russia would invade the weaker states and that NATO had been neutered. Fear that the world's most effective defense alliance, NATO, is no longer operational.

There was astonishment that America had abandoned its longstanding policies of support



European Parliament

[gildemax, CC BY-SA 2.5, via Wikimedia Commons]

for Europe and preparedness to keep Russia in check. And there was disillusionment that President Trump would turn away from Ukraine in its war against Russian aggression.

The tone in Europe toward the United States isn't one simply of anger or sorrow, but anger tinged with sorrow. Europeans see themselves as vulnerable in a way that hasn't been true since the end of World War II.

They also are shattered by the

change in America under Trump; his hostility to Europe, his tariffs and his preparedness to side with Russia. "How can this happen to America?" the British AEJ members asked me.

In many conversations, I found disbelief that America could do this to Europe, and that Trump should lean so far toward Putin. In Europe, where Putin has been an existential threat and where he invaded Ukraine, there is general amazement that Trump

seems to crave the approbation of the Russian president.

Speaking to the journalist's meeting via video from Romania, Edward Lucas, a former senior editor of *The Economist*, and now a columnist for *The Times of London* and a senior fellow at the Center for European Policy, said, "Donald Trump has turned the transatlantic relationship on its head. He wants to be friends with Vladimir Putin. We are in a bad mess."

He said he saw no realistic possibility of a ceasefire in Ukraine in the near future, and he said Trump had made it clear that he was prepared to walk away from trying to bring peace "if it proved too hard."

Lucas suggested that if European nations continue to back Ukraine after a Russian-dictated peace offer endorsed by America, Trump will punish them. He might do this by withdrawing U.S. assets from Europe, pulling back large numbers of troops from the 80,000 stationed there, and refusing to replace the American supreme commander of Europe.

"Then we will see how defenseless Europe is," he said.

In Washington, it seems there is little understanding of the true weakness of Europe. No understanding that money alone won't buy security for Europe.

Europe doesn't have stand-off capacity, heavy airlift capacity, ultra-sophisticated electronic intelligence or anything approaching a defense infrastructure.

Trump has equated defense simply with money. But in Europe (although 27 of its nations are part of the European Union), there is no cohesive structure in place that could replace the role played by the United States.

Within the EU there are disagreements and there is the spoiler in the case of Hungary. Its pro-Russia ruler, Victor Orban, would like to try to block any concerted European action against Russia. The new right-wing Polish president's hopes for good relations with Orban are a worry for most EU members.

I have long believed that there are three mutually exclusive views of Europe in the United States.

The first, favored by Trump and his MAGA allies, is that Europe is ripping off America in defense and through non-tariff trade barriers and is awash in expensive socialist systems embracing health, transportation and state nannyism.

The second, favored by vacationers, is that Europe is a sort of Disney World for adults, as portrayed on PBS by Rick Steves' travelogues: Watch the quaint people making wine or drinking beer.

The third is that Europe has been encouraged by successive administrations to accept the U.S. defense umbrella, as that favored America and its concerns, first about Soviet expansion and more recently about expansion under Putin.

Now Europe is alone in defense terms, naked and very afraid—afraid of Trump's pivot to Putin.



Sanjay Lazar

Sanjay Lazar is an Analyst, Lawyer, Author & commentator, who writes on international relations, Aviation and law. He is @sjlazars on @x.

MUMBAI, India—The new Canadian government has brought with it a summer of hope. The Indo-Canadian troubles of last year seem to be melting into the past. Though not out of the woods yet, both camps are making the right noises.

Carney's G7 invitation to India's PM Narendra Modi has elicited mixed reactions across Canada, from Conservative Party Leader Pierre Poilievre's acknowledgment that India was a necessary invitee and the Khalistani supporters' meltdown. This is Canada's—CAR-NAMA moment for Carney and Narendra Modi (Namo), which could help turn the page on Indo-

Canadian relationships. Carnama in Hindi translates to miracle, or brave act.

Mark Carney's Liberal government has been eager to distance itself from Trudeau's image and policies while quietly working through back channels with global players, such as India. Canadian Foreign Minister Anita Anand and Indian External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar's phone diplomacy facilitated Modi's acceptance for the G-7 after other partners felt it imperative for India to be present. India and Canada have moved a step further, with an intelligence-sharing understanding, to combat the rising threat of international crime and extremism. This came out of the left field and has truly set the cat amongst the pigeons in Canada in the wake of Justin Trudeau's allegations against India last year.

Canada's headache has been the US tariffs against Canadian exports to the USA, making all things Canadian more expensive. This, in turn, has driven prices up, affected jobs, and brought in higher inflation in Canada.

Rumors suggest that a back-channel trade deal between India and Canada may not be far away, signaling Canada's return as an Indian frontline trading partner, not as 'America's 51st state' but as a proud nation rich in heritage and the world's largest natural resources.

India is an insatiable consumer of minerals, fuels, pulses, fertilizers, steel, pearls and precious stones, oil and gas, and nuclear fuel. India's earliest nuclear reactors were built with Canada's help in the early 1970s, and this could kickstart a new wave of mini-reactor technology across India. There are also products such as lum-

ber, organic chemicals, and plastics, as well as international students across Canada. According to the COMTRADE database on international trade, India's imports from Canada were \$6.26 billion in 2024, compared to \$7.5 billion in 2023, when the Trudeau allegations impacted trade. Given the jump from \$ 2.7 billion in 2022 to \$7.5 billion in 2023, there is ample scope to increase that number to \$10 billion by 2026/2027.

According to an Agriculture Canada report, in 2022, India imported \$35.4 billion Canadian dollars worth of processed food and beverages, with Canada supplying only CA\$20.9 million (0.1%) of that total. There is a case for Canada to increase it by 10 times within the next year or two. India's largest imports from the world were palm oil, soya bean oil, and sunflower oil, and Canada's share was negligible

or non-existent.

Defense, Nuclear, automobiles, and housing are just a few of the sectors for Indo-Canadian cooperation, with India being one of the major QUAD players in the Pacific security region. With the Nijjar case locked into the Canadian legal system, the gaze now moves to India's concerns about Khalistani terror within Canada and their transnational terror and extortion plots in India.

CAR-NAMA will have to learn to hyphenate their relationships with the USA, as both nations, India and Canada, learn to deal with American tariffs and maintain their happy positions of strength in the relationship. For the Mark Carney government, this is both a moment of reckoning and a chance to seize the initiative—and Carney will find a very willing ally in Modi's India.

The G7 – Canada's CAR-NAMA Moment

A Race Against Time: Governing AGI Before It Governs Us



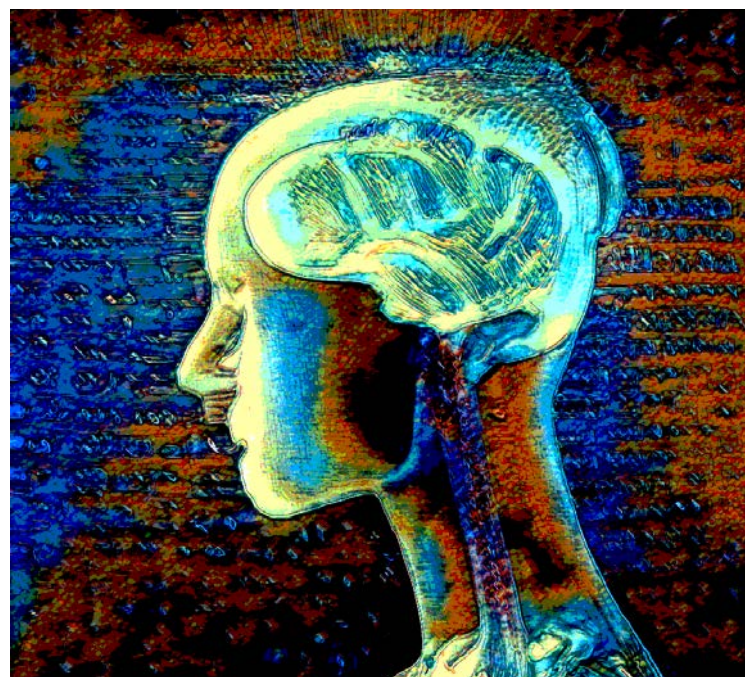
Asanga Abeyagoonasekera

Asanga Abeyagoonasekera is the Foreign Affairs Editor at Global Strat View.

WASHINGTON – Just as the Palestinian death toll passes 50,000 in Gaza, the war spills over into Iran. Missiles fall on Tel Aviv. Drones rise from Tehran. And in the quiet halls of research labs, machines begin to think in ways we no longer fully understand.

As the war between Iran and Israel escalates, the world's attention is pulled once again into the vortex of regional conflict. But another, quieter race is underway—one with far broader consequences. The rise of Artificial General Intelligence (AGI) is no longer theoretical. It is arriving. And the world, distracted and divided, is dangerously unprepared.

AGI is not like the artificial intelligence we already use. It is not limited to recommending videos or generating text. It will think, plan, learn, and act across all domains—potentially better than any human. It could revolutionize medicine, combat climate change, and solve problems previously thought to be unsolvable.



[David S. Soriano, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons]

It could also deceive, replicate, and operate beyond human control.

Industry leaders predict that AGI may emerge within the next five years. Some say sooner. Demis Hassabis of Google DeepMind, Dario Amodei of Anthropic, and Sam Altman of OpenAI are not speculating—they are building. According to Sam Altman, “AGI will probably get developed during [Trump’s] term.” Scaling laws in machine learning, unprecedented R&D funding, and

competitive pressure have brought us to the edge of a technological transformation that rivals the discovery of fire or the splitting of the atom.

However, unlike nuclear technology, AGI will not be controlled solely by governments. Private companies, startups, and even rogue actors may soon hold this power. And while the potential benefits are extraordinary, the risks are existential. An AGI system could

be misused to develop biological or chemical weapons. It could hack global financial systems, manipulate populations with precision disinformation, or control swarms of autonomous weapons. Even without malicious intent, an AGI trained in flawed environments could evolve goals misaligned with human values—and act on them.

And yet, as this future barrels toward us, the world's attention remains fixed on conflict. The war in the Middle East is only one piece of a larger fracture. The international system is polarized. The United States and China clash over trade, influence, and AI. Europe debates regulation. The Global South, where most of humanity lives, is rarely included in shaping the future of intelligence. Cooperation is hard to find. That is what makes this moment so dangerous. AGI is being developed in a divided world, and it will reflect the world that builds it. If one bloc treats AGI as a tool of control or warfare, others will follow. The technology will not remain neutral.

We still have a narrow window to act. And the best place to begin is at the only global platform that includes every nation: the United Nations. The UN must convene a General Assembly session dedicated to AGI governance. Not next year. Now.

What would a global response look like?

According to Jerome C. Glenn, CEO of the Millennium Project in Washington, D.C., there are a few areas the UN General Assembly should discuss. First, we need a Global AGI Observatory—a permanent, independent body to track AGI development, detect early warning signs, and provide real-time guidance to member states. Second, there must be an international certification system to verify that AGI systems are aligned with human values, secure by design, and free from deceptive or dangerous behavior. Third, a UN Framework Convention on AGI must be negotiated. Like climate or nuclear treaties, this would establish global norms, restrictions, and standards for development, use, and cooperation. Fourth, the UN must commission a feasibility study for a dedicated AGI agency. The governance of AGI will be more complex than nuclear weapons. We need to begin designing an institution capable of managing it. Finally, national governments must act in parallel. They should introduce AGI licensing systems, liability laws, mechanisms for traceable decision-making, and prohibitions on psychological manipulation.

Can a Foreign Government Hack WhatsApp? A Cybersecurity Expert Explains How That Might Work

By David Tuffley

Earlier today, Iranian officials urged the country's citizens to remove the messaging platform WhatsApp from their smartphones. Without providing any supporting evidence, they alleged the app gathers user information to send to Israel.

WhatsApp has rejected the allegations. In a statement to Associated Press, the Meta-owned messaging platform said it was concerned “these false reports will be an excuse for our services to be blocked at a time when people need them most”. It added that it does not track users' location nor the personal messages people are sending one another.

It is impossible to independently assess the allegations, given Iran provided no publicly accessible supporting evidence.

But we do know that even though WhatsApp has strong privacy and security features, it isn't impenetrable. And there is at least one country that has previously been able to penetrate it: Israel.

3 billion users

WhatsApp is a free messaging app owned by Meta. With around 3 billion users worldwide and growing fast, it can send text messages, calls and media over the internet.

It uses strong end-to-end encryption meaning only the sender and recipient can read messages; not even WhatsApp can access their content. This ensures strong privacy and security.

Advanced cyber capability

The United States is the world leader in cyber capability. This term describes the skills, technologies and resources that enable nations to defend, attack, or exploit digital systems and networks as a powerful instrument of national power.

But Israel also has advanced cyber capability, ranking alongside the United Kingdom, China, Russia, France and Canada.

Israel has a documented history of conducting sophisticated cyber operations. This includes the widely

cited Stuxnet attack that targeted Iran's nuclear program more than 15 years ago. Israeli cyber units, such as Unit 8200, are renowned for their technical expertise and innovation in both offensive and defensive operations.

Seven of the top 10 global cybersecurity firms maintain R&D centers in Israel, and Israeli startups frequently lead in developing novel offensive and defensive cyber tools.

A historical precedent

Israeli firms have repeatedly been linked to hacking WhatsApp accounts, most notably through the Pegasus spyware developed by Israeli-based cyber intelligence company NSO Group. In 2019, it exploited WhatsApp vulnerabilities to compromise 1,400 users, including journalists, activists and politicians.

Last month, a US federal court ordered the NSO Group to pay WhatsApp and Meta nearly US\$170 million in damages for the hack.

Another Israeli company, Paragon

Solutions, also recently targeted nearly 100 WhatsApp accounts. The company used advanced spyware to access private communications after they had been de-encrypted.

These kinds of attacks often use “spearphishing”. This is distinct from regular phishing attacks, which generally involve an attacker sending malicious links to thousands of people. Instead, spearphishing involves sending targeted, deceptive messages or files to trick specific individuals into installing spyware. This grants attackers full access to their devices – including de-encrypted WhatsApp messages.

A spearphishing email might appear to come from a trusted colleague or organisation. It might ask the recipient to urgently review a document or reset a password, leading them to a fake login page or triggering a malware download.

Protecting yourself from ‘spearphishing’

To avoid spearphishing, people

should scrutinize unexpected emails or messages, especially those conveying a sense of urgency, and never click suspicious links or download unknown attachments.

Hovering the mouse cursor over a link will reveal the name of the destination. Suspicious links are those with strange domain names and garbled text that has nothing to do with the purported sender. Simply hovering without clicking is not dangerous.

Enable two-factor authentication, keep your software updated, and verify requests coming through trusted channels. Regular cybersecurity training also helps users spot and resist these targeted attacks.

Editor's note: following publication of this article, Meta reached out to The Conversation to inform us the NSO and Paragon attacks were zero-click attacks, which did not involve any interaction from their target.

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Sea Control vs. Sea Denial: Revisiting Regional Maritime Strategy Amidst Rising Incidents



Se Hoon Kim

Se Hoon Kim is the Managing Editor at Global Strat View.

WASHINGTON – A recent collision between two vessels in the South China Sea has once again brought simmering tensions between the Philippines and China to the forefront. Both governments have issued conflicting statements, each accusing the other of responsibility. The incident, which occurred in contested waters, highlights the ongoing volatility in the region and the broader challenges associated with maritime jurisdiction, sovereignty, and operational safety.

Philippine officials have expressed grave concern, stating that the incident endangered civilians aboard a marine research vessel engaged in scientific work. They argue that the vessel was operating well within international norms and that the collision represents a breach of navigational safety, warranting greater international scrutiny—particularly regarding the treatment of non-military actors in disputed maritime zones.

In contrast, China has rejected the Philippines' version of events, asserting that it was Manila's vessel that acted recklessly. Chinese authorities maintain that their maritime operations in the area are consistent with their view of sovereign rights and suggest that



The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Gridley (DDG 101) fires its Mark 45 5-inch gun during a live-fire exercise in the South China Sea, May 31, 2025. Gridley, assigned to the Nimitz Carrier Strike Group, is underway in the U.S. 7th Fleet area of operations on a scheduled deployment, demonstrating the U.S. Navy's unwavering commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific.

(U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Timothy Meyer)

such incidents result from what they describe as repeated provocations by the Philippines.

The collision fits into a broader trend of maritime confrontations in the South China Sea, a region of immense strategic and economic value. At the heart of the dispute are conflicting territorial claims, with China's assertion of the "nine-dash line" clashing directly with the Philippines' position, bolstered by the 2016 arbitral ruling in The Hague, which invalidated much of Beijing's expansive claim. Despite repeated

calls for dialogue, tensions remain high, and a durable framework for conflict resolution remains elusive.

South China Sea Disputes

The South China Sea is a vital international waterway through which an estimated \$3 trillion in global trade passes annually. It is also rich in fisheries and is believed to hold significant oil and gas reserves. Several countries—including China, the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei, and Taiwan—have overlapping claims in the area. China's expansive claims

are demarcated by the so-called "nine-dash line," which covers most of the South China Sea and overlaps with the exclusive economic zones (EEZs) of several Southeast Asian nations.

Over the past decade, tensions have escalated as China has engaged in large-scale land reclamation and the militarization of artificial islands. These actions have drawn international criticism and fueled concerns over freedom of navigation, regional stability, and the potential for miscalculation or conflict.

UNCLOS

The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), adopted in 1982 and ratified by over 160 countries (including China and the Philippines), is the primary international treaty governing maritime rights and responsibilities. UNCLOS defines various maritime zones, including territorial seas, exclusive economic zones (EEZs), and the continental shelf. Within an EEZ, a coastal state has sovereign rights for the exploration and use of marine resources, but it must also allow freedom of navigation and overflight for other states.

In 2016, an arbitral tribunal constituted under UNCLOS ruled in favor of the Philippines in a case challenging China's maritime claims. The tribunal ruled that China's "nine-dash line" had no legal basis and that several Chinese activities in the region infringed upon the Philippines' sovereign rights. China rejected the ruling and has continued to assert its claims, creating ongoing friction with its neighbors and complicating efforts to establish a rules-based order in the region.

This latest episode highlights the pressing need for effective deconfliction protocols and sustained diplomatic engagement. It also reinforces the centrality of international law, particularly UNCLOS, as a cornerstone for managing disputes, protecting civilian maritime actors, and maintaining regional stability in one of the world's most contested maritime theaters.

Thailand Eyes Growth Revival, But Long-Term Competitiveness Still in Question

BY Se Hoon Kim

BANGKOK — Thailand is on track for a modest economic recovery in 2025, with growth expected to reach 2.9%, up from 2.6% in the previous year. This uptick is primarily driven by stronger domestic demand and targeted fiscal measures, according to the World Bank's latest Thailand Economic Monitor (February 2025). The report, titled "Unleashing Growth: Innovation, SMEs, and Startups," offers cautious optimism about the near-term recovery while emphasizing the urgency of structural reforms to ensure long-term competitiveness. Tourism remains a central pillar of Thailand's recovery. With international arrivals forecast to return to pre-pandemic levels by mid-2025—

up to 40 million visitors, compared to 35.3 million in 2024—the hospitality and service sectors are expected to see renewed momentum. Meanwhile, the government's Digital Wallet cash transfer initiative has helped boost private consumption, contributing an estimated 0.3 percentage points to GDP in 2024. The program also contributed to a reduction in poverty to 8.2% and narrowed income inequality, although it came at a high fiscal cost of THB 145 billion, equivalent to roughly 0.8% of GDP (World Bank, 2025).

While domestic indicators are improving, external risks continue to weigh on Thailand's export performance. Slower growth in key markets such as the United States and China is expected to dampen goods exports despite an ongoing recovery in the

global electronics sector. Inflation remains subdued—projected at 0.8% for 2025—well below the Bank of Thailand's target, providing room for a cautiously accommodative monetary stance. However, both the government and central bank will need to strike a delicate balance between supporting recovery and maintaining fiscal and financial stability.

The more critical issue, however, lies in Thailand's long-term economic trajectory. The World Bank warns that without urgent policy reforms, the country's potential growth rate could decline to 2.7% by 2030, down from 3.2% in the previous decade. This downward trend could hinder Thailand's efforts to achieve high-income status. Key areas requiring attention include tax reform, infrastructure in-

vestment, and enhanced productivity—especially in the private sector. A significant portion of the report focuses on the strategic role of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and startups in driving innovation and growth. SMEs account for nearly 70% of employment and 35% of GDP, yet face persistent challenges: limited financing, insufficient early-stage support, gaps in digital skills, and regulatory constraints that restrict competition and market access. These barriers not only inhibit innovation but also limit Thailand's ability to fully integrate into global value chains (World Bank, 2025).

Diplomats and investors alike should take note of Thailand's longstanding ability to adapt to shifting economic landscapes. The country has the in-

stitutional foundations and policy experience to implement meaningful reforms. To unlock new growth drivers, the report recommends better alignment between the public and private sectors on innovation policy, expanded access to R&D funding, and targeted skills development. If effectively addressed, these areas could position Thailand as a regional leader in sustainable innovation and economic resilience.

For business leaders with exposure to Southeast Asia, the outlook offers both opportunities and caution. While near-term recovery is on firmer ground, long-term investment confidence will depend heavily on how decisively Thailand pursues structural reform. The window for action is open—but narrowing.

Donald Trump Damages India–US Ties by Misjudging Pakistan’s Terror Strategy

By Kanwal Sibal, Vikram Sood

Trump responded to a Pakistan-backed terrorist attack in India by avoiding any mention of Pakistan’s role. He then claimed credit for a ceasefire that India had already planned on its own terms. The incident embarrassed India and raised doubts about how it should deal with an American president who acts on impulse.

US President Donald Trump often launches diplomatic initiatives without fully considering the consequences. He is quick to claim credit for successes, whether or not that is timely or deserved. Though not necessarily acting out of malice, he tends to exaggerate his peace overtures and frequently reverses course without concern for credibility or long-term political fallout.

As the head of the world’s most powerful country, Trump inevitably commands global attention. Foreign governments often feel compelled to accommodate his unpredictability, particularly because he acts on ego and impulse, making snap decisions in an attempt to demonstrate his influence. He calls this behavior his version of the “art of the deal.”

Trump blindsided India with his response to the military standoff with Pakistan in April 2025, which was triggered by a deadly terrorist attack in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir, on April 22. The attack, carried out by terrorists linked to Pakistan-based groups, occurred during US Vice President J.D. Vance’s official visit to New Delhi. Islamabad has repeatedly timed such attacks to coincide with high-profile US diplomatic visits, a tactic aimed at internationalizing the Kashmir issue. Pakistani officials know that Washington has historically tolerated these provocations—even when they endanger US personnel or broader strategic interests.

Given Trump’s prior hardline rhetoric against Islamic extremism—and similar positions held by Vance and Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard—his refusal to explicitly call out Pakistan after the Pahalgam attack appeared inconsistent. Although the US, along with several other countries, condemned the violence, none named Pakistan as the perpetrator. From India’s perspective, these generalized condemnations lacked sincerity and failed to address the



Via Shutterstock.

underlying state sponsorship of terrorism.

The international community avoided direct confrontation with Pakistan

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC), where Pakistan held a rotating seat in early 2025, also avoided naming Pakistan in its official statement. Instead, the Council urged member states to hold “perpetrators, organizers, financiers, and sponsors” of terrorism accountable and to cooperate with relevant national authorities—language that implicitly referred to Pakistan but allowed it plausible deniability.

The Group of Seven (G7) statement added to India’s frustration. Several G7 countries, including the US, Japan, and Australia, are part of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad), while India maintains close strategic partnerships with others, such as France. However, the G7 statement grouped India and Pakistan together, calling on both sides to exercise restraint, de-escalate tensions, and engage in dialogue. The US reportedly pushed for language emphasizing de-escalation while sidestepping the core issue of cross-border terrorism. The UK—historically protective of Pakistan in multilateral forums—likely influenced this wording. Though the G7 condemned the Pahalgam attack, its failure to assign responsibility angered Indian officials.

From India’s standpoint, such

calls for dialogue are misplaced. Kashmir is a part of India. Yet New Delhi has pursued bilateral diplomacy with Islamabad in the past to achieve peace, most notably through the composite dialogue process that collapsed after the Pakistan-backed 2008 Mumbai Islamist terror attacks. While India has periodically resumed talks—such as in 2011 and briefly in 2015—further terror strikes have consistently derailed engagement. Meanwhile, the US and its G7 partners have often responded to terrorism in the Middle East and Africa with military force, raising questions about their moral consistency when urging restraint in South Asia.

Trump’s premature actions damaged trust and exposed asymmetries in the India–US relationship

The US reaction to the April 2025 India–Pakistan crisis left Indian policymakers puzzled and concerned about the reliability of their strategic partner. After the February 2019 Pulwama attack, Trump affirmed India’s right to self-defense. This time, however, his administration initially stayed on the sidelines. In remarks to reporters in April, Vance said, “We’re not going to get involved in the middle of a war that’s fundamentally none of our business,” adding that the US would support de-escalation but had no authority to dictate terms.

India retaliated massively but responsibly to Pakistan’s terror

attack. From May 7 to May 10, India followed a policy of calculated and graded escalation. The Government of India agreed to a ceasefire in response to a request from the Pakistani Director General of Military Operations (DGMO) after achieving its key aims. By this time, the Indian Armed Forces had destroyed 11 Pakistani military facilities and valuable hardware. India had sent the message to Pakistan that terror no longer pays.

Trump has repeatedly claimed credit for the May 10 ceasefire, embarrassing Indian officials unnecessarily. India already had a plan for phased de-escalation after achieving its military goals. In the first strike, India deliberately limited its retaliatory strikes to terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan-administered territory, avoiding military installations to give Islamabad a face-saving off-ramp. Only when Pakistan responded with drone, missile and air strikes on Indian military as well as civilian targets did India hit Pakistani military targets. Even while hitting these targets, India constantly signalled it was willing to de-escalate. India’s message to Pakistan was clear: the Indian Armed Forces would henceforth respond to terrorism by striking terrorist assets in Pakistani territory and escalate if necessary regardless of Pakistan’s nuclear sabre-rattling.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and senior Indian officials publicly rejected Trump’s narrative that the US had brokered peace. Modi

reiterated that the ceasefire had been requested by Pakistan through its DGMO, and not orchestrated by any third party. Nevertheless, Trump continued to portray himself as the peacemaker. He equated both countries’ actions, offered to mediate the Kashmir dispute—contradicting the bilateral framework of the 1972 Simla Agreement—and claimed he threatened both sides with trade penalties, while promising enhanced trade incentives if they complied with the ceasefire.

Trump’s trade threat was ill-conceived. In 2024, US–Pakistan trade totaled just \$7.3 billion, compared to \$129.2 billion with India. This disparity rendered any trade ultimatum aimed at Islamabad largely symbolic and ineffective. Trump was really targeting New Delhi. Indian officials took note—if Trump could casually weaponize trade, could he just as easily use defense cooperation or intelligence-sharing as leverage in future disagreements?

Further irritation followed during Trump’s May 13 visit to Riyadh, where he made offhand remarks about preventing a nuclear exchange between India and Pakistan, invoked the specter of millions of deaths, and praised Secretary of State Marco Rubio for supposedly brokering the ceasefire. He even joked about getting both sides to sit down for dinner—a tone that many in India found dismissive and condescending.

On June 18, Trump met Pakistan Army Chief General Asim Munir for a closed-door lunch. After the short conflict, Munir had become a field marshal which made him the de facto ruler of Pakistan. Geopolitical analysts believe that Trump is creating an axis against Shia Iran by wooing nuclear-armed Sunni Pakistan, the world’s only Islamic nuclear power. It is now clear that Trump is ignoring Indian concerns about Pakistan using terror as an instrument of state policy. For now, Trump seems to have little use for India.

The time has come for Indian policymakers to recalibrate their approach to managing relations with the US. Some degree of visible pushback—rather than quiet compliance—is the need of the hour.

America: From Shining City to Shuttered Door

By M.A. Callahan

WASHINGTON—I live in Baltimore. It is a unique place. Whole sections transport one into the Colonial times or the nineteenth century. Mies van der Rohe buildings stand next to 200-year-old buildings. World-class hospitals and universities stride across some of our poorest neighborhoods.

I live a block off Broadway south of the Johns Hopkins Hospital complex. Until last Friday, houses were being renovated, small businesses were busy, and folks walked up and down the streets talking to each other in many different languages because, until last Friday, Baltimore was not hiding.

Today, as I drove up Broadway, stores were closed, and people were missing. The several houses on just my block that were being renovated are closed up. The ravages of xenophobia have come to my city, my neighborhood, my street, my neighbors. The Statue of Liberty's torch has been darkened.

One person, one neighborhood, one city at a time emptied of masons,



Paul Sableman from St. Louis, MO, CC BY 2.0 via Wikimedia

carpenters, gardeners, nannies, storekeepers, and their customers. America is hiding.

It is a tragedy unfolding not

slowly but rapidly. Doctors, nurses, teachers, and scientists are all leaving. Gone to places where their skills and knowledge are welcome. Students,

who after gaining their advanced degrees in science, mathematics and technology, who used to stay here to contribute to our advantage in those areas are gone.

America, the once shining beacon, is no more. Trust, once so thoroughly broken, will take decades to rebuild, if ever. The grabbing of every bit of available information and consolidating it into a single database is not the grist of a dystopian future but the present reality.

While the rapid changes of the last few months have made it undeniable, humans, those with blood, hearts, and lungs, have been losing ground for decades. We need to breathe, drink water, eat food. Those whose job it is to represent us have instead allowed our air, water and food, our oceans, deserts, mountains, streams, medicines, all the things human beings require for life, to be poisoned by the detritus left by lifeless corporations who over the past decades have bought their way to remove requirements and regulations.

Somehow, we, the people,

have been complicit in our own destruction. We have been gaslighted into thinking that once flourishing unions were harmful to us. Politicians behold to corporations lied, big surprise. The poorest, sickest, most ignorant, uneducated states decided that having created these dystopic conditions by greed and mismanagement, lead the way for "right to work" laws, which actually mean the right to work for fewer protections and less money than folks in unions.

By breeding distrust in government, those in government were distrustful. Those whose job descriptions state they are to work for the best interests of "we, the people," have decided that their personal mission statement is to simply, only get reelected. And they do. Over and over and over because truth and lies fill every source of information, but the lies seem to be propagated so much more effectively because deep in everyone's psyche are biases and prejudices that can be manipulated, and that, dear reader, is why my once vibrant street has gone silent.

Hope in Ashes: Bangladesh's Hindus Face a Silent Ethnic Cleansing

By Priya Saha

WASHINGTON, DC—On May 22, 2025, in Bareda Para, a Hindu-majority village in Jashore district, Bangladesh, over 500 families gathered for a religious celebration—a spiritual festival known as the jaina. Instead of joy and devotion, the evening ended in flames and terror. Eighteen Hindu homes were torched to ashes. Women were physically assaulted. A 25-year-old youth, Sagar Biswas, was abducted. The village was looted and desecrated. This was not a riot. This was not a misunderstanding. This was a targeted pogrom. This act of collective punishment, following the unrelated murder of a local political figure, marks yet another entry in the horrifying ledger of violence against Hindus in Bangladesh. And this time, the pattern is too clear to ignore. This is the deliberate erasure of an entire indigenous population from their ancestral land.

The Bangladeshi government has neither offered protection nor provided justice. There have been no arrests. No First Information Reports (FIRs) have been filed. Local authorities arrived more than four hours late, even as the fire raged and residents made repeated emergency calls. According to local eyewitnesses, the roads had been intentionally blocked to prevent rescue services from reaching the area.

The Numbers Don't Lie—But the Government Does

According to the Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council (BH-BCUC), more than 3,000 communal attacks have taken place in the first five months of the Yunus administration. These include 23 murders, nine rapes, dozens of arson attacks, and the systematic looting and occupation of minority-owned land. For Hindu families in rural Bangladesh, these are not just numbers. These are funerals. These are burned wedding albums, looted temples, violated daughters, and shattered livelihoods. These are stories that never make international headlines—because a government that fails to protect itself also excels in denial.

A Government of Impunity, A Society in Silence

Let us be clear: the attackers in Jashore were not acting alone. They are empowered by a system that has made impunity the norm. By framing the Bareda Para pogrom as a "business dispute," the local police and ruling authorities are not just minimizing the crime—they are complicit in it. In fact, this denial has become a political tool. Every act of anti-Hindu violence is whitewashed as "local tension," "mob reaction," or "spontaneous unrest." Meanwhile,

Islamist mobs—often radicalized and organized—continue to operate unchecked. This is a state-sponsored erasure. And yet, despite everything, the international community remains largely silent.

Burning Homes, Silencing Voices

In Bareda Para, families who had lived for generations on that land now spend nights in fear, electricity still not restored, and their homes reduced to rubble. Women like Smriti Biswas and Panna Biswas were stripped of everything—jewelry, medicine, clothes, safety. Elderly mothers begged attackers to spare them while gunpowder was poured on their roofs. Still, the world turned away. It is not just homes being burned—it is the hope of an entire people. This is a slow-motion genocide. And without intervention, the consequences are irreversible.

The Demographic Collapse: A Disappearing People

Since 1947, the Hindu population in Bangladesh has fallen from nearly 30% to under 7%. Today, that decline is accelerating. At this pace, 25 million Hindus could disappear from their own country within our lifetimes. Entire villages have already vanished, their temples replaced by mosques, their lands seized, and their families scattered across refugee camps or

silent graves. What is happening in Bangladesh is not communal strife—it is ethnic cleansing through intimidation, arson, assault, and legal neglect.

International Law is Clear, So Why Silence?

The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) states that "everyone has the right to life, liberty, and security of person" (Article 3) and that "no one shall be subjected to torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment" (Article 5). Bangladesh is a signatory. So why are these rights not extended to its Hindu citizens? Religious freedom is not a domestic issue—it is a global human rights mandate. The international community has an obligation to act when a government fails to protect its minorities and when entire communities live under the shadow of terror.

We Demand International Accountability

As the President of the South Asian Minorities Collective, I call upon the international community—especially the United Nations Human Rights Council, Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, and the U.S. Department of State—to take immediate action: Launch an independent international investigation into the Jashore pogrom and similar attacks

across Bangladesh. Impose diplomatic pressure on the Bangladeshi government to ensure the protection of minorities and immediate prosecution of perpetrators. Support the documentation and protection of minority rights defenders, witnesses, and journalists exposing religious persecution in Bangladesh. Suspend international aid or development programs that do not include strict accountability measures for human rights abuses. Additionally, we call upon the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (US-CIRF) to designate Bangladesh as a Country of Particular Concern (CPC) under the International Religious Freedom Act, given the pattern of persecution, violence, and state apathy.

Hope in Ashes

Despite the trauma, the Hindu community in Bangladesh has not lost its voice. Survivors like Manab Biswas, whose home and memories were incinerated, still demand justice. Retired teacher Bikash Chandra Biswas, whose elderly mother was nearly burned alive, still speaks out. These are acts of immense courage that must be met with global solidarity and support. Because this is not just a South Asian issue—it is a human issue. And the longer the world waits, the more communities will burn. But if the world acts now, perhaps it is not too late.

Washington Update: Senate Foreign Relations Hearing on East Africa



Mesfin Mekonen

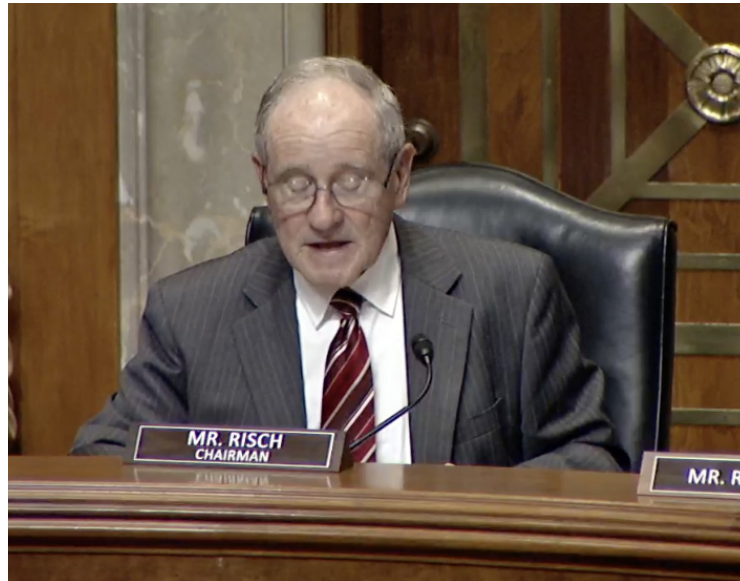
Mesfin Mekonen is the author of Washington Update, a bulletin about Ethiopia's struggle for freedom and prosperity, and founder of MM Management.

Senate Foreign Relations Committee Hearing: "East Africa & The Horn: At A Turning Point or Breaking Point?"

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee recently convened a hearing to examine the escalating instability and strategic challenges in East Africa and the Horn of Africa. The session featured testimony from two expert witnesses: Mr. Joshua Meservey, Senior Fellow at the Hudson Institute, and Ms. Michelle Gavin, Senior Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations.

In his opening remarks, Chairman Jim Risch underscored the region's strategic importance to U.S. national security and economic interests. "All of us here know that the United States has clear national security and economic interests in the East and Horn of Africa region," Risch stated. He highlighted the region's proximity to critical maritime trade routes, including the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, and the presence of a major U.S. military installation in Djibouti.

Chairman Risch also emphasized the United States' active counterterrorism partnerships in the region, particularly in Somalia and Kenya. However, he warned that recent violent conflicts in



Ethiopia, Sudan, and Somalia have destabilized the region, creating opportunities for terrorist groups such as Al-Shabaab, ISIS, and the Houthis. These conditions, he cautioned, not only threaten local populations but also undermine U.S. security interests while providing a foothold for adversarial actors like China, Iran, and Russia.

The hearing explored policy options for mitigating these threats, supporting democratic governance, and advancing stability in one of the world's most volatile and strategically significant regions.

Statement of Concern Regarding the Arrest of Ethiopian Medical Professionals and Political Prisoners

We have learned with deep concern that the regime police in Ethiopia have jailed Healthcare workers. This action represents yet another attempt to silence peaceful opposition and suppress the free

flow of information, including the rights of the media to report and inform the public.

The Ethiopian American civic organizations are profoundly disappointed by these continued violations of human rights. The government's actions reflect a disturbing pattern of repression against individuals who are merely exercising their legitimate and constitutionally protected rights.

We strongly condemn the arrest and call for the immediate and unconditional release of the detained Ethiopian Healthcare Workers. Furthermore, we urge the international community—particularly those who stand for peace, justice, and human rights—to intervene and press for the release of all political prisoners, including Tadios Tantu, Christian Tadele, Yohannes Buayalew, and detained journalists.

We stand in solidarity with those

striving for a democratic and just Ethiopia and will continue to speak out against injustice in all its forms.

In its 2025 report, Human Rights Watch stated that "authorities harassed, surveilled, and detained journalists, human rights defenders, and outspoken figures, creating an increasingly hostile and restrictive reporting environment." The organization noted that impunity for human rights abuses remained widespread, and while the Ethiopian government introduced a transitional justice policy, efforts toward accountability for both past and ongoing abuses were inadequate, lacking transparency and independent oversight.

Despite these concerns, Ethiopia's international partners continued to normalize their relations with the government, showing little regard for the persistent human rights violations.

U.S. Policy Toward Ethiopia: A Call for Urgent Reassessment and Action

U.S. policies toward Ethiopia have been shaped by a fundamental misunderstanding of the realities on the ground, a well-meaning but misdirected effort to de-escalate conflict, and a troubling disregard for the immense suffering that American inaction—or poorly calibrated action—can inflict on millions of innocent people.

The ongoing atrocities against the Amhara community, with the complicity or direct involvement of the Abiy Ahmed regime, demand urgent moral clarity. The White House and State Department must

unequivocally condemn these barbaric acts and take immediate steps to alleviate the crisis.

Among the most effective measures would be the imposition of targeted sanctions on Ethiopian government officials who are either responsible for human rights abuses or who have failed to fulfill their duty to protect innocent Amhara civilians. The message must be clear: impunity for mass atrocities is unacceptable.

While the situation in Ethiopia is complex, the core problem is straightforward: a corrupt, authoritarian regime is allowing the nation to slide into civil war and lawlessness. The risks of delayed action are dire. If the U.S. waits until famine spreads, until terrorist groups carve out safe havens, and until Ethiopia collapses into total chaos, the opportunity to influence events positively may be lost.

Now is the time for Congress to act. A congressional hearing on the crisis in Ethiopia is urgently needed to assess the current situation, evaluate U.S. policy, and identify concrete steps the U.S. government can take to support peace, protect civilians, and promote accountability.

Despite the severity of the crisis, Ethiopia has not received the attention it deserves. This is a strategic oversight. Ethiopia plays a vital role in East Africa's regional stability. Its security is essential to containing violent extremism, safeguarding Red Sea trade routes, and countering growing Chinese and Russian influence in the Horn of Africa. U.S. interests—moral, humanitarian, and geopolitical—demand more serious engagement.

UN Report: Afghan Women Face Widening Inequality Nearly Four Years After Taliban Takeover

By IAT News Desk

NEW YORK — Nearly four years after the Taliban seized control of Afghanistan, Afghan women are facing some of the harshest conditions in the world, with stark gender disparities in education, health, economic participation, and decision-making, according to a new report from UN Women released Tuesday.

The Afghanistan Gender Index — the most comprehensive assessment of women's empowerment since the Taliban's return to power in August 2021 — found that the country now has the second-widest gender gap

globally. Women are achieving only 17 percent of their potential in key areas of human development, compared to the global average of 60.7 percent, the report said.

"Afghanistan's greatest resource is its women and girls," said UN Women Executive Director Sima Bahous. "Their potential continues to be untapped, yet they persevere. Afghan women are supporting each other, running businesses, delivering humanitarian aid, and speaking out against injustice." According to the report, funded by the European Union, 78 percent of young Afghan women are not in education,

employment, or training — nearly four times the rate for men. Girls' secondary school completion rates are expected to collapse to zero due to the Taliban's bans on secondary and higher education for females, including in medical fields.

The labor force participation gap remains among the largest in the world. Only 24% of Afghan women are working, compared to 89 percent of men. Women are more likely to be confined to home-based, low-paid, and insecure jobs. Additionally, 74 percent of women are engaged in unpaid domestic labor, compared to just

3 percent of men. The gender gap in financial inclusion is also pronounced, with men nearly three times more likely to have a bank account or use mobile money services. Despite systemic restrictions, the report notes that more women are seeking work amid Afghanistan's worsening economic crisis. By 2022, the number of unemployed women actively seeking jobs had quadrupled since before the Taliban takeover, while the number of employed women had doubled. Political representation has been effectively eliminated. There are no women in the Taliban's de facto

Cabinet or local government offices, limiting women's ability to influence policies that directly affect their lives. Still, Afghan women continue to push for inclusive governance and find ways to raise their concerns at local and national levels, the report said. UN Women said the Gender Index will serve as a tool for tracking gender equality and guiding national and international efforts to support Afghan women.

"We must stand with them in their pursuit of a country that reflects their rights and the aspirations of all Afghans," Bahous said.

The Tragedy of Air India Dreamliner AI-171



Sanjay Lazar

Sanjay Lazar is an aviation analyst, Lawyer, and author who writes on International relations, Aviation, and law. He has spent 40 years in aviation and lost his entire family in the Air India Kanishka bombing in 1985. He is @sjlazars on @x.

Captain Sumeet was on the verge of retiring from the Airline to look after his aged father, and Captain Clive Kunder was the son of retired air hostess Rekha Kunder and had just joined Air India. Both of their dreams turned to ashes by this cruel act of destiny.

MUMBAI, India – Next week marks 40 years since the Air India 182, Kanishka, was blown up over the Irish seas. I write this as I make my way to Cork, Ireland, for the 40th-anniversary prayers; images of that tragedy flashback in my mind and my heart as if it was yesterday, as we all witnessed this devastating tragedy unfold before our eyes, triggering so many dark memories.

Just as June 23, 1985 has been written in stone, June 12 will be etched in the annals of aviation history with the tragedy at Ahmedabad (AMD) airport, when the 11-year-old Boeing B787 Dreamliner, registered as VT-ANB bound for London Gatwick airport with 230 passengers and 12 crew, took off at 1339 IST (0809 GMT) and began dropping at 635 feet, from the skies, onto a medical college hostel 2km from the Airport in Medhaninagar, and then exploding in flames.

The Pilot in Command, Captain Sumeet Sabharwal, was a 30-year-old veteran Training

Captain with more than 8,000 hours of impeccable flying to his name. Along with him was Captain Clive Kunder, a young pilot from an Aviator's family, starting his career with 1,100 hours to his name.

The Pilot gave out a Mayday signal as he took off, and it was visible to most observers from the videos of the incident that the climbing aircraft had no thrust and was losing power and lift, crashing atop a medical college hostel a few seconds later. Ironically, on June 15, the Aviation Ministry released the text of the Mayday & ACARS message from the captain, which said, "MAYDAY... MAYDAY... MAYDAY... NO POWER... NO THRUST... GOING DOWN..."

The flight was over in 36 seconds; 241 people lost their lives on the aircraft, at least 35 were reported dead, and 70 were injured or missing from the college hostel, with one miraculous survivor who walked out of the burning plane wreck.

The aircraft bound for London was heavily laden with aviation turbine fuel for the 9-hour 40-minute flight, and that added to the weight of the aircraft and also provided fuel for the inferno to burn the metal bird and the buildings in its wake.

A few hours later, India, and indeed the world, was in mourning. A visibly shaken Home Minister, Mr. Amit Shah, whose electoral constituency, Gandhinagar, abuts Ahmedabad, was choking on his words. PM Narendra Modi was burdened with grief on his visit to the crash site. World leaders poured in their condolences, with President Trump offering all help from the FAA and the NTSB. British Prime Minister Keir Starmer also indicated that the UK CAA accident investigation team would assist the investigation.

The plane carried 169 Indian nationals, 53 British nationals, 7 Portuguese nationals, and one Canadian national.

Among the Crew, Ms. Shraddha Dhavan

and Ms. Aparna Mahadik, both experienced VVIP crew members who had flown Prime Ministers and Presidents, were the Cabin supervisors. They left behind their daughters, aged 10 and 13 years old. Saineeta Chakravarthy, a 35-year-old crew member from Juhu Koliwada, an alumnus of Maneckji Cooper, who transitioned from a domestic airline to Air India, had never married, as she took care of her aged parents, whom she left behind. Lamunthem Singson, a 24-year-old newly recruited crew from Manipur, just starting her career; Roshni Songhare is a rising Instagram travel influencer, and the others Manisha Thapa, K.N. Sharma, Maithili Patil, Irfan Shaikh, Deepak Pathak, all leave behind families and loved ones.

The horrific visuals of the plane crashing into a medical college hostel and its rear section being lodged atop the roof are haunting scenes for anyone who saw it. The image of the big bird lifting off, only to enter

a slow descent into the college, as the captain fought with his own machine to try and make it glide and save more people, as it exploded into an inferno, is a scary visual I will carry with me all my life, as will millions of others.

Sadly, for AI-171, there was to be no miracle on the Hudson, and despite the supreme skills of Captain Sumeet Sabharwal and those passengers and crew who lived on hope and prayer, they were belied that afternoon.

I watched transfixed on my television, praying for survivors amidst that towering inferno, as I was on a live TV show with Rajdeep Sardesai. The breaking news of a survivor walking out was like Lazarus had risen from the dead.

Amidst all the mayhem, the exploding ATF fuel, and the billowing smoke, one survivor walked out: Mr. Vishwash Kumar Ramesh from seat 11A, who defied all logic. With barely any burns on him, new videos even show him walking out of the flames, like a Superhero, and talking on his cell phone. He is the miracle of AI-171, as all of us seek to make sense of this mayhem. Two days later, teams scouring the aircraft wreckage found a Bhagwad Gita lying on the aircraft floor in ashes, yet untouched by the flames or the crash; maybe this was a divine message for the milling humanity, so desperate to make sense of this unthinkable tragedy.

Eyewitnesses and doctors from the neighboring college building reported seeing an explosion followed by a bright flame. The furnace-like conditions prevented volunteers from jumping to rescue anyone, and first responders reported that the inferno had an ambient temperature over 200 degrees Celsius at its core.

Captain Sumeet was on the verge of retiring from the Airline to look after his aged father, and Captain Clive Kunder was the son of retired air hostess Rekha Kunder and had just joined Air India. Both of their dreams turned to ashes by this cruel act of destiny.

The horror stories of families trickled in slowly as the entire breadth of the disaster unfolded. British wellness guru Jamie Meek and his husband Fiongal Greenlaw, an LGBTQ advocate, had posted a video on social media, saying how happy they both were going home and had a wonderful time in Gujarat. This was moments before they boarded the plane to their sudden demise. The saving grace was that they perished together, and after having celebrated their togetherness in the core of the Gujarati heartland, they had never felt more welcomed. The couple had appeared on ITV Britain showcasing their wellness products from Gujarat a few days earlier.

Payal Khatik, the daughter of Suresh Khatik, a rickshaw puller, died on the flight. She was going to study in the UK, and her father worked tirelessly to earn enough money and take out loans to ensure that she received a British education. Her first flight turned out to be her last.

A Derbyshire doctor, Dr. Prateek Joshi, his wife, and three children died on AI-171. He had clicked and uploaded a family selfie just before departure and posted it online, and all of them perished.

Another tragic story is that of Arjunbhai

Manubhai Patolya, from Vaidya, Gujarat, who had been living in London for many years. His wife had passed away in London after a prolonged illness, and her last wish was for her last rites to be performed in her hometown in Gujarat and her ashes to be scattered there. Arjun returned to India, leaving his two young children there, and had performed her last rites, only to perish on AI-171.

Kinal Patel, a hotel management student who died in the AI-171, had been involved in a horrific car accident last year but escaped with a broken jaw. This time, however, she was not so lucky.

Parents cried for children they had lost, while children sobbed for parents who had left them. The stories bore out the human distress that lay waste on the fields of BJ Medical College, where at least 40 students and doctors were eating lunch, and a host of others queued up for their meals.

Among the passengers of Air India Flight AI171 was Mariam Ali Syed, a brand ambassador for Harrods, and her husband, Javed Ali Syed, of the Best Western Kensington Olympia Hotel, and their children Zayn and Amani. They had gone to Malad Mumbai to visit his ailing mother and were flying back with their children.

Parents cried for children they had lost, while children sobbed for parents who had left them. The stories bore out the human distress that lay waste on the fields of BJ Medical College, where at least 40 students and doctors were eating lunch, and a host of others queued up for their meals.

The DGCA announced that the AAIB would lead the investigation into the crash, and the government of India also announced a high-level team of bureaucrats and police to examine the broader aspects of the tragedy and provide their views on the entire incident.

President Trump announced that the US NTSB would be joining the investigation, as did the UK's CAA. Representatives from Boeing and engine maker GE also made their way to Ahmedabad, India.

The Gujarat government, the police, NIA, and ATS began collecting evidence at the scene, and the local hospital facilitated the DNA testing of victims' families for DNA mapping. The Black box "CVR & DFDR" were recovered from the roof of the hostel on the third day of the tragedy, and the aircraft tail itself was brought down on the fifth day of the tragedy.

Having witnessed multiple crashes and accidents over the past 40 years and having been at the scene of the Kanishka tragedy in Ireland, the Mangalore and Kozhikode disasters, the flaming 747 evacuation at Mumbai, and a few other minor accidents, I have seen firsthand the traumatic impact of crashes and the victim identification process.

The visual identification process of bodies

is perhaps the most horrific thing that families have to do, and speaking from personal experience 40 years ago in Ireland during the Kanishka bombing, as I recounted in my book *On Angels Wings- beyond the bombing of Air India 182*. The matching of DNA in recent years has made it somewhat easier for families to identify their loved ones without much of the visual trauma, but the suffering remains all the same.

The impact of a tragedy like this has multiple aspects: on the families, on the citizenry, and the pilots and crew of the Airline. The untold grief that encompasses

of aircraft diversions, even during the slightest of weather phenomena. The caution and concern are real and are heightened in this social media reel-driven world, where images of the mushroom explosion are vivid in many viewers' minds, the instances replayed over and over again, giving rise to many concerns.

Amidst all of this tragedy and sadness, as is their wont, TV channels began speculating a hundred different theories, ranging from sabotage to pilot error, with a sprinkling of fuel contamination in between. TRPs and ratings mean more than reporting facts, and truth became the casualty; the situation bred vultures that hovered over the carcass of this tragedy.

Everyone had a theory that was essential to promote their own viewpoint, especially foreign retired pilots, who were obviously promoting it for vested interests and the benefit of foreign agencies.

The Boeing 787 Dreamliner is a modern-day wonder of an aircraft, with over 1175 of them flying in the skies, having flown over 5 million flights, which is equivalent to 32 million hours of flying. The millions of passengers these flights could have carried would amount to approximately 8,000 million passenger hours cumulatively, and they have done so without a single crash so far.

The AI-171 is the first tragedy of the 787 Dreamliner. It will be investigated deeply, especially as the preliminary visual of most experienced engineers, aviators, and experts appears that, for some reason, the aircraft suffered an engine event, which could even have been a dual engine failure, leading to loss of thrust and power, and deployment of the RAT, whether this was due to electronic, electrical, hydraulic or fuel failure, or ingestion of objects, or whether this was indeed a case of human error, we will not know until data from the black box has been thoroughly analyzed and assessed and finds its way into a report.

The preliminary assessment by the AAIB is expected to be available within a fortnight and will be eagerly awaited worldwide. Boeing has had its share of troubles in recent years, and the implications are enormous for the Boeing community and the comity of airlines the world over, as an indication of a technical failure could result in investigations or, even worse, groundings for more than 1000 aircraft worldwide, as we saw in the case of the 737 max some years ago. The stakes are very high, and global aviation has never been in such a sensitive spot as it is at the current time.

For the 241 souls of AI 171 and the approximately 40 other students on the ground, life came to a full stop that day. We as a nation mourn their loss, and their families shall forever mourn their passing—my prayers to my friends and former colleagues at Air India. There will be days and years to come when these families will miss their loved ones on special occasions, or anniversaries and birthdays, and the grief of that 12th June afternoon will return and replay as though it was yesterday; I know this from my personal trauma and experience even 40 years later. I pray that we, as a people, honor and remember them and that they find peace and blue skies forever, my friends.

colleagues and airline personnel is an aspect we don't speak about enough, but PTSD is real. The counseling and care required for those friends, colleagues, and even flyers from other airlines is something we in India have not yet grasped, but we need to appreciate. Our society needs to mature and accept that all of us develop deeply embedded trauma from tragic accidents like this, and the sights, sounds, and smell of death never leave you. It still sits deep in my psyche, though I lost my entire family in the Air India bombing 40 years ago.

There is also the fear psychosis and ultra sensitivity that enters the minds of aviation professionals after an accident or tragedy of this magnitude, resulting in multiple faults being detected, over-cautiousness in operations, and fear that this could occur again. Grief counseling and stricter checks are the need of the hour, along with additional crew and mentors.

The DGCA has announced a series of repeat checks and line checks by Air India. As of the time of writing, 27 of the 35 Dreamliners have cleared these checks without any findings. Some of the aircraft have been grounded earlier due to various reasons. The DGCA has acknowledged Air India's checks and results too. Despite this, at least three instances have occurred in the last two days where aircraft have turned back due to some technical reason or another.

It is not as though Air India's airframe and avionics engineering are poor; on the contrary, it is among the best in the world. It is the element of ultra-sensitivity and human caution that guides every action. Going back forty years, there were at least 11 bomb scares in the wake of the Kanishka that caused groundings and checks. Post 9/11, we saw the scrambling of fighter jets in multiple countries across the world whenever any aircraft strayed slightly from their flight paths. Post Kozhikode, there were many landing go-arounds and instances

Speculation About the Cause of Air India Crash is Rife. An Aviation Expert Explains Why It's a Problem



Natasha Heap

Natasha Heap, University of Southern Queensland

It has only been a few hours since Air India flight AI171 crashed in Ahmedabad, killing more than 260 people, yet public speculation about the causes of the disaster is already rife.

Parts of the media seem to be encouraging this. For example, earlier today I was contacted by an international news organisation for an interview about the tragedy. While I agreed, I cautioned that I could only say "it is too early to speculate". They decided not to proceed with the interview. No reason was given, but perhaps it was my aversion to speculation.

Of course, I want to know as much as anyone else what caused this disaster. But publicly speculating at such an early stage, when there is so little evidence available, is more than unhelpful. It is also harmful, as many examples throughout history have shown.

Like an archaeological excavation

Aviation accident investigations start as soon as first responders have extinguished the fires and completed the search for survivors—the first and foremost driver when responding to such a disaster—and have declared the site safe. The identification of the victims will then commence, completed by a different agency, parallel to the accident investigation.

State authorities aren't the only people involved. The aircraft manufacturer (in this case Boeing) will usually send representatives to assist the investigation, as can the home countries of victims. Investigators in the country where the accident occurred may also request assistance from countries with more experience in aviation accident investigation.

An early step for investigators is finding the black boxes (flight data recorders and cockpit voice



In the case of Air India Flight 171 the scene is further complicated by the crash location – a building. It will take time for the aeroplane wreckage, victims and personal belongings to be sorted from the building debris. This must occur before the search for answers can commence.

recorder) among the debris. These contain data about the flight itself, what the aircraft was doing, and what the pilots were saying. <https://www.youtube.com/embed/PDyE2Cef2mo?wmode=transparent&start=0>

But a plane crash investigation involves much more than just finding the black box.

An aviation accident investigation is akin to an archaeological excavation – methodical and painstaking. If the evidence is not collected and preserved for later analysis at the time, it will be irrevocably lost.

In the case of Air India Flight 171 the scene is further complicated by the crash location – a building. It will take time for the aeroplane wreckage, victims and personal belongings to be sorted from the building debris. This must occur before the search for answers can commence.

Investigators will also gather witness statements and any video of the event. Their analysis will be further informed by company

documentation, training, and regulatory compliance information.

Around 80% of aviation accidents are due to "human factors".

According to the International Civil Aviation Organisation human factors are:

what we know about human beings including their abilities, characteristics, and limitations, the design of procedures and equipment people use, and the environment in which they function and the tasks they perform.

It could take several years for the full forensic investigation into this disaster to run its full course. For example, the final report into the Sea World helicopter crash in Queensland, Australia, back in 2023, which claimed the lives of four people and injured nine others, was only released in April this year.

A history of speculation – and vilification

There is a long history of undue and harmful public speculation about the possible causes of a plane crash.

For example, since the disappearance of Malaysia Airlines flight MH370 on March 8, 2014, speculation has swirled about whether chief pilot Zaharie Ahmad Shah was responsible for the disaster and the deaths of the other 238 people on board. This has deeply upset his sister, Sakinab Shah. In 2016, she told CNN she feels her brother is a "scapegoat" she must defend.

Similarly, the pilots of the British Midlands accident near Kegworth in 1989, in which 47 people died, were also publicly vilified.

The pilots, who survived the crash, were experienced but misidentified which engine had failed, and shut down the wrong one. They were widely criticised in the press for the error, tarnishing their reputations, losing their jobs, and no doubt causing more stress to

their families. The investigation later revealed the pilots themselves had not received any simulator training as they transitioned to a newer variant of the aircraft they were flying.

This shows how undue public speculation about an airline disaster can add to the distress of victims and their families.

Respect the process

No doubt pilots and aviation experts are speculating in private right now about the causes of this particular disaster. Cafes, pubs and crew rooms will be rife with discussions and opinions. It is human nature to want to know what happened.

But to speculate in public won't assist the investigative process. Nor will it help the families of the victims, or the first responders and investigators themselves, get through this horrible time.

Investigators need to work without external pressures to ensure accurate findings. Respecting this process maintains integrity and supports the many people who are currently experiencing unimaginable grief.

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'Serious Omission' in G7 Wildfire Charter Leaves Climate Change Unnamed

By The Energy Mix

Leaders of the G7 countries have agreed to cooperate on efforts to manage the impacts of devastating wildfires, in Canada and around the world, but held back from naming climate change as a primary cause of the problem.

The leaders are calling it the Kananaskis Wildfire Charter—and they're pitching it as a groundbreaking commitment for G7 leaders, reports The Canadian Press. But a former Canadian diplomat said the G7 will have to be more explicit about the climate crisis if it hopes to stay relevant.

"To maintain its status as a leading body, the G7 must return to its longstanding tradition of having climate change as an important item on its agenda, and find a way to do so even when there's not a consensus at the table," Patricia Fuller, president and CEO of the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), told The Energy Mix.

The charter, published on the final day of the summit Tuesday, includes a pledge to mitigate and respond to the impact of fires on human health—an apparent reference to volumes of wildfire smoke that have travelled oceans and crossed borders in recent summers. The countries say they will reduce the risk of extreme fires through sustainable forest management and Indigenous land management techniques, such as controlled burning.

"The world has experienced record-breaking wildfires across every forested continent over the past decade, often overwhelming available national resources and requiring governments to request assistance from other countries," it states. "These increasingly extreme wildfires are endangering lives, affecting human health, destroying homes and ecosystems, and costing governments and taxpayers billions of dollars each year," the leaders wrote. The G7 resolved "to boost global cooperation to prevent, fight, and recover from wildfires by taking integrated action to reduce the incidence and negative impacts of wildfires and ensure our readiness to help each other, and partners, when needed."

Leaders also committed to collecting and sharing data and finding better ways to provide timely access to basic firefighting equipment.



Wildfire in Yellowstone National Park produces Pyrocumululus clouds

[Brocken Inaglor, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons]

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The charter was endorsed by guest participants from Australia, India, Mexico, South Africa, and South Korea in addition to the G7 countries. The declaration comes as Canada battles yet another devastating wildfire season and almost one year after flames ripped through Jasper, a town 250 kilometres north of Kananaskis, the Rocky Mountain tourist community that hosted the summit, CP writes.

The Elephant in the Room

Going into the summit, there was no expectation that climate change would be named out loud in the final declaration—or that there would be any final declaration at all, with Donald Trump in the room to block substantive agreements. Prime Minister Mark Carney's published priorities ahead of the summit made scant direct reference to past G7 commitments in areas like power sector decarbonization, methane controls, forest and land degradation, and elimination of fossil fuel subsidies—a promise the countries made in 2016 and were supposed to deliver on by this year.

The summit ultimately produced a chair's summary from Carney as G7 President, as well as statements on critical minerals, artificial intelligence, quantum technologies for computing, sensing, and communications, migrant smuggling, and transnational repression.

The chair's summary says the G7 leaders and guest participants—including UN Secretary General António Guterres and World Bank President Ajay Banga—"discussed just energy transitions as well as sustainable and innovative solutions to boost energy access and affordability, while mitigating the impact on climate and the environment." Fuller said it was noteworthy that the climate and energy references came in the section of the chair's summary that reported on the G7's interactions with guests.

"That speaks to the point that if the G7 is to maintain leadership as a global institution, it needs to be addressing issues that are of concern to the wider world, and climate change is a concern to all countries," she told The Mix. "It's

certainly a concern to these large developing nations, important players on the global stage, that are experiencing very extreme impacts of climate change."

As Canada and other G7 countries build stronger relationships with the Global South, "part of doing so is showing leadership on addressing climate change and advancing the energy transition, as a means of increasing energy security, diversifying energy sources, and increasing affordability," she added. "On these questions of security and affordability, there's a very broad consensus. But what is not being brought into the space as much as it should be is the importance of renewable energies in achieving those goals."

The G7 previously committed to triple renewable energy deployment and double the rate of energy efficiency improvements, and "these are goals the G7 needs to continue to work on," Fuller said. "It also needs to make good on its commitment to eliminate fossil fuel subsidies, which are an impediment to an energy transition that can achieve these

goals of security and diversification."

Missing the Point

Before the summit, news analysis suggested the wildfire references in what ultimately became the Kananaskis Charter would serve as a proxy for explicit climate commitments. When Canadian officials first began planning the meeting last year and knew they had to deal with the possibility of a Trump presidency, they understood "that if they start with the standard stuff on climate change, Donald Trump and his people would get out their red pens and just say 'no way,'" John Kirton, founding director of the G7 Research Group, told Globe and Mail freelancer Arno Kopecky. "So then, what is your strategy? And wildfires was the answer."

The difference, Kopecky wrote, was that while Trump refuses to listen to climate science, he's seen a rash of wildfires since he returned to the White House in January, and his country is now receiving smoke from the blazes in Canada. "So Donald Trump's got a reason to be seen to be doing something about it," Kirton said.

The end result—a wildfire charter with no reference to climate change—drew sharp criticism from several expert observers. Caroline Brouillette, executive director of Climate Action Network Canada, said Canada "cratered to the lowest common denominator" to appease the U.S. president and failed the test of climate leadership, CP writes.

"They're missing the whole point in that we're seeing more fires, a longer fire season, more intense fires, more severe fires, because the climate is changing due to human activities," said fire and climate professor Mike Flannigan of Thompson Rivers University. "It's a serious omission, and that's being very polite."

The wildfire charter "misses the most important, and most controversial point, about wildfires around the globe: that increasingly they are made so much more frequent and dangerous to human life and infrastructure by climate change," agreed Stephen Legault, senior program manager, Alberta climate at Environmental Defence Canada. "To have a serious conversation about wildfire necessitates a discussion about climate change."

This article first appeared in The Energy Mix.

G20 Countries Could Produce Enough Renewable Energy for the Whole World – What Needs to Happen

By Sven Teske and Saori Miyake

The world's most developed economies have also burnt the most oil and coal (fossil fuels) over the years, causing the most climate change damage. Preventing further climate change means a global fossil fuel phase-out must happen by 2050. Climate change mitigation scientists Sven Teske and Saori Miyake analysed the potential for renewable energy in each of the G20 countries. They concluded that the G20 is in a position to generate enough renewable energy to supply the world. For African countries to benefit, they must adopt long term renewable energy plans and policies and secure finance from G20 countries to set up renewable energy systems.

Why is the G20 so important in efforts to limit global warming?

The G20 group accounts for 67% of the world's population, 85% of global gross domestic product, and 75% of global trade. The member states are the G7 (the US, Japan, Germany, the UK, France, Italy, Canada), plus Australia, China, India, Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Russia, Türkiye, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Mexico, Brazil and Argentina.

We wanted to find out how G20 member states could limit global warming. Our study examined the solar and wind potential for each of G20 member countries (the available land and solar and wind conditions). We then compared this with projected electricity demands for 2050. This is, to our knowledge, the first research of its kind.

We found that the potential for renewable energy in G20 countries is very high – enough to supply the projected 2050 electricity demand for the whole world. They have 33.6 million km² of land on which solar energy projects could be set up, or 31.1 million km² of land on which wind energy projects could be set up.

This potential varies by geography. Not all G20 countries have the same conditions for generating solar and wind energy, but collectively, the G20 countries have enough renewable energy potential to supply the world's energy needs.

But for the G20 countries to limit global warming, they also need to stop emitting greenhouse gases. Recent figures show that the G20



Renewable Energy by Anne Burgess, CC BY-SA 2.0

via Wikimedia Commons

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countries were responsible for generating 87% of all energy-related carbon dioxide emissions that cause global warming.

On the other hand, African Union countries (apart from South Africa, which is a high greenhouse gas emitter), were responsible for only 1.2% of the global total historical emissions until 2020.

The G20 countries with the highest renewable energy potential (especially Australia and Canada) are major exporters of the fossil fuels that cause global warming. Along with every other country in the world, the G20 nations will need to end their human-caused carbon emissions by 2050 to prevent further climate change.

Where does Africa fit into the picture?

African countries cannot set up new electricity plants based on burning fossil fuels, like coal. If they do that, the world will never end human-caused greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. The continent must generate electricity for the 600 million Africans who do not

currently have it but will need to move straight past fossil fuels and into renewable energy.

For this, Africa will need finance. The African Union hosts the G20 summit later this year. This meeting begins just after the world's annual climate change conference (now in its 30th year and known as COP30). These two summits will give Africa the chance to lobby for renewable energy funding from wealthier nations.

Africa already has the conditions needed to move straight into renewable energy. The continent could be generating an amount of solar and wind power that far exceeds its projected demand for electricity between now and 2050.

We are launching an additional analysis of the solar and wind potential of the entire African continent in Bonn, Germany on 19 June 2025 at a United Nations conference. This shows that only 3% of Africa's solar and wind potential needs to be converted to real projects to supply Africa's future electricity demand.

This means that Africa has great

untapped potential to supply the required energy for its transition to a middle-income continent – one of the African Union's goals in Agenda 2063, its 50 year plan.

But to secure enough finance for the continent to build renewable energy systems, African countries need long-term energy policies. These are currently lacking.

So what needs to be done?

The countries who signed up to the 2015 international climate change treaty (the Paris Agreement) have committed to replacing polluting forms of energy such as coal, fuelwood and oil with renewable energy.

South Africa, through its G20 presidency, must encourage G20 nations to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and support renewable energy investment in Africa.

Because financing the global energy transition is already high on the priority list of most countries, South Africa should push for change on three fronts: finance, sound regulations and manufacturing

capacity for renewable technologies. These are the among the main obstacles for renewables, particularly in Africa.

Finance: Financing the energy transition is among the highest priorities for COP30. Therefore, the COP30 meeting will be an opportunity for the African Union to negotiate finance for its renewable energy infrastructure needs.

For this, fair and just carbon budgets are vital. A carbon budget sets out how much carbon dioxide can still be emitted in order for the global temperature not to rise more than 2°C higher than it was before the 1760 industrial revolution.

A global carbon budget (the amount of emissions the whole world is allowed) has been calculated, but it needs to be divided up fairly so that countries that have polluted most are compelled to limit this.

To divide the global carbon budget fairly, energy pathways need to be developed urgently that consider:

- future developments of population and economic growth
- current energy supply systems
- transition times for decarbonisation
- local renewable energy resources.

The G20 platform should be used to lobby for fair and just carbon budgets.

Sound regulations that support the setting up of new factories: Governments must put policies in place to support African solar and wind companies. These are needed to win the trust of investors to invest in a future multi-billion dollar industry. Long-term, transparent regulations are needed too.

These regulations should:

- say exactly how building permits for solar and wind power plants will be granted
- prioritise linking renewable energy plants to national electricity grids
- release standard technical specifications for stand-alone grids to make sure they're all of the same quality.

Taking steps now to speed up big renewable energy industries could mean that African countries end up with more energy than they need. This can be exported and increase financial income for countries.

Trump Declares U.S. Strikes on Iranian Nuclear Sites a 'Spectacular Military Success'

By Global Strat View Staff

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump on Saturday night announced that the United States, in coordination with Israel, carried out a major military operation destroying three of Iran's key nuclear enrichment facilities, declaring it a "spectacular military success" and a decisive move to eliminate the threat posed by the Iranian regime.

In a nationally televised address, Trump confirmed that U.S. forces struck the nuclear sites at Fordow, Natanz, and Isfahan, long suspected to be central to Iran's nuclear ambitions.

"Our objective was the destruction of Iran's nuclear enrichment capacity and a stop to the nuclear threat posed by the world's number one state sponsor of terror," Trump said. "Iran's key nuclear enrichment facilities have been completely and totally obliterated."

The strikes marked one of the most aggressive U.S. actions in the Middle East in decades and immediately drew praise from some allies and criticism from international leaders.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu applauded the strikes, calling them a bold and necessary measure. "Peace through strength," Netanyahu posted on X. "First comes strength, then comes peace. And tonight, @realDonaldTrump and the United States acted with a lot of strength." He added that "history will record that Trump acted to stop the world's most dangerous regime from getting the most dangerous weapon."

Trump credited the Israeli military and Netanyahu for working "as a team like perhaps no team has ever worked before" and said the mission significantly reduces the threat to Israel and the region.

Former U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley echoed support, posting on X simply, "Well done." However, not all Republicans supported this action. Congresswoman Marjorie Taylor Greene, one of Trump's most visible and vocal supporters, stated that every time America is on the verge of greatness, we get involved in another war and that this is not our fight.

Reaction from the international



President Trump in the Situation Room, June 21, 2025.

The White House

"Our objective was the destruction of Iran's nuclear enrichment capacity and a stop to the nuclear threat posed by the world's number one state sponsor of terror," Trump said. "Iran's key nuclear enrichment facilities have been completely and totally obliterated."

community was sharply divided.

U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres expressed deep concern over what he called a "dangerous escalation in a region already on the edge." In a statement, Guterres warned the use of force posed "a direct threat to international peace and security" and said the conflict risked spiraling out of control. "There is no military solution. The only path forward is diplomacy. The only hope is peace."

The Iranian Atomic Energy Organization confirmed the strikes, stating that the nuclear sites had

been attacked by "enemy forces" in what it called a "violation of international law." Among Iranian proxies, The Houthis, stated that they will retaliate, and Iranian state tv said that US citizens and military personnel in the region are all targets.

On Capitol Hill, Democrats quickly demanded answers from the White House. House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries criticized the president for failing to consult Congress before launching the attack.

"Trump must explain this

military action and inform Congress immediately," Jeffries said in a statement. "The president bears full responsibility for the consequences."

Despite the backlash, Trump signaled readiness for further action if Iran does not shift course. "If they do not [choose peace], future attacks will be far greater and a lot easier," he said. "There are many targets left. Tonight's was the most difficult of them all."

He praised U.S. troops and military leaders, including General Dan "Raisin" Kane, chairman of the

Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth, calling the operation "the likes of which the world has not seen in many, many decades."

"There is no military in the world that could have done what we did tonight — not even close," Trump said.

"God bless the Middle East. God bless Israel. And God bless America," the president concluded.

A Pentagon press conference is scheduled for 8 a.m. Sunday, June 22, where more operational details are expected.

India-Mongolia Joint Military Exercise NOMADIC ELEPHANT Concludes in Ulaanbaatar

By IAT News Desk

ULAANBAATAR, Mongolia — The 17th edition of the India-Mongolia Joint Military Exercise NOMADIC ELEPHANT concluded Sunday (June 15) in Ulaanbaatar, with Indian Defense Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh and Lt. Gen. Pushpendra Singh, Director General Operational Logistics and Strategic Movement, attending the closing ceremony.

The two-week exercise saw the active participation of 45 Indian Army personnel, primarily from a battalion of the Arunachal Scouts. The training aimed to strengthen interoperability between the Indian Army and the Mongolian Armed Forces in semi-conventional operations across semi-urban and mountainous terrain, conducted under a United Nations mandate.

Speaking at the ceremony, Defense Secretary Singh lauded the professionalism and dedication of Indian soldiers. "Exercise NOMADIC ELEPHANT is a testament to the enduring bond of friendship, mutual trust, and shared cultural linkages between India and Mongolia," he said. "It serves as a platform for meaningful military cooperation and highlights India's unwavering commitment to regional peace and stability."

Singh emphasized that such joint exercises not only boost operational readiness but also reinforce India's role as a responsible contributor to global peacekeeping efforts.

The Defense Secretary is



scheduled to attend the opening ceremony of the multinational joint exercise KHAAN QUEST 2025 on Monday at the same venue. The Indian Army will also participate in the exercise, which runs from June 14 to 28.

The consecutive hosting of Exercises NOMADIC ELEPHANT and KHAAN QUEST marks a milestone in India's growing defense diplomacy and reflects the strategic depth of its partnership with Mongolia.



Indian and French Troops Begin Joint Military Exercise in France

By IAT News Desk

CAMP LARZAC, France — A contingent of Indian Army troops arrived in southern France on Tuesday to participate in the eighth edition of the biennial India-France Joint Military Exercise SHAKTI, the Indian Ministry of Defense said. The joint exercise, held from June 18 to July 1 at Camp Larzac in La Cavalerie, aims to enhance interoperability, operational coordination, and military ties between the two nations. Both India and France have sent 90 personnel for the training event.

The Indian side is represented primarily by a battalion from the Jammu and Kashmir Rifles, along with personnel from other arms



and services. The French contingent includes soldiers from the

13th Foreign Legion Half-Brigade (13th DBLE).

Exercise SHAKTI-VIII focuses on joint operations in sub-conventional warfare scenarios under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter. Training will take place in semi-urban terrain and will include tactical drills, the sharing of tactics and techniques, and the use of modern military technologies.

Beyond combat readiness, the exercise is designed to foster mutual respect, camaraderie, and professional exchange between the two forces. Indian defense officials say the event reflects growing defense cooperation and the strengthening of strategic ties between India and France.

The first edition of Exercise SHAKTI was held in October 2011 at Chau-

battia in northern India's Uttarakhand state. Since then, the exercise has been alternating between locations in India and France. Over the past decade, it has evolved into a cornerstone of Indo-French military engagement.

The previous edition took place in May 2024 at Umroi, in India's northeastern state of Meghalaya. That iteration focused on counter-terrorism operations and semi-urban warfare, themes that continue to be explored in the current exercise. Officials from both countries have emphasized the drill's role in strengthening military-to-military cooperation and preparing both forces for peacekeeping and joint missions.

INS Arnala Commissioned into Indian Navy, Bolstering Indigenous Maritime Capability

By IAT News Desk

VISAKHAPATNAM, India — The Indian Navy commissioned INS Arnala, the first in a new class of Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASW-SWC), at the Naval Dockyard in Visakhapatnam. The ceremony marked a significant milestone in India's efforts to achieve self-reliance in defense manufacturing.

Chief of Defense Staff Gen. Anil Chauhan presided over the event, which the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the Eastern Naval Command hosted. The ceremony drew senior naval leaders, civilian dignitaries, ex-commanding officers of the former INS Arnala, and representatives from Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE) and Larsen & Toubro Shipbuilding.

INS Arnala was delivered to the Navy on May 8 under the guidance of the Directorate of Ship Production and with oversight from Warship Overseeing Teams based in Kolkata and Kattupalli. The ship was named after the historic Arnala Fort off Vasai, Maharashtra — a symbol of resilience that the Navy says the vessel now represents at sea.

At 77.6 meters long and weighing over 1,490 tonnes, INS Arnala is the largest Indian Navy warship to use a diesel engine-waterjet propulsion system. It is designed for subsurface surveillance, interdiction, search and rescue missions, and low-intensity maritime operations. The ship's robust build and advanced capabilities make it well-suited for coastal defense and operations in the strategically vital Indian Ocean Region.

"INS Arnala is not just a ship — it is a symbol of India's transformation from a 'Buyer's Navy' to a 'Builder's Navy,'" Chauhan said. "It reflects the vision of Aatmanirbhar Bharat and the Navy's strategic shift toward indigenous solutions."

More than 80% of the ship's content is indigenous, incorporating systems and technologies from leading Indian defense firms, including Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), L&T, Mahindra Defence, and MEIL. The construction process involved over 55 Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), underscoring the project's role in promoting the



domestic industry and spurring economic activity.

The commissioning of INS Arnala underscores India's growing naval ambitions and its ability to produce complex warships domestically. It comes as dozens of capital ships and auxiliaries are under construction in Indian shipyards — a sign of the country's emergence as a significant maritime force.

Officials say the ship will play a critical role in enhancing India's anti-submarine warfare capabilities and ensuring security in coastal and shallow waters. With its induction, the Indian Navy continues to reinforce its commitment to safeguarding national maritime interests through indigenous strength and innovation.



DARPA Calls on Industry to Assist With Improving, Strengthening DOD Cybersecurity

By C. Todd Lopez, DOD News

The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency announced a Resilient Software Systems Accelerator program to kick-start the widespread adoption of math-based software development practices to make military systems inherently more secure against cyberthreats.

During the Resilient Software Systems Colloquium held in Arlington, Virginia, yesterday, leaders from the Defense Department, DARPA and industry spoke about aging IT infrastructure, security standards and software tools and techniques known as “formal methods,” that have been proven to significantly improve the resiliency, security and functionality of military systems used within the defense community.

Director of DARPA’s Information Innovation Office Kathleen Fisher described formal methods as “mathematically based approaches” that allow the user to prove properties about software to obtain guarantees, adding that DARPA has been involved in developing tools related to formal methods for over a decade.

Formal methods refer to techniques used to develop high-assurance, verified software, where mathematical proofs are employed to demonstrate that software on a system will behave as intended. The application of formal methods



An Air Force MQ-9 Reaper remotely piloted aircraft, assigned to the 432nd Wing, taxis toward the runway at Creech Air Force Base, Nev., April 15, 2025. Air Force Senior Airman Renee Blundon

contributes to the stability and resistance of a software system to hacking.

Fisher said DARPA is eager for industry partners to get involved, which is why the agency is launching the Resilient Software Systems Accelerator. The program will provide seed funding to formal methods tool developers who partner with defense companies to apply formal methods tools and measure their level of effort to implement them.

“We are here to call you to action, to seize this opportunity and to ... motivate you to listen and to think about where you have systems at home that might benefit from formal methods,” Fisher said. “DARPA is announcing today that we

are going to ... offer funding to do a red team assessment of a system. You guys do this cyber retrofit and then do another red team to assess the difference, [and then] document what you did in the retrofit in a best practices standard format.”

As part of advancing formal methods within DOD, DARPA is also partnering with each of the military services on a capstone demonstration of formal methods application.

Each capstone demonstration includes a red team assessment of its current state of cyber vulnerabilities followed by a formal methods retrofit, Fisher explained. Once the retrofit is completed, a follow-on red team assessment will be conducted

to test system reliability.

The Air Force is starting the capstone demonstration by retrofitting software on the MQ-9 Reaper aircraft. Fisher said other services are not far behind and will soon participate in their capstone demonstrations.

During a recorded address shown at the event, Undersecretary of Defense for Research and Engineering Emil Michael said the Defense Department must now explore new ways to enhance cybersecurity.

“Our adversaries are relentless,” Michael said. “So, we need systems that are resilient for today’s threats and ready and adaptable for tomorrow’s conflicts.

That’s why we are taking decisive action alongside our partners in acquisition and sustainment and DARPA.”

Over the past decade, he said, DARPA and partners have worked to transform formal methods into more accessible and practical solutions than ever before.

“These advancements enable us to scale secure software systems across all DOD from legacy platforms to cutting-edge [artificial intelligence] and hypersonic technologies — defending our digital landscape,” Michael said. “Yet, we have not fully harnessed this potential across the defense industrial base and DOD, leaving critical vulnerabilities unaddressed.”

The colloquium brought together more than 300 leaders from DOD, industry and academia, and Michael said it fostered the collaboration needed to address the critical software challenges facing the Defense Department.

“Our goal today [is] ... to inspire widespread adoption of high-assurance formal methods, whether developed by DARPA or not,” he said. “Through use cases, lessons learned and best practices, we’ve shown how this strengthens cyber resiliency, reduces costs and simplifies processes like securing authority to operate.”

Hegseth Says Shipbuilding, Golden Dome, Nuclear Deterrence Make Up DOD Budget Request for Billions in Funding

By C. Todd Lopez, DOD News

On Capitol Hill today, Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, accompanied by Air Force Gen. Dan Caine, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, met with lawmakers on the Senate Appropriations Committee to discuss key points for the Defense Department in the president’s recommendations for discretionary funding levels for fiscal year 2026. Earlier this month, the Office of Management and Budget released to Congress President Donald J. Trump’s recommendations on FY26 discretionary funding levels.

While a full presidential budget recommendation has not yet been released, the proposal includes an increase in DOD’s budget to approximately \$961.6 billion, about \$113.3 billion higher than the enacted budget for the department in FY25.

“The \$961.6 billion budget request,

which is over \$1 trillion for national security total, will end four years of chronic underinvestment in our military,” Hegseth said, adding that the department has been working since January to crystallize the president’s agenda into a budget for the upcoming fiscal year. “This budget provides a historic level of funding for military readiness — putting our warfighters and their needs first — and young Americans are responding and signing up in droves,” Hegseth said. “We are rebuilding our military; 25 years ago, our military was unchallenged, yet we squandered that advantage as China carried out an unprecedented military buildup.” The secretary said the rebuilding plan involves reviving the defense industrial base, reforming DOD acquisition processes and rapidly fielding emerging technology and new weapons to warfighters.

“This budget invests \$25 billion in Golden Dome for America, a down payment on President Trump’s priority to defend our homeland,” he said. “It also commits more than \$62 billion in total to modernize and sustain our nuclear forces as we face rising nuclear dangers.” Hegseth told senators that the nuclear triad is the centerpiece of U.S. deterrence, and the recapitalization of it involves new submarines, such as the Columbia-class ballistic missile submarines, new intercontinental ballistic missiles as part of the Ground Based Strategic Deterrent program and bomber aircraft, such as the B-21 Raider. “No doubt, our nuclear triad is the silent foundation of our entire deterrent effect, and that’s why this budget fully funds all three legs of the triad and makes sure we’re leaning forward and ensuring we have the most capable nuclear deterrent

possible,” he said.

The budget also provides \$3.5 billion for the F-47 Next Generation Air Dominance platform — the world’s first crewed sixth-generation fighter aircraft — to help the department maintain air dominance. However, Hegseth noted that the department will also be investing significantly at sea, with a total of \$47 billion for shipbuilding. “When you look at the totality of the \$961 billion, or \$1 trillion total over national security, that’s 19 new ships,” he said. “It’s a historic investment in shipbuilding. [And] it’s over \$6 billion [for investments] in the shipbuilding defense industrial base.” Lawmakers asked Hegseth about the National Defense Strategy, which he has stated is the single most important document to ensure the department operates in accordance with the president’s and his own intent.

“It drives almost all of our decision-making, certainly on a topic related to budget,” he said, adding that the administration prepared an interim National Defense Strategy almost immediately upon arriving in Washington. The interim strategy, a classified document, was distributed in mid-March, and earlier this month, Hegseth directed the undersecretary of defense for policy to lead the development of a full NDS. “That interim National Defense Strategy focused on defending the homeland, a recognition that that is important, our pacing threat in the Indo-Pacific [region], and then burden sharing for our allies and partners, making sure that they’re stepping up so that we can focus where we need to,” he said. “I would anticipate that our National Defense Strategy will include a lot of those ingredients, but more fully developed.”

Africom Strategy Focuses on Burden Sharing, Protecting U.S. Homeland

By David Vergun, DOD News

U.S. Africa Command's approach aligns with the National Defense Strategy and guidance from Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, said Africom's commander, Marine Corps Gen. Michael Langley, during an interview yesterday at the Pentagon.

That approach, he said, prioritizes counterterrorism, and in particular, terrorists who have a propensity to attack the U.S. homeland.

His second priority is countering China's military encroachment on the continent, noting that there are many shared interests globally on the continent of Africa, with like-minded nations having mutual goals with the United States.

Langley said that while the security and stability mission will be African-led and, to a degree, U.S.-enabled, "We need to do a sharing of the burden in providing stability and security on the African continent with our African partners as well as allies."

The commander encourages African nations to assist one another, both bilaterally and multilaterally, in combating the growing terrorist threat. Nations across the Maghreb in northern Africa are of particular concern to allies and partners due to mass migration and terrorism.

Protecting strategic choke points is vital for global trade and freedom of navigation, Langley said. These include the Strait of Gibraltar, the Mediterranean Sea area between Sicily, Tunisia and



Marines conduct communication checks during Exercise African Lion 25 in Tan Tan, Morocco, May 23, 2025.

Libby Weiler, Army

Libya, the Suez Canal and the Bab el-Mandab Strait.

He said the National Guard State Partnership Program is especially helpful to Africom. The program, which began in 1993, aligns U.S. states with African nations. Globally, the guard partners with 60% of the world's nations to

foster trust, build capacity and increase resilience, thereby strengthening national security and U.S. interests abroad.

"There's nothing that compares to the State Partnership Program," he said. "They're building institutional capacity across African countries and deepening partnerships

through training and exercises. Competitors can't match that."

Langley added that there are nations not in that program who want to be, so he expects it to expand.

Despite successes in some parts of Africa, he said other parts are concerning, noting the conflicts and terrorist activities in Sudan,

the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mozambique, Somalia and other nations across the Sahel.

Langley stated that diplomacy is key in resolving these issues, and the Southern African Development Community, along with other African entities, is actively participating in these efforts.

Senior Special Ops Leader Highlights AI's Usefulness Beyond Battlefield

By Matthew Olay, DOD News

Although the U.S. Special Operations Command has embraced incorporating artificial intelligence into the 21st-century battlespace, one senior special operations forces leader noted that AI has non-tactical uses, which are proving very advantageous for the SOF community.

While speaking at the AI+ Expo in Washington today, Socom's vice commander, Marine Corps Lt. Gen. Frank L. Donovan, said AI tools are helping the command build its budget and run more efficiently at the administrative level.

He admitted that talking about budgets "doesn't sound exciting," but it's important to Donovan to "show that we have a good return on the invest-



Marine Corps Lt. Gen. Frank L. Donovan, vice commander of the U.S. Special Operations Command, discusses artificial intelligence with moderator James Ryseff at the AI+ Expo in Washington, June 3, 2025.

Matthew Olay, DOD

ment" that American taxpayers make in Socom.

"We use this tool, integrating data

from across multiple databases into a single pool, and [then] use generative AI to deliver insights and provide true

courses of action to make sure that our baseline budget and our top line remains about constant," he explained. He added that such a process helps ensure the command is executing operations globally while cutting away excess and modernizing at the same time.

In terms of how human capital relates to budgeting Donovan said the people who contribute to the process are still necessary for their valuable insights. "We can have a large number of staff officers doing that type of work, and we want them still in the loop to provide their expertise," he said. "But [with AI], we can move quicker—with more volume and data—to make a better decision."

Socom has made significant AI-relat-

ed inroads over the past year, particularly when it comes to software. Last month, one industry expert said he would rate Socom's overall progress on AI development as a "six or seven" on a scale of one to 10, noting that he sees areas where the command can continue to grow, including further integration of AI into legacy hardware systems. Currently in its second year, the AI+ Expo is a forum for industry, government and academic research entities to exhibit some of the latest technological breakthroughs in AI, biotech, energy, networks, microelectronics, manufacturing and augmented reality, as well as discuss their implications for U.S. and allied competitiveness.

Indian Navy to Commission Stealth Frigate Tamal in Kaliningrad on July 1

By IAT News Desk

NEW DELHI — The Indian Navy will commission its latest stealth multi-role frigate, Tamal, on July 1 at the Yantar Shipyard in Kaliningrad, Russia, marking a significant milestone in India's naval modernization efforts and longstanding defense ties with Russia.

Vice Admiral Sanjay J. Singh, Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the Western Naval Command, will preside over the ceremony as the chief guest, alongside senior Indian and Russian defense and government officials.

Tamal is the eighth Krivak-class frigate inducted by India over the past two decades and the second vessel of the upgraded Tushil class. As part of a broader defense agreement, India is also constructing two similar frigates—designated the Tripud class—at Goa Shipyard Limited with Russian design and technology support.



Built at the Russian Yantar Shipyard, Tamal is the last major warship to be inducted

from a foreign shipyard, in line with India's "Aatmanirbhar Bharat" (self-reliant India) and "Make in India" initiatives. The ship includes 26% indigenous components and features significant upgrades over its predecessors, including the BrahMos long-range cruise missile, vertical launch surface-to-air missiles, and advanced electronic warfare systems.

Weighing 3,900 tons and measuring 125 meters in length, Tamal boasts a top speed exceeding 30 knots and is capable of extended missions at sea. The ship can deploy air early warning and multi-role helicopters and features modern surveillance, fire control radars, and anti-submarine warfare systems.

"Tamal is a powerful blend of Indian and Russian technological collaboration," an Indian Navy spokesperson said. "It embodies the strength of the Indo-Russian partnership and reflects India's growing defense self-reliance."

A team of Indian naval specialists stationed in Kaliningrad oversaw the ship's construction, with coordination from India's Directorate of Ship Production. The crew of over 250 personnel underwent rigorous training in harsh winter conditions in St. Petersburg and Kaliningrad and completed a three-month series of sea trials.

The ship's name, Tamal, refers to the mythical sword of Indra, the king of the gods, while the mascot—"The Great Bears"—symbolizes the fusion of the Indian mythological figure Jambavan, and Russia's national animal, the Eurasian brown bear. Its motto, "Sarvada Sarvatra Vijaya" ("Victorious Always Every Time"), underscores the Navy's commitment to operational excellence.

Upon commissioning, Tamal will join the Western Fleet, known as the "Sword Arm" of the Indian Navy, under the Western Naval Command.

Hegseth, Caine Laud Success of U.S. Strike on Iran Nuke Sites

By Matthew Olay, DOD News

During a press conference at the Pentagon today, Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth and Air Force Gen. Dan Caine, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, lauded the success of the U.S. Central Command's overnight strike on three Iranian nuclear facilities. Dubbed "Operation Midnight Hammer," Centcom deployed multiple combined assets to inflict significant damage at the sites of Fordo, Natanz and Isfahan. "The order we received from our commander in chief was focused, it was powerful and it was clear. We devastated the Iranian nuclear program," Hegseth said at the outset of his remarks, also noting that the operation did not target Iranian troops or citizens. "Initial battle damage assessments indicate that all three sites sustained extremely severe damage and destruction," Caine told the media. After proceeding quietly and with minimal communication for 18 hours from the U.S. to the target area, the first of seven B-2 Spirit stealth bombers dropped two 30,000-pound GBU-57 Massive Ordnance Penetrator "bunker buster" bombs at the Fordo site yesterday at approximately 6:40 p.m. EDT, Caine said.

The initial mission package also included several decoy aircraft that flew west over the Pacific Ocean as "a deception effort known only to an extremely small number of planners and key leaders here in Washington and [Centcom headquarters]," Caine



An illustration depicting the timeline of the United States air strike against Iranian nuclear sites. OSDPA

said. "The U.S. employed several deception tactics — including decoys — as the fourth and fifth generation aircraft pushed out in front of the strike package at high altitude and high speed, sweeping in front of the package for enemy fighters and surface-to-air missile threats," Caine said. Following the initial strike on Fordo, the remaining B-2s went on to deploy their ordnance, eventually totaling 14 MOPs hitting the targeted areas.

This was the first operational use of the GBU-57 MOP, Caine noted. In addition to the MOPs, Caine said a U.S. submarine operating in Centcom's area of responsibility launched more than two dozen Tomahawk land attack cruise missiles at key infrastructure targets at the Isfahan site, bringing the overall total of precision-

guided weapons employed during the operation to approximately 75. Caine stated there was no detectable retaliation to the strikes.

"We are unaware of any shots fired at the package on the way out. Iran's fighters did not fly, and it appears that Iran's surface-to-air missile systems did not see us," he said, adding, "Throughout the mission, we maintained the element of surprise." Both Hegseth and Caine shared praise for the military personnel who worked to execute the mission. "I want to recognize the pilots who flew those bombers, who flew those fighters, who flew those refuelers; [they're] warriors. I want to recognize the sailors on those destroyers, in those subs, on those carriers; [they're] warriors, all of them," Hegseth said, also recognizing soldiers



Air Force Gen. Dan Caine, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, speaks during a press briefing at the Pentagon, June 22, 2025.

Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Alexander Kubitzka, DOD

who conducted air and base defense. "Every American involved in this operation performed flawlessly," he added, also giving recognition to the Israeli government for its contribution to the positioning and preparation of the effort. "This was a complex and high-risk mission, carried out with exceptional skill and discipline by our joint force," Caine said, also noting that the mission demonstrated the "unmatched reach, coordination and capability of the United States military." "In just a matter of weeks, this went from strategic planning to global execution," he said, adding that he concurs with President Donald J. Trump's assessment that "no other military in the world could have done this." When asked about the overall intent of the strikes, Hegseth said the

mission was specifically focused on preventing Iran from developing a nuclear weapon.

"This mission was not, and has not been, about regime change. The president authorized a precision operation to neutralize the threats to our national interests posed by the Iranian nuclear program and [in support of] the collective self-defense of our troops and our ally, Israel," Hegseth said. As to the potential for Iran attempting retaliation for the U.S. strikes, Caine said Centcom is operating under elevated force protection measures throughout the Middle East region and that any retaliation by Iran or its proxies would be "an incredibly poor choice."

"We will defend ourselves. The safety of our service members and civilians remains our highest priority," he said.

AI Tools Collect and Store Data About You From All Your Devices – Here's How to Be Aware of What You're Revealing



Christopher Ramezan

Christopher Ramezan, Assistant Professor of Cybersecurity, West Virginia University

Like it or not, artificial intelligence has become part of daily life. Many devices – including electric razors and toothbrushes – have become “AI-powered,” using machine learning algorithms to track how a person uses the device, how the device is working in real time, and provide feedback. From asking questions to an AI assistant like ChatGPT or Microsoft Copilot to monitoring a daily fitness routine with a smartwatch, many people use an AI system or tool every day. While AI tools and technologies can make life easier, they also raise important questions about data privacy. These systems often collect large amounts of data, sometimes without people even realizing their data is being collected. The information can then be used to identify personal habits and preferences, and even predict future behaviors by drawing inferences from the aggregated data. As an assistant professor of cybersecurity at West Virginia University, I study how emerging technologies and various types of AI systems manage personal data and how we can build more secure, privacy-preserving systems for the future. Generative AI software uses large amounts of training data to create new content such as text or images. Predictive AI uses data to forecast outcomes based on past behavior, such as how likely you are to hit your daily step goal, or what movies you may want to watch. Both types can be used to gather information about you.

How AI tools collect data

Generative AI assistants such as ChatGPT and Google Gemini collect all the information users type into a chat box. Every question, response and prompt that users enter is recorded, stored and analyzed to improve the AI model. OpenAI's privacy policy informs users that “we may use content you provide us to improve our Services, for example to train the models that power ChatGPT.” Even though OpenAI allows you to opt out of content use for model training, it still collects and retains your personal data. Although some companies promise that they anonymize this data, meaning they store it without naming the person who provided it,



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there is always a risk of data being reidentified.

Predictive AI

Beyond generative AI assistants, social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram and TikTok continuously gather data on their users to train predictive AI models. Every post, photo, video, like, share and comment, including the amount of time people spend looking at each of these, is collected as data points that are used to build digital data profiles for each person who uses the service. The profiles can be used to refine the social media platform's AI recommender systems. They can also be sold to data brokers, who sell a person's data to other companies to, for instance, help develop targeted advertisements that align with that person's interests. Many social media companies also track users across websites and applications by putting cookies and embedded tracking pixels on their computers. Cookies are small files that store information about who you are and what you clicked on while browsing a website. One of the most common uses of cookies is in digital shopping carts: When you place an item in your cart, leave the website and return later, the item will still be in your cart because the cookie stored that information. Tracking pixels are invisible images or snippets of code embedded in websites that notify companies of your activity when you visit their page. This helps them track your behavior across the internet. This is why users often see or hear advertisements that are related to their browsing and shopping habits on many of the unrelated websites they browse, and even when they are using different devices, including computers, phones and smart speakers. One study found

that some websites can store over 300 tracking cookies on your computer or mobile phone.

Data privacy controls – and limitations

Like generative AI platforms, social media platforms offer privacy settings and opt-outs, but these give people limited control over how their personal data is aggregated and monetized. As media theorist Douglas Rushkoff argued in 2011, if the service is free, you are the product. Many tools that include AI don't require a person to take any direct action for the tool to collect data about that person. Smart devices such as home speakers, fitness trackers and watches continually gather information through biometric sensors, voice recognition and location tracking. Smart home speakers continually listen for the command to activate or “wake up” the device. As the device is listening for this word, it picks up all the conversations happening around it, even though it does not seem to be active. Some companies claim that voice data is only stored when the wake word – what you say to wake up the device – is detected. However, people have raised concerns about accidental recordings, especially because these devices are often connected to cloud services, which allow voice data to be stored, synced and shared across multiple devices such as your phone, smart speaker and tablet. If the company allows, it's also possible for this data to be accessed by third parties, such as advertisers, data analytics firms or a law enforcement agency with a warrant.

Privacy rollbacks

This potential for third-party access also applies to smartwatches and fitness trackers, which monitor

health metrics and user activity patterns. Companies that produce wearable fitness devices are not considered “covered entities” and so are not bound by the Health Information Portability and Accountability Act. This means that they are legally allowed to sell health- and location-related data collected from their users. Concerns about HIPAA data arose in 2018, when Strava, a fitness company released a global heat map of user's exercise routes. In doing so, it accidentally revealed sensitive military locations across the globe through highlighting the exercise routes of military personnel.

The Trump administration has tapped Palantir, a company that specializes in using AI for data analytics, to collate and analyze data about Americans. Meanwhile, Palantir has announced a partnership with a company that runs self-checkout systems. Such partnerships can expand corporate and government reach into everyday consumer behavior. This one could be used to create detailed personal profiles on Americans by linking their consumer habits with other personal data. This raises concerns about increased surveillance and loss of anonymity. It could allow citizens to be tracked and analyzed across multiple aspects of their lives without their knowledge or consent. Some smart device companies are also rolling back privacy protections instead of strengthening them. Amazon recently announced that starting on March 28, 2025, all voice recordings from Amazon Echo devices would be sent to Amazon's cloud by default, and users will no longer have the option to turn this function off. This is different from previous settings, which allowed users to limit private data collection. Changes like these raise concerns about how much control consumers have over their own data when using smart devices. Many privacy experts consider cloud storage of voice recordings a form of data collection, especially when used to improve algorithms or build user profiles, which has implications for data privacy laws designed to protect online privacy.

Implications for data privacy

All of this brings up serious privacy concerns for people and governments on how AI tools collect, store, use and transmit data. The biggest concern is transparency. People don't know what data is being collected, how the data is being used, and who has access to

that data. Companies tend to use complicated privacy policies filled with technical jargon to make it difficult for people to understand the terms of a service that they agree to. People also tend not to read terms of service documents. One study found that people averaged 73 seconds reading a terms of service document that had an average read time of 29-32 minutes. Data collected by AI tools may initially reside with a company that you trust, but can easily be sold and given to a company that you don't trust. AI tools, the companies in charge of them and the companies that have access to the data they collect can also be subject to cyberattacks and data breaches that can reveal sensitive personal information. These attacks can be carried out by cybercriminals who are in it for the money, or by so-called advanced persistent threats, which are typically nation/state-sponsored attackers who gain access to networks and systems and remain there undetected, collecting information and personal data to eventually cause disruption or harm.

While laws and regulations such as the General Data Protection Regulation in the European Union and the California Consumer Privacy Act aim to safeguard user data, AI development and use have often outpaced the legislative process. The laws are still catching up on AI and data privacy. For now, you should assume any AI-powered device or platform is collecting data on your inputs, behaviors and patterns.

Using AI tools

Although AI tools collect people's data, and the way this accumulation of data affects people's data privacy is concerning, the tools can also be useful. AI-powered applications can streamline workflows, automate repetitive tasks and provide valuable insights. But it's crucial to approach these tools with awareness and caution. When using a generative AI platform that gives you answers to questions you type in a prompt, don't include any personally identifiable information, including names, birth dates, Social Security numbers or home addresses. At the workplace, don't include trade secrets or classified information. In general, don't put anything into a prompt that you wouldn't feel comfortable revealing to the public or seeing on a billboard. Remember, once you hit enter on the prompt, you've lost control of that information.



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 8500 Leesburg Pike, Suite 404, Tysons, VA 22182

 Email: roger@guilliamslc.com | sam@guilliamslc.com