

भारत

# SAMVAAD

THE  
INDIAN  
NETIZENS

## INDIA'S EVOLVING SECURITY PARADIGM

A GLIMPSE INTO INDIA'S NATIONAL SECURITY HORIZON:  
THREATS, STRATEGIES, AND THE ROAD AHEAD

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रत्नाकरधौतपदां हिमालयकिरीटिनीम् ।  
ब्रह्मराजर्षिरत्नाद्याम वन्देभारतमातम् ॥

जिनके पैर समुद्र द्वारा धोए जाते हैं और जो हिमालय से  
सुशोभित हैं, वह, जो कई ब्रह्मऋषियों और राजऋषियों से भरा  
है। ऐसी मेरी भारत माता को अभिवन्दन ।

*Salute to my mother India, whose feet are washed by the  
sea, adorned with Himalaya, she, who possess many  
Brahmarishis (intellectual sages) and Rajyarishis (king sages).*



# MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDER'S DESK

Dear Readers,



It is with immense pride that I present to you the second edition of Bharat Samvaad, centred on the theme "**India's Evolving Security Paradigm**". This edition offers a timely and insightful glimpse into India's national security horizon, its threats, evolving strategies, and the road ahead.

This issue was conceived in the aftermath of the tragic Pahalgam terror attack and the subsequent Operation Sindoora, a powerful reminder of the bravery and resolve of our armed forces. We salute their unmatched courage and dedicate this edition to their valour.

I extend heartfelt thanks to Ms Shida M, Director of the Bharat Samvaad team, and our Deputy Directors Ms Niharika and Mr Aditya Pandey, for their outstanding leadership. I am equally grateful to the contributing authors whose research and writing have shaped this edition. A special note of thanks to our Graphics Team led by Mr Rishabh Khatri, Creative and Development Head at The Indian Netizens, and our talented designer, Gauri, for visually bringing this edition to life.

As a youth-led, *India-first* organisation, **The Indian Netizens** as an organization remains committed to delivering insightful research and thought-provoking work. Stay tuned for more updates from our organization as we continue to contribute to the nation's discourse.

We value your feedback and invite you to share your thoughts with us at [theindianetizens@gmail.com](mailto:theindianetizens@gmail.com). Your insights are important in shaping future editions. We would also love to have new people in our team, so we encourage you to join our dynamic team.

**Jai Hind!**

**Aditya Kr Chaudhary**  
Founder & CEO  
**The Indian Netizens**

# MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR's DESK

Dear Readers,



It is with utmost pride and boundless gratitude that I present to you this special issue of our magazine, "**National Security of India : Threats, Strategies and Road Ahead.**" In an era of uncertain and changing order, the term security has gone far beyond conventional definitions. National security today has adopted a polydimensional character - including not just military preparedness, but also cybersecurity, economic strength, sustainability and technological development.

This edition hopes to unravel these interconnected aspects. Ranging from border disputes and cross-border terrorism to domestic security challenges, we hope to provide insights that are both timely and eye-opening. Special emphasis has been placed upon the strategic realignments in geopolitics, India's defence modernisation drive and the diplomatic efforts in fostering regional stability.

Informed discourse is crucial for security. With threats increasingly hybrid and complex in form, critical consideration and awareness are our best line of defense. As such, through this magazine we aim to spark curiosity, promote dialogue and provide a multidisciplinary and critically engaged view of the new security paradigm.

I extend my heartfelt appreciation to my team and colleagues who worked diligently to give life to this cause. May these pages serve as a space for reflection, dialogue and learning.

Thank You!

*Shida M*  
Director, Bharat Samvaad

# MESSAGE FROM THE Dy DIRECTOR's DESK

Dear Readers,



As we bring you this edition, “**National Security of India: Threats, Strategies and Road Ahead**”, I find myself reflecting on how the idea of security has evolved; no longer confined to borders and battalions, but now deeply entwined into our digital, economic, and social fabric. Each article in this compilation is a proof of the complexity of India’s security paradigm, from the silent work of our intelligence agencies to the visible shifts in our military and technological arena.

My own journey, rooted in literature yet shaped by experiences in policy and public service, reminds me that the stories we tell about national security must be as multidimensional as the challenges we face. This magazine is our collective attempt to break silos, spark critical dialogue, and highlight that safeguarding the nation is not the job of a few, but a shared responsibility of all citizens.

I hope these pages of Bharat Samvaad inspire you to think, question, and engage; because an aware mind is our greatest defence.

Thank You!

*Niharika Kapat*  
Dy Director, Bharat Samvaad

# MESSAGE FROM THE Dy DIRECTOR's DESK

Dear Readers,



This magazine aims to synchronise all the major domains of Internal security in a single publication. It deals with the intelligence system of our country to issues such as communal radicalisation, threat to national security. We strive to propound holistic views on the issues highlighted in its titles along with critical engagement and diversified way forward which enlighten about the future complication with practical suggestions.

Here, at the Indian Netizens, we believe that National security is not solely the domain of governments and specialised agencies; it is a shared responsibility. Each citizen plays a part, whether through critical thinking in the face of misinformation, adherence to best practices in cybersecurity, or simply by fostering a sense of community and vigilance. An informed populace is a resilient populace, and it is with this conviction that we present this issue.

Let us remember that national security is not merely a defensive posture; it is an active pursuit of a stable, prosperous, and secure future for generations to come. It is about building a nation that is strong, adaptable, and capable of overcoming any challenge that lies ahead. To spread this awareness is the destiny of this magazine.

Thank you!

*Aditya Pandey*

Dy Director, Bharat Samvaad

# MESSAGE FROM THE CREATIVE TEAM'S DESK

Dear Readers,



In the evolving landscape of national security, communication plays a crucial role—not just in analysis, but in awareness and engagement. At The Indian Netizens, we believe that security is not just a matter of policy decisions or defense strategies; it is equally a question of how ideas are communicated, how narratives are shaped, and how informed dialogue strengthens collective resilience.

This edition brings together key discussions on geopolitics, defense modernization, and regional stability while also emphasizing the power of strategic storytelling—where design transforms complex security discourse into accessible, thought-provoking engagement. Through compelling visuals and structured narratives, our goal is to ensure that security and policy conversations reach beyond institutional circles, becoming part of a broader public consciousness.

National security is a shared responsibility, and fostering informed discourse is a vital aspect of it. Through this publication, we aim to bridge the gap between analysis and understanding, using creative mediums to enhance clarity and impact. I extend my gratitude to the team whose dedication has shaped this issue, and I hope these pages serve as a space for reflection, insight, and meaningful exchange.

Thank you!

*Rishabh Khatri*

Creative & Development Head  
The Indian Netizens

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# SETTING THE STAGE :

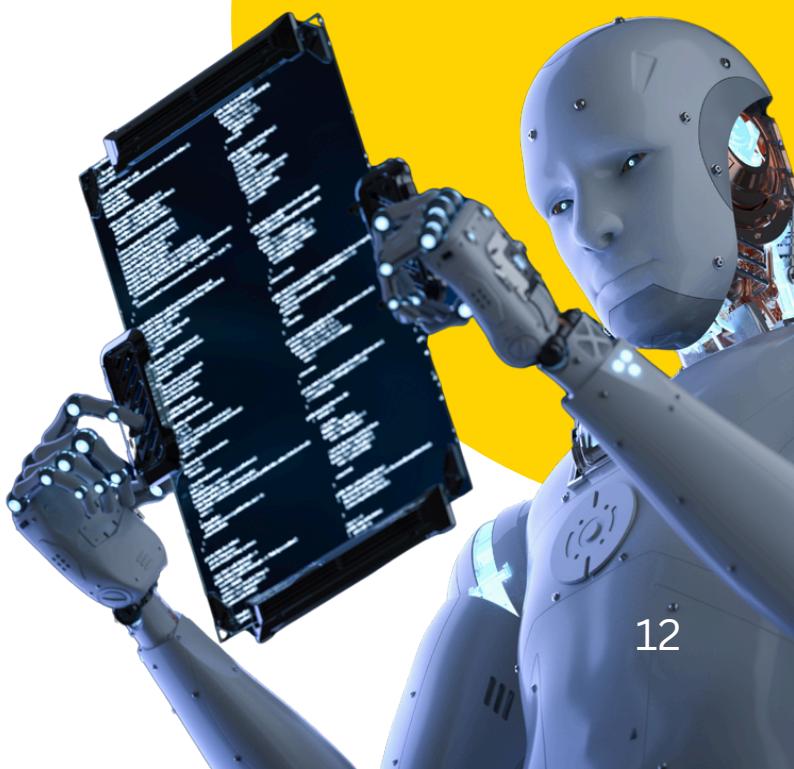
## Understanding National Security

### 1. The Dynamics of Intelligence and National Security

*By Sudhansh*

**A foundational look into the intelligence apparatus and its strategic role.**

Intelligence is now essential for national security because of hybrid dangers, international competition and unbalanced conflicts. It provides states with understanding; aids their decision making and immunises them to take preventive steps. Since the threats like cyberwarfare and terrorism are cross borders in nature so there the intelligence needs to move forward with combined fields and must remain unpredictable.



The main function of intelligence is the collection, review and distribution of details necessary for national aims. You can break it into various categories such as OSINT, SIGINT, IMINT and HUMINT. Both tactical and strategic objectives are fulfilled when these domains give leaders information about threats and the strengths of countries that might challenge them. Intelligence is important for actions we take in advance and not only for responding to what happens. It helps in preventing major disputes, detect secret agents, subdue terrorist organisations and uncover cases of economic sabotage.

Working in Domestic Security and Intelligence Security inside India depends on its level of intelligence. Those threats include terrorism, organised crime, insurgency and unrest among groups that are closely watched by organisations like the Intelligence Bureau (IB) and State Intelligence Units. It became obvious from the Mumbai attacks of 26/11 that there were problems with sharing intelligence among agencies.



Two reforms put in place after the events were to enhance the Multi-Agency Centre (MAC) and introduce the National Intelligence Grid (NATGRID). To achieve greater cooperation among agencies, they reduce the isolation of data. Recent intelligence has grown significantly when dealing with insurgency and LWE in Kashmir. Many militant groups were neutralised by Operation Green Hunt and careful watch in Jammu & Kashmir, leading to the conclusion that intelligence is essential for good results.

Threats Across Borders and Intelligence for Policy Long-term national interests in India are best served when strategic intelligence supports the country in its problems with Pakistan and China. In view of this, India's Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) plays an essential part. India was able to act with precision in 2017 Doklam thanks to information that showed how the Chinese intended to act. Both the Pulwama terror attack and the 2019 Balakot strike showed how precise intelligence can guide limited operations that matter. India is using more technology in intelligence through satellites, unmanned aircraft and electronic tools along the LAC.

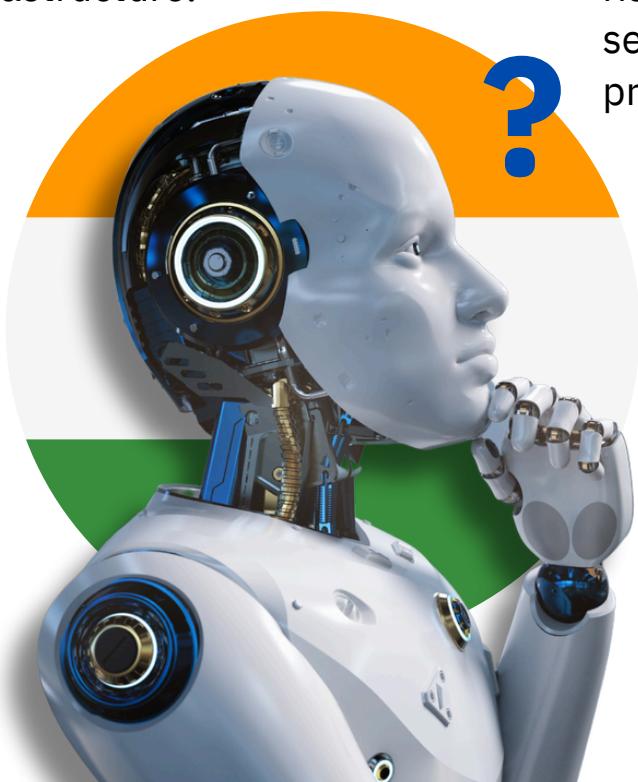


# What is Cyber Intelligence? and How Technology is Shaping Our World These days?

National security heavily depends on cybersecurity. Examples of digital threats include state led cyber-attacks and spreading fake information and these actions can weaken the people's trust, disrupt their privacy and other rights and negatively impact the national economies. In order to monitor and address cyberthreats, India formed organisations called the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) and the National Technical Research Organisation (NTRO). Their main efforts include preventing stealing of data, protecting from viruses and looking after important infrastructure.



The Mumbai power grid attack of 2020 which accused foreign agents, proves that we must change from passive cyber security to actively preventing danger. Counterintelligence and incidents involving security breaches Both intelligence gathering and protecting sensitive data are necessary tasks. The purpose of counterintelligence is to find spies, prevent them from stealing secrets and keep communication secure. When Indian naval officers were arrested for allegedly disclosing information to foreign services, it proved that strategic institutions are also at risk. It pointed out that security services must regularly check, profile and monitor individuals.



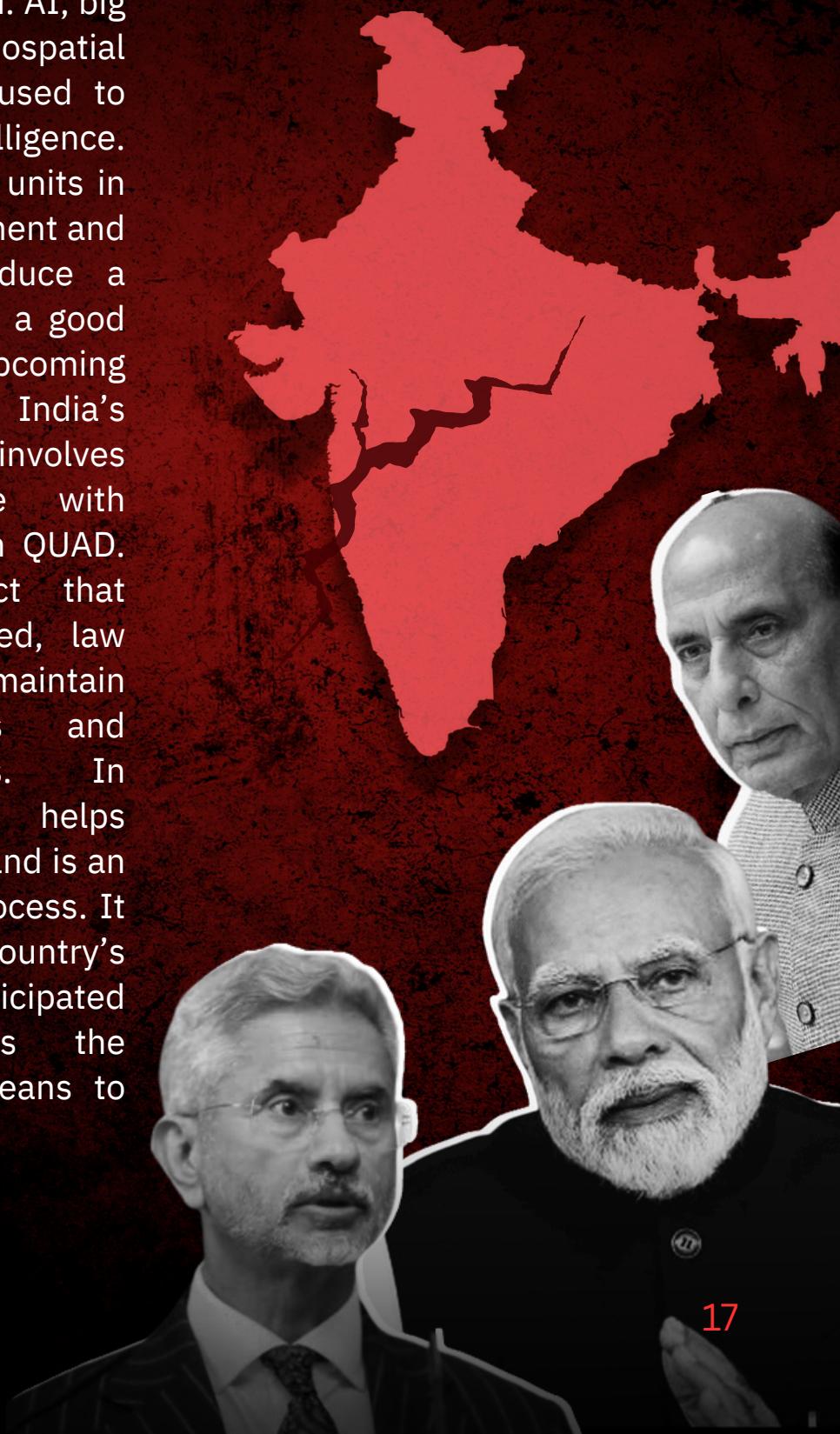
Even after recent improvements, India's intelligence system is facing various problems, and its intelligence system has to deal with several consistent challenges. If agencies don't coordinate, it causes problems and competition which decreases their effectiveness. No organisation has been appointed yet to handle these issues just like the case of the USA Director of National Intelligence.

In India, hearing from the people on the ground is still treated as vital strategic action, on the other hand foes are becoming highly skilled in satellite monitoring, artificial intelligence and cyber technology. Since its intelligence agencies lack continuous statutory regulations, some people show concern that it could be misused and there would be no accountability.

Enough number of language experts, regional specialists or cyber analysts are not available to our intelligence community. In addition, training and keeping employees adhered to their service is not as effective as it could be.



The Nation is in high need to upgrade and modernise its intelligence system to protect itself in today's global conflicting environment. Via Statutory Reforms the clarity of tasks and transparency in the activities of the IB and RAW with the help of new laws can be achieved. AI, big data analytics and geospatial technology, all can be used to gather accurate intelligence. Cooperating with various units in the military, law enforcement and cyber worlds can produce a dependable strategy and a good response to the upcoming threats. Increasing India's strategic position involves exchanging intelligence with partners, for example on QUAD. Understanding the fact that technology has expanded, law and order are crucial to maintain citizens' civil rights and democratic traditions. In essence, Intelligence helps ensure national security and is an important part of that process. It ensures the country's independence, anticipated threats and provides the government with the means to act decisively.



## 2. The Digital Fortress: How Technology Reshapes National Security

*By Disha*

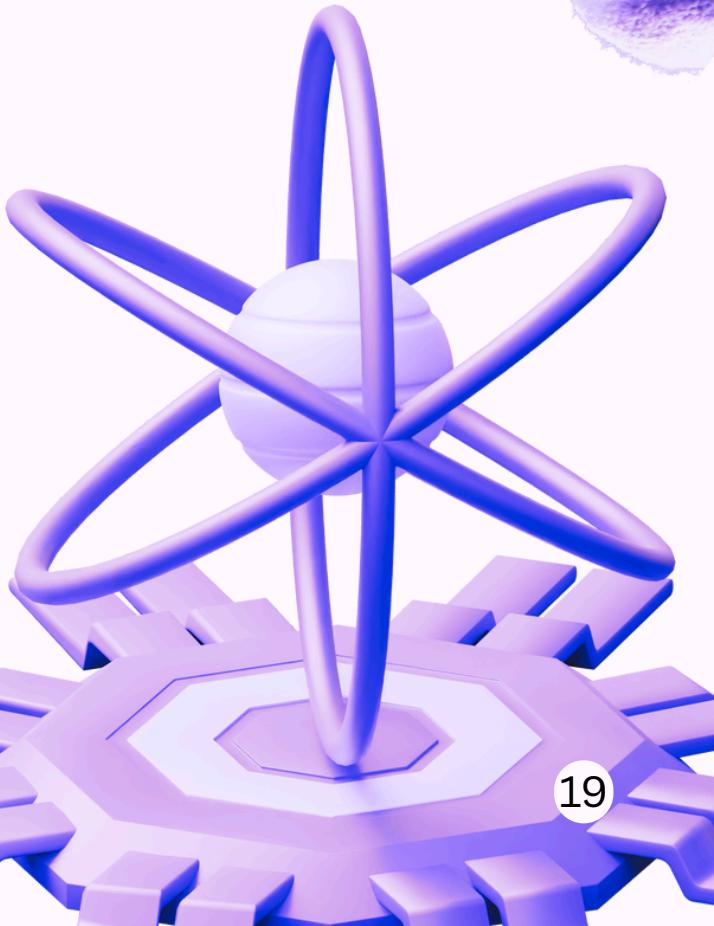
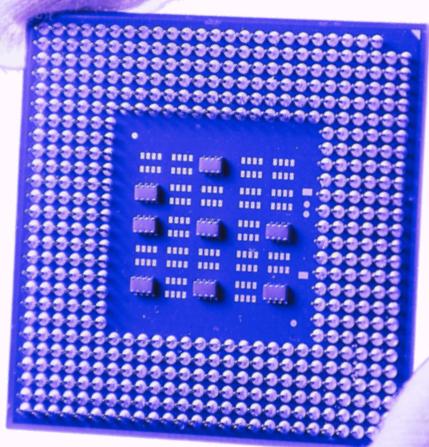
**Exploring the digital frontier of India's defence capabilities.**

With growing advancements in the field of blockchains, artificial intelligence and quantum computing, India's national security landscape is constantly changing. These advances present sincere possibilities in defence, cyber-security, and strategic governance but also give rise to refined vulnerabilities that necessitate forward-looking policy models. With growing advancements in the field of blockchains, artificial intelligence and quantum computing, India's national security landscape is constantly changing



## QUANTUM COMPUTING STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITIES AND RISKS

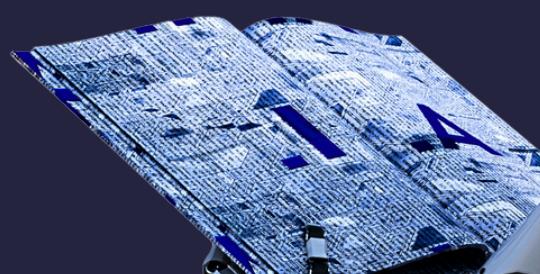
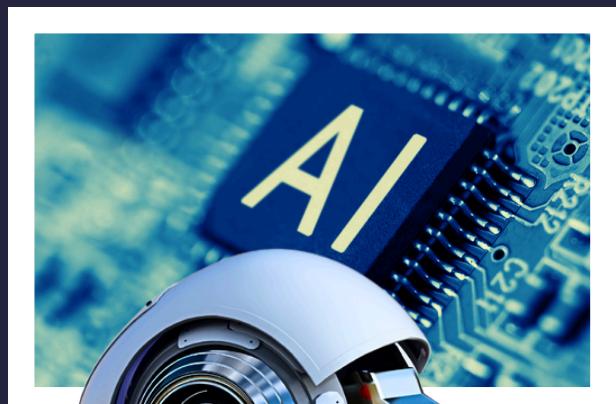
Quantum computing has been sidelined as a dual-use technology with broad potential ramifications for cryptography, intelligence, and military applications. NITI Aayog's 2025 report highlights India's National Quantum Mission (NQM), where the objective is to make India a leading player in quantum science at the global level. However, the achievement of millions of qubits would potentially compromise prevailing forms of encryption, putting critical infrastructure and digital sovereignty at risk. The report underlines the importance of post-quantum cryptography and tighter export controls on quantum-related components, such as cryogenic refrigerators and specialised lasers, to alleviate supply-chain vulnerabilities.



## AI in Defense and Cybersecurity

AI is overhauling India's military and cybersecurity strategies. INDIAN ARMY India has over 140 AI systems installed for surveillance, logistics, and cyber warfare, and has an AI centre up and running in Madhya Pradesh. Operational efficiency and safety are improved with the use of AI-powered tools such as voice transcription and fatigue monitoring tools. Simultaneously, threat detection AI platforms such as those used by the State Bank of India have slashed fraud by 30%. AI's double role as both a defence tool and a weapon is clear. AI-cyberattackers are unlikely to resist using AI to carry out phishing and zero-day attacks, calling for strong AI governance and control to thwart model poisoning and fiddle with data.

Blockchain has the capability to make Indian public services more transparent, whether that involves land registries, healthcare records, or judicial processes. While not directly cited in security contexts, its tamper-proof infrastructure aligns with wide objectives of securing digital transactions and reducing bureaucratic fraud.



## Strategic Challenges and Ethical Considerations

India is caught in the geopolitical crossfire over access to technology, especially as Europe and other countries impose increasing restrictions on the export of quantum and AI components. Ethical issues: biased AI algorithms and autonomous weapon systems are other challenges to be faced when integrating into defence architectures. The need to build greater public-private partnerships and local R&D for reduced dependence on foreign technologies<sup>64</sup> is well articulated by experts.

India's national security doctrine must be centred on balancing innovation and risk management. Investment in quantum science, AI-enabled defence capabilities, and blockchain infrastructure is important – but interdisciplinary effort, ethical governance, and responsive policy are what will determine whether this generation's tech 'boom' booms with Aussies at the helm. By fully addressing these challenges, India will be able to safeguard its digital future as well as strategic autonomy in a technology-dominated world.



# 3. Economic Security: The Unsung Aspect of National Defence

By Soumya

## Unveiling the economic undercurrents that sustain a secure nation.

If we're looking at the modern changing geopolitical situation, it means a country's security cannot be assured just through military might or stuff like border patrol. The most crucial yet little-understood facet of it is economic security. A country is strongly affected in the protection of its sovereignty and stability while facing some international threats due to the defence of economic interests against attacks.

In other words, economic security refers to the state in which people, businesses, and governments enjoy stable income and resources and thus have the ability to secure their future well-being. At the national level, economic security refers to the capacity of a country to produce, expand, and shield its economic pillars from internal weaknesses and external shocks.



**Some major building blocks of economic security exist, and each of them is interconnected with larger national interests:**

### **1. Energy Security:**

The basis of both national security and the economy is the availability of energy resources. More at risk are countries that rely significantly on imported energy, especially that which comes from politically unstable areas. It makes strategic and environmental sense to invest in a variety of energy sources, including renewables.

### **2. Food Security:**

Ensuring a secure, safe, and stable food supply shields against social and economic instability. The collapse of food systems would destabilise governments and economies regardless of the reason—war, supply chain failure, or climate change.

### **3. Cyber and Technological Resilience:**

In an age of digital economies, cybersecurity is needed. It can be jeopardised by attacks on financial infrastructure, theft of intellectual property, and disruption of the supply chain. It can all contribute to economic instability. Nations must invest in secure digital infrastructure and skills upgrading of their people to guard against such attacks.



**कोषमूली दण्डः**

The treasury is the root of power.

## 4. Industrial and Trade Policy:

Strategic autonomy in strategic industries, for instance, medicines, chips, and defence manufacturing, is required. Excessive dependence on other countries can make a country susceptible to economic blackmail or geopolitical pressure.

## 5. Monetary and Fiscal Stability:

Good financial management, i.e., responsible public expenditure, low inflation, and stable exchange rate systems, instills investor confidence and prevents economic crisis that may spill over into political crisis.

Recent international occurrences—ranging from the pandemic of COVID-19 to Ukraine's war—have brutally emphasised how economic fragilities can instantly turn into security threats for the nation. Supply chain disruptions, inflationary trends, and power shortages have subjected even the global front-runner economies to the ultimate test of endurance.

Governments must adopt a comprehensive strategy that integrates economic anticipation into defence planning in order to improve national security. In addition to being economically necessary, increasing domestic production, protecting important supply chains, and promoting inclusive growth are also acts of national safeguarding.



A country's power is not solely in its weaponry, but in the strength of its economy. Economic security is not an adjunct to national security in the 21st century—it is the foundation itself.

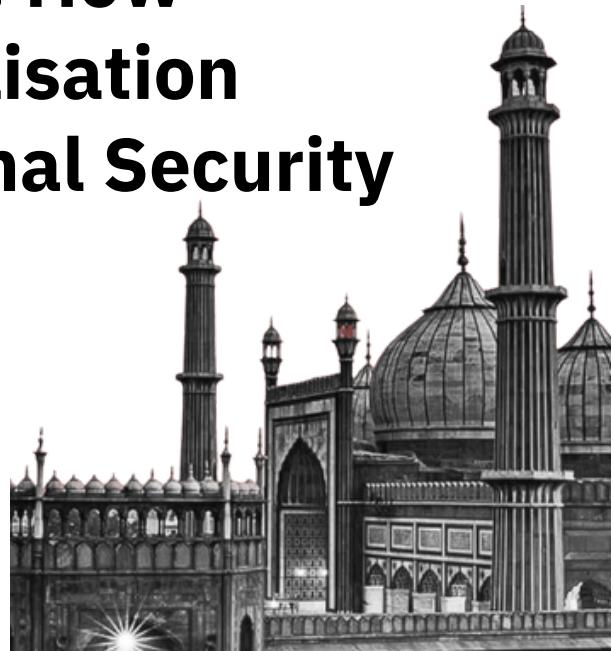
# DOMESTIC FRONTLINES: Internal Threats and Social Faultlines

## 4. Erosion of Unity: How Communal Radicalisation Undermines National Security

By Akshara

Decoding how ideological  
divides pose risks to  
internal stability.

Communalism has truly been a challenge in India for a very long time; indeed, even in the pre-independence era, it served as a major problem. Largely, it is the belief that one religious group is superior or more significant than others. It's certainly no secret that India is a diverse country, a homeland to so many communities.



But the core issue is the mentality itself, which has caused tension, division, and even violence between communities, mostly, as we know, between Hindus and Muslims. During colonial rule, this tension was, quite deliberately, weaponised and used against the nation.

Even in contemporary times, communalism exerts a massive influence in politics and indeed, in general life. What's more, with the rise of social media and the internet, inciting violence or tensions between communities has become far easier, sometimes with an act as simple as circulating hateful or hurtful speech. These platforms, unfortunately, can be easily used to spread divisive messages and to create a scenario of utter misunderstanding and confusion. In graver situations, this can, sadly, lead to violent clashes. That is precisely why it is so important to analyse what truly causes these tensions and then take immediate actions towards building peace and trust among all communities.

A recent example from Murshidabad, West Bengal, clearly showcases the fragility of peace and just how easily conflicts can be created. What began as protests against changes to the Waqf Act—a law, to clarify, related to Muslim charitable properties—soon turned violent. Many Hindu families, heartbreakingly, had to leave their homes, leaving the entire community shaken and afraid.

The Governor of West Bengal, C.V. Ananda Bose, described this situation as a dangerous mix of radicalisation and militancy in a report to the central government. He suggested important steps, such as launching a detailed inquiry, deploying central security forces along the border, and even considering stronger state-level actions if things worsened.





Thus, Murshidabad stands as a recent, stark reminder of how quickly trust between communities can break down, causing radicalisation and violence. It also shows why it is so important to have a timely managing of critical situations before they escalate into violent clashes. Hence, emphasis should be laid upon peace-building, social harmony, and social cohesion among the diverse communities, as these are truly the fundamentals of our country's integrity and solidarity, ultimately playing the most crucial role in national security. Internal radicalisation, communalism, or terrorism is, in fact, the most immediate and biggest threat to national security, which often even goes ignored and overlooked. Therefore, India's incredible diversity is something we should cherish and protect, but it requires ongoing care and effort from both governmental and non-governmental actors. Only by tackling the root causes of communalism and truly encouraging unity can we build a strong and united nation.

# 5. Rohingyas: Threat to National Security?

*By Aditya Pandey*

**Examining the security implications of the refugee crisis.**

Rohingya refugees in India have increasingly been considered a security concern by officials, raising many different challenges for policy makers. Although they face terrible difficulties, the large number of people and the way many entered India create many issues that must be managed well from security viewpoints. A main issue is the impact of changing populations and economies.



A large number of undocumented immigrants may use up available housing, jobs and public services, adversely affecting the situation in border communities already under financial stress. As a result, foreign businesses may experience tension with locals which can result in places where instability occurs. Moreover, if there are no standard systems for identification and integration, identifying people for internal security purposes becomes much more difficult.

One of the top direct security problems is that background checks are not mandatory for everyone who comes into the country irregularly. A further worry exists that those with dangerous intentions could use poorly secure borders to their benefit or that people in vulnerable situations could become radicalised and threaten the country with espionage or terrorism. It is hard to tell war refugees apart from dangerous individuals who may use the migrant movement for criminal activity in these hidden communities.



The way the energy sector affects the economy must also be considered. Due to a large number of low-skilled workers, wages in certain employment areas might fall to a level that negatively affects Indian citizens. What's more, since their work is usually not regulated, they can easily become victims of organised criminal groups. Solutions for the Future: How We Move Forward To solve these issues, we need an approach that puts human values along with national protection on the same level.

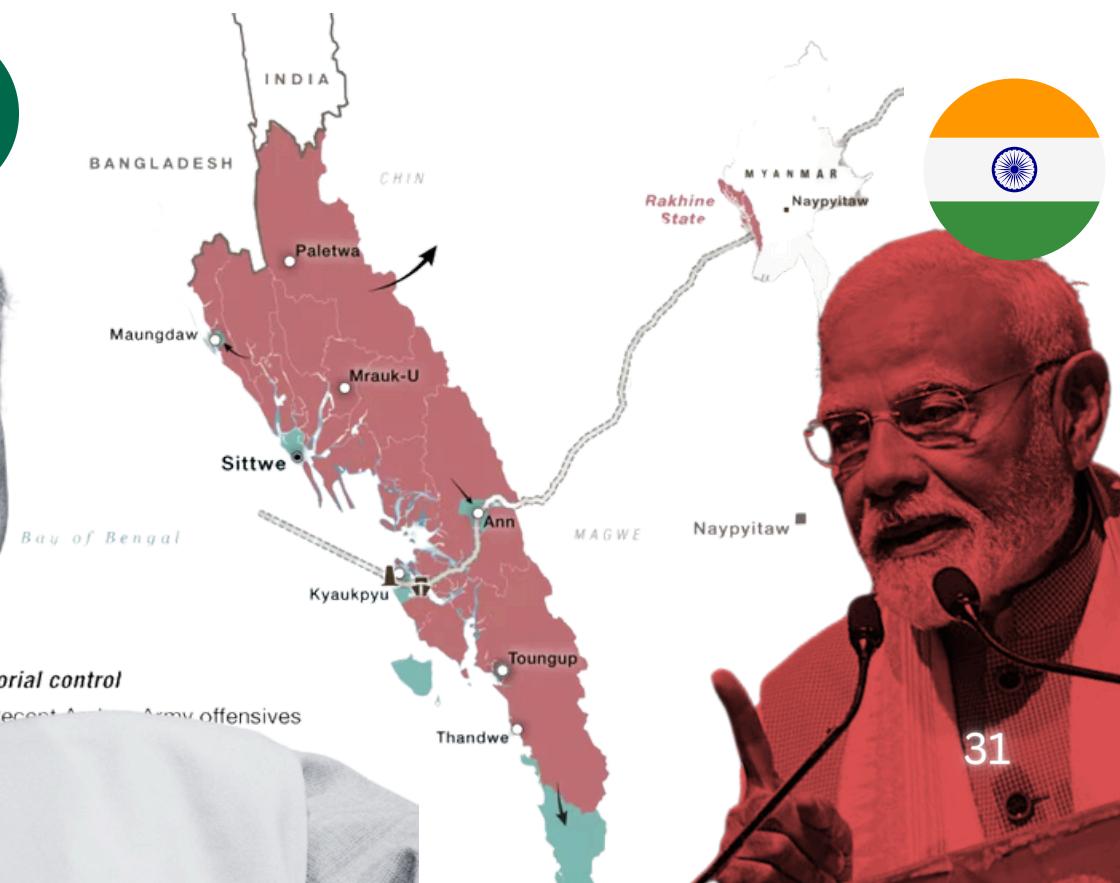
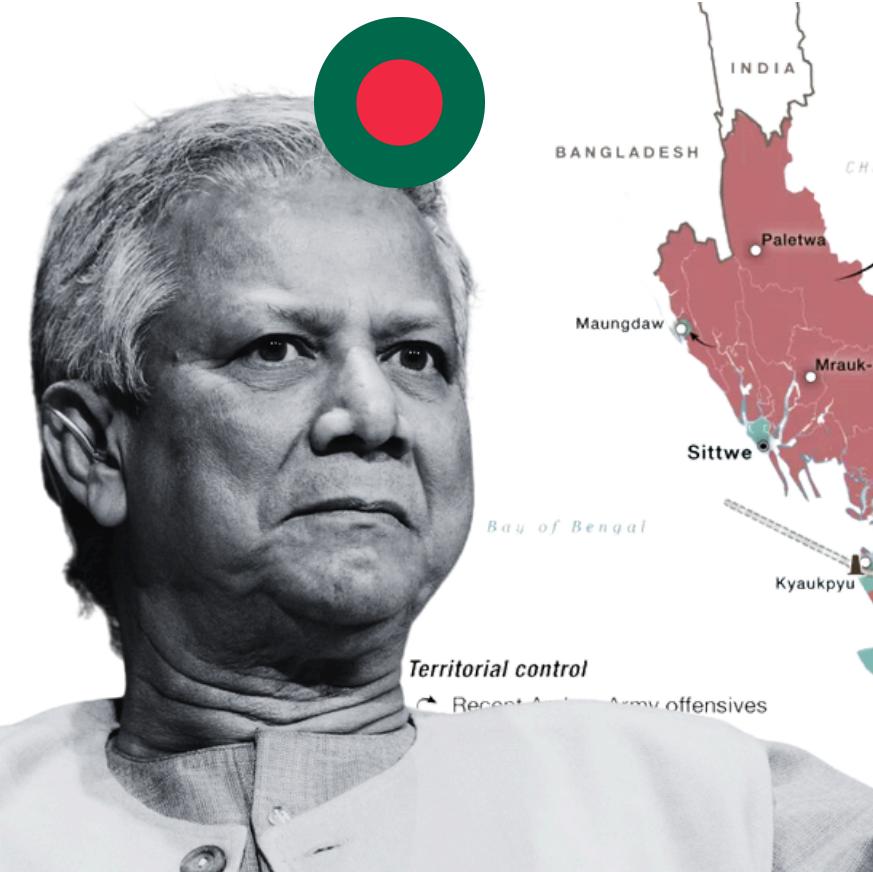
First of all, screening methods need to be powerful. All undocumented migrants should be registered properly and given biometric information collected in one place to verify their identity and check for any danger. It would help officials tell apart genuine refugees from individuals who may be a threat to the society.



In addition, stronger border control is necessary. Improved monitoring, more patrolling and use of modern technologies in sensitive areas of its border can reduce unlawful crossing attempts. This is also important as cooperation with Bangladesh and Myanmar is essential. Helping one another by sharing information, working together on security along borders and pursuing diplomacy to let people return safely to Myanmar are major strategies for the future.

Lastly, policies should rely on data and be proven by evidence to avoid making general assumptions. Suppose the government focuses on the aspects that cause security issues in various groups and does not treat such groups as one big threat. In that case, security efforts will be more successful in protecting India and keeping with its humane values.

## RAKHINE CORRIDOR THREAT TO INDIA?



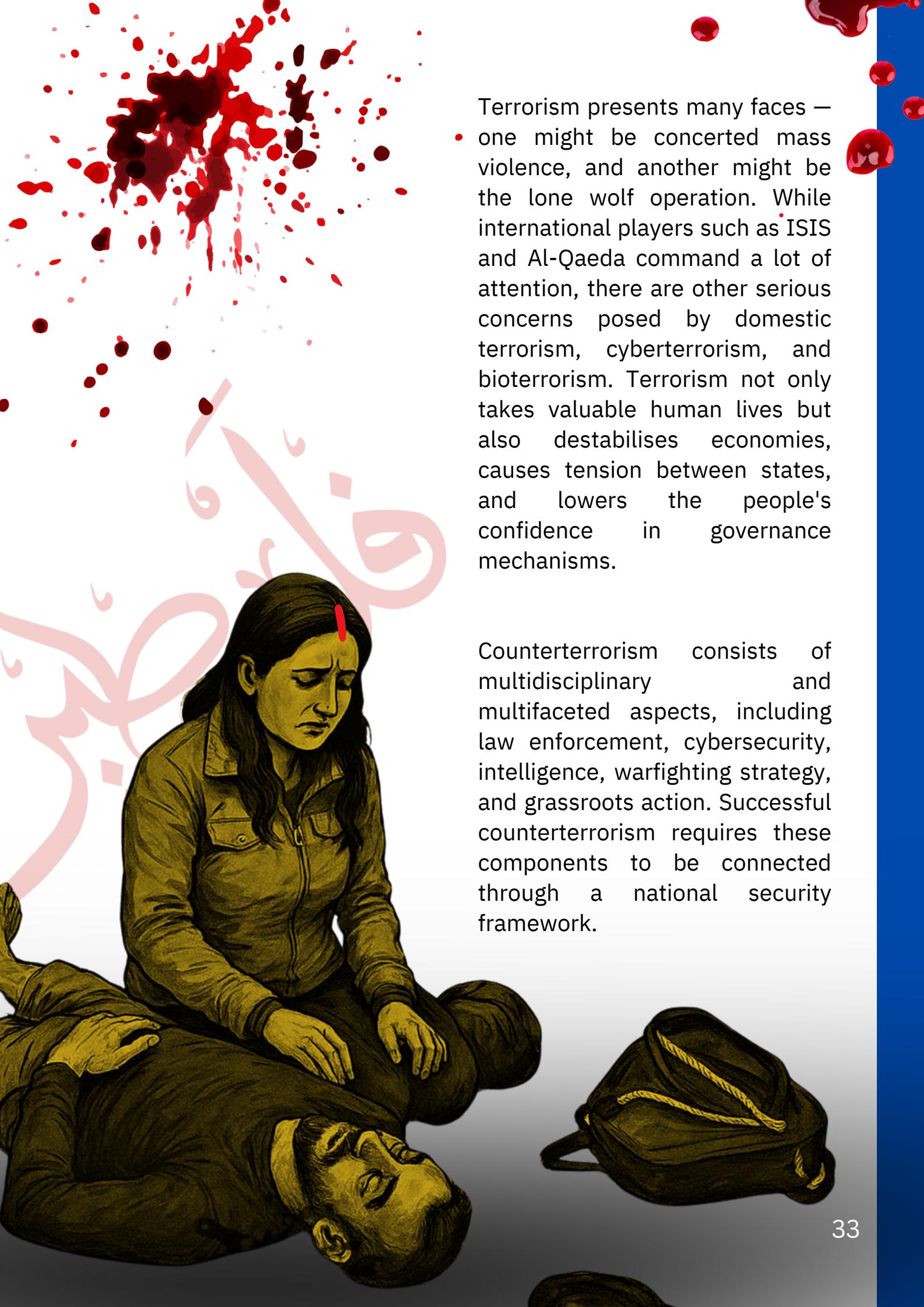
# 6. Terrorism and Counterterrorism: The Pillars of National Security

*By Soumya*

**A critical analysis of terror threats and India's response framework.**

Terrorism is arguably the most potent threat to national security in the twenty-first century. Terrorism, in its essence, is a political ideology that seeks to destroy the social order by instilling fear and negating the legitimacy of governments. Terrorism has been growing in might and treachery. Nowadays, by focusing on technologies, open borders, and quick adaptability, terrorist organisations maintain their edge over countermeasures.





Terrorism presents many faces – one might be concerted mass violence, and another might be the lone wolf operation. While international players such as ISIS and Al-Qaeda command a lot of attention, there are other serious concerns posed by domestic terrorism, cyberterrorism, and bioterrorism. Terrorism not only takes valuable human lives but also destabilises economies, causes tension between states, and lowers the people's confidence in governance mechanisms.

Counterterrorism consists of multidisciplinary and multifaceted aspects, including law enforcement, cybersecurity, intelligence, warfighting strategy, and grassroots action. Successful counterterrorism requires these components to be connected through a national security framework.

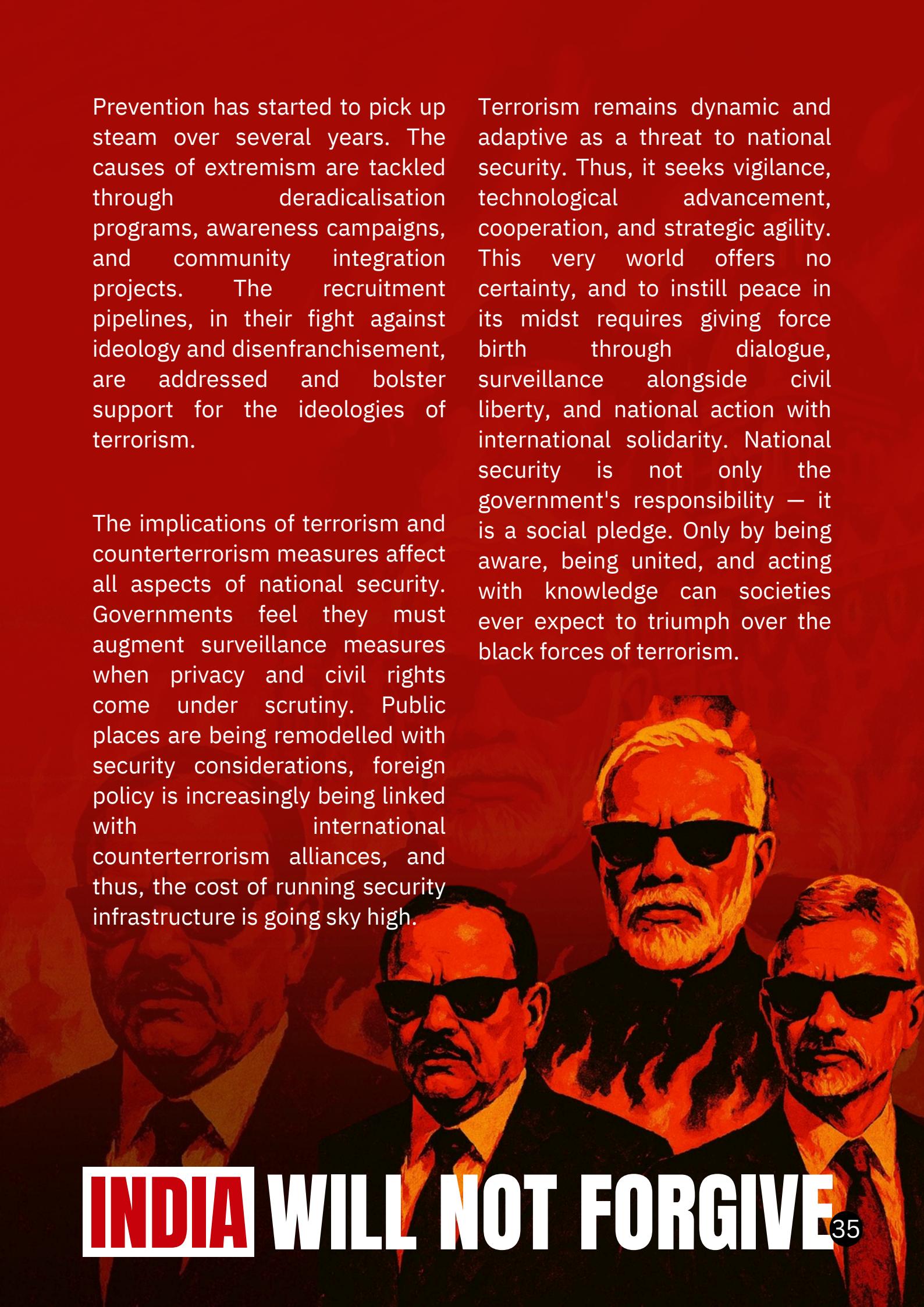
Intelligence (both technical and human) is key to every successful counterterrorism effort. Agencies need to intercept communications, monitor financial transactions, and conduct surveillance online to identify threats before they materialise. Military and law enforcement action, controversial at times, is also critical in breaking down operational capabilities and arresting high-risk targets.

Counterterrorism is not merely a matter of coercion. Legal structures, like anti-terrorism laws, equip governments with the tools to prosecute offenders and freeze assets. Equally, if not more, important is international collaboration — sharing information, coordinating legal definitions of terrorism, and coordinating sanctions or interventions through activities of institutions like the United Nations.

Prevention has started to pick up steam over several years. The causes of extremism are tackled through deradicalisation programs, awareness campaigns, and community integration projects. The recruitment pipelines, in their fight against ideology and disenfranchisement, are addressed and bolster support for the ideologies of terrorism.

The implications of terrorism and counterterrorism measures affect all aspects of national security. Governments feel they must augment surveillance measures when privacy and civil rights come under scrutiny. Public places are being remodelled with security considerations, foreign policy is increasingly being linked with international counterterrorism alliances, and thus, the cost of running security infrastructure is going sky high.

Terrorism remains dynamic and adaptive as a threat to national security. Thus, it seeks vigilance, technological advancement, cooperation, and strategic agility. This very world offers no certainty, and to instill peace in its midst requires giving force birth through dialogue, surveillance alongside civil liberty, and national action with international solidarity. National security is not only the government's responsibility – it is a social pledge. Only by being aware, being united, and acting with knowledge can societies ever expect to triumph over the black forces of terrorism.



**INDIA WILL NOT FORGIVE** <sup>35</sup>

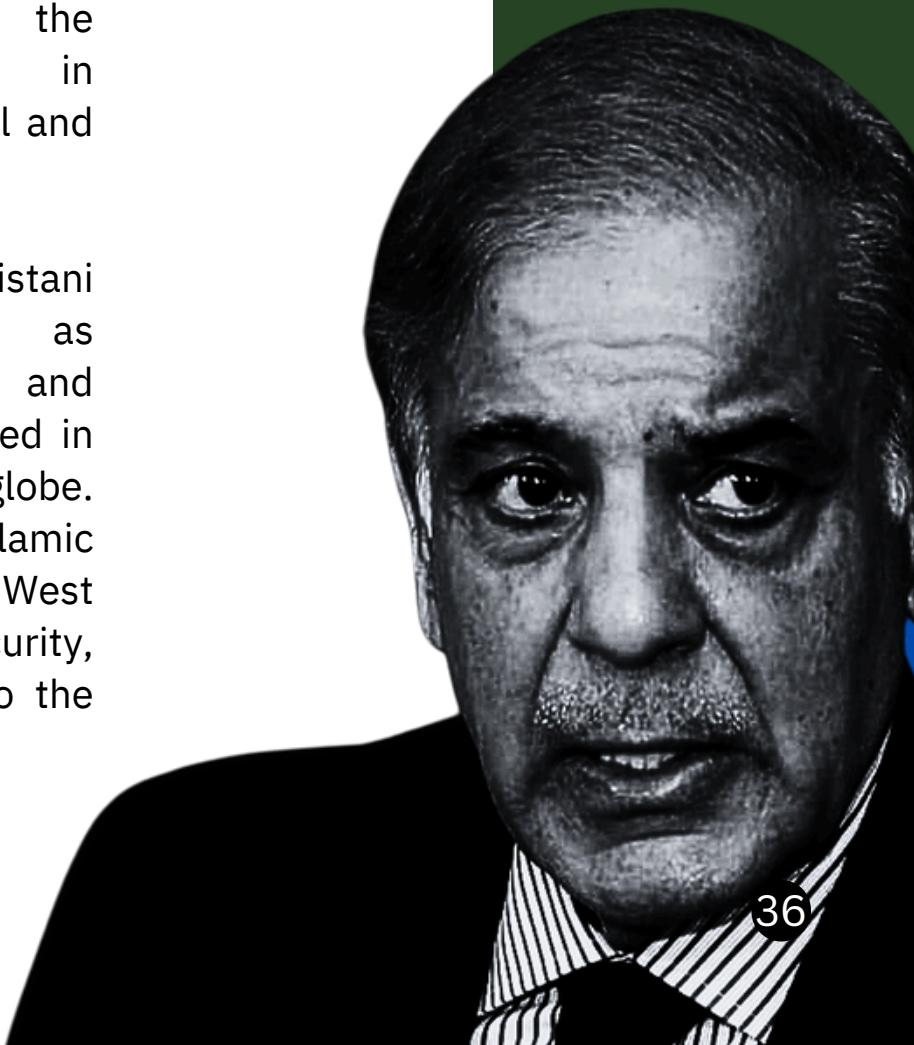
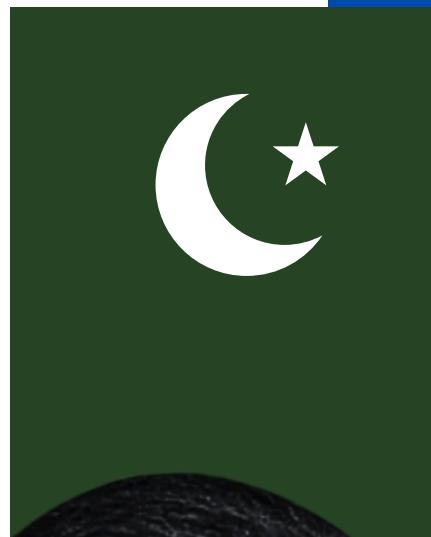
# 7. Abrupt Resecuritisation of the Kashmir Issue

*By Kartik Sahu*

**A theoretical dive into the shifting narrative and securitisation of Kashmir.**

One week before the ‘barbaric’ Pahalgam attack, Pakistani Army Chief General Asim Munir while convening the First Annual Convention on Overseas Pakistanis, organised by the Pakistani government in Islamabad, made communal and anti-India remarks.

Moreover, Munir called Pakistani overseas citizens as ambassadors, soldiers and warriors of Pakistan deployed in the nook and corner of the globe. He also exclaimed that Islamic Civilisation is superior to the West for providing ontological security, that is security of being, to the diasporas.



General Munir in his vitriolic speech commented on Hindus by sense of othering that, “they(Pakistanis) are different from Hindus in every aspect of life, i.e. their religion, their customs, their traditions are different”. He also made an appeal to the listeners to pass this heroic mission of the origin of Pakistan to their offspring.

The army chief also reiterated the Two-Nation theory that was proposed by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, rejuvenated cartographic anxieties of the two post-Partition nations.

Later, Munir bluffed that “the Pakistani army's stance and the government's stance on Kashmir are absolutely clear; it was our jugular vein, it is our jugular vein”. This statement instantly resecuritised the Kashmir issue.



**EXTREMIST RHETORIC**



Jugular viens refers to the veins of the neck region of the human body that take blood from the head to the heart. It reflects Munir's diplomatic vocabulary of calling Kashmir the head, i.e. the moving force and Pakistan the heart. Similarly, Northern Rivers, i.e. Indus, Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Beas, Sutlej, were implied as veins and the water flowing as the blood. In comparative interpretation, it tells that as the blood is important for the human body to survive, similarly, the water of the Indus River System is extremely important for Pakistan's people to survive and their agriculture, economy to flourish.

In this context, the theoretical parallel of Munir's Speech can be drawn with the Securitisation Theory of the Copenhagen School, given by Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver, and Jaap de Wilde. According to this theory, political actors can turn social issues, such as immigration, national security, and particular race, into existential threats via speech acts, justifying exceptional actions beyond the ambit of democratic governance.

## INDUS WATER VEINS OF PAKISTAN ?



Munir's rhetoric can also be explained through the Speech Act theory of J.L. Austin and John Searle Austin (1962), who argued that speech acts are not merely descriptive but constitutive. According to this theory, when a political actor declares any material or idea as a "threat", it is not just an expression of opinion but initiates a chain of extraordinary actions against the referent.

Therefore, various security analysts and defence experts are viewing this sudden discursive act of General Munir as the first symbolic step on the escalation ladder of the recent India-Pakistan standoff.

Even the Foreign Secretary of India, Vikram Misri, in a press briefing, also drew a direct connection between Pakistan Army Chief Asim Munir's "communal" remarks and the Pahalgam terror attack. India's External Affairs Minister Dr. S Jaishankar claimed that the attack was an attempt to sabotage flourishing Kashmiri tourism and incite communal discord in India.



# BORDERS AND BEYOND: Strategic Rivalries and Geopolitics



## 8. Indo-Pak Conflict: Realpolitik or Narrative Warfare?

*By Shida*

**Investigating how perception, propaganda, and power politics intertwine.**

The Indo Pak conflict that remains a volatile security challenge has once again been reignited. Let us analyse this long standing crisis through the lens of leading IR theories - Realism, Constructivism, Idealism, Neoliberalism, Postcolonialism, and Feminism, in an attempt to uncover the complexities of national security dynamics.

Realism is centred around power play and dominance. Mearsheimer's offensive realism, for example, would explain Operation Sindoor and Pakistan's retaliatory drone attacks as survival tactics. Global powers further amplify this making the series of escalation inevitable in an anarchic world.

Constructivism, on the other hand, focuses on identity. According to Wendt, security challenges stem from perception and how we construct each other's identities. India's efforts, in a bid to save territorial integrity, clashing with Pakistan's cause of liberation, fuel this narrative. The public sentiments in both nations, perceiving each other as threat, further locks security into identity driven stalemates.

Idealism has traditionally been a champion of cooperative security. However, the May 10 ceasefire, aligning with Kant's ideals of perpetual peace and its subsequent violation underscores its real life impediments. The suspension of the 64-year-old Indus Water Treaty further demonstrates idealism's limits when security trumps dialogue.



Neoliberalism also builds on similar ideals, but focuses more on the role of international institutions and economic interdependence in mitigating these conflicts. Despite the anarchic system, it believes in the strength of dialogue, cooperation and diplomacy over military force and confrontation.

Postcolonialism links current security issues to colonial legacies. Fanon further exemplifies this argument in his critique of decolonisation as an inherently violent process. Applying this perspective, it is the partition that created Kashmir's unresolved status fuelling four wars.

Feminism calls attention to the gendered aspects of security. Intersectional feminism further highlights how overlapping systems of oppression, such as gender, caste, class, and religion, shape this suffering. From the gendered violence of partition to marginalisation in conflict narratives, there has been little progress.

Hence, this conflict, from the outlook of Realism's power hunger, Constructivism's identity clash, Idealism's broken promises, Postcolonialism's scathing scars, and Feminism's excluded voices, demand urgent rethinking.



# 9. India's Strategic Lens on the Indian Ocean

*By Disha*

**Understanding the maritime chessboard and India's evolving strategy.**

The Indian Ocean, make no mistake, has rapidly become a global hotbed. It's truly a nexus of international competition, driven by its immense importance for global trade, energy security, and frankly, military influence. You can see this clearly with the Quadrilateral Dialogue (QUAD)—that's the US, Japan, India, and Australia—which has significantly stepped-up naval cooperation and joint exercises in the region. Their big goal? To ensure a "free and open Indo-Pacific," as Pant & Saha noted back in 2022.



But then there's China, and their "String of Pearls" strategy. This growing network of strategic ports dotted across the Indian Ocean poses some serious challenges to India's traditional maritime dominance and, well, its broader security interests in the area (Barauh, 2022). How's India responding? With a rather bold approach, actually. They're modernising their navy, expanding crucial military bases—think the Andaman & Nicobar Islands, for instance—and really ramping up Defense collaborations with their Indo-Pacific partners (Albert, 2016; Jaishankar, 2016).

Historically, India has largely kept its gaze on continental security. That's changing, though. They're definitely recalibrating their maritime doctrine now to tackle these emerging threats (Albert, 2016; Jaishankar, 2016). And what does that mean for their naval deployments? It means they're built to counter both the traditional, state-based threats and a whole range of non-traditional dangers like piracy, human and drug trafficking, or even illegal fishing. Just look at China's port strategy: Gwadar in Pakistan, Hambantota in Sri Lanka, Djibouti over in the Horn of Africa. These are clear signs of Beijing's expanding economic and military reach, directly challenging India's long-held maritime presence (Singh, 2021).



To be more specific, India's naval force development isn't just about big state-on-state confrontations. It's very much about non-state violence too. A prime example? The Indian Navy has actually taken command of international anti-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden. Plus, there's a clear policy to jump into action immediately for any maritime incidents across the region. This really bolsters the Indian Navy's reputation as the 'first responder' in its backyard.

This whole commitment is nicely wrapped up in SAGAR – that stands for Security and Growth for All in the Region. It's India's sweeping strategic maritime vision. Think of it as a comprehensive geopolitical and maritime framework designed to really foster cooperation, enhance security, and drive sustainable development throughout the entire Indian Ocean Region (IOR).

Understanding this incredibly dynamic landscape is, quite simply, crucial for figuring out where Indo-Pacific geopolitics is headed. India's maritime strategy will undoubtedly play a deciding role in shaping this future, especially as various states try to navigate the profound implications of technological shocks and major power transitions. The ultimate results here? They'll certainly add a lot to our understanding of international relations theory, particularly in how political ideology can truly shape a nation's reactions to new diplomatic and strategic challenges—and opportunities—in the absolutely vital maritime domain.

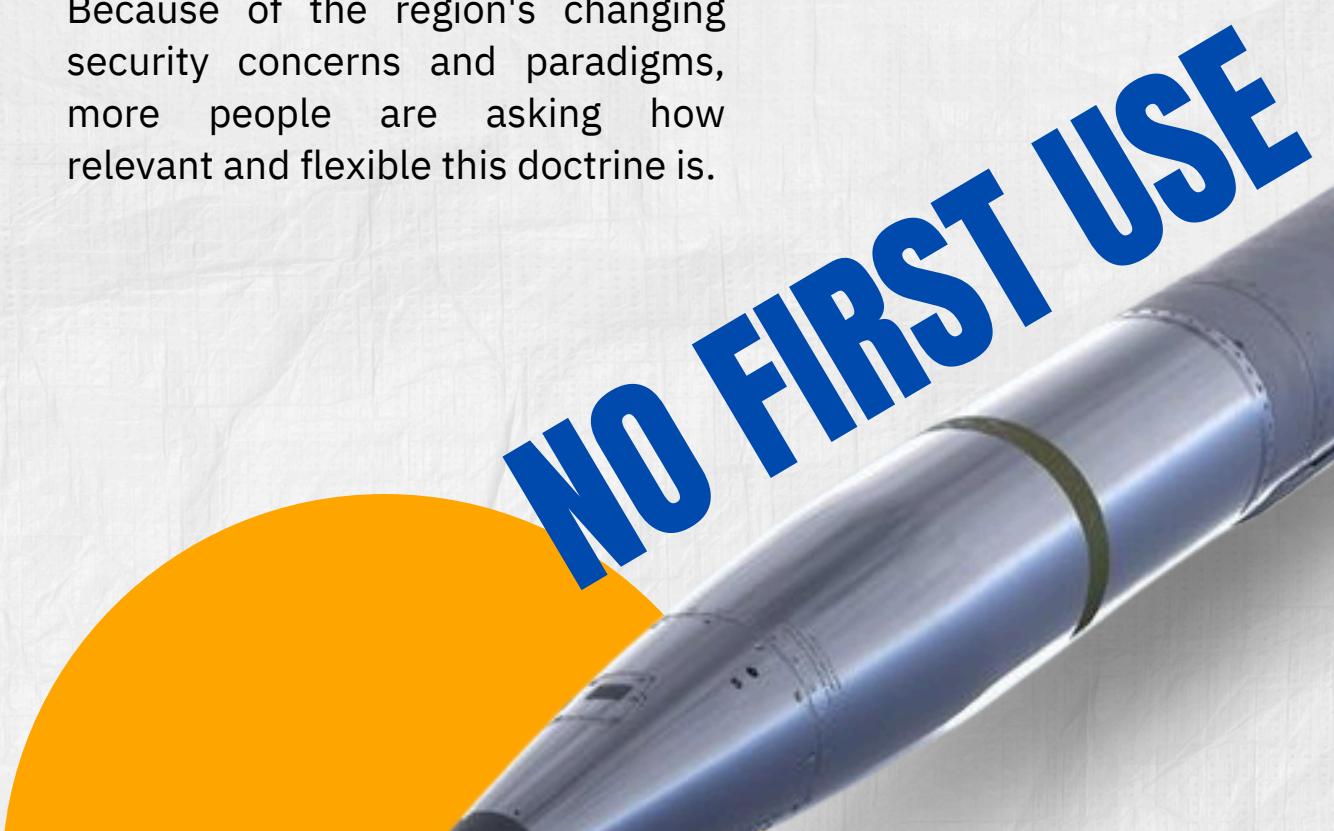


# 10. Is There any Strategic Clarity ?

*By Poorak*

## **Analysing India's No First Use nuclear doctrine amid global uncertainty.**

India's nuclear doctrine, which is based on a "No First Use" (NFU) policy, has been the foundation of its strategic stance since it was officially written down in 1999. This policy says that India will never use nuclear weapons first, but if deterrence doesn't work, it will respond with punitive strikes. Because of the region's changing security concerns and paradigms, more people are asking how relevant and flexible this doctrine is.



**NO FIRST USE**

## **The development of India's nuclear policy**

The 1999 draft nuclear doctrine was the first to spell out the NFU policy. It focused on "credible minimum deterrence" and a promise not to attack. The doctrine was updated in 2003 to include nuclear retaliation possibilities in case of biological or chemical attack. Even with these explanations, the core of NFU was still intact.



## **Modern Debates and Strategic Implications**

The last few years have seen controversy among Indian defence specialists and policymakers over the inflexibility of the NFU policy. Remarks by previous Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar in 2016 and incumbent Defence Minister Rajnath Singh in 2019 indicated that India was considering altering its NFU strategy according to changing realities.

These exchanges are shaped by neighbourhood security issues, and especially the doctrines of the immediate nuclear neighbours. Pakistan's "full spectrum deterrence" doctrine makes first use of nuclear weapons in stipulated situations, in contrast to India's NFU policy. China's military modernisation and strategic direction have also contributed to the heightened complexity of India's security calculation.



## Technological Advancements and Strategic Posture

India's own development of sophisticated missile technologies, like the Agni-5 intercontinental ballistic missile with its payload of multiple independently targetable re-entry vehicles (MIRVs), strengthens its second-strike capability. These innovations are supplemental to India's efforts to achieve credible minimum deterrence in matching emerging threats.

## Conclusion

India's NFU policy is a reflection of its strategic culture and commitment to responsible nuclear stewardship. Though questions about its flexibility abate, the policy also functions as an anchor in the security order in South Asia. Any adjustment on its part will need to balance regional realities, potential in technology, and international norms.



# SHAPING TOMORROW: Military Modernisation and Defence Reforms

## 11. Integrated Theatre Commands and Indigenous Defence

*By Poorak*

**Evaluating India's  
structural and  
technological shift toward  
self-reliance.**

Two interrelated initiatives—the establishment of Integrated Theatre Commands (ITCs) and an emphasis on domestic defence manufacturing—define India's military modernisation. Enhancing operational effectiveness, strategic autonomy, and readiness to adapt to the realities of contemporary security are the initiatives.



A structural overhaul of integrated theatre commands, ITC vision, entails the restructuring of the military into integrated theatre-based commands, to enable joint operations by the Army, the Navy, and the Air Force.

As of early 2025, plans are well underway for three ITCs: Northern, Western, and Maritime. The Northern Theatre Command, which is based in Lucknow, will focus on the Line of Actual Control with China. The Inter-Services Organisations (Command, Control & Discipline) Act, 2023, gives the command of inter-service organisations the power to command people from all three services. This merges command chains and makes them more joint.

## Indigenous Defence Production: Developing Self-Reliance

India's emphasis on indigenous defence production in the "Atmanirbhar Bharat" (Self-Reliant India) program is encouraging facilitatory structural reforms. Development of next-generation weapons, including the Agni-5 missile complex and Vikrant-class aircraft carriers, and Arihant-class nuclear attack submarines, is one among the initiatives towards decreasing dependence on overseas suppliers and enhancing domestic capabilities.



## **Collaboration Between Industrial and Structural Reforms**

Strategic independence and operational readiness are increased through the synergistic effects of integration with domestic production. Effective mobilisation of domestically produced equipment is made possible by unified command structures, and defence self-sufficiency supplies the equipment required to meet India's strategic needs.

## **Conclusion**

India's focus on both integrated and indigenous defence production command hierarchies is a natural way to modernise its military. The goal of these steps is to make the defence establishment faster, more independent, and more responsible so that it can deal with the many different security problems of the 21st century.

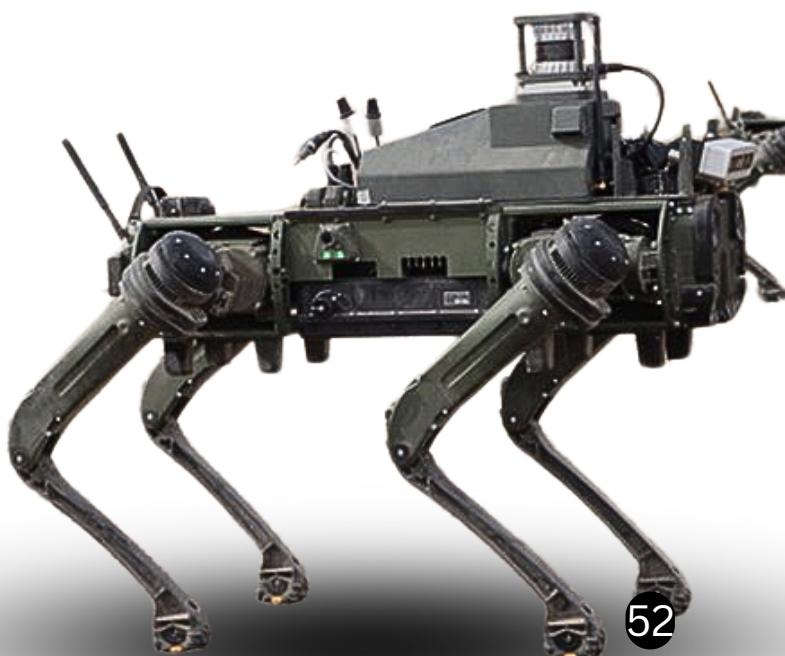
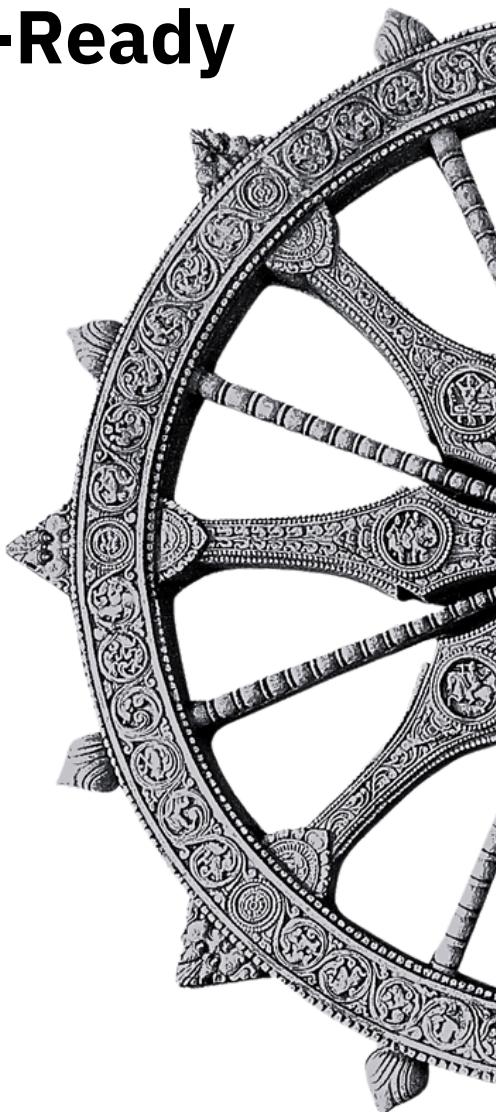


# 12. Modernising the Might: India's Journey Towards a Future-Ready Military

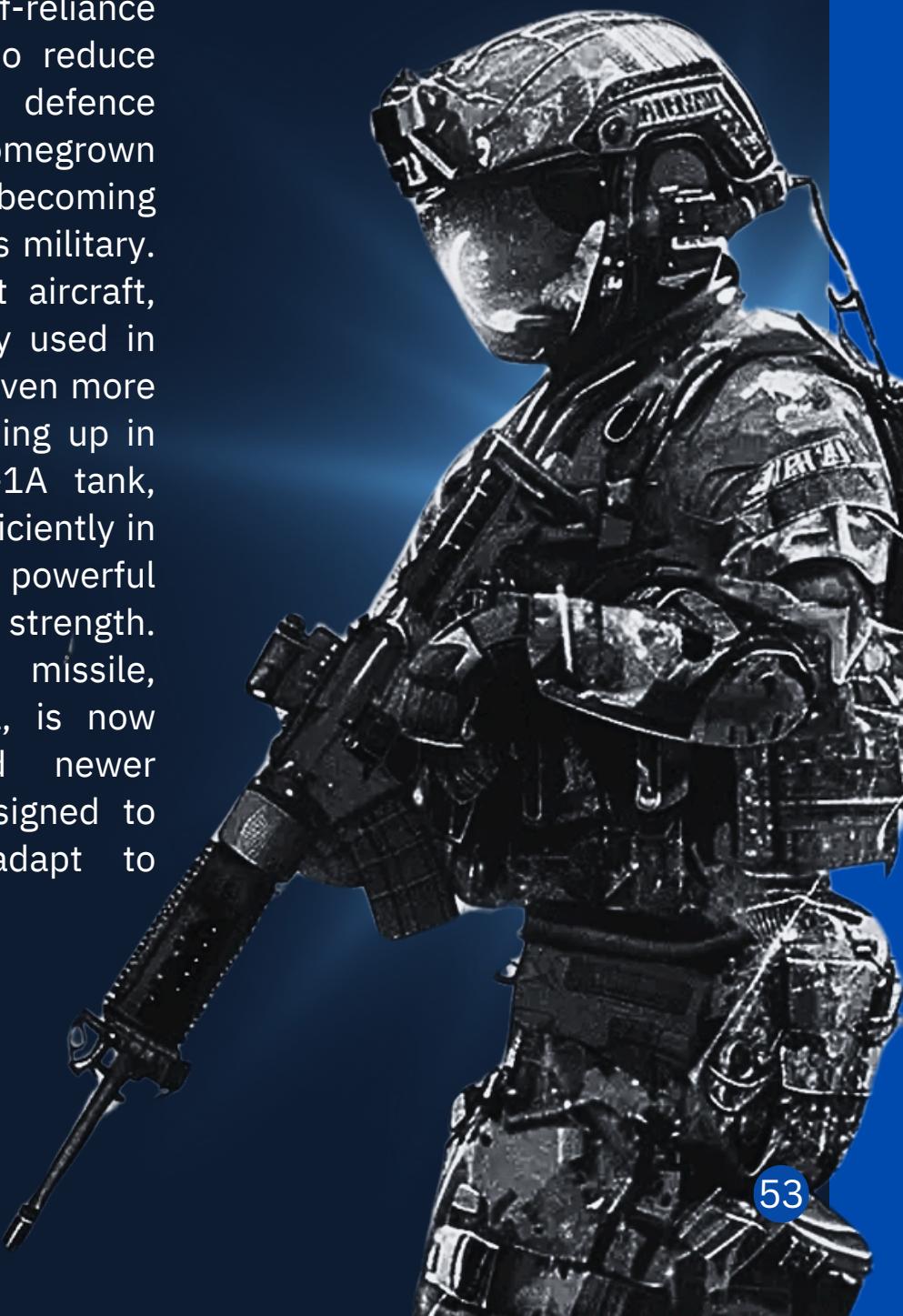
*By Akshara*

**Charting India's transformation into a next-gen fighting force.**

India's military capabilities are at a turning point. The Ministry of Defence has called 2025 the "Year of Reforms," showcasing a bold move to make the Indian Armed Forces a combat-ready, technologically sophisticated force that can conduct integrated yet multi-domain operations. The goal of modernisation is to reshape the military's capabilities and structure and functioning in order to meet the challenges of the ever evolving world which is not simply about acquiring new weapons. India's armed force comprising the Army, Navy, and Air Force are being modernised to respond to 21st-century challenges. Whether it's guarding high-altitude borders, asserting maritime control, or preparing for cyber and space-based threats, modernisation is now forming the core of India's defence policy.



The 2024–25 Union Budget earmarked ₹6.2 lakh crore (approximately \$75 billion) for defence with a significant ₹1.7 lakh crore allocated modernising the armed forces which includes buying new weapons, upgrading military infrastructure, and supporting the development of advanced, homegrown defence technologies. The emphasis is laid on Atmanirbhar Bharat, the government's self-reliance initiative, which aims to reduce foreign dependency in defence procurement. Homegrown defence systems are becoming more common in India's military. The Tejas light combat aircraft, built by HAL, is already used in several missions, with even more advanced versions coming up in future. The Arjun Mk-1A tank, designed to function efficiently in India's conditions, is a powerful upgrade to the Army's strength. India's BrahMos missile, developed with Russia, is now being exported, and newer versions are being designed to travel farther and adapt to different targets.



India's strategic strength has grown too. The Agni-V missile gives the country long-range strike capability, while the INS Arihant India's own nuclear-powered submarine provides a reliable second-strike option, forms the core of the country's nuclear defence system. At the same time, India is putting serious effort into future technologies. Drones are now regularly used to patrol borders, and new systems like loitering munitions—drones that hover and strike have recently been used in the operation sindoor. The Air Force is also working on the AMCA project, which aims to build a next-generation stealth fighter entirely in India showing just how far Indian defence manufacturing has come.



India's private sector is emerging big time when it comes to defence manufacturing. Heavyweights like Tata, Bharat Forge, and L&T are teaming up on crucial projects—from designing artillery systems to helping develop submarines. This rise in private sector participation is finally starting to pay dividends. In 2023–24, Indian defence exports reached an all-time high of ₹21,083 crore, a 32.5% increase from the last year. It's a strong indication that India is becoming a serious player in the international defence market. The Agniveer programme launched under the Agnipath scheme has already enlisted close to 100,000 youth recruits including about 200 women onto active duty, giving them short-term military experience and career advice in the future. India's modernisation is different because of its emphasis on self-reliance and innovation.

India is determined on promoting indigenous technology and industry and not just purchasing new equipment. Thus creating an ethos of promoting and protecting its indigenous technology and infrastructure, its own scientists, engineers, and soldiers taking the lead. With the advent of new technologies, domestic manufacturing, and multiple reforms, the nation is gearing up its forces to face modern challenges. As this change continues, it is indicative of one greater aim: safeguarding the country while standing proudly on its own two feet.



# OUR WEBINARS

On December 4th, in observance of Indian Navy Day, The Indian Netizens hosted a webinar featuring retired Navy officer Cdr. Anil Jai Singh and JK Policy Research Institute's research analyst Ms. Anamitra Banerjee. The session revolved around the theme **"Indian Navy: Strength and Power through Innovation and Indigenization."**

They underscored the Navy's crucial role in military strategy, particularly in countering regional threats, including those posed by China.

During the discussion, Cdr. Singh and Ms. Banerjee highlighted significant advancements within the Indian Navy, emphasizing the importance of modern equipment in contemporary warfare, the integration of women into naval operations, and India's strategic relevance in the Indian Ocean.

The speakers encouraged young professionals to consider careers in defence, highlighting the rewarding opportunities that contribute to the nation's growth and security.



**SCAN THE QR CODE**

*to watch the full video*

On December 22nd, The Indian Netizens hosted a webinar titled **"India-Bangladesh Relations: Past, Present, and Future,"** featuring distinguished speakers, including retired Colonel Nikhil Apte, Additional Director General Shri Sanjiv Krishnan Sood, JK Policy Institute Analyst Ms. Anamitra Banerjee, and retired Captain Kaustubh Rana.

Shri Sood commenced the discussion by emphasizing the significance of India-Bangladesh relations. Following this, Colonel Apte provided historical insights into the 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War. Captain Rana raised concerns regarding the rights of the Hindu minority in Bangladesh, while Ms. Banerjee drew attention to media freedoms and the unexpectedly high happiness index in Bangladesh, advocating for deeper bilateral cooperation to foster future growth.

The webinar concluded with a Q&A session, where the audience engaged with the speakers through insightful questions, reflecting a keen interest in Geopolitics.



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# Our Authors



**Shida M** is the Director of The Indian Netizens' magazine team and an undergraduate Political Science Honours student at Hindu College, University of Delhi. She is passionate about geopolitics, diplomacy, and socio-political issues, advocating for caste, gender, and marginalized communities. With interests in power politics and political theory, she employs strong analytical skills and leadership to create inclusive narratives. As an articulate public speaker and writer, she effectively communicates complex ideas with clarity and empathy.

**Niharika Kapat**, a postgraduate in English literature from the University of Delhi, is the Deputy Director of the Magazine Team for The Indian Netizens. Her interests span Education, Public Policy, and International Relations, aiming to create progressive narratives in India's national and international contexts. Her experience includes working with NITI Aayog's Security Vertical.

**Aditya Pandey** is a master's student in political science at the University of Delhi, with interests in international relations, geopolitics, and national affairs. He is a debater eager to explore various political dynamics.

**Soumya** is a second-year undergraduate student pursuing a major in English at Patna Women's College. She currently holds the position of Joint General Secretary in the Student Council, actively contributing to leadership and student governance. Deeply interested in International Diplomacy, Global Affairs, Geopolitics, and National Security, she aspires to establish herself as a distinguished voice in the field of mass communication. Her academic pursuits and leadership experience underscore a strong commitment to engaging with critical global and national issues.

**Kartik** is a Master's student in International Relations at South Asian University, with a background in Political Science and English Literature. He has experience as a Subject Matter Expert for both international and domestic students and serves as a Campus Ambassador. Additionally, he led the Social Media and PR team for the Global Library Summit 2025 and is a postgraduate Research fellow at the Water Studies Group at SAU. His interests include geopolitics, diplomacy, foreign policy, security studies, and conflict transformation, and he aims to work at the intersection of public policy and international relations with a strong theoretical foundation.

**Akshara Shukla** is a Political Science (Hons.) student with a minor in English at Atma Ram Sanatan Dharma College, Delhi University. She has a keen interest in public policy, global governance, and international affairs. Akshara has contributed to the Political Science Association's content on socio-political issues and engages in debating, MUNs, and policy competitions. She is dedicated to feminism, climate justice, gender equality, and sustainability, advocating for these causes through her work.

**Disha Sharma** is a Master's student at Delhi University with a keen interest in political science, focusing on politics and defense studies. She writes articles on strategic aspects of political science and aims to make political concepts engaging and relatable as an emerging content writer for a broad audience.

**Sudhans Gurjar** is an intellectually driven individual passionate about geopolitics and politics. They provide sharp insights into global affairs, examining how power dynamics and policy decisions influence societies. A dedicated observer of international and domestic developments, Sudhans combines academic curiosity with social responsibility. They are an avid reader, advocate for inclusive dialogue, and believe in the transformative power of knowledge. With a vibrant personality and commitment to critical thinking, Sudhans is a thoughtful voice in today's complex world.

**Poorak Gupta** is an ambitious student with a solid academic background and a passion for leadership, innovation, and social impact. His diverse experiences in research, internships, and entrepreneurship showcase his initiative and commitment to excellence. Known for his disciplined leadership, he combines analytical thinking and creativity to tackle real-world problems. His achievements highlight his interests in economics, technology, and public service, marking him as a promising future changemaker.

# Our Designers



**Rishabh**, Creative and Development Head at The Indian Netizens, is a Master of Arts student in Political Science with a keen focus on geopolitics and national security. Passionate about the intersection of policy and design, he leverages visual storytelling to bridge the gap between analysis and implementation. Through strategic narrative-building and innovative design, he transforms complex geopolitical discussions into accessible, engaging content that enhances public understanding and discourse.

**Gauri Tripathi**, a first-year student at DU and an aspiring graphic designer, draws on her varied experiences from freelancing, internships, and personal projects. She has a strong passion for digital content, posters, and magazines. As a member of the Indian Netizens creative team, Gauri contributed to transforming content into a polished and accessible magazine. The team prioritized impactful design across all formats. She is genuinely thankful for this invaluable opportunity.

Thank you.

**Himani Sain**, a second-year Journalism Honours student at LSR, is an aspiring graphic designer with a keen interest in digital media and editorial design. As a member of The Indian Netizens, she contributed to creating clean and engaging magazine layouts. She is genuinely thankful for the chance to develop her skills through such impactful creative projects.

**Alisha**, a recent graduate from Delhi University with a major in Political Science and a minor in History, is currently interning as a Graphic Designer at The Indian Netizens. She has created visual content for the project, blending her creative talents with her keen interests in India's strategic neighborhood, international relations, public policy, and matters concerning governance and national security.



Shida M



Niharika Kapat



Aditya Pandey



Rishabh Khatri



Soumya



Kartik



Gauri Tripathi



Akshara Shukla



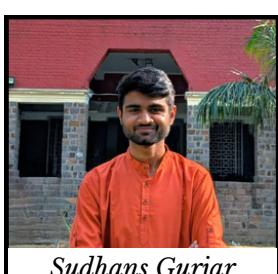
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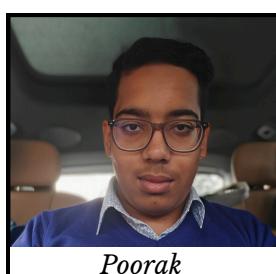
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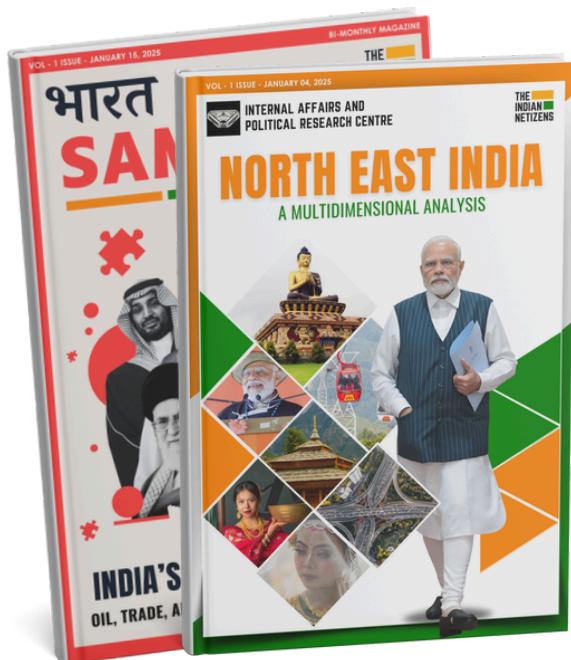
Poorak



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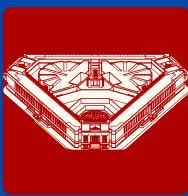


**OUR**  
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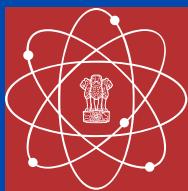
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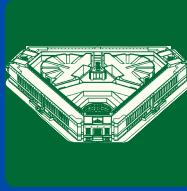
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