



**INDIC
RESEARCHERS
FORUM**

Civilisation • Security • Statesmanship

DECODING THE IDEA OF PAKISTAN



**CONFERENCE REPORT
APRIL 2025**

*An enemy's strength grows in the shadows of
our neglect, but a wise ruler turns their divisions
into opportunities for victory*

Chanakya

The contents of this report are based on the deliberations and further analysis of the conference **Decoding the Ideology of Pakistan**

organized by the
Indic Researchers Forum.

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About Indic Researchers Forum

Indic Researchers Forum is an independent Think Tank established to promote quality research on geopolitics and security studies through a civilisational perspective. The organisation strives to bring scholars, experts and practitioners together to deliberate and strategise India's geopolitical and security interests.

Late General Bipin Rawat's idea of Two-and a Half Front War is perspicuous and an accurate representation of the complexity India faces in terms of its external and internal security. The concept of Two and a Half Front War explains the complex multi-front and coordinated internal security concerns for India.

Similarly, due to the restructuring of the existing world order we are witnessing global conflicts, economic slowdown, increase in non-state attacks, radical transformation of technology and socio-cultural clashes. These transnational security challenges have paved the way for new geopolitical equations. Therefore, with a realist approach, IRF seeks to promote partnership and cooperation with like-minded countries to protect India's strategic interests. Through quality research and deliberations, the organisation seeks to protect the cultural identity of Indian civilisation, devise strategies to counter adversaries and enhance civilisational security and adopt a statesmanship approach to nation building.

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Distinguished Speakers in the Conference

M. J. Akbar

Shri M. J Akbar is an Indian Journalist and Politician, who served as the Minister of State for External Affairs. He ss a former Member of Parliament in the Rajya Sabha, and was inducted into the Union Council of Ministers by PM Narendra Modi. He is also a veteran Indian journalist and author of several books including a biography of Jawaharlal Nehru titled Nehru: The Making of India, a book on Kashmir titled Kashmir Behind the Vale, Riot After Riot and India: The Siege Within. He also authored The Shade of Swords, A History of Jihad. His book Tinderbox: The Past and Future of Pakistan discusses the themes of identity crisis and class struggles in Pakistan. His latest book is Gandhi: A Life in Three Campaigns.



Tathagata Roy

Shri Tathagata Roy, an esteemed Indian politician and former Governor of Tripura and Meghalaya. He has also served as the President of the Bharatiya Janata Party's West Bengal unit and was a member of the BJP National Executive. Shri Roy is an accomplished author and writer, contributing extensively to socio-political discourse in both English and Bengali. His published works include My People, Uprooted: The Exodus of Hindus from East Pakistan and Bangladesh and Syama Prasad Mookerjee: Life and Times.



Lt Gen CA Krishnan, PVSM, UYSM, AVSM (Retd.)

Lieutenant General CA Krishnan is a former Deputy Chief of the Army and a former Member of the Armed Forces Tribunal. A post graduate in Defence studies and M Phil in strategic affairs and Defence Management, he is also a post graduate diploma in Human Rights Laws from NLSIU, Bangalore and a post graduate diploma in journalism. He has four decades of operational experience across high altitude remote areas of Ladhakh Arunachal Pradesh and Siachen Glacier as well as vast experience in combating terrorism in Jammu & Kashmir and North East. Subsequently, as the Deputy Chief, he was responsible for perspective planning, Capital acquisition programs and financial planning of the Indian army. He has been on the Board of Directors of Bharat Electronics Ltd and Bharat Dynamics Ltd. Currently he is the Director of the Asia Centre Bangalore.



Yashovardhan Jha Azad, IPS (Retd.)

Yashovardhan Jha Azad has a wide variety of experience in national security and governance after nearly 40 years as a career intelligence and law enforcement official. Post retirement he also served as a Central Information Commissioner, adjudicating appeals under the federal Right To Information Act delivering over 8000 judgments. He belongs to the 1976 batch of the Indian Police Service (IPS) and served as the police chief of four districts and deputy chief of a range, before moving on deputation to the Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC),



In 1997 he moved to the Intelligence Bureau (IB), India's premier agency for internal security. In his career as an intelligence professional, he dealt with counter-terrorism, security risk assessments for the nation's top political leadership and on international security assignments in Pakistan and Bangladesh. He was also responsible for arranging the security of high-risk dignitaries such as US President Bill Clinton during his bilateral visit to India. He served as a Special Director in the IB and later appointed as Secretary (Security) to the Government of India.

Cmdre (Professor) SL Deshmukh, NM (Retd.)

Commodore SL Deshmukh, NM (Retired), has served in the Indian Navy for 32 years. He holds qualifications both in Marine & Aviation fields. He served on board ships & Aircraft carriers. He is specialist on maintenance of Fighter aircraft and Anti Submarines Warfare Helicopters. He held many operational appointments on board ships and administrative appointments including Principal Director at Naval HQ, Commodore Superintendent Naval Aircraft Yard, Director Naval Institute of Aeronautical Technology and Project Director of a major Naval Aviation Project.



Post retirement from the Indian Navy, he worked with Tata Group for 5 years and with SUN Group's Aerospace & Defence vertical (at Gurgaon) as Senior Vice President (Industrial Cooperation) for 12 years. He is currently in Pune, guiding SMEs in the region- to undertake projects under Atma Nirbhar Bharat policy, in conjunction with the global OEMs. He is currently working with Manipal Institute of Technology (MIT) and Manipal Academy for Higher Education (MAHE) as Adjunct Faculty. KW Publishers have published his books titled "Probable Sino-Russia Military Pact-Implications for India" and "China's Game Plan in Ladakh-Imperatives for India."

Lt Gen (Dr) Rakesh Sharma, PVSM, UYSM, AVSM, VSM (Retd.)

Lt Gen (Dr) Rakesh Sharma was commissioned in Gorkha Rifles in 1977, and had a career in the Army spanning forty years. He has had extensive operational experience in Jammu and Kashmir, North East and on the Western Borders. The officer had trained the Botswana Army for three years in Africa, and attended the National War College at Abuja, Nigeria. Lt Gen Rakesh Sharma attended the NDC at New Delhi. He was Research Fellow at IDSA and has done PhD in Defence Studies. General Rakesh Sharma commanded the Fire and Fury Corps in Ladakh, facing both Pakistan and China. The General was the Adjutant General responsible for the Human Resource Management of the Indian Army. He is regular participant in seminars, lectures in various institutions, and regularly writes for newspapers, military journals and contributes chapters in edited Books. He currently holds Gen Bipin Rawat Chair of Excellence at USI, New Delhi,



Maj Gen Dr Rajan Kochhar, VSM (Retd.)

Major General Rajan Kochhar, VSM, PhD is a former MGAOC Central Command. He has commanded key logistics units of the Indian Army such as Commandant of a Central Ordnance Depot and Divisional Ordnance Units of an Infantry and RAPID divisions. He has done active service in operational areas of Jammu and Kashmir and the North-East. He is the recipient of the Vishisht Seva Medal awarded by the President of India. He has also been awarded the Army Commanders Commendation twice. He holds a doctorate in Emotional Intelligence and is a certified NLP practitioner coach. He is also serving as the Vice Chairman of National Council of news and broadcasting. Presently he is serving as the Director at NIES Business School. His recent book on “Breaking the Chinese Myth” has been a best seller on Amazon.



Harjit Sandhu, IPS (Retd.)

Harjit Sandhu is a retired IPS Officer having held leadership positions in the field of law enforcement, counter- terrorism, war crimes, homicide investigations including political assassinations, investigation of financial crimes, financing of terrorism and organised crime including arms trafficking networks. He served as a District Police Chief and was also a Commanding Officer of an armed Battalion engaged with counter-insurgency operations, Superintendent of Police in the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and DIG in charge of counter-insurgency operations in Manipur state of India. At international level, he had assignments with Interpol General Secretariat (more than 3 years) and UN Security Council (2 years).



Dr Anshuman Behera

Dr. Anshuman Behera is an Associate Professor in Conflict Resolution and Peace Research Programme at NIAS. A trained Political Scientist, Dr. Behera worked with Institute of Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA) and Institute for Conflict Management (ICM), New Delhi, before joining NIAS. His main areas of research interest are in the field of political violence and internal conflicts in India, Nepal and Bangladesh, Democracy and Governance in India, Political Theory and the Social Impacts of Development. Apart from his extensive work on the Maoist insurgency in India and militancy in South Asia, Dr. Behera has also written on insurgency in Myanmar and Nepal. Governance in the Northeastern states and the Social Impact Assessment of infrastructure projects in India are his present research areas. He teaches courses on ‘Theoretical



Dr. Michael Rubin

Michael Rubin is a senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, where he specialises in Iran, Turkey, and the broader Middle East. A former Pentagon official, Dr. Rubin has lived in post-revolution Iran, Yemen, and both pre- and postwar Iraq. He also spent time with the Taliban before 9/11. For more than a decade, he taught classes at sea about the Horn of Africa and Middle East conflicts, culture, and terrorism, to deployed US Navy and Marine units. Dr. Rubin is the author, co-author, and co editor of several books exploring diplomacy, Iranian history, Arab culture, Kurdish studies, and Shi’ite politics, including “Seven Pillars: What Really Causes Instability in the Middle East?”; “Kurdistan Rising”; “Dancing with the Devil: The Perils of Engaging Rogue Regimes”; and “Eternal Iran: Continuity and Chaos” Constructs of Understanding Conflict’, ‘Qualitative Research Methodology in Social Sciences’, and ‘Approaches to Conflict Resolution’



Abdullah Baheer

Abdullah Baheer is an Afghan political activist dedicated to the fight for freedom and democracy for his people on both sides of the wretched Durand Line. He actively engages with both traditional and social media to raise awareness against fascist and terrorist entities. Professionally, Abdullah is a network engineer, currently employed at Amazon in Sydney, Australia. He is also the grandson of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, former Mujahideen leader and Drug Trafficker.



Lt Gen Shokin Chauhan, PVSM, AVSM, YSM, SM, VSM (Retd.)

Lt General Shokin Chauhan, PVSM, AVSM, YSM, SM, VSM, PhD, is a distinguished leader with extensive experience in the defence and space sectors. As a seasoned Chairman and Director General, he has a proven track record in counter-terrorism operations, border guarding, peacekeeping, and crisis management. His expertise extends to intelligence analysis and operations management, underscoring his profound impact on national and international security. Lt General Chauhan holds a PhD in Defence and Strategic Studies and another in International Relations and Defence Studies from Panjab University, Chandigarh. His academic credentials are complemented by his role as a Visiting Fellow at CLAWS. Beyond his professional achievements, he is a renowned life coach, dedicated to mentoring young individuals and guiding them through both professional and personal challenges.



Brigadier Kuldeep Singh (Retd.)

Brigadier Kuldeep Singh is a seasoned professional with 46 years of experience in strategic assessment, disaster risk management, climate adaptation, and intelligence handling. Having served in the Indian Army from Lieutenant to Brigadier, he held key positions in regimental, staff, and technical appointments. As Director (Intelligence Coordination), he was instrumental in establishing India's Defence Intelligence Agency. Brig Singh served as Principal Director (Defence) in the National Security Council Secretariat for a decade and was the first Indian Army officer to be posted at DRDO's CVRDE for national projects like MBT Arjun and the Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme. His extensive international experience and expertise in defence, security, and geopolitical matters have made him a highly respected leader.



Prof. Ishtiaq Ahmed

Professor Ishtiaq Ahmed is the Emeritus of Political Science, Stockholm University and Honorary Senior Fellow, Institute of South Asian Studies, National University of Singapore. His Latest publications are, Jinnah: His Successes, Failures and Role in History which won the English Non-Fiction Book Award for 2021 at the Valley of Words Literary Festival, Dehradun. His other books include Pakistan: The Garrison State, Origins, Evolution, Consequences and, The Punjab Bloodied, Partitioned and Cleansed which won the Best Non-Fiction Book Prize at the 2013 Karachi Literature Festival and the 2013 UBL-Jang Groups Best Non-Fiction Book Prize at Lahore and the Best Book on Punjab Award from Punjabi Parchar at the Vaisakhi Mela in Lahore, 2016.



Ambassador Anil Trigunayat, IFS (Retd.)

Ambassador Anil Trigunayat (IFS Retd.), a distinguished Indian diplomat and Rotarian, has dedicated over three decades to the promotion of India's interests on the global stage. His extensive career in public diplomacy, strategic analysis, and economic engagement has spanned key regions such as the U.S., Russia, the Middle East, and North Africa. He has served as India's Ambassador to Jordan, Libya, and Malta, and worked as Trade Commissioner in New York, and Deputy Head of Mission in Sweden, Russia, and Nigeria. Notably, during his assignments in Nigeria and Libya, he was actively involved in conflict management and provided crucial assistance to stranded Indians during challenging times.



A respected voice in economic diplomacy, Ambassador Trigunayat is a member of several prominent trade and industry councils, including the International Trade Council in Brussels. He also serves on the boards of multiple think tanks such as the Vivekananda International Foundation and is the President of the Millennial India International Chamber of Commerce. An Oxford alumnus and TEDx speaker, Ambassador Trigunayat continues to contribute to global peace and strategic dialogue.

Vicky Nanjappa

Vicky Nanjappa is a freelance journalist known for his extensive reporting on internal security, terrorism, legal affairs, and geopolitical issues. He has contributed to various prominent publications, including Rediff.com, MyNation, Swarajya, and Newsroom Post. He started off his career as a legal journalist. He is also credited for his extensive coverage of the fake stamp paper scam masterminded by Abdul Karim Telgi.



Nanjappa gained recognition for being the first journalist in India to undergo a narco-analysis test, an experience later cited by forensic expert Padma Bhushan P. Chandra Sekharan in his book "The First Human Bomb." He also conducted a significant interview with Faiza Outalha, the wife of David Headley, who was involved in the reconnaissance for the 26/11 Mumbai attacks carried out by Lashkar-e-Tayiba. His work often focuses on matters of national security, including terrorism, radicalisation, and the activities of terror groups like the Indian Mujahideen, Popular Front of India, Lashkar-e-Tayiba, Jaish-e-Mohammad and Hizbul Mujahideen.

Off late his focus has largely been on the developments in Bangladesh and how the country is slowly but surely turning into an Islamic state thanks to the meddling by the ISI, Pakistan.

Dr. Nanda Kishor M S

Dr. Nanda Kishor M S is an Associate Professor and Head at the Department of Politics and International Studies, at Pondicherry University. He is formerly Head of the Department of Geopolitics and International Relations, Manipal Academy of Higher Education, Manipal. His expertise is in Geopolitics of West Asia, India's Foreign Policy, Concept of War and Peace in Geopolitics, Terrorism and Asymmetric Conflicts

He has several publications in journals and edited volumes. His recent book "Reimagining India in the Geopolitics of the 21st Century" has been critically acclaimed for its theme and content. He has four books in pipeline.

1. India and the Great Powers in the Indo-Pacific: Praxis of a Geopolitical Imagination 2. Strategy and Negotiations in International Relations 3. Understanding Perception of South Asian States on Rising India: Integrating Panchamrit with India's Neighbourhood First Policy 4. The Art of Governing: Revisiting Kautilya's Arthashastra for the 21st Century. Dr Kishor is a sought after public speaker on Dharma, Arthshastra and Indian Knowledge System apart from the subjects he teaches on Geopolitics and International Relations. He is currently heading a Major Research Project sponsored by ICSSR. He has been a visiting faculty to several HRDC centres, Naval Academy Goa and Karnataka Police Academy, Mysore.



Dr. Abhinav Pandya

Dr. Abhinav Pandya is the Founder and CEO of Usanas Foundation, an India-based foreign policy and security think tank. A distinguished geopolitical analyst, he specializes in South Asia, counter-terrorism, and extremism, with a focus on both Islamist and right-wing movements. With over five years of field research in Kashmir, Dr. Pandya played a key advisory role to the former Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, Mr. Satyapal Malik, particularly during the abrogation of Kashmir's special status. His expertise spans intelligence affairs, youth engagement, and security. He has authored two significant books, including "*Terror Financing in Kashmir*," published by Routledge Taylor & Francis in 2023, and "*Radicalization in India*," written for the Vivekananda International Foundation.

At Usanas Foundation, Dr. Pandya has curated the prestigious Maharana Pratap Annual Geopolitics Dialogue in collaboration with the Ministry of External Affairs. He is a regular contributor to renowned international and Indian publications, and frequently appears as a panelist on TV debates. Dr. Pandya also lectures on security and terrorism at academic institutions and security establishments globally.



Col (Dr.) Ram Athavale (Retd.)

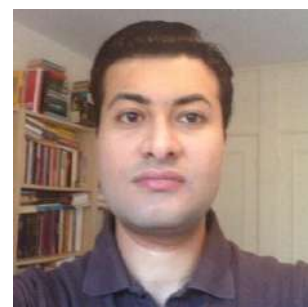
Col (Dr) Ram Athavale, is a specialist in CBRN Security, Risk Mitigation and Incident Management with more than two decades of domain experience. He is an '81 Batch veteran Armoured Corps Officer. He has commanded an Armoured Regiment during Operation Parakram. He was last posted as Director CBRN at the Directorate of Perspective Planning, Army Headquarters. Col Athavale has been a Key Advisor to the Govt of India (MoD and MHA) on CBRN Security and Incident Management.



Col Athavale was appointed as a Key CBRN Expert for the European Union CBRN Risk Mitigation Centers of Excellence initiative. He was deployed in the Eastern and Central Africa region from Sep 2015 to Sep 2018. He functions as Honorary Professor/Adjunct Faculty and Guest Faculty for CBRN Security and Risk Mitigation subjects at select Indian and overseas Universities. He has authored a pioneering book on 'CBRN Incident Management in India', titled "Toxic Portents."

Burzine Waghmar

Burzine Waghmar was the inaugural visiting India fellow (2022-23) at the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI), London, the world's oldest strategic think-tank. He is permanently based at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), London as its Arts & Humanities Lead Librarian, and jointly affiliated with the Centre for Iranian Studies, Centre for the Study of Pakistan, and SOAS South Asia Institute. Burzine is also a sr. fellow at the USANAS Foundation, India; and honorary fellow, European Foundation for South Asia Studies, Amsterdam.



Maj Gen Shashi Asthana, SM, VSM (Retd.)

Maj Gen Shashi Asthana is a globally acknowledged Strategic and Security Analyst, Ph.D. from JNU, has authored over 450 publications. He is a Veteran Infantry General with 45 years of experience at national and varied international fields and United Nations. He is the Former Director General Infantry in Indian Army. He is the Director Courses, USI of India, the oldest think tank of India, conducting largest online & correspondence courses for Indian military officers since last 10 years. TV commentator having participated in over 3000 TV shows globally. Speaker in various Strategic, Military forums, UN Organisations, Think tanks and Universities. He is interviewed by various National and International news channels/newspapers/ organisations on strategic, military and UN related subjects. He has been awarded twice by President of India, twice by UN, CEE excellence award for Nation building by Governor of Haryana. Awarded for "International Diplomacy and Global Conflict Resolutions" by IOED twice, a Consultative body for ECOSOC and International Police Commission – IPC India, by former Prime Minister of Moldova.



Cmdre R S Vasan, IN (Retd.)

An Alumnus of the Defence Services Staff College, the Naval War College and the International Visitor Leadership Programme USA, Commodore Seshadri Vasan has a distinguished service of over 34 years in the Navy and the Coast Guard. His appointments include command of warships, two major air stations and a maritime air squadron. He has participated both in the 1971 war and IPKF operations.

He was an instructor at the Naval War College, India. Prior to retirement, he was the Regional Commander of the Indian Coast Guard Region East. He is presently the Director General of the Chennai Centre of China Studies and the Regional Director of the National Maritime Foundation Tamil Nadu. His areas of study include the Indo Pacific, neighbourhood policies, maritime security, stability, counter terrorism and maritime dynamics in the IOR, China, blue economy and ocean governance



Dr. Shalini Chawla

Dr. Shalini Chawla is a Distinguished Fellow at the Centre for Air Power Studies (CAPS), New Delhi. She was a research scholar at IDSA, 1999-2002. She worked as a freelance defence analyst from 2003-2005 in Colombo, Sri Lanka. She joined CAPS in 2006 and focus of her studies is Pakistan and Afghanistan. Currently, she heads the Afghanistan and Pakistan Studies Programme at CAPS. She has received a **Commendation and Badge** by the **Chief of Air Staff** in October 2020 for displaying great dedication and professional ability, resulting in praiseworthy contribution to the service. She is a Visiting Faculty at the Naval War College, Goa. She is part of the Pakistan Study Group coordinated by the Vivekananda International Foundation, New Delhi and authored seven books.



Lalit Ambardar

Lalit Ambardar is a security and current affairs analyst. He is one of the most prominent voices on Indian TV channels. He regularly contributed to response columns of the leading dailies like Times Of India and Hindustan Times and has dozens of published 'LETTERS' to his credit. He has also been a 'programme coordinator' for foreign TV/Radio bureaus, and writes on Kashmir. Born and brought up in Srinagar, Kashmir, he is presently based in Delhi. Academically, he did his Masters in Civil Engineering and has nearly three decades of experience in Building Design. He is now a practising Building Design Management /Coordination Consultant. He has also been involved in the promotion of SILK ROAD Tourism in association with the World Tourism Organisation and has the distinction of having featured on the SILK ROAD Contact List of WTO.



Aditya Raj Kaul

As a seasoned Indian journalist with over 16 years of experience in critical breaking news situations and editorial leadership roles, Aditya Raj kaul had the privilege of covering some of the most significant events in recent history.

Currently, He serves as the Executive Editor of TV9 Network, where He has been instrumental in launching News9Plus, India's first OTT platform for news documentaries as well as Satellite News Station NEWS9. He also successfully organized the NEWS9 Global Summits 2024/25 featuring Prime Minister Narendra Modi among other notable global speakers in India & Germany. journalistic journey has taken him to various esteemed organizations, including Network18, where he was the Group Contributing Editor.. He has anchored prime-time debates on foreign affairs and national security with prominent voices, and his reportage has taken him to conflict zones, including Iraq, Israel, Palestine, Jammu and Kashmir, and the Red corridor of Maoists in Bastar. He has been awarded Ram Jethmalani Journalism Prize in service to humanity.



Prof. Yoga Jyotsna Varanasi

Prof. Yoga Jyotsna is an alumna of Osmania university. She represented India to workshops & Summer schools in Pakistan, USA and Sri Lanka. She has supervised nearly 40 research scholars mostly from the Armed forces. She is a Guest Faculty with Colleges of Air Warfare, Defense Management, & the Naval War college. As a Freelancer Dr. Jyotsna writes on issues related to National Security. Her publications appeared in CASS journal and CAW journal.

She edited study materials on: International Relations for Osmania; on Diplomacy and Foreign Policy for BR Ambedkar Open University. Dr. Yoga Jyotsna comments on current affairs in the electronic media and keeps participating in virtual programs.



Prof. Ayon Bhattacharjee

Prof Ayon Bhattacharjee is a Professor of Physics at NIT Meghalaya. His academic research is in the field of Soft Matter Physics, Quantum Dots and Nanotechnology. He has held several important positions in educational administration which include Dean (Faculty Welfare), Dean (Research & Consultancy) and Registrar. Apart from his academics, he works on two domains: Indian knowledge (Ancient Indian Technologies and Vedanta Philosophy, and he has worked extensively on the partition of Bengal, especially the Sylhet referendum and its impact on the displaced people.



Dr. Ashish Shukla

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Divya Malhotra, PhD

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Neeraj previously served as the Director of Research at the Indo-Pacific Consortium at Raisina House, New Delhi. He has authored and edited six books, and his research interests include India-China border issues, Transboundary rivers, Water Security in South Asia, Climate Security, and Defence studies. His latest edited book, Analysing the Current Afghan Context, was published by in 2023. Neeraj's writings have been featured by renowned institutions



Zia Ullah Hamdard

Zia Ullah Hamdard is a Journalist, Human Rights Activist and as Academician from Pakistan, he is in United Kingdom. He had worked with Pakistan television, Radio Pakistan, German Academic Exchange, Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, UKS and other media and Human Rights Organisations in different capacities. He is the lecturer in Journalism and Mass Communication and Currently pursuing his P.hD in communication, Media and Cultural Studies at Solent University, UK. He is writing his thesis on 'Role of Social Media in circumventing state censorship and political activism; A case Study of Phastun Tahafuz Movement'



Hakeem Wadhela

Hakeem Wadhela is the Focal Person of Baloch National Movement's Foreign Department. He represented Balochistan's case on International Forums like United Nations, British Parliament and other prominent forums. He is a columnist focusing on the balochisthan crisis and a current situation of Balochisthan.



Mohim Baloch Sarkhosh

He is the Swedish Baloch residing in Sweden. He holds the master's degree in Economics (MBA) and a bachelors degree in both Information Systems and Cyber Security. He is a Business Economist as well as Cyber security Engineer, and he works as a CISO (Chief Information Security Officer). He is the party president of the Balochisthan National Solidarity Party, which is a democratic party.



Levsa Bayankhail

Levsa Bayankhail. She is the convener of the Pashtun Security Dialogue at the Indic Researchers Forum and Member of International Advocacy Committee of Pashtun Tahafuz Movement. She is a regularly writes for various platforms such as the Sunday Guardian, DSA magazine and many other portals



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Executive Summary

The "Decoding the Idea of Pakistan" conference, hosted by the Indic Researchers Forum on April 25-26, 2025, gathered scholars, military experts, Intelligence professionals and policymakers to dissect Pakistan's ideological foundations, military strategies, geopolitical and security dynamics, with a focus on their implications for India's security amid escalating tensions, including the April 22, 2025, Pahalgam terrorist attack. Shri M.J. Akbar's inaugural address portrayed Pakistan as a "state of mind" rooted in the flawed two-nation theory, tracing its origins to Mughal theocratic failures and highlighting internal contradictions like Baloch and Pashtun insurgencies. Shri Tathagata Roy's keynote address proposed "recoding" Pakistan's narrative, calling for acknowledgment of partition's religious basis and urging the Indian Muslims to affirm national loyalty to counter communal distortions.

The seven sessions provided comprehensive insights: Session one debunked the two-nation theory's historical legitimacy, linking Islamic revivalism to regional instability. It further examined how Islamic revivalist movements provided not just religious but also political momentum to the Two nation theory and eventually partition of it; Session two detailed the Pakistan Army's hybrid warfare, Islamization, and reliance on Chinese and Turkish technology; Session three exposed the ISI's proxy wars in Jammu & Kashmir and Afghanistan, Promoting narco-terrorism in the region and influence operations in Bangladesh; Session four highlighted Pakistan's systemic repression in Balochistan, cases of enforced disappearances, and CPEC's (China Pakistan Economic Corridor) economic exploitation of Balochistan; Session five examined the emergence of Taliban 2.0, evolving dynamics in Pakistan Afghanistan relations, state-sponsored discrimination against Pashtuns, the rise of the Pashtun Tahafuz Movement, and resource exploitation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa by the Pakistani state; Session six analyzed Pakistan's bilateral relations with China, the Islamic world, the U.S. under Trump 2.0, and Bangladesh under Mohammed Yunus; and Session seven addressed Pakistan's evolving war strategy against India, Pakistan's Nuclear Doctrine, Indus Water Treaty, and border infiltration tactics.

The outcomes of the conference reiterated Pakistan as an imploding garrison state, driven by economic decline, ethnic unrest, and strategic miscalculations. Recommendations include designating Pakistani Army and ISI as a Terrorist group, dismantling Wahabi influence Muslim schools of thought in India which are continuing the legacy of two nation theory, supporting Baloch and Pashtun self-determination, enhancing India's border security with advanced

surveillance, countering Pakistan's nuclear and cyber threats, and leveraging diplomatic alliances, particularly with the U.S. and Gulf states, to isolate Pakistan's China-backed provocations. To counter adversarial 4th generation warfare, a sophisticated defensive offence strategy was proposed, emphasizing a pre-emptive approach to neutralise such threats emerging from Pakistan. The discussions underscored the need for India to adopt a proactive, multi-pronged doctrine—balancing kinetic and non-kinetic measures—to ensure regional stability and dismantling Pakistan's destabilizing ideology, offering a strategic roadmap for policymakers to navigate South Asia's volatile security landscape.

Abbreviations

S No.	Abbreviation	Full form
1.	ADG PI	Additional Directorate General of Public Information
2.	BLA	Baloch Liberation Army
3.	BSF	Border Security Force
4.	BWC	Biological weapons Convention
5.	C4ISR	Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance
6.	CBM	Confidence Building Measures
7.	CBRN	Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear defense
8.	CME	Civil-Military Engagement
9.	CPEC	China-Pakistan Economic Corridor
10.	CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
11.	CWC	Chemical weapons Convention
12.	FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Area
13.	FIA	Federal Investigation Agency
14.	G-ZONE	Grey Zone
15.	Hm	Harkatul Mujahideen
16.	ICM	Institute for Conflict Management
17.	IDSA	Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses
18.	IED	Improvised Explosive Devices
19.	ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
20.	ISKP	Islamic State Khorasan Province
21.	ISPR	Inter-Services Public Relations
22.	IWT	Indus Water Treaty
23.	JeM	Jaish- e- Mohammed
24.	JIC	Joint Intelligence Committee
25.	LeT	Lashar -e - Taiba
26.	MEA	Ministry of External Affairs
27.	MENA	Middle East and North Africa
28.	MISO	Military Information Support Operations
29.	NSCS	National Security Council Secretariat
30.	OIC	Organization of Islamic Cooperation
31.	PLA	People's Liberation Army
32.	Psy-Ops	Psychological Operations
33.	PTM	Phastun Tahafuz Movement
34.	RICO	Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act
35.	TRF	The Resistance Front
36.	VUCA	Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, and Ambiguity

Inaugural Address by Shri M.J. Akbar

Opening Remarks

The conference commenced with an introduction by Mr Sathya Pulukuri, Associate Editor of IRF, who outlined the forum's mission to address Bharat's security challenges through a civilizational lens. Mr Sathya highlighted the tragic terrorist attack in Pahalgam on April 22, 2025, where 26 tourists were killed, underscoring the urgency of decoding the ideology driving such violence. This tragedy framed the conference's purpose: to confront Pakistan not merely as a neighbouring state but as a destabilizing ideological construct.

Shri M.J. Akbar began his address by paying homage to the victims of the Pahalgam attack and others who have sacrificed their lives defending India. He emphasized the timeliness of the conference in light of recent barbarism, which he described as an opportunity to examine the ideas underpinning Pakistan's actions.

Key Themes and Analysis

1. Pakistan as a State of Mind

Shri Akbar argued that Pakistan is not merely a state defined by territory or institutions but a *state of mind* rooted in fear, illusion, and a volatile mix of superiority and inferiority complexes. He described Pakistan as a unique experiment in nation formation, born out of a *doctrine of distance* articulated in the 18th century by cleric Shah Waliullah Dehlawi. This doctrine, which advocated maintaining distance from Hindus to preserve Islam, evolved into the two-nation theory and separate electorates, culminating in the partition of 1947.

2. Historical Roots and the Collapse of Mughal Theocracy

Drawing on his forthcoming book, *Chaos and Astrology in the Mughal Empire*, Shri Akbar traced the ideological origins of Pakistan to the collapse of the Mughal Empire under Aurangzeb's theocratic rule. He argued that the Mughal state, initially an alliance between Mughals and Rajputs, was destabilized by Aurangzeb's Islamism, proving that theocratic states are unsustainable in India. In contrast, a syncretic, multicultural state aligned with civilizational values is essential for stability.

3. Failure of the Two-Nation Theory

Shri Akbar challenged the legitimacy of the 1946 provincial elections, which he argued were not a mandate but a restricted exercise involving only 9% of the population. He further

debunked the two-nation theory, noting its failure in 1971 with the creation of Bangladesh, a Muslim-majority nation that rejected Pakistan's framework. He emphasized that Islam cannot serve as the basis for nationalism, as evidenced by the existence of 22 Arab nations, Bangladesh's independence, and the separation of Pakistan from Taliban-led Afghanistan.

4. Pakistan's Ideological Crisis and Internal Contradictions

Shri Akbar described Pakistan as a nation without a present, trapped between a troubled past and an uncertain future. He highlighted its internal contradictions, including the violent secession of East Pakistan, insurgencies in Balochistan, and the rise of the Pashtun Tahafuz Movement (PTM). Rather than addressing these issues, Pakistan's state has perpetuated Islamic imperialism, persecuted minorities, and adopted discriminatory policies, particularly against provinces seeking parity with Punjab.

5. Pakistan as a Garrison State

Shri Akbar characterized Pakistan as a *garrison state*, where the military, backed by a semi-feudal elite, has usurped governance functions. This establishment projects Pakistan as an ideological construct obsessed with Kashmir, a fixation Shri Akbar linked to hatred for India rather than concern for Kashmiris. He cited General Asim Munir's April 16, 2025, speech reaffirming the two-nation theory as evidence of this enduring ideology, potentially signalling military intervention amid civilian governance failures.

6. Modernity and India's Path Forward

Shri Akbar outlined five principles of modernity—nation-state, democracy, freedom of faith, gender equality, and eradication of hunger—arguing that Pakistan fails to meet these standards. In contrast, he praised India's progress under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, particularly the *Gareeb Kalyan Yojana*, which ensures food security for 800 million Indians. He also redefined the concept of a neighbour, suggesting that proximity does not define neighbourliness but rather *reach* and shared humane values, as exemplified by India's strong ties with the Gulf compared to its negligible connectivity with Pakistan.

7. The Longest Continuous War

Shri Akbar described the India-Pakistan conflict, initiated in October 1947, as the *longest continuous war in world history*, sustained by Pakistan's strategy of "bleeding India through a

thousand cuts” via terrorism. He predicted that this war will persist until Pakistan collapses under its own incoherence, not due to external forces but its internal failures.

Strategic Implications and Call to Action

Shri Akbar urged the forum to serve as a *strategic inflection point*, producing a long-term Indian doctrine on Pakistan. He called for a deeper, unsentimental understanding of Pakistan’s ideological evolution and its implications for India’s security. The address challenged attendees to ask critical questions, such as why Pakistan’s military leadership focuses solely on Kashmir while ignoring other Muslim-majority regions like Bangladesh or Afghanistan.

Shri M.J. Akbar’s inaugural address was a tour de force, blending historical depth, strategic insight, and a clarion call for action. His analysis framed Pakistan as an ideological prison, unravelling under the weight of its contradictions, and underscored the need for India to confront this destabilizing ideology head-on. The address set a high benchmark for the conference, inspiring attendees to think critically and strategically about India’s response to the enduring challenge posed by Pakistan.

Session 1

Decoding the Idea of Pakistan - Two-Nation Theory and Partition of the India

Introduction

The Indic Researchers Forum (IRF) hosted the first session of its conference, *Decoding the Idea of Pakistan*, aimed at analyzing the ideological and historical foundations of Pakistan, with a focus on the two-nation theory and the partition of India. The session, chaired by Prof. Ayon Bhattacharjee, featured distinguished speakers: Dr. Nand Kishore, Prof. Ishtiaq Ahmed, and Mr. Burzin Waghmar. The recent terrorist attack in Pahalgam, Kashmir, on April 22, 2025, which claimed 26 lives, provided a somber backdrop, emphasizing the urgency of understanding Pakistan's ideological roots and their implications for regional security. This report summarizes the key points from the session, including the speakers' presentations, the chair's remarks, and the Q&A discussion.

Session Overview

The session explored the historical, political, and ideological dimensions of the two-nation theory and the partition of India, tracing their origins, evolution, and contemporary relevance. Prof. Ayon Bhattacharjee, a professor of physics at NIT Meghalaya with expertise in soft matter physics, quantum dots, and nanotechnology, chaired the session. Beyond his academic credentials, Prof. Bhattacharjee has extensively researched the partition of Bengal, particularly the silent referendum and its impact on displaced populations, as well as Indian knowledge systems, ancient technologies, and Vedanta philosophy. His opening remarks framed the session as an opportunity to critically examine the two-nation theory, question its outcomes, and reflect on whether the partition achieved its intended goals or exacerbated regional volatility.

Speaker Presentations

1. Dr. Nanda Kishor M S: Islamic Revivalist Movements and the Two-Nation Theory

Affiliation: Associate Professor and Head, Department of Politics and International Studies, Pondicherry University

Key Points:

Dr. Nanda Kishor M S provided a comprehensive analysis of the interplay between Islamic revivalist movements and the two-nation theory, emphasizing their role in shaping South Asia's political and religious evolution. He described Pakistan as an ideological construct rooted in the two-nation theory, formalized by Sir Muhammad Iqbal and Muhammad Ali Jinnah, which posited Muslims and Hindus as distinct nations incapable of coexisting within a single political entity.

- **Islamic Revivalism:** Dr. Kishor traced the roots of Islamic revivalism to the decline of the Mughal Empire in the 18th century, particularly after Aurangzeb's death in 1707, which led to political and cultural fragmentation. Figures like Shah Waliullah Dehlawi (1703–1762) advocated a return to Quranic teachings to unify Muslims, blending spiritual and political objectives. Syed Ahmed Bareilvi militarized this revivalism, promoting jihad against non-Muslim rulers and establishing a theocratic state in the Northwest Frontier. The Deobandi movement, founded in 1866, adopted a scholarly approach, focusing on religious education to preserve Islamic identity amid colonial challenges.
- **Colonial Influence:** British colonialism catalyzed revivalism by disrupting traditional power structures and introducing Western modernity, which many Muslims perceived as a threat. The spread of secular education and Christian missionary activities fueled fears of cultural erosion, prompting reformers to emphasize a distinct Muslim identity.
- **Two-Nation Theory:** Formalized by Iqbal in his 1930 Allahabad address and later by Jinnah through the 1940 Lahore Resolution, the theory oversimplified India's complex social fabric. Dr. Kishor critiqued its reductionist view of Hindu-Muslim relations and its failure to account for Muslim heterogeneity, leading to the violent partition of 1947 and ongoing regional tensions.
- **Contemporary Relevance:** The legacy of revivalism and the two-nation theory continues to foster extremism and division, undermining pluralism and democratic values in Pakistan and the broader region.

Dr. Kishor concluded that both ideologies were flawed, contributing to a legacy of conflict and instability that remains a major concern for South Asia.

2. Prof. Ishtiaq Ahmed: Partition of Bengal, Khilafat Movement, and Partition of India

Affiliation: Professor Emeritus of Political Science, Stockholm University; Honorary Senior Fellow, Institute of South Asian Studies, National University of Singapore

Key Points:

Prof. Ishtiaq Ahmed offered a nuanced perspective on the partition of Bengal, the Khilafat Movement, and the partition of India, challenging linear narratives of Pakistan's creation. His presentation drew on his acclaimed works, including *Jinnah: His Successes, Failures and Role in History* and *Pakistan: The Garrison State*.

- **Partition of Bengal (1905):** Prof. Ahmed argued that the British introduced religious division as an administrative strategy, initially alarming Muslims. Lord Curzon's efforts to create a Muslim-majority province by including parts of Bihar and Assam met resistance from both Hindu and Muslim elites in Calcutta. The 1906 Shimla Deputation and the founding of the All-India Muslim League in Dhaka marked the beginnings of Muslim separatism, though Bengal's politics remained provincial until the 1930s.
- **Khilafat Movement (1919–1924):** The movement, primarily a Sunni concern, arose from fears that the Ottoman Caliphate would be dismantled post-World War I. The British secured Barelvi support by questioning the Ottoman Caliph's legitimacy, while Deobandi radicals led the agitation. Mahatma Gandhi's support aimed to bridge Hindu-Muslim divides, but the movement's failure and Jinnah's opposition to street agitation marked a turning point in his break with Congress.
- **Partition of India:** Prof. Ahmed highlighted the 1935 Government of India Act, which expanded suffrage to 10–11% of the population, though Muslims lagged due to lower property ownership and education levels. The 1937 elections saw regional parties dominate Muslim-majority areas, rejecting the Muslim League. Jawaharlal Nehru's 1936 Lucknow address, advocating socialism, alienated landlords and enabled Jinnah to position himself as a defender of Muslim interests. The Second World War further bolstered Jinnah's influence, as Congress's refusal to support the British war effort allowed him to align with the British, culminating in the 1940 Lahore Resolution.
- **Violence and Legacy:** Jinnah's call for Direct Action in 1946 led to widespread violence, notably in Calcutta and Punjab, with up to 800,000 deaths by December 1947. Prof. Ahmed debunked the two-nation theory's historical basis, noting that Muslims

ruled India for 600 years without creating a separate state. The theory's reliance on a homogenous Muslim identity ignored sectarian and ethnic divisions, haunting Pakistan's politics today.

Prof. Ahmed emphasized that Pakistan's creation was driven by elite Muslim fears of Hindu dominance in a democratic India, not a unified Muslim consensus, and its garrison state model continues to fuel regional instability.

3. Mr. Burzine Waghmar: Cabinet Mission Plan 1946 - Balkanization with Good Intentions?

Affiliation: Affiliate, Centre for Iranian Studies & SOAS South Asia Institute, Former visiting India fellow RUSI, UK

Key Points

Mr. Burzine Waghmar, approaching the topic from the perspective of Pakistan studies, offered a critical reassessment of the 1946 Cabinet Mission Plan and its role in the partition, challenging narratives that blame Jawaharlal Nehru for India's division.

- **Cabinet Mission Plan:** The plan, proposed by British officials Lord Pethick-Lawrence, Sir Stafford Cripps, and A.V. Alexander, envisioned a confederal India with two sub-federations (Hindustan and Pakistan) and autonomous provinces. It aimed to balance Jinnah's demand for Pakistan with Congress's vision of a united India. The Muslim League accepted the plan on June 6, 1946, seeing it as a pathway to Pakistan, while Congress rejected it on June 22, citing concerns over compulsory grouping and weak central authority.
- **Nehru's Role:** Mr. Waghmar defended Nehru against accusations of torpedoing a united India, arguing that the plan's provision allowing provinces to secede after the first election (para 19, section 8) posed a perpetual threat of disintegration. Nehru's insistence on a strong central authority for taxation, defense, and foreign policy was pragmatic, as a weak centre reliant on provincial "doles" was unsustainable.
- **Hindu Mahasabha's Influence:** Mr. Waghmar highlighted the Hindu Mahasabha's prescient role in supporting partition to protect Hindus and non-Muslims in Pakistan, challenging contemporary Hindu nationalist narratives that criticize Nehru. The Mahasabha's decision ensured the safety of minorities who would have faced

exclusionary policies in Pakistan, as evidenced by the 1949 Objectives Resolution, which prioritized Islamic principles over minority rights.

- **Regional Implications:** Had India remained united, its large Muslim population (now nearly 500 million) would have entangled it in Middle Eastern conflicts, such as the Iran-Iraq War, Houthi conflict, and ISIS recruitment. A British official's 1946 note warned that West Pakistan would align with Muslim countries, dragging India into unrelated wars.

Mr. Waghmar concluded that the partition, while tragic, was a necessary compromise to secure India's stability and avoid entanglement in global Islamic conflicts, urging a rational reassessment of historical decisions.

Chair's Closing Remarks

Prof. Ayon Bhattacharjee closed the session by emphasizing the interconnectedness of the two-nation theory, the idea of Pakistan, and the partition, questioning whether leaders anticipated the scale of violence and human suffering that followed. He noted that the partition's failure to resolve communal tensions has left South Asia volatile, as evidenced by ongoing conflicts and the recent Pahalgam attack. Prof. Bhattacharjee encouraged the panel to critically analyze the ideological underpinnings of Pakistan and their relevance today, setting the stage for a robust discussion. His moderation ensured a balanced and engaging session, with seamless transitions between speakers and thoughtful engagement with audience questions.

Q&A Discussion

The Q&A session addressed several critical issues, with audience questions submitted via the chat box. Key points include:

1. **Sectarian Divisions Under Zia-ul-Haq (Question for Prof. Ishtiaq Ahmed):** Asked why Zia-ul-Haq's policies deepened sectarian rifts, Prof. Ahmed clarified that sectarian tensions predated Zia, citing the 1953 anti-Ahmadi riots and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's 1974 declaration of Ahmadis as non-Muslims. Zia's alignment with Saudi Arabia and Deobandi/Ehle Hadis ideologies, amid Iran's Shia revolution, exacerbated Sunni-Shia conflicts, leading to 1990s terrorism. He described Pakistan's state as leveraging religious divisions for political control, a legacy of Jinnah's mobilization of Muslim unity against Hindus.

2. **Khomeini's Influence on Pakistani Shia (Comment by Mr. Burzin Waghmar):** Addressing a comment on Khomeini's role in stoking Pakistani Shia unrest post-1979, Mr. Waghmar argued that Zia-ul-Haq cynically allowed Sunni groups to counter Shia activism, fueled by Iran's revolutionary rhetoric, to maintain control. He debunked the notion that the Soviet invasion alone caused Pakistan's "Kalashnikov culture," pointing to earlier sectarian tensions triggered by Iran's actions, such as Khomeini's 1979 false claim of a Zionist takeover of Mecca.
3. **Jinnah and Atatürk (Question for Prof. Ishtiaq Ahmed):** Asked whether Jinnah, influenced by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, unleashed Islamic forces akin to Atatürk's actions during the 1923 Smyrna fire, Prof. Ahmed dismissed the comparison. He noted Jinnah's limited intellectual engagement, citing his lack of reading beyond law books, and argued that Jinnah's 11th August 1947 speech was a tactical move to reassure India's Muslims, not a genuine secular vision. Jinnah's invocation of Prophet Muhammad and Sharia contradicted Atatürk's secular reforms, revealing his strategic use of religion.
4. **Modern Islamic Revivalism and Regional Security (Open Question):** Mr. Waghmar noted that the Maldives, not India or Pakistan, has contributed the most ISIS fighters from South Asia, but warned of the persistent lure of Middle Eastern conflicts. Prof. Ahmed countered that a united India with Muslim representation in governance would have mitigated extremism, as Congress enjoyed Muslim support pre-partition. He described Pakistan as a "rentier state," engaging in conflicts for financial gain, not ideological commitment, citing its reluctance to aid Gaza without payment.
5. **Reconciliation Between India and Pakistan (Open Question):** Prof. Ahmed expressed optimism, citing shared cultural wisdom from Sufi, Bhakti, and Sikh traditions, and suggested a European Union-style arrangement as a long-term solution. He emphasized people-to-people connections, noting the warmth he experienced in India and the hospitality shown to Indian visitors in Pakistan. Mr. Waghmar was more pessimistic, highlighting the growing disconnect between younger generations due to ignorance of each other's histories, despite shared cultural elements like cricket and food. He acknowledged historical precedents, such as post-war European reconciliation, but stressed the challenge of overcoming distinct Indian and Pakistani identities.

Strategic Implications

The session underscored the two-nation theory's flawed assumptions and the partition's enduring impact on South Asia's security and identity politics. Dr. Nanda Kishor highlighted the intellectual and practical shortcomings of revivalism and the two-nation theory, which fueled division and extremism. Prof. Ishtiaq Ahmed debunked the theory's historical legitimacy, tracing Pakistan's garrison state model to elite fears of democratic marginalization. Mr. Burzine Waghmar defended the partition as a pragmatic necessity to protect non-Muslims and ensure India's stability.

The discussion revealed the complexity of Pakistan's ideological foundations and their ongoing relevance amid rising tensions, as seen in the Pahalgam attack. Prof. Bhattacharjee's call for rationality over emotion resonated throughout, urging a re-examination of historical decisions to inform future policies. The session concluded with a mix of optimism and caution, recognizing the potential for reconciliation but acknowledging deep-seated divisions exacerbated by political and military establishments of Pakistan.

Session 2

Iman, Taqwa, Jihad Fi-Sabilillah: Pakistan Army's Way of War

Overview

Session 2 of the "Decoding the Idea of Pakistan" conference, titled *Iman, Taqwa, Jihad Fi-Sabilillah: Pakistan Army's Way of War*, explored the multifaceted dimensions of the Pakistan Army's military strategy, ideological underpinnings, and asymmetric warfare tactics. Chaired by Maj Gen (Dr.) Rajan Kochhar, VSM (Retd.), former Major General of Army Ordnance Corps, Central Command, the session featured four distinguished speakers who provided in-depth analyses of Pakistan's defense capabilities, the Islamization of its army, its ties with terrorist organizations, and the role of its propaganda machinery. The session was particularly timely given recent escalations, including the terrorist attack in Pahalgam and tensions surrounding the Indus Water Treaty (IWT).

Opening Remarks by Session Chair

Maj Gen (Dr.) Rajan Kochhar opened the session by emphasizing the relevance of understanding Pakistan's military strategy amidst rising tensions. He highlighted the Pakistan Army's reliance on hybrid warfare, including non-kinetic means and terrorism, to offset its conventional inferiority against India. Referencing the strategy of "bleeding India through a thousand cuts" pioneered by General Zia-ul-Haq, he noted Pakistan's dependence on external support from China and Turkey, particularly in drone technology and air power. He also underscored Pakistan's shift to full-spectrum deterrence, incorporating tactical nuclear weapons post-1998, and cautioned against underestimating the adversary. Gen Kochhar framed the session as a critical exercise in *Shatru Gyan* (knowing the enemy), stressing the need to analyze the psyche of Pakistan's leadership, particularly General Asim Munir, Chief of Army Staff.

1. Pakistan's Defense Assets and Capabilities

Speaker: Cmde (Prof.) S.L. Deshmukh, NM (Retd.), Adjunct Faculty, Manipal Institute of Technology and Manipal Academy of Higher Education

Cmde Deshmukh provided a comprehensive overview of the Pakistan Armed Forces' capabilities across land, sea, air, cyber, and space domains, emphasizing their strategic alignment against India. Key points included:

- **National Security Policy (2022):** Pakistan's first publicly released National Security Policy identifies India as the primary threat, advocating effective deterrence through conventional and nuclear modernization, with a focus on hybrid warfare.
- **Army:** With approximately 560,000 active personnel, the Pakistan Army operates advanced equipment from multiple nations (USA, China, Germany, UK, Italy), including 2,600 main battle tanks (e.g., Type 89, produced with Chinese technology), multi-range missile systems, and a drone brigade equipped with Turkish Bayraktar TB2 and Chinese Wing Loong II UAVs. Its aviation wing includes 300 transport aircraft and helicopters from various suppliers.
- **Navy:** Post-1971, the Pakistan Navy has modernized to prevent blockades like the one in Karachi. It operates 100 ships, including stealth frigates, Azmat-class corvettes, and Jurat-class missile boats. The submarine arm, established in 1964, includes eight vessels, with the Hangor-class AIP-powered submarines (in collaboration with China) enhancing second-strike capabilities. Plans for a nuclear-powered submarine were noted.
- **Air Force:** With 70,000 personnel and a fleet of 149 JF-17s, 75 F-16s, and 80 Mirage-3s, the Pakistan Air Force is the largest in the Islamic world. It employs advanced air defense systems (e.g., HQ-9B) and aerial refueling platforms (IL-78). UAVs like Shahpar and Bhaktiar TB2 enhance surveillance and combat capabilities.
- **Nuclear Strategy:** Pakistan's shift to full-spectrum deterrence includes tactical nuclear weapons, posing a risk in potential conflicts.
- **External Support:** China is the largest supplier, with joint projects like the JF-17 fighter. Turkey provides drones, while the USA, as a non-NATO ally since 2004, supplies equipment. The Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) plays a pivotal role in asymmetric warfare.

Cmdre Deshmukh concluded by quoting Sun Tzu, urging India to understand Pakistan's capabilities to avoid complacency and prepare effective countermeasures.

2. Understanding the Pakistan Army: Islamization, Corporate Interests, and Politics

Speaker: Dr. Ashish Shukla, Associate Fellow, Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (MP-IDSA)

Dr. Shukla examined the Pakistan Army as Pakistan's most powerful institution, shaping its national security and political landscape. Key points included:

- **Dominance and Ideology:** The Pakistan Army views itself as the guardian of Pakistan's territorial and ideological frontiers, perpetuating an India-centric threat narrative to justify its control over foreign policy, nuclear strategy, and Afghanistan policy. General Asim Munir's recent invocation of the Two-Nation Theory reflects this obsession.
- **Civil-Military Relations:** The army distrusts civilian leadership, micromanaging politics to maintain dominance. It has orchestrated the rise and fall of leaders like Imran Khan (2018–2022) and Nawaz Sharif (removed via a judicial coup in 2017). Recent constitutional amendments (October–November 2024) extended service chiefs' tenures to five years, securing General Munir's position until 2027, and increased judicial appointments to favor the establishment.
- **Islamization:** Islam is integral to Pakistan's identity, and the army leverages it for legitimacy. General Zia-ul-Haq's Islamization program (1977–1988) entrenched religious elements, though post-Zia efforts to moderate these influences have had mixed results. The army's religious rhetoric, including references to Kashmir as Pakistan's "jugular vein," remains potent.
- **Corporate Interests:** The army is a major economic player, controlling conglomerate foundations like Fauji Foundation, Army Welfare Trust, Shaheen Foundation, and Bahria Foundation. These entities, initially for veterans' welfare, now span agriculture, banking, energy, real estate, and more, generating significant revenue (estimated at \$20 billion in assets, \$500 million annually). Scholars like Ayesha Siddiqi describe this as "military inc.," highlighting its hegemonic economic control.
- **Political Influence:** The army avoids direct rule post-Musharraf (1999–2008) to preserve its image, preferring to manipulate politics indirectly. It ensures autonomy, high defense budgets, and control over national security, intervening when civilian policies threaten these interests.

Dr Shukla emphasized the army's role as Pakistan's de facto political party, shaping the nation's destiny while prioritizing institutional interests over national ones.

3. Soldiers Without Uniform: Waging Jihad with Jaish-e-Mohammed and Lashkar-e-Taiba

Speaker: Dr. Abhinav Pandya, CEO, Usanas Foundation; Author

Dr. Pandya analyzed the operations of Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) and Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), Pakistan's primary terrorist proxies in Jammu and Kashmir, detailing their ideological roots, recruitment, and financing. Key points included:

- **Evolution of Terrorism:** Pakistan's strategy in Kashmir evolved from local groups like JKLF (1989–1990) to more radicalized outfits. Hizbul Mujahideen (HM), linked to Jamaat-e-Islami, relies on local networks but lacks the combat skills of foreign-dominated JeM and LeT. The Harkat network (e.g., Harkatul Mujahideen) introduced battle-hardened Afghan war veterans, followed by LeT (Ahle Hadith/Wahabi) and JeM (Deobandi).
- **Jaish-e-Mohammed:** Founded by Maulana Masood Azhar post his release in the 1999 IC-814 hijacking, JeM is known for fidayeen attacks (e.g., 2001 Parliament attack, 2019 Pulwama attack). Its Deobandi ideology aligns with Al-Qaeda and Taliban, with seed funding from Osama bin Laden. JeM recruits from madrasas in South Punjab, where young boys face radicalization and abuse, fostering a violent mindset. Its financing includes ISI support, international donors, and ventures like MBBS and Haj tours.
- **Lashkar-e-Taiba:** A Wahabi group with corporate-style operations, LeT invests in industries like hotels and leather. It receives funding from West Asian charities (e.g., Al-Haramain Foundation) and activities like animal hide sales. LeT's cadres, drawn from Punjab, FATA, and Afghanistan, are highly trained and radicalized, operating with ISI backing.
- **Operational Differences:** HM excels in local intelligence and resilience, while JeM and LeT leverage foreign fighters for lethal operations. JeM's fidayeen training involves months of isolation and indoctrination, as seen in the Pulwama attack. LeT's broader sectarian appeal enhances its recruitment.
- **Challenges for India:** Dr Pandya criticized India's strategic community for underestimating the religious dimension of Pakistan's proxy war, which ISI and terrorists frame as jihad. He highlighted deficiencies in Indian research, noting a lack

of quality field studies and language expertise (e.g., Balochi, Pashto). International narratives often sidelining India's perspective due to weak academic output.

Dr Pandya urged India to develop a robust strategic culture and invest in counter-terrorism research to address these threats effectively.

4. ISPR: Pakistan Military's Propaganda Factory

Speaker: Dr. Divya Malhotra, Researcher, Centre for National Security Studies; Adjunct Faculty, Mount Carmel College, Bangalore

Dr. Malhotra explored the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the Pakistan military's media wing, as a sophisticated propaganda tool shaping the idea of Pakistan. Key points included:

- **Evolution and Structure:** Established in 1949 under Colonel Shahbaz Khan, ISPR evolved from a press release cell to a perception management body post-1990s, leveraging information technology. Headed by Lt Gen Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry, it reports to the army chief and collaborates with ISI for narrative control.
- **Strategic Objectives:** ISPR targets domestic legitimacy, countering civil-military tensions, and projects a pro-military image. It conducts cyber operations against India, undermines India's global standing (e.g., Kashmir campaigns in New York), and aligns civilian discourse with military narratives.
- **Media Operations:** ISPR produces dramas, documentaries, and songs to glorify the army, available on platforms like YouTube and Spotify. Popular serials like *Ehd-e-Wafa* (2019) and *Sipahi* (2016) blend Islamic values, patriotism, and military supremacy. FM radio channels and the magazine *Hilal* (since 1948) cover politics, foreign policy, and contemporary issues, often featuring non-Pakistani scholars for legitimacy.
- **Youth Engagement:** ISPR's internship program, formalized post-2012, recruits graduates from institutions like National Defence University and Fatima Jinnah Women University. Interns engage in cyber propaganda and social media operations, with opaque recruitment processes advertised through university placement cells.
- **Censorship and Control:** ISPR suppresses critical journalism, framing dissent as anti-national. Journalists like Amir Mateen faced repercussions for questioning its influence. Coverage of Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is tightly controlled, with major newspapers like *The News International* aligning with ISPR narratives.

- **Turning Points:** Post-2011 (Osama bin Laden's killing), ISPR, under Maj Gen Asim Bajwa and Maj Gen Asif Ghafoor, revamped its media strategy to rebuild the army's image, emphasizing youth-oriented content and strategic communication.

Dr Malhotra stressed ISPR's role in hybrid warfare, urging Indian researchers to study its activities and suggesting a white paper to enhance India's own strategic communication, such as through the Army's Additional Directorate General of Public Information (ADG PI).

Q&A Session

The Q&A session addressed several critical points:

- **JeM and Al-Qaeda Ties:** Dr. Pandya noted JeM's close ideological and operational links with Al-Qaeda, particularly in Afghanistan post-Taliban resurgence, posing a threat to India's hinterland via Deobandi networks.
- **Terrorism and India's West Asia Policy:** Dr Pandya highlighted growing counter-terrorism cooperation with Saudi Arabia, UAE, and Israel, but criticized India's reluctance to designate Hamas as a terrorist group, reflecting lingering diplomatic biases.
- **ISPR vs. ADG PI:** Dr. Malhotra advocated for strengthening India's ADG PI to match ISPR's capabilities, emphasizing the need for young researchers to contribute to narrative-building.

Closing Remarks by Session Chair

Maj Gen Kochhar concluded by reiterating the importance of understanding Pakistan's capabilities, particularly its hybrid warfare tactics and nuclear posture. He warned of General Munir's potential to escalate tensions to restore the army's image, weakened by setbacks in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

He emphasized countering terrorism through intelligence, national unity, and disrupting local support networks. Gen Kochhar also echoed Dr Pandya's call for robust research and Dr Malhotra's focus on strategic communication, urging India to match Pakistan's narrative-building prowess.

Session 2 provided a nuanced understanding of the Pakistan Army's multifaceted approach to warfare, blending conventional capabilities, ideological indoctrination, terrorism, and propaganda. The speakers underscored the need for India to counter Pakistan's hybrid strategies

through enhanced intelligence, research, and strategic communication. The session highlighted the urgency of addressing these challenges in light of recent escalations, offering valuable insights for policymakers, researchers, and security professionals.

Session 3

Inter-Services Intelligence: Terror, Crime Syndicate & Influence Operations

Overview

Session 3 of the "Decoding the Idea of Pakistan" conference, titled *Inter-Services Intelligence: Terror, Crime Syndicate & Influence Operations*, examined the multifaceted role of Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) as a state-sponsored entity engaged in terrorism, organized crime, and influence operations across South Asia and beyond. Chaired by Shri Yashovardhan Azad, a distinguished former Special Director of the Intelligence Bureau with extensive experience in counter-terrorism and national security, the session featured four speakers who provided detailed insights into the ISI's operations, including its links with narco-terrorism, covert activities in India and Afghanistan, and growing influence in Bangladesh. The session was particularly relevant in the context of recent escalations, such as the terrorist attack in Pahalgam and heightened regional tensions.

Opening Remarks by Session Chair

Shri Yashovardhan Azad opened the session by underscoring the ISI's pervasive influence, describing it as a "state within a state" with tentacles extending globally, from Kashmir to international arenas. He highlighted the ISI's involvement in terrorism, funding, and covert operations, referencing its role in the 2008 Mumbai attacks (26/11) and the recent Pahalgam attack, where Pakistani terrorists used advanced M4 carbines, signalling upgraded tactics. Azad criticized Pakistan's military leadership, particularly General Asim Munir, for perpetuating divisive narratives like the Two-Nation Theory, contrasting this with India's inclusive ethos. He noted the ISI's strategic advantage from the 2021 ceasefire agreement, which allowed Pakistan to redeploy 70,000–80,000 troops to the Afghan border and Balochistan, intensifying covert activities in Kashmir. Mr Azad framed the session as a critical examination of the ISI's rogue behavior, urging India to counter its hybrid threats through robust intelligence and strategic responses while questioning the sustainability of Pakistan's nuclear blackmail.

1. Organized Crime Groups, Narco-Terrorism, and the ISI

Speaker: Mr Harjit Sandhu, IPS (Retd.), Former INTERPOL Officer, Former DIG Manipur

Mr Harjit Sandhu explored the convergence of organized crime, narco-terrorism, and ISI operations, presenting them as a multi-dimensional threat to global security. Key points included:

- **Organized Crime Characteristics:** Organized crime groups operate transnationally, exploiting legal and jurisdictional gaps, wielding significant economic power through money laundering, and using corruption and intimidation to influence officials. Unlike localized underworld groups, these entities function like business enterprises with hierarchical structures and long-term goals.
- **Narco-Terrorism:** The fusion of drug trafficking and terrorism, where profits from narcotics fund terrorist activities, and violence facilitates drug operations. India faces significant threats in Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, and the Northeast, sandwiched between the Golden Crescent (Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran) and Golden Triangle (Myanmar, Thailand, Laos).
- **ISI's Role:** Described as Pakistan's "invisible government," the ISI supports militant groups like Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM), Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), Hizbul Mujahideen, and the recently emerged The Resistance Front (TRF). It is implicated in drug trafficking, protecting operatives like Osama bin Laden, who was found in Abbottabad near a military installation, and generating revenue through illicit means. Sandhu cited the 2021 Mundra port seizure of 2,988 kg of heroin (valued at ₹12,000 crore), linked to LeT, and the arrest of Harpreet Singh in Sacramento, connected to Khalistani groups and the ISI.
- **Challenges:** Law enforcement faces hurdles due to differing legal systems, bureaucratic clashes, overemphasis on sovereignty, and limited international cooperation. The ISI exploits these gaps, legitimizing drug and extortion money through money laundering, presenting it as "windfall profits" from investments in industries like automobiles and pharmaceuticals.
- **Judicial Interference:** Sandhu referenced a 2024 letter from Islamabad High Court judges to the Chief Justice, accusing the ISI of meddling in judicial processes, highlighting its overreach.

Mr Sandhu emphasized the need for timely intelligence and international cooperation to counter the ISI's revenue-generating model, which uniquely contributes to Pakistan's military budget.

2. Operation K2 and ISI's Operations in India

Speaker: Brig. Kuldeep Singh (Retd.), Former Principal Director, National Security Council Secretariat

Brig. Kuldeep Singh analyzed the ISI's sponsorship of terrorism in India, particularly in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) and Punjab, framing it as a cost-effective alternative to conventional warfare. Key points included:

- **Rationale for Terrorism:** Sponsoring terrorism is cheaper than maintaining large armies, requires fewer personnel, and allows plausible deniability. Victim nations expend disproportionate resources to counter these threats.
- **ISI's Rogue Nature:** Brig. Singh described the ISI as inefficient and rogue, unable to manage Pakistan's internal turmoil (e.g., Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) while exacerbating external conflicts. Post-1947, Pakistan inherited 33% of British India's military but only 17% of its revenue, giving the military undue influence over a fractious nation with ethnic tensions (Pashtuns, Bengalis) and sectarian divides (Sunni-Shia, Ahmadi).
- **Historical Context:** The ISI's use of irregular forces began in 1947, followed by operations in 1965, 1971, and 1999 (Kargil). Post-1971, recognizing India's conventional superiority, Pakistan focused on nuclear weapons and proxy warfare. The 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, backed by U.S. and Saudi funding, provided the ISI with trained mujahideen, later redirected to J&K after 1989.
- **J&K Operations:** The ISI exploited perceived injustices in J&K, leveraging porous borders and India's initial lack of counter-insurgency expertise. The Pahalgam attack demonstrated sophisticated planning, with reconnaissance and advanced weaponry, contradicting assumptions of "madrasa-bred" terrorists. A U.S. Military Academy study (co-authored by Dr. Christine Fair) revealed LeT recruits are well-educated, competing with Pakistan's military for talent.
- **Punjab Operations:** The ISI capitalized on India's political missteps, such as the Congress's support for Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale to counter the Akali Dal, leading to Operation Blue Star (1984). Brig. Singh criticized Blue Star's planning, contrasting it with the more effective Operation Black Thunder (1988). The ISI exploited communal tensions and India's bureaucratic inefficiencies.

- **Internal Failures:** Brig. Singh cautioned against blaming Pakistan exclusively, citing India's colonial policing mindset, bureaucratic resistance to reasonable demands, and lack of accountability (e.g., no high-level dismissals post-security failures, unlike the U.S.). He advocated addressing internal schisms, such as communal polarization, to prevent ISI exploitation.

Brig. Singh concluded that India must balance security with normalcy, celebrate thwarted attacks, and adopt a national security doctrine resilient to political changes to counter ISI's hybrid threats.

3. ISI's Operations in Afghanistan

Speaker: Mr. Abdullah Baheer, Afghan Political Activist, Grandson of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar

Mr. Abdullah Baheer provided a historical and personal perspective on the ISI's operations in Afghanistan, emphasizing its destabilizing role. Key points included:

- **Historical Roots:** The ISI's interference began with the 1893 Durand Line, which divided Pashtun tribes, and intensified post-1947 as Pakistan viewed Afghanistan as an existential threat and sought "strategic depth" against India. In 1975, under Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the ISI trained jihadists like Gulbuddin Hekmatyar (Baheer's grandfather) to attack Daoud Khan's democratic government.
- **Soviet Invasion (1979):** The ISI solidified its influence by funneling U.S. and Arab funds to mujahideen, controlling their operations. Mr. Baheer recounted personal experiences of ISI oversight, including issuing short-term permits for non-custom vehicles to ensure dependency and intelligence-sharing.
- **Post-Soviet Era:** After the Soviet withdrawal (1989), the ISI fueled Afghanistan's civil war, rejecting peace overtures from Najibullah. It created the Taliban in the 1990s, using figures like Colonel Imam (Brig. Sultan Amir Tarar), who trained mujahideen and Taliban fighters.
- **Taliban Era:** The 1999 IC-814 hijacking, orchestrated in Taliban-controlled Kandahar, secured the release of JeM founder Masood Azhar, illustrating the ISI's use of the Taliban as a tool. During the 2001–2021 U.S. presence, the ISI ensured a slow bleed of Afghanistan, establishing 20,000+ madrasas in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to produce Taliban and TTP fighters.

- **Current Challenges:** The TTP, initially ISI-aligned, now attacks Pakistan, reflecting the agency's loss of control. Baheer highlighted the ISI's selective blindness to intra-Afghan violence, such as the 1988 killing of Sayyid Bahauddin Majrooh, orchestrated by Hekmatyar's group.

Mr Baheer stressed that the ISI's policies have perpetuated chaos in Afghanistan, undermining Pashtun unity and regional stability.

4. ISI in Bangladesh: Security Challenges for India

Speaker: Mr. Vicky Nanjappa, Internal Security Journalist

Mr. Vicky Nanjappa analyzed the ISI's growing influence in Bangladesh post-2024, following the ouster of Sheikh Hasina, and its implications for India. Key points included:

- **Context:** The ISI, backed by Jamaat-e-Islami, exploited student protests to install Muhammad Yunus, who has adopted a pro-ISI stance, easing visa norms and opening water routes for illicit activities. This has created a "free pass" for terrorists and contraband, including narcotics and arms.
- **Security Challenges:** The Northeast and West Bengal face heightened risks due to illegal immigration, narco-smuggling, and arms trafficking. The ISI aims to distract India's resources from the Line of Control (LoC) by activating the India-Bangladesh border. Recent reports of suspicious radio signals in Urdu, Arabic, and Bengali suggest ISI-backed plots.
- **Historical Strategy:** Post-1971, Jamaat-e-Islami and ISI pursued demographic change through illegal immigration into Assam and Bengal, fostering communal clashes and economic discontent. Groups like Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami, banned in India, operate with ISI support.
- **Yunus's Role:** Yunus's radical ideology and overtures to China (e.g., offering access to the "Chicken's Neck") exacerbate India's challenges. The Bangladesh Army Chief's divergence from Yunus's administration offers a stabilizing factor, but the situation remains volatile.
- **Recommendations:** Mr. Nanjappa advocated a strong military response to the Pahalgam attack to deter both Pakistan and Bangladesh, alongside diplomatic engagement with Bangladesh's military and border security enhancements to curb

infiltration. He emphasized that India cannot afford conflicts on multiple fronts, given tensions with China and Myanmar.

Mr Nanjappa concluded that a decisive response to Pakistan, coupled with diplomatic and security measures, is critical to counter the ISI's exploitation of Bangladesh.

Q&A Session

The Q&A session addressed several pressing issues:

- **Hamas and ISI Connections:** Responding to a question about potential Hamas funding from the ISI or Turkish intelligence for Kashmir attacks, Mr. Azad clarified that while tactical alignments may exist, the ISI's ample funding negates the need for external sources like Hamas. He noted Hamas's silence on violence as a strategy to build anti-Israel sentiment.
- **Article 370 and Terrorism:** On whether revoking Article 370 failed to curb terrorism, Mr. Azad argued that 370's abrogation was about integration, not directly linked to terrorism. The security grid remains robust, with declining violent incidents, though sporadic attacks may persist.
- **National Security Doctrine:** Maj. Gen. (Retd.) K.R. Prasad, a guest, emphasized the need for a politically neutral national security doctrine, citing inconsistent policies across governments. Brig. Singh countered that a doctrine exists but is not publicized like U.S. models, and collective wisdom guides India's security apparatus.
- **Intelligence Failures:** Addressing the Pahalgam attack, Brig. Singh and Mr. Sandhu rejected the notion of intelligence failure, noting that highly trained terrorists exploit small gaps. They highlighted thousands of thwarted attacks, underscoring the professionalism of India's intelligence agencies, though timely intelligence remains critical.
- **Indus Water Treaty:** On suspending the treaty, Mr. Sandhu raised technical concerns about feasibility and environmental impacts, while Brig. Singh suggested leveraging water as a strategic tool without abrogating the treaty, given Pakistan's water stress.
- **War Scenarios:** Brig. Singh dismissed prospects of full-fledged war, citing escalation risks and Pakistan's nuclear threshold. He advocated calibrated responses, such as activating the LoC with precision strikes using advanced weaponry (e.g., Smirch MBRL), to force Pakistan to defend its borders without triggering escalation.

Closing Remarks by Session Chair

Mr. Harjit Sandhu, stepping in for Mr. Azad, concluded the session by reiterating the ISI's rogue nature and its exploitation of global gaps in counter-terrorism cooperation. He emphasized the need for timely intelligence, as "intelligence does not age like fine wine," and celebrated India's unsung successes in thwarting attacks. Mr. Sandhu urged a multi-pronged response—diplomatic, political, commercial, and military—to counter the ISI, ensuring punishment for attacks like Pahalgam is memorable. He thanked the speakers for their clarity and the audience for their engagement.

Session 3 provided a comprehensive analysis of the ISI's role as a driver of terrorism, organized crime, and influence operations, with profound implications for India and the region. The speakers highlighted the agency's historical and current strategies, from narco-terrorism to proxy wars in J&K, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh. The session underscored the need for India to strengthen its counter-intelligence, border security, and diplomatic frameworks while addressing internal vulnerabilities to neutralize the ISI's hybrid threats. The discussions offered actionable insights for policymakers and security professionals, reinforcing the urgency of a coordinated response to Pakistan's rogue intelligence apparatus.

Keynote Address by Shri Tathagata Roy

Introduction

The second day of the "Decoding the Idea of Pakistan" conference, hosted by the Indic Researchers Forum, commenced with a keynote address by Shri Tathagata Roy, a distinguished Indian politician, former Governor of Tripura and Meghalaya, and a noted author. The host highlighted Shri Roy's illustrious career, including his tenure as President of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) West Bengal unit, membership in the BJP National Executive, and his contributions to socio-political discourse through works such as *My People, Uprooted* and *Syama Prasad Mookerjee: Life and Times*. Shri Roy's address focused on re-evaluating the historical and political implications of Pakistan's creation, proposing a "recoding" of its foundational idea to address contemporary challenges in India.

Keynote Address Summary

Shri Tathagata Roy began by expressing the personal significance of the topic, describing it as both dear and painful. He suggested that the conference title, "Decoding the Idea of Pakistan," could be reframed as "Recoding the Idea of Pakistan" to reflect the need to revisit and correct historical missteps made during India's partition in 1947. Below is a summary of the key points from his address, refined for clarity and factual accuracy:

Historical Context and the Partition of India

Shri Roy argued that the partition of India, agreed upon in March 1947, was marred by critical errors by Indian leaders, including Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Acharya J.B. Kripalani, and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. These decisions, he claimed, continue to impact India's socio-political landscape. He referenced the 1945 Central Legislative Assembly elections, where approximately 87% of Muslim voters supported the Muslim League's demand for Pakistan. This overwhelming support, he argued, implied that the logical outcome of partition should have been a complete population exchange—Muslims moving to Pakistan and non-Muslims remaining in India. However, this did not occur, leading to significant demographic and political consequences.

Pakistan's Objective Resolution

Shri Roy cited Pakistan's Objective Resolution, moved by Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan in 1949, as a foundational document that declared Islam as integral to statecraft, beyond private

belief. He argued that this vision of Pakistan as a state where Muslims could freely pursue their way of life was not adequately considered by Indian leaders who consented to partition. The failure to address this ideological underpinning, he suggested, contributed to ongoing tensions in India.

The Hindu-Muslim Problem in India

Shri Roy identified the "Hindu-Muslim problem" as India's most pressing challenge, surpassing issues like poverty or housing. He noted that the significant Muslim population that remained in India after partition tends to vote as a bloc, making them a key demographic for political parties. This, he argued, has led to a perception among some parties that Muslims are above criticism, a notion he likened to the medieval English axiom, "The king can do no wrong." He emphasized that this dynamic distorts India's political landscape and hinders honest discussions about communal issues.

Persecution of Hindus in East Pakistan and Bangladesh

Drawing from his book *My People, Uprooted*, Shri Roy detailed the persecution of Hindus in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) post-1947. He corrected the original claim of 50,000 Hindu deaths in 1950, noting that while precise figures are debated, widespread economic and physical persecution occurred, particularly during events like the 1950 riots. He highlighted the significant reduction in the Hindu population in Pakistan (from 19% in 1947 to approximately 1.7% today) and Bangladesh (from 29% to around 8%) as evidence of systemic persecution, which he argued is often overlooked in historical narratives.

Recoding the Idea of Pakistan

Shri Roy proposed "recoding" the idea of Pakistan to acknowledge these historical realities and address their implications. He clarified that he does not advocate for reversing history or expelling Muslims from India, as this is neither feasible nor desirable. Instead, he called for a candid recognition of partition's basis—religion—and its ongoing impact. He suggested that Indian Muslims, given the historical context of partition, bear a responsibility to demonstrate loyalty to India, particularly in regions like Jammu and Kashmir, West Bengal, and Assam, which border Muslim-majority countries with records of minority persecution.

Contemporary Relevance and Political Discourse

Shri Roy critiqued the reluctance of some Indian politicians to acknowledge the religious dimensions of terrorism, referencing incidents like the 2002 Godhra train burning in Gujarat, where 59 Hindu pilgrims were killed. He defended the then-Chief Minister Narendra Modi's statement about actions and reactions, framing it as a restatement of Newton's third law rather than an incitement to violence. He argued that such incidents highlight the need to challenge political narratives that avoid addressing communal realities.

Call to Action

In concluding, Shri Roy urged Indian Muslims to unequivocally condemn the persecution of non-Muslims in Pakistan and Bangladesh and to affirm their allegiance to India. He cited Pakistani politician Mushahid Hussain's claim that some Indian figures and parties support Pakistan, arguing that Indian Muslims must counter such narratives to reinforce their commitment to India. He emphasized that this is essential for fostering national unity and addressing the distortions introduced by partition.

Shri Tathagata Roy's keynote address provided a provocative and historically grounded perspective on the idea of Pakistan and its implications for India. His call for "recoding" rather than merely "decoding" the idea of Pakistan underscored the need to confront uncomfortable historical truths to address contemporary challenges. The address sparked reflection among attendees, offering a new lens through which to view India's communal dynamics and the legacy of partition.

Session 4

Pakistan's Baloch Dilemma, Quest for freedom, and Civil Rights Movement

Overview

Session 4 of the "Decoding the Idea of Pakistan" conference, titled *Pakistan's Baloch Dilemma, Insurgency, and Civil Rights Movement*, explored the historical, political, and humanitarian dimensions of the Balochistan crisis. Chaired by Maj. Gen. Shashi Asthana (Retd.), a distinguished strategic and security analyst with over 45 years of military experience, the session delved into Pakistan's systemic repression of the Baloch people, the role of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), state-sponsored discrimination, enforced disappearances, and the global response to the crisis. The speakers provided a multi-faceted analysis, emphasizing the Baloch struggle for freedom, the geopolitical implications of CPEC, and India's potential role in supporting regional stability. The session was particularly timely, given recent escalations, including the Jafar Express attack and the arrest of Baloch activists like Dr. Mahrang Baloch.

Opening Remarks by Session Chair

Maj. Gen. Shashi Asthana opened the session by framing Balochistan as a critical lens for understanding Pakistan's internal contradictions. He highlighted Balochistan's vast landmass (43.6% of Pakistan) and sparse population (3.6%, reduced from 5.1% due to state atrocities), noting its strategic significance and mineral wealth. Gen Asthana described the Baloch struggle not as an insurgency but as a freedom movement, rooted in Pakistan's forced annexation in 1948. He drew parallels with the oppression in erstwhile East Pakistan (now Bangladesh), citing enforced disappearances, mass graves, and systemic violence. Gen Asthana criticized the international community's indifference to the Baloch crisis, urging a moral and strategic reckoning. He introduced the speakers as experts who would decode Pakistan's policies, the exploitation via CPEC, and the resilience of Baloch nationalism.

1. Seven Decades of Baloch Struggle: A Quest for Freedom

Speaker: Mr. Aditya Raj Kaul, Executive Editor, TV9 Network

Mr. Aditya Raj Kaul traced the Baloch struggle to Pakistan's forced annexation in 1948, when the Khan of Kalat sought independence but was coerced into accession. He outlined key phases of resistance:

- **Historical Context:** Protests in the 1950s and 1970s demanded autonomy, escalating into a major rebellion in the early 2000s. The 2006 killing of Nawab Akbar Bugti by Pakistani forces under Gen. Pervez Musharraf galvanized the movement.
- **Current Dynamics:** The Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) and other groups lead an armed struggle, targeting Pakistan's military and Chinese interests. Mr. Kaul cited recent attacks, including the Jafar Express hostage crisis and an IED blast in Quetta, as evidence of escalating resistance.
- **State Repression:** Pakistan's military and ISI crush peaceful protests, as seen in the arrest of Dr. Mahrang Baloch and other Baloch Yakjehti Committee leaders in March 2025. Mr Kaul detailed Dr. Mahrang's ordeal, including her detention, hunger strike, and prior harassment by the ISI.
- **Chinese Exploitation:** Pakistan aims to transform Balochistan into a "Chinese colony" via CPEC, exploiting resources in Gwadar and Sui while marginalizing locals.
- **Global Silence:** Mr. Kaul criticized the Western media and UN for ignoring Balochistan's plight, noting selective outrage compared to coverage of Palestine or Kashmir. He referenced his 2022 documentary series, *Balochistan: Bangladesh 2.0?*, which exposed atrocities but led to an FIR by Pakistan's FIA.

Mr. Kaul urged India to adopt a proactive policy, supporting Baloch exiles and pressuring Pakistan to end human rights abuses, warning that Pakistan's "cancerous" deep state threatens global security.

2. CPEC: Slow-Burn Corridor to Nowhere

Speaker: Mr Burzine Waghmar, Affiliate, Centre for Iranian Studies & SOAS South Asia Institute, UK

Mr. Burzine Waghmar provided a critical analysis of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), describing it as environmentally unsustainable, financially unfeasible, and politically unstable. Key points included:

- **CPEC Overview:** Launched in 2015 as a \$62 billion project (17% of Pakistan's GDP), CPEC includes Gwadar port, infrastructure, energy projects, and industrial zones. It is a flagship of China's Belt and Road Initiative but has underdelivered.
- **Strategic Motives:** CPEC addresses China's "Malacca Dilemma," reducing the 16,000-km trade route via the Strait of Malacca by 5,000 km through Gwadar, leased to China for 43 years. Only 9% of Gwadar's revenue benefits Balochistan, with 91% going to China.
- **Economic Failures:** High-cost energy projects are unaffordable for Pakistanis, and Chinese investments primarily serve Xinjiang's development. The Karakoram Highway, another Sino-Pak project, remains underutilized due to seasonal closures and high costs.
- **Security Challenges:** Baloch militants, including the BLA, target Chinese personnel (23 killed to date), undermining Pakistan's security assurances. A 2018 Financial Times report revealed secret China-Baloch talks, indicating Beijing's distrust of Islamabad.
- **Baloch Marginalization:** CPEC exacerbates local resentment by prioritizing Punjabi labor and neglecting Balochistan's unskilled workforce, risking demographic disruption.

Mr. Waghmar concluded that CPEC is a "white elephant," serving China's strategic interests while deepening Baloch alienation and instability.

3. Baloch Yakjehti Committee & Baloch Resistance Against Pakistan

Speaker: Mr. Hakeem Wadela, Focal Person, Baloch National Movement, Foreign Department

Mr Hakeem Wadela focused on the Baloch Yakjehti Committee's peaceful resistance and Pakistan's brutal response, particularly following the Jafar Express attack. Key points included:

- **Recent Crackdown:** In March 2025, Pakistani forces arrested Dr. Mahrang Baloch, Beebow Baloch, Sammi Deen Baloch, and others during protests in Quetta demanding identification of 13 unidentified bodies, claimed as Jafar Express attackers. The arrests, under the colonial-era 3 MPO law, sparked widespread protests across Balochistan.
- **State Violence:** Pakistani forces fired on protesters in Quetta and Hub Chowki, killing minors and injuring others. Mr. Wadela accused military intelligence of orchestrating

the crackdown to suppress the Yakjehti Committee, a globally recognized civil rights movement.

- **Baloch Nationalism:** The movement transcends tribal divisions, uniting Balochs in a secular, national struggle for independence. Leaders like Mahrang Baloch and BLA's Bashir Zai Baloch (a former student activist) represent a new, educated generation.
- **Historical Continuity:** Since 1948, Pakistan has targeted Baloch activists, from water protesters in Jiwani (1990s) to student leaders, viewing any demand for rights as a threat.

Mr. Wadela called for India to adopt a clear foreign policy supporting Balochistan, potentially hosting a government-in-exile, to counter Pakistan's aggression and terrorism.

4. State-Sponsored Discrimination and Enforced Disappearances

Speaker: Mr. Mohim Baloch Sarkhosh, Head, Balochistan National Solidarity Party

Mr. Mohim Baloch Sarkhosh provided a historical and contemporary overview of Baloch oppression in Pakistan and Iran, emphasizing enforced disappearances and Baloch nationalism. Key points included:

- **Historical Betrayal:** Balochistan, an independent state under British protection, was forcibly annexed by Pakistan in 1948, despite the Khan of Kalat's declaration of independence. Muhammad Ali Jinnah, once the Khan's lawyer, orchestrated the betrayal.
- **State Terrorism:** Pakistan's "kill and dump" policy involves abducting, torturing, and executing activists, with bodies dumped in remote areas. Mass graves in Khuzdar and Dera Bugti contain victims last seen in military custody. Thousands, including students and children, have disappeared.
- **Transnational Repression:** Activists like Karima Baloch (killed in Canada, 2020) and Sajid Hussain Baloch (killed in Sweden) faced suspected ISI-orchestrated assassinations, signalling Pakistan's global reach.
- **Iran's Role:** Iran's theocratic regime executes Balochs (over 20 in recent weeks) and suppresses their Sunni identity, mirroring Pakistan's ethnic persecution. Both states aim to erase Baloch culture and resistance.

- **Baloch Resilience:** Women leaders like Dr. Mahrang Baloch, Sammi Deen Baloch, and Beebow Baloch lead nonviolent resistance. Mahrang's arrest on March 22, 2025, during a Quetta protest, and her ongoing detention in Huda jail highlight Pakistan's desperation to silence her. Her 2024 BBC recognition and 2025 Nobel Peace Prize nomination underscore her global impact.
- **Future Vision:** Mr. Sarkhosh predicted the eventual dissolution of Pakistan and Iran, artificial states like Yugoslavia, asserting that Balochistan will reclaim independence as a secular, sovereign nation.

Mr. Sarkhosh urged global powers, including India, to support the Baloch civil movement, framing it as a moral and strategic necessity.

5. Balochistan Crisis, Response of International Community and India's role in regional stability

Speaker: Mr. Lalit Ambardar, Security and Current Affairs Analyst

Mr. Lalit Ambardar analyzed the Baloch struggle from an Indian perspective, emphasizing historical parallels and strategic imperatives. Key points included:

- **Historical Parallels:** Like Jammu and Kashmir, Balochistan was a princely state that sought independence in 1947 but was invaded by Pakistan. Mr. Ambardar criticized India's Congress leadership for abandoning Balochistan and the Pashtun-led Awami National Party, enabling Pakistan's consolidation.
- **Baloch Nationalism:** The Baloch movement is secular and distinct from Pakistan's jihadist ideology. Mr. Ambardar praised Baloch support for Israel post-October 7, 2023, as evidence of their civilizational values, contrasting Pakistan's role as a hub for Hamas and Al-Qaeda.
- **State Atrocities:** Pakistan's genocidal methods include chemical weapons, mass rapes (including of male children), and resource theft, creating a "double O" scenario of occupation and oppression.
- **Concerns Over Tactics:** Mr. Ambardar cautioned against the BLA's Majid Brigade suicide squads, citing the failures of LTTE and Palestinian groups, and urged Baloch women to emulate Kurdish Peshmerga fighters in pursuing nonviolent resistance.

- **India's Role:** India must rectify its historical betrayal by supporting a Baloch government-in-exile and amplifying their cause globally. This is not merely to weaken Pakistan but to uphold justice and foster a secular democracy in a strategic region.
- **Global Strategy:** Mr. Ambardar warned that Pakistan's ISI is losing control, resorting to aggressive tactics to consolidate power via Islamic mobilization. He urged Western powers to rethink their support for Pakistan's deep state, which shelters terrorists like Osama bin Laden.

Mr. Ambardar concluded that supporting Balochistan is a strategic necessity for India and a moral duty to counter Pakistan's jihadist agenda.

Q&A Session

The Q&A session addressed critical issues:

- **External Support for Baloch Movement:** A question on the role of Arab states and the U.S. prompted Mr. Wadela to note that GCC countries (Oman, UAE, Bahrain) employ Balochs in security forces but avoid criticizing Pakistan due to strategic ties. Mr. Waghmar added that these states prioritize regime stability, using naturalized Balochs as "fodder" for security, and will not challenge Pakistan.
- **Demographic Imbalance and Militarization:** On whether the dissolution of FATA led to a demographic shift in Balochistan, Wadela clarified that Pakistan's plan to settle Punjabis via CPEC aims to alter Gwadar's demographics, but Baloch resistance (BLA, BLF) has limited its success. He noted TTP's recent attacks on Pakistan's military but denied significant collaboration with Lashkar-e-Jhangvi.
- **India's Chabahar Strategy:** On balancing India's investment in Iran's Chabahar port with Baloch support, Mr. Waghmar argued that India's non-interference policy prevents it from questioning Iran's treatment of Balochs, despite Tehran's criticism of India's Kashmir policy. Gen. Asthana reaffirmed India's consistent non-interference stance.
- **Escalation Indicators:** Gen. Asthana identified the Jafar Express attack, IED blasts, and BLA/TTP activities as signs of escalating conflict, predicting increased Baloch resistance. He emphasized the need for strong leadership, akin to Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, to galvanize the movement.

Closing Remarks by Session Chair

Maj. Gen. Shashi Asthana concluded by thanking the speakers for their insightful analyses and the audience for their engagement. He reiterated that the Baloch struggle is a freedom movement, not an insurgency, driven by Pakistan's colonial oppression and Chinese exploitation via CPEC. Gen Asthana highlighted India's historical missteps but emphasized its current resolve to counter Pakistan's military, the "centre of gravity" for regional terrorism. He noted India's preparedness for various scenarios post the Pahalgam attack, hinting at potential responses without elaborating due to sensitivity of information. Gen. Asthana urged Baloch activists to leverage social media to amplify their cause and called for global support to address the crisis, ensuring the Baloch voice is not silenced.

Session 4 illuminated the Balochistan crisis as a complex interplay of historical betrayal, state repression, and geopolitical exploitation. The speakers underscored Pakistan's systemic violence, from enforced disappearances to demographic engineering, and the failure of CPEC to deliver promised development. The Baloch movement, led by figures like Dr. Mahrang Baloch, was celebrated as a secular, resilient struggle for justice. The session called for India to adopt a proactive policy, potentially supporting a Baloch government-in-exile, and for the international community to move beyond rhetoric to address war crimes. The discussions provided a roadmap for policymakers, emphasizing the moral and strategic imperative to support Balochistan's quest for freedom and dignity.

Session 5

Pakistan's Pashtun Conundrum, State-Sponsored Terror, and the Rise of Pashtun Tahafuz Movement

Overview

The fifth session of the "Decoding the Idea of Pakistan" conference, organized by the Indic Researchers Forum, focused on the complex dynamics of Pakistan's Pashtun population, state-sponsored discrimination, and the emergence of the Pashtun Tahafuz Movement (PTM). Chaired by Ms. Levsa Bayankhail, the session featured distinguished speakers who provided in-depth analyses of the political, economic, and security challenges in the Pakistan-Afghanistan region. The discussions underscored the systemic marginalization of Pashtuns, the exploitation of their resources, and the evolving regional security landscape shaped by the Taliban 2.0 and Pakistan's strategic policies.

Opening Remarks

Ms. Levsa Bayankhail, a prominent advocate for Pashtun rights and convener of the Pashtun Security Dialogue at the Indic Researchers Forum, opened the session by highlighting the historical and ongoing challenges faced by Pashtuns. She emphasized Pakistan's use of religion as a unifying tool to suppress ethnic diversity, a policy inherited from British colonial practices. This approach, she argued, has failed to address regional aspirations, particularly those of Pashtuns and Baloch, leading to destabilization and state-sponsored violence. Ms. Bayankhail stressed the need for equal rights and regional stability, noting the Pakistani state's role in portraying Pashtuns as extremists while committing atrocities against them.

1. Taliban 2.0 and the emerging dynamics between Pakistan and Afghanistan

Speaker: Dr. Shalini Chawla, Distinguished Fellow, Centre for Air Power Studies (CAPS), New Delhi

Dr. Shalini Chawla provided a comprehensive analysis of the evolving dynamics between Pakistan and Afghanistan, focusing on the implications of Taliban 2.0 following the U.S. withdrawal in 2021. She outlined the following key points:

- **Taliban 2.0's Evolution:** The Taliban has transitioned from an insurgent group to a functional government, consolidating power under its supreme leader in Kandahar. Despite internal fissures, the group maintains unity to avoid collapse. The Taliban seeks

global recognition, leveraging traditional and social media, but shows limited progress on women's rights and education.

- **Regional Engagement:** Major powers, including China, Russia, and India, engage with the Taliban due to strategic, economic, and security interests. China invests in projects like the Aynak copper mine, while Russia views the Taliban as a stable partner. India, cautious in its approach, focuses on humanitarian aid to preserve its \$3 billion investment and soft power in Afghanistan.
- **Pakistan-Afghanistan Relations:** Pakistan's obsession with achieving "strategic depth" in Afghanistan, a policy rooted in the 1980s, has been a strategic blunder. This doctrine aimed to control Afghanistan to counter India, manage the Durand Line dispute, and suppress Pashtun nationalism. However, it has fueled extremism and militancy in Pakistan's tribal areas. Post-2021, Pakistan initially celebrated the Taliban's return but faced strained relations due to the Taliban's refusal to recognize the Durand Line and the resurgence of the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP).
- **Security Challenges:** The TTP, emboldened by the Taliban's victory, has intensified attacks in Pakistan, adopting tactics like shadow governance. Reports suggest potential TTP mergers with Al-Qaeda or the Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP), posing a grave threat to regional stability. Dr. Chawla emphasized the need for a cohesive regional approach to counter terrorism, noting the lack of consensus among regional powers despite shared concerns about ISKP.
- **Impact on India:** The rise of TTP and potential alliances with ISKP could destabilize the region, affecting India's security interests. India's cautious engagement with the Taliban aims to safeguard its strategic investments and counter Pakistan's influence.

Dr. Chawla concluded that Pakistan's strategic depth policy has failed to achieve its objectives, with persistent challenges like Pashtun nationalism, the Durand Line dispute, and India's renewed engagement in Afghanistan. The future of terrorism remains alarming without a unified regional strategy.

2. Pashtun Tahafuz Movement and Its Impact on the Pakistan-Afghanistan Region

Speaker: Mr. Zia Ullah Hamdard, Journalist, Human Rights Activist, and Lecturer, United Kingdom

Mr. Zia Ullah Hamdard discussed the emergence and impact of the Pashtun Tahafuz Movement (PTM), a civil rights and social movement advocating for Pashtun rights in Pakistan's former Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). His key points included:

- **Origins of PTM:** The PTM emerged in 2018 following the extrajudicial killing of Naqeebullah Mehsud, a young Pashtun, by police in Karachi. The movement gained momentum through protests and digital media, addressing decades of marginalization, stereotyping, and violence against Pashtuns during the war on terror and earlier conflicts.
- **Historical Context:** Pashtuns have faced profiling since the Anglo-Afghan wars, with intensified stereotyping over the past four decades due to proxy wars involving global powers and Pakistan. The destruction of Afghanistan and militarization of Pashtuns have had devastating consequences for the community.
- **Achievements of PTM:**
 - **Breaking the Spiral of Silence:** PTM challenged the state's monopoly over information, giving voice to Pashtuns who were previously silenced by violence and intimidation. Over 2,000 tribal elders have been killed, highlighting the scale of repression.
 - **Addressing Enforced Disappearances:** PTM documented and campaigned against the abduction of thousands of Pashtuns by the military, demanding their presentation in courts. This has made it harder for the state to conduct extrajudicial killings.
 - **Combating Stereotyping:** PTM raised awareness about negative portrayals of Pashtuns in media, protesting military-sponsored content that perpetuates harmful stereotypes.
 - **Clearing Landmines:** The movement demanded the removal of landmines left from military operations, which continue to kill civilians, particularly children.
 - **Reinvigorating Pashtun Nationalism:** PTM challenged Pakistan's state narrative of a singular national identity based on religion, emphasizing Pashtun identity, language, and history. This has inspired similar ethno-nationalist movements among Baloch, Sindhi, and Kashmiri communities.

- **Impact on Regional Politics:** PTM's slogans, such as "Da Sanga Azadi Da" (What kind of freedom is this?) and "Yeh Jo Dehshatgardi Hai, Iske Peeche Wardi Hai" (The terrorism is backed by the uniform), have resonated across Pakistan, gaining traction among other marginalized groups and civil rights movements. These slogans, popularized during protests like the May 9th incident, reflect a growing consensus against military dominance and state-sponsored militancy.
- **Challenges:** Despite its successes, PTM faces significant resistance from Pakistan's military, with activists enduring imprisonment and violence. The movement struggles to halt the proxy wars affecting Pashtun lands but remains a beacon of hope for oppressed communities.

Mr. Hamdard emphasized that PTM's alternative narrative of Pashtun identity challenges Pakistan's state ideology, fostering a broader call for civil supremacy and ethno-nationalist movements. He expressed optimism about the movement's potential to reshape Pakistan's political landscape.

3. Exploitation of Natural Resources in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Speaker: Dr. Asif Kamal, Postdoctoral Fellow, Northwest University of Politics and Law, Shaanxi, China

Dr. Asif Kamal highlighted the systematic exploitation of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's natural resources by Pakistan's state and military, depriving local Pashtuns of their economic benefits. His key points included:

- **Resource Wealth:** Khyber Pakhtunkhwa produces 45% of Pakistan's oil, 30% of its natural gas, and 42% of its LPG. The province is also rich in minerals like emerald (70 million carats in Swat, valued at \$4,000–\$6,000 per carat), nephrite (1,900 tons annually from Mohmand), marble (1.36 million tons annually), and coal (123 million tons). Additionally, it generates 3,000 megawatts of hydropower, far exceeding its consumption of 1,500 megawatts.
- **Systemic Exploitation:** Despite constitutional provisions (Articles 158–172) granting provinces precedence over their resources, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa faces gas and electricity shortages, with load shedding lasting up to 20 hours daily in some areas. Resources are diverted to Punjab through the national grid, and contracts are awarded

to non-Pashtun, often military-linked, companies like Mari Petroleum and the Frontier Works Organization.

- **Economic Disparity:** The province receives only a fraction of its entitled revenue, such as 7 billion out of 84 billion rupees in hydropower profits for 2023–24. The absence of oil refineries and marketing companies in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa further limits local benefits.
- **Environmental and Social Impact:** Resource extraction has led to environmental degradation and health issues, including high cancer rates in areas like Lakki Marwat and Karak. Poor infrastructure, lack of hospitals, and inadequate schools exacerbate the plight of local communities.
- **Military's Role:** Dr. Kamal cited examples of resource looting during military operations, such as the removal of precious timber from Waziristan during Operation Zarb-e-Azb. The proposed Minerals and Mines Bill aims to legalize further control over resources, undermining provincial autonomy.
- **Shadow Economies:** The lack of economic opportunities has fueled illicit trade and shadow economies, as locals are excluded from legitimate resource benefits. This has worsened poverty and instability in the region.

Dr. Kamal called for provincial control over resources, as mandated by the 18th Amendment, and urged campaigns to raise awareness and advocate for Pashtun rights at national and international levels, including through institutions like the International Court of Justice.

Q&A Session

The Q&A session addressed critical issues raised by the audience:

- **Shift in Militant Landscape:** Mr. Hamdard clarified that militancy in the Pashtun belt is not rooted in Pashtun nationalism but in religious ideology or proxy wars orchestrated by external powers and Pakistan's military. Groups like the Taliban and ISKP lack Pashtun nationalist goals, focusing instead on religious or geopolitical objectives.
- **PTM Slogans and Public Acceptance:** Mr. Hamdard noted that PTM's slogans have gained widespread acceptance across Pakistan, including in Punjab, reflecting a growing consensus against military-backed militancy. This indicates increasing support for civil rights movements challenging state narratives.

- **Future of Terrorism and Impact on India:** Dr. Chawla warned that the TTP's potential alliances with Al-Qaeda or ISKP pose a significant threat to regional stability. The Taliban's support for TTP, driven by ideological ties and fear of defection to ISKP, complicates the security landscape. India faces risks from heightened terrorism, necessitating a regional approach to counter these threats.
- **Taliban 2.0 and Stability:** Dr. Chawla argued that while Taliban 2.0 has reduced violence, the suppression of women's rights and human rights abuses undermine long-term stability. The absence of a generation of educated women could have severe repercussions.
- **Shadow Economies:** Dr. Kamal confirmed that the exclusion of Pashtuns from resource benefits has fueled shadow economies and illicit trade, exacerbating poverty and health crises, such as high cancer rates due to environmental degradation.

Closing Remarks

Ms. Levs Bayankhail concluded the session by thanking the speakers for their insightful presentations, which illuminated the political, economic, and human rights challenges facing Pashtuns. She reiterated the need for global awareness of the Pakistani state's actions and expressed hope that these discussions would inspire actionable outcomes for Pashtun rights and regional stability.

This session provided a nuanced understanding of the Pashtun conundrum, highlighting Pakistan's failed strategic policies, the resilience of the PTM, and the economic exploitation of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The speakers underscored the urgency of addressing state-sponsored discrimination and fostering a regional approach to counter terrorism, offering critical insights for policymakers, researchers, and advocates.

Session 6

Pakistan in the New Geopolitical Era: Opportunities and Challenges

Overview

The sixth session of the "Decoding the Idea of Pakistan" conference, organized by the Indic Researchers Forum, explored Pakistan's evolving role in the global geopolitical landscape, focusing on its bilateral relations with key players and the opportunities and challenges in the new era. Chaired by Prof. Yoga Jyotsna Varanasi, the session featured distinguished speakers who analyzed Pakistan's ties with China, the Islamic world, the United States, and Bangladesh, alongside emerging regional dynamics. The discussions highlighted Pakistan's persistent reliance on military dominance, state-sponsored terrorism, and strategic alliances, while addressing the implications for India and the broader region.

Opening Remarks

Prof. Yoga Jyotsna Varanasi opened the session by emphasizing the dynamic nature of international relations, particularly in the context of Pakistan's persistent strategic missteps. She critiqued Pakistan's failure to capitalize on globalization, its continued military dominance over civilian governance, and the economic control exerted by the Fauji Foundation. Highlighting the adage that "every country has an army, but Pakistan's army has a country," she noted the military's disproportionate influence, including vast land allocations to retired officers. Prof. Varanasi lamented Pakistan's inability to establish robust diplomatic or democratic processes, citing the example of Nawaz Sharif's brief attempts at reform, followed by his brother Shehbaz Sharif's role as a "puppet" of military handlers. She introduced the concept of irredentism, proposing that India's historical and cultural claims to territories lost during partition, including parts of Pakistan, could reshape the discourse around regional autonomy and integration.

1. Pakistan-China Bilateral Relations in the Era of Cold War 2.0

Speaker: Cmde R.S. Vasan, Director General, Chennai Centre for China Studies

Cmdre Vasan provided a strategic and military analysis of Pakistan-China relations, emphasizing their deepening partnership amid global tensions reminiscent of a new Cold War. Key points included:

- **Historical Context:** The Pakistan-China alliance strengthened in the 1960s, driven by shared interests against India and the Soviet Union. China's support during the 1965 and 1971 wars, followed by nuclear and missile technology transfers in the 1980s, marked significant milestones. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), part of China's Belt and Road Initiative, aims to link Xinjiang to Gwadar, addressing China's Malacca Dilemma but facing challenges from Baloch insurgency.
- **Military Cooperation:** China is Pakistan's primary supplier of military hardware, including Yuan-class submarines, J-10 and J-20 aircraft, and Type 054A frigates. Joint naval exercises and China's growing presence in the North Arabian Sea, including potential bases in Gwadar, shift the regional maritime balance.
- **Nuclear and Missile Support:** China's provision of nuclear technology and missile systems, including the Shaheen series, raises proliferation concerns. The strategic partnership, described as "deeper than the oceans, higher than the mountains," poses challenges for India, particularly in the context of the China-Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir (CPOK) economic corridor.
- **Emerging Dynamics:** The rise of Turkey and Russia as partners, alongside China, complicates the regional security landscape. Recent attacks in Kashmir, attributed to Pakistan-backed groups, underscore the need for India to counter these provocations through kinetic and diplomatic measures.
- **Afghanistan and Balochistan:** Strained Pakistan-Afghanistan relations, marked by border clashes and the Taliban's condemnation of Pakistan-sponsored attacks, limit Pakistan's influence. Balochistan's insurgency threatens CPEC projects, with Chinese engineers and infrastructure targeted.

Cmdre Vasan concluded that the Pakistan-China axis, bolstered by military and nuclear cooperation, remains a formidable challenge for India. He advocated for strengthening India's naval capabilities, international alliances, and strategic deterrence to counter this evolving threat.

2. Pakistan-Islamic World Relations in the New Geopolitical Era

Speaker: Amb. Anil Trigunayat, Distinguished Fellow, Vivekananda International Foundation

Amb. Trigunayat analyzed Pakistan's relations with the Islamic world, emphasizing its historical reliance on religious identity and its diminishing influence due to changing regional dynamics. Key points included:

- **Islam as a Tool:** Pakistan, created as an Islamic state, leveraged the two-nation theory to position itself as a leader in the Islamic world. This narrative, however, was undermined by Bangladesh's independence in 1971. Pakistan used Islam to secure financial and military support from Gulf countries, particularly Saudi Arabia, becoming a "rentier state" by loaning its army and fighters.
- **OIC and Military Ties:** The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) has been a key platform for Pakistan to counter India, notably excluding India from the 1969 Rabat Summit. Pakistan developed strong military ties with monarchical Gulf states, with figures like Gen. Zia-ul-Haq playing pivotal roles, such as supporting Jordan against Palestinian forces in the 1970s.
- **Nuclear Ambitions:** Pakistan's clandestine nuclear program, branded as an "Islamic bomb," was marketed to Islamic countries, with A.Q. Khan's proliferation attempts targeting Iran, Libya, and others. This bolstered Pakistan's strategic relevance despite its destabilizing actions.
- **Shifting Dynamics:** The Gulf countries, particularly Saudi Arabia and the UAE, have moved away from Wahhabism and ideological support for Pakistan, adopting transactional relations. Saudi Arabia's rapprochement with Iran and focus on development reduce Pakistan's leverage. Turkey, driven by neo-Ottoman ambitions, remains a close ally, supporting Pakistan on Kashmir in exchange for Pakistan's backing on Cyprus.
- **Challenges:** Pakistan's "nuisance value" allows it to extract concessions, but recent terrorist attacks, such as the Pahalgam incident, have drawn condemnation from Gulf states. The rise of new alignments, like a potential China-Russia-Iran-Pakistan-Turkey-Afghanistan-Qatar bloc, could reshape Pakistan's role, though its economic dependence on Gulf aid persists.

Amb. Trigunayat concluded that Pakistan's influence in the Islamic world is waning as Gulf states prioritize stability and India strengthens its regional ties. Pakistan's reliance on terrorism and nuclear saber-rattling hinders its integration into a reformed Islamic world.

3. Pakistan-USA Bilateral Relations in the Era of Trump 2.0

Speaker: Dr. Michael Rubin, Former Pentagon Official, Senior Fellow, American Enterprise Institute

Dr. Rubin examined Pakistan's fraught relationship with the United States, particularly under a second Trump administration, advocating for a recalibration of U.S. policy. Key points included:

- **Historical Missteps:** U.S. policy toward Pakistan has often been shaped by Cold War dynamics and China's influence, to India's detriment. The U.S. ignored Pakistan's destabilizing actions post-Afghanistan and 9/11, providing aid despite its support for terrorism.
- **Trump's Approach:** President Trump's limited understanding of regional complexities presents both challenges and opportunities. His personal relationships, including with Prime Minister Modi, could be leveraged to shift U.S. policy. Dr. Rubin proposed that Trump visit India or Kashmir to signal solidarity, mirroring Biden's post-October 2023 visit to Israel.
- **Terrorism and ISI:** Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) agency drives state-sponsored terrorism, targeting Hindus in Kashmir and supporting groups like Lashkar-e-Taiba. Dr. Rubin urged the U.S. to designate Pakistan as a state sponsor of terror and the ISI as a foreign terrorist organization, citing the precedent of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. This would financially cripple ISI-linked businesses and deter foreign partnerships.
- **Regional Threats:** Pakistan's support for Khalistani separatism and its influence in Bangladesh under Jamaat-e-Islami signal a multi-front challenge for India. Dr. Rubin criticized Pakistan's failure to address blowback from its Islamist policies, unlike Saudi Arabia's post-2003 crackdown on extremism.
- **Policy Recommendations:** India should capitalize on Modi's rapport with Trump to highlight Pakistan's role in attacks like the 2008 Mumbai incident, emphasizing

American casualties to sway Trump. Designating Pakistan as a terror sponsor would require reforms for reversal, aligning with U.S. and Indian goals of regional peace.

Dr. Rubin concluded that Pakistan's sovereignty does not absolve its responsibility for terrorism. The U.S. must align its policy with reality, supporting movements like Pashtun Tahafuz and Baloch liberation to counter Pakistan's imperialist tendencies.

4. A New Era in Pakistan-Bangladesh Bilateral Relations

Speaker: Dr. Anshuman Behera, Associate Professor, National Institute of Advanced Studies

Dr. Behera explored the renewed Pakistan-Bangladesh relationship, driven by shared Islamist agendas and anti-India sentiments, and its implications for India. Key points included:

- **Context:** The 2024 ousting of Bangladesh's democratically elected government, led by Sheikh Hasina, and the rise of Jamaat-e-Islami signal a shift toward extremism. Pakistan, facing strained ties with Afghanistan's Taliban, seeks to rekindle relations with Bangladesh to advance its regional agenda.
- **Drivers of Rapprochement:** Two factors facilitate this alignment: (1) a shared Islamist agenda, with Bangladesh's radicalized elements mirroring Pakistan's state-sponsored extremism, and (2) anti-India sentiment, fueled by Jamaat-e-Islami's rhetoric and Pakistan's foundational anti-Indianism. Key constituencies in Bangladesh, including Jamaat-e-Islami and radicalized security forces, align with Pakistan's ISI.
- **Challenges:** Historical grievances from 1971, demands for reparations, and the repatriation of stranded Pakistanis complicate ties. Islamic (but not Islamist) parties like the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and Awami League supporters resist Pakistan's influence, creating internal opposition.
- **Implications for India:** The Pakistan-Bangladesh axis threatens India's security, with cross-border incidents like the Murshidabad riots linked to Bangladeshi miscreants. Economically, India's 14% share of Bangladesh's imports could decline as China (26%) and Pakistan (1%) strengthen ties. India's Neighborhood First policy faces challenges, potentially isolating it to Nepal and Bhutan.
- **China's Role:** China's tacit support, evidenced by its response to Muhammad Yunus's visit, amplifies the threat. A potential Islamist bloc involving Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, and Maldives could reshape South Asian geopolitics.

Dr. Behera urged India to engage with non-Islamist forces like the BNP to counter this axis, emphasizing the distinction between Islamic and Islamist ideologies to maintain diplomatic options.

Q&A Session

The Q&A session addressed critical audience questions:

- **Pakistan’s Marginalization in the Islamic World (to Amb. Trigunayat):** Pakistan risks losing relevance as Gulf states shift to transactional relations and renounce Wahhabism. However, its “nuisance value” and potential alignments with Turkey, Qatar, and others sustain its influence. A China-Russia-Iran-Pakistan-Turkey-Afghanistan-Qatar bloc could emerge, though Gulf states’ reforms limit ideological alignment.
- **Pakistan’s Blame-Shifting (to Dr. Rubin):** Pakistan’s defense minister’s claim that it did the U.S.’s “dirty work” ignores the ISI’s deliberate turn to Islamism post-1971 to counter ethnic identities. The ISI’s control over arms distribution during the Soviet-Afghan war prioritized Islamist groups, transforming Afghanistan’s politics. Pakistan’s failure to address blowback distinguishes it from Saudi Arabia and Syria.
- **Saudi-Pakistan Relations (to Amb. Trigunayat):** Saudi Arabia and the UAE’s shift from Wahhabism and focus on development reduce Pakistan’s ideological leverage. Relations are now transactional, with investments in Gwadar and Karachi ports but no blind support.
- **Russia’s Engagement with Pakistan (to Prof. Varanasi):** Russia’s pivot to Pakistan, driven by China and Afghanistan’s drug trade, reflects pragmatic interests. Historical India-Russia ties limit this engagement, but Russia’s desire to counter U.S. influence complicates dynamics.
- **Pakistan-Iran-Turkey Relations (to Amb. Trigunayat):** Turkey’s alliance with Pakistan, rooted in mutual support on Cyprus and Kashmir, remains strong. Iran-Pakistan ties are strained by Baloch conflicts, limiting cooperation despite shared Islamic identity.
- **Bangladesh Relations (to Dr. Behera):** The Pakistan-Bangladesh axis revives old fault lines, with Jamaat-e-Islami’s rise undermining India’s interests. Engaging non-Islamist parties like the BNP, which resist Pakistan’s influence, is crucial. The Islamic-Islamist distinction guides India’s outreach.

- **Irredentism Concerns (to Prof. Varanasi):** Prof. Varanasi's irredentist proposal aims to reclaim culturally significant territories lost to partition, distinguishing it from Pakistan's revanchist claims on Kashmir, which violate the Partition Act. Pakistan's anti-India agenda justifies this approach, though implementation requires careful consideration.
- **Pashtun Nationalism (to Dr. Rubin):** The Pashtun Tahafuz Movement and Baloch liberation could be key components of U.S. and Indian security policies to counter Pakistan's separatism, given its artificial statehood and ethnic discontent.
- **Balochistan's Independence (to Prof. Varanasi and Amb. Trigunayat):** An independent Balochistan, forcibly annexed by Pakistan, would weaken Pakistan's resource base and strategic depth, benefiting India. Its rich rare earth elements and strategic location enhance its geopolitical significance.

Closing Remarks

Prof. Yoga Jyotsna Varanasi concluded by thanking the speakers for their insightful presentations and precise responses. She reiterated the concept of irredentism, questioning Pakistan's nuclear capabilities and suggesting that recent attacks, like Pahalgam, reflect individual ambitions (e.g., Gen. Asim Munir's) rather than strategic coherence. She expressed gratitude to the organizers for the opportunity to chair the session and emphasized the need for India to adapt to Pakistan's evolving challenges.

This session illuminated Pakistan's complex role in the new geopolitical era, marked by its deepening ties with China, transactional relations with the Islamic world, strained U.S. partnership, and renewed engagement with Bangladesh. The speakers underscored Pakistan's reliance on terrorism, military dominance, and strategic opportunism, posing significant challenges for India. Recommendations included designating Pakistan as a terror sponsor, engaging non-Islamist forces in Bangladesh, and supporting ethnic movements like Pashtun and Baloch liberation to reshape regional dynamics. The session offered critical insights for policymakers and scholars navigating South Asia's volatile geopolitics.

Session 7

The Imploding Garrison State of Pakistan and Security Implications for India

overview

The seventh session of the "Decoding the Idea of Pakistan" conference, organized by the Indic Researchers Forum, examined Pakistan's internal crises and their strategic ramifications for India. Chaired by Lt Gen C.A. Krishnan (Retd), former Deputy Chief of Army Staff, the session featured distinguished speakers: Lt Gen Rakesh Sharma (Retd), Lt Gen Shokin Chauhan (Retd), Col Ram Athavale (Retd), and Mr. Neeraj Singh Manhas. The discussions focused on Pakistan's evolving war strategies, cross-border infiltration, nuclear and CBRN threats, and water security challenges, particularly in the context of the recent suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) following the Pahalgam terror attack in 2025.

Opening Remarks

Lt Gen C.A. Krishnan opened the session by contextualizing Pakistan's trajectory as a garrison state, where the military dominates governance, economy, and society. He highlighted Pakistan's failure to achieve political freedom or democratic stability 78 years after independence, with the Pakistan Army controlling a vast business empire spanning real estate, cement, and even footwear. Citing economic disparities—Pakistan's per capita GDP in PPP terms at \$6,800 compared to India's \$12,000 and China's \$20,000 in 2024—he underscored the garrison model's dismal report card. Lt Gen Krishnan questioned Pakistan's foundational identity, rooted in anti-Indianism, and proposed that India reconsider facilitating a stable Pakistan, given the Pakistan Army's reliance on perpetuating conflict to maintain relevance. He advocated supporting ethnic movements like Baloch and Pashtun liberation and dismantling Pakistan's nuclear capabilities in collaboration with global powers.

1. Evolution of Pakistan's War Strategy Against India

Speaker: Lt Gen Rakesh Sharma (Retd), General Bipin Rawat Chair of Excellence, USI, New Delhi

Lt Gen Sharma traced the evolution of Pakistan's military strategies, shaped by historical shocks and foundational factors:

- **Historical Context:** The traumatic formation of the Pakistan in 1947, the 1971 loss of East Pakistan, India's 1974 nuclear test, the 1980s Islamization under Zia-ul-Haq, and India's economic rise post-1991 have profoundly influenced Pakistan's military psyche.
- **Foundational Factors:** Pakistan's lack of a cohesive national identity, obsession with parity with India, perception of a vengeful India, belief in a "martial race" superiority, and the narrative of Islam being under threat drive its strategic outlook.
- **Pre-1971 Strategy:** Pakistan pursued offensive operations, exemplified by the 1965 war's failed pincer movement to capture Amritsar and cut off Jammu and Kashmir (J&K). The belief in Hindu weakness and Muslim martial prowess underpinned these ambitions.
- **Post-1971 Strategy:** After the 1971 defeat, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's vows to "eat grass" to build a nuclear bomb and "bleed India by a thousand cuts" shaped Pakistan's approach. The 1980s saw the rise of proxy warfare, with surplus militants from the Afghan jihad redirected to J&K by the 1990s. The Kargil War (1999) reflected a limited war strategy under a nuclear overhang, exploiting India's Siachen occupation.
- **Response to Indian Doctrines:** India's Sundarji Doctrine (1980s) for mechanized offensives prompted Pakistan to escalate proxy wars in Punjab and J&K. India's Cold Start Doctrine (2004) led Pakistan to develop tactical nuclear weapons (e.g., Nasr) to deter conventional Indian offensives. Pakistan's modernization, supported by Chinese equipment like JF-17s and air defense systems, emphasizes standoff warfare, drones, and electronic warfare, as seen in the 2019 Balakot response.

Lt Gen Sharma concluded that Pakistan's strategy remains defensive-offensive, with reserves positioned to counter Indian offensives while maintaining proxy warfare in J&K. Internal dissent under Gen Asim Munir and Baloch insurgencies necessitate continued aggression to justify the Army's primacy.

2. Cross Border infiltration, Border Security & Pakistan- Bangladesh Nexus: India's Border Management Approach

Speaker: Lt Gen Shokin Chauhan (Retd), Former Director General, Assam Rifles

Lt Gen Chauhan analyzed the complexities of India's border management, focusing on infiltration routes and emerging regional alignments:

- **Border Vulnerabilities:** India's borders with Pakistan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Nepal, and China (via occupied Tibet) are diverse and porous. The Indo-Pakistan border, though heavily fenced, allows infiltration due to Pakistan Army support, using tactics like rubber ladders and covering fire. The Indo-Bangladesh border, managed by the BSF, faces economic migration and terrorist infiltration, exacerbated by Bangladesh's radicalization post-August 2024. The 1,700-km Indo-Myanmar border, with only 75 km fenced, is porous due to tribal affiliations (e.g., Chin tribes). The open Indo-Nepal border facilitates terrorist movement, with weak immigration controls.
- **Pakistan-Bangladesh Nexus:** The 2024 rise of Jamaat-e-Islami in Bangladesh, coupled with anti-India sentiment, has revived Pakistan-Bangladesh ties. Pakistan exploits Bangladesh's border for infiltration into West Bengal and Tripura, targeting J&K. This aligns with a potential China-Pakistan nexus, where Chinese pressure on India's northern borders forces troop redeployment, weakening J&K's defenses.
- **Border Management Challenges:** Limited troop availability, with 82 companies of Assam Rifles covering 1,776 km of the Indo-Myanmar border, and reliance on CAPFs with sparse border posts (15 men every 5 km) create gaps. Post-Galwan (2020), redeployment of Rashtriya Rifles to Ladakh has left J&K vulnerable, enabling Pakistan to reactivate terror launch pads in PoK.
- **Recommendations:** Lt Gen Chauhan urged doubling or tripling border forces, enhancing sensors, and countering ISI's ties with northeastern insurgent groups. He emphasized that no fence is impenetrable, citing the Hamas breach of Israel's Gaza border, and stressed the need for robust manpower over technological reliance.

3. Nuclear Smuggling, CBRN Terrorism and the State of Pakistan: Security Concerns for India

Speaker: Col Ram Athavale (Retd), CBRN Security Expert

Col Athavale addressed the risks of nuclear smuggling and CBRN terrorism, focusing on Pakistan's role:

- **Nuclear Smuggling:** Defined as the trafficking of fissile materials, nuclear devices, or related equipment, nuclear smuggling peaked with the A.Q. Khan network (1970s–1990s). Khan, leveraging his work at URENCO, proliferated centrifuge technology, uranium hexafluoride, and manuals to Libya, Iran, North Korea, and others via shell

companies. Exposed in 2004, the network highlighted the ease of non-state actors accessing nuclear technology from rogue states.

- **Post-USSR Risks:** The 1991 USSR collapse left fissile materials and rumored “suitcase bombs” unaccounted for in Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine. Over 100 such devices may remain missing, posing risks of terrorist acquisition.
- **Recent Incidents:** In January 2024, a Japanese Yakuza leader was charged with trafficking uranium, thorium, and yellowcake, possibly sourced from Myanmar, which may be developing clandestine nuclear capabilities with North Korean and Russian aid. The IAEA’s database records 353 Group 1 incidents (1993–2024) involving fissile material trafficking.
- **CBRN Terrorism:** Historical cases include the 1995 Tokyo sarin gas attack, the 1984 Rajneeshee salmonella attack, and Al-Shabaab’s anthrax extraction in Kenya. ISIS used chlorine and sulfur mustard in Syria (52 cases). In 2010, Al-Qaeda’s Dhiren Barot was caught assembling a dirty bomb in the UK.
- **Pakistan’s CBRN Landscape:** Pakistan’s nuclear program, initiated in 1977 with Chinese and North Korean support, includes six nuclear power plants (3,262 MW) and a range of nuclear-capable missiles (0–2,500 km). The Strategic Plans Division ensures control, but porous security risks pilferage to terrorists. While Pakistan adheres to BWC and CWC, dual-use biotech labs (e.g., Wuhan collaboration) and chemical industries could supply terrorists with deniable CBRN materials.
- **Concerns for India:** The primary threat is terrorists accessing CBRN materials from Pakistani labs, given the ease of deployment and deniability. India has intercepted smuggling attempts (e.g., J&K’s 2024 hoax involving zinc alloy), but South Asia remains a smuggling hub.

Col Athavale recommended stringent monitoring of Pakistan’s nuclear assets and regional cooperation to secure CBRN materials.

4. Ticking Time Bomb: Pakistan’s Growing Water Crisis

Speaker: Mr. Neeraj Singh Manhas, Special Advisor, Parley Policy Initiative, South Korea

Mr. Manhas examined Pakistan’s water crisis and the geopolitical implications of India’s IWT suspension:

- **Pakistan's Water Crisis:** Pakistan, classified by the World Bank as water-stressed, has seen per capita water availability drop from 5,000 cubic meters in 1947 to 1,017 cubic meters in 2024, below the scarcity threshold. The Indus River supplies 80% of its water, but climate change (melting Himalayan glaciers, 70% less rainfall in 2024–2025), mismanagement (flood irrigation, colonial-era canals), population growth (237 million in 2024, projected 250 million by 2050), and geopolitical tensions exacerbate the crisis.
- **Internal Challenges:** Limited storage capacity (30 days vs. Egypt's 700 days) and provincial disputes (Punjab vs. Sindh) strain resources. Tarbela and Mangla dams face depleting water levels, threatening irrigation and hydropower. Sindh's soil salinization (70–80%) and urban reliance on contaminated water tankers compound vulnerabilities.
- **IWT Suspension:** On April 23, 2025, India suspended the IWT, citing Pakistan's cross-border terrorism (Pahalgam, Uri, Pulwama). The move leverages India's control over 20% of the Indus flow, justified by security concerns, the treaty's outdated 1960 framework, and Pakistan's accusations despite India sharing 5,000+ pages of hydrological data.
- **Implications for Pakistan:** Suspension disrupts flood and irrigation planning, threatens 25% of agricultural output (wheat, rice), and risks hydropower failures (25% of electricity). Pakistan's labeling of the suspension as an "act of war" reflects its economic dependence on the Indus.
- **Limitations:** India's run-of-the-river dams (e.g., Kishanganga, Ratle) lack storage capacity, requiring significant infrastructure investment for effective water control.

Mr. Manhas concluded that India's bold, justified suspension demands a short-, medium-, and long-term strategy to counter Pakistan's narratives at international forums like the UN, balancing security and diplomatic imperatives.

Q&A Session

- **Pakistan's Economic Constraints vs. Military Modernization (to Lt Gen Sharma):** Pakistan balances Chinese support (JF-17s, air defense systems) with IMF/World Bank funds and Middle Eastern investments (UAE, Saudi Arabia). China's strategic interest in tying India down via Pakistan ensures steady equipment supply, despite Pakistan's economic woes.

- **IWT Strategy (to Mr. Manhas):** A multi-term strategy is needed to implement the IWT suspension effectively, countering Pakistan’s international narratives while leveraging India’s moral high ground against terrorism.
- **Border Management (to Lt Gen Chauhan):** The complexity of India’s porous borders requires increased troop deployment and advanced sensors, as technological solutions alone are insufficient.

Closing Remarks

Lt Gen Krishnan thanked the speakers for their comprehensive insights, emphasizing the need for multifaceted strategies beyond military options. He highlighted the IWT suspension as a strategic tool, noting Pakistan’s “act of war” rhetoric as evidence of its vulnerability. The session underscored Pakistan’s internal implosion—marked by military dominance, economic decline, and ethnic unrest—and its reliance on terrorism and nuclear posturing. Recommendations included dismantling Pakistan’s nuclear arsenal globally, enhancing border security, and strategizing water security.

Threat Matrix with Consequences and Impact Analysis Based on the Decoding the Idea of Pakistan Conference

The following threat matrix identifies key security threats to India emanating from Pakistan, as highlighted in the "Decoding the Idea of Pakistan" conference. Each threat is analyzed scientifically, including its consequences and impact on India's national security, economic stability, and regional influence. The analysis uses a structured framework with likelihood (High, Medium, Low), severity (Critical, High, Moderate, Low), and impact scores (1-5, where 5 is most severe). The matrix is designed to inform strategic policymaking.

Threat Matrix

1. State-Sponsored Terrorism by ISI

- **Description:** The ISI orchestrates terrorism through proxy groups like Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammad, as evidenced by the Pahalgam attack (April 2025), targeting India's civilian and military infrastructure.
- **Likelihood:** High (80% probability, based on historical patterns and recent incidents).
- **Severity:** Critical (potential for mass casualties, economic disruption).
- **Consequences:**
 - Loss of lives and infrastructure damage (e.g., 26 killed in Pahalgam).
 - Economic costs from disrupted tourism and trade in border regions.
 - Heightened communal tensions, risking internal instability.
- **Impact Analysis:**
 - **Security:** Increased pressure on counter-terrorism resources (Impact Score: 5).
 - **Economic:** Tourism revenue loss in J&K (est. \$100M annually) (Impact Score: 4).
 - **Political:** Strains India's global image if attacks persist (Impact Score: 3).
 - **Mitigation:** Strengthen intelligence networks, deploy AI-based surveillance, and pursue global sanctions against ISI.

2. Balochistan Insurgency Escalation

- **Description:** Pakistan's repression fuels Baloch militancy (e.g., BLA's Jafar Express attack), potentially destabilizing Pakistan and affecting India via cross-border spillover or refugee flows.
- **Likelihood:** Medium (60%, given rising BLA activities).
- **Severity:** High (regional instability, refugee crisis).
- **Consequences:**
 - Spillover of violence into India's western borders.
 - Refugee influx straining India's border management.
 - Opportunity to weaken Pakistan but risks regional chaos.
- **Impact Analysis:**
 - **Security:** Increased border vigilance required (Impact Score: 4).
 - **Economic:** Humanitarian aid costs (est. \$50M/year) (Impact Score: 3).
 - **Political:** Diplomatic opportunity to expose Pakistan's abuses (Impact Score: 3).
 - **Mitigation:** Support Baloch advocacy diplomatically, enhance border security, and prepare for refugee contingencies.

3. Pashtun Tahafuz Movement (PTM) Suppression

- **Description:** Pakistan's crackdown on PTM risks radicalizing Pashtuns, potentially aligning with TTP or ISKP, threatening India via Afghanistan-Pakistan border instability.
- **Likelihood:** Medium (50%, based on PTM's growing influence).
- **Severity:** High (cross-border militancy risks).
- **Consequences:**
 - Increased TTP attacks disrupting India's Afghan investments.
 - Radicalization spillover into India's border states.

- Destabilization of Pak-Afghan region affecting India's trade routes.
- **Impact Analysis:**
 - **Security:** Threats to India's Afghan projects (\$3B at risk) (Impact Score: 4).
 - **Economic:** Trade route disruptions (est. \$200M loss/year) (Impact Score: 3).
 - **Political:** Challenges India's regional influence (Impact Score: 3).
 - **Mitigation:** Engage PTM leaders, support Afghan stability, and monitor TTP-ISKP, AQIS alignments.

4. China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Expansion

- **Description:** CPEC strengthens Pakistan's military capabilities and China's regional presence, threatening India's maritime and border security.
- **Likelihood:** High (90%, given ongoing Chinese investments).
- **Severity:** High (strategic encirclement risks).
- **Consequences:**
 - Enhanced Pakistan-China military cooperation (e.g., Gwadar naval base).
 - Increased Chinese influence in India's maritime domain.
 - Economic marginalization of India in regional trade.
- **Impact Analysis:**
 - **Security:** Naval balance shift in Arabian Sea (Impact Score: 5).
 - **Economic:** Reduced Indian trade competitiveness (est. \$500M loss/year) (Impact Score: 4).
 - **Political:** Strains India's relations with Gulf states (Impact Score: 3).
 - **Mitigation:** Bolster Indian Navy, expose CPEC's failures, and deepen Quad partnerships.

5. Nuclear Smuggling and CBRN Threats

- **Description:** Pakistan's nuclear proliferation history (e.g., A.Q. Khan network) risks CBRN materials reaching terrorist groups, threatening India.

- **Likelihood:** Low (30%, due to international oversight).
- **Severity:** Critical (catastrophic potential).
- **Consequences:**
 - Potential CBRN attacks on Indian cities.
 - Global isolation if Pakistan's role is confirmed.
 - Massive economic and human losses.
- **Impact Analysis:**
 - **Security:** Existential threat to urban centres (Impact Score: 5).
 - **Economic:** Recovery costs (est. \$10B/event) (Impact Score: 5).
 - **Political:** Global pressure on India to respond (Impact Score: 4).
 - **Mitigation:** Enhance intelligence sharing with IAEA, invest in CBRN defense systems.

6. Water Crisis Escalation

- **Description:** Pakistan's water scarcity, exacerbated by India's upstream control under the Indus Water Treaty, could prompt aggressive posturing or conflict.
- **Likelihood:** Medium (60%, given Pakistan's water stress).
- **Severity:** Moderate (diplomatic and economic risks).
- **Consequences:**
 - Diplomatic tensions over water sharing.
 - Economic losses in agriculture for both nations.
 - Potential for low-intensity conflict.
- **Impact Analysis:**
 - **Security:** Increased LoC tensions (Impact Score: 3).
 - **Economic:** Agricultural losses (est. \$300M/year) (Impact Score: 3).
 - **Political:** Strains India's global image if treaty is questioned (Impact Score: 2).

- **Mitigation:** Use water as a diplomatic lever, strengthen treaty compliance monitoring.

7. Pakistan-Bangladesh Islamist Axis

- **Description:** The emerging Pakistan-Bangladesh nexus, driven by Jamaat-e-Islami, threatens India's eastern security through cross-border terrorism and radicalization.
- **Likelihood:** Medium (60%, based on 2024 Bangladesh shifts).
- **Severity:** High (regional destabilization).
- **Consequences:**
 - Increased infiltration via India-Bangladesh border.
 - Economic trade disruptions with Bangladesh.
 - Strengthened anti-India sentiment in South Asia.
 - Communal clashes in India
- **Impact Analysis:**
 - **Security:** Heightened eastern border threats (Impact Score: 4).
 - **Economic:** Trade losses (est. \$1B/year) (Impact Score: 4).
 - **Political:** Weakens India's Neighbourhood First policy (Impact Score: 3).
 - **Mitigation:** Engage non-Islamist Bangladeshi factions, fortify eastern border defenses.

8. Cyber Warfare by Pakistan

- **Description:** Pakistan's growing cyber capabilities target India's critical infrastructure, as part of its hybrid warfare strategy.
- **Likelihood:** High (70%, given increasing cyber incidents).
- **Severity:** Moderate (economic and operational disruptions).
- **Consequences:**
 - Disruptions to banking, power, and defense systems.

- Economic losses from cyber recovery efforts.
- Erosion of public trust in digital infrastructure.
- Countering Deep Fakes.
- **Impact Analysis:**
 - **Security:** Compromised defense networks (Impact Score: 3).
 - **Economic:** Recovery costs (est. \$200M/incident) (Impact Score: 3).
 - **Political:** Public pressure for retaliation (Impact Score: 2).
 - **Mitigation:** Strengthen cybersecurity with CERT-In, train cyber defense personnel.

9. Radicalization and Internal Destabilization

- **Description:** Pakistan's ISI exploits communal fault lines in India to incite radicalization, particularly in border states like J&K, Punjab and West Bengal.
- **Likelihood:** High (70%, based on historical ISI operations).
- **Severity:** High (social cohesion risks).
- **Consequences:**
 - Increased communal violence and unrest.
 - Diversion of security resources to internal threats.
 - Political polarization affecting governance.
- **Impact Analysis:**
 - **Security:** Strains internal security forces (Impact Score: 4).
 - **Economic:** Investor confidence loss (est. \$500M/year) (Impact Score: 3).
 - **Political:** Weakens national unity (Impact Score: 4).
 - **Mitigation:** Implement counter-radicalization programs, enhance community policing.

10. Pakistan's Military Modernization with Chinese Support

- **Description:** Pakistan's acquisition of Chinese drones, missiles, and naval assets enhances its military capabilities, threatening India's conventional superiority.
- **Likelihood:** High (85%, given ongoing China-Pakistan deals).
- **Severity:** High (strategic balance shift).
- **Consequences:**
 - Increased LoC provocations and standoff warfare.
 - Higher defense spending to counter Pakistan.
 - Regional arms race escalation.
- **Impact Analysis:**
 - **Security:** Reduced conventional deterrence (Impact Score: 5).
 - **Economic:** Defense budget strain (est. \$2B/year) (Impact Score: 4).
 - **Political:** Pressure to align with Western arms suppliers (Impact Score: 3).
 - **Mitigation:** Accelerate India's defense modernization, deepen Quad defense ties.

Summary of Impact Scores

- **Critical Threats (Score 5):** State-sponsored terrorism, CBRN, CPEC expansion, military modernization.
- **High Threats (Score 4):** Balochistan insurgency, PTM suppression, Pakistan-Bangladesh axis, radicalization.
- **Moderate Threats (Score 3):** Water crisis, cyber warfare.
- **Total Impact Score:** 37/50 (High overall risk to India's security and stability).

Strategic Implications

The threat matrix underscores Pakistan's multifaceted challenge to India, driven by its garrison state model, external alliances, and internal instability. Critical threats like terrorism and nuclear risks demand immediate action, while high and moderate threats require sustained

strategic responses. India must prioritize intelligence-driven operations, technological advancements, and diplomatic isolation of Pakistan to mitigate these risks. The analysis highlights the need for a comprehensive national security doctrine to address Pakistan's evolving threats, ensuring India's regional leadership and stability.

Security Threat Assessment: Pakistan's Strategic Challenges

The "Decoding the Idea of Pakistan" conference (April 25-26, 2025), organized by the Indic Researchers Forum, analyzed Pakistan's ideological, military, and geopolitical threats to India, emphasizing the Pahalgam terrorist attack (April 22, 2025). Using a Multi-Criteria Decision Analysis (MCDA) framework, the report identifies state-sponsored terrorism (TIS: 17.2), CPEC expansion (TIS: 15.48), and nuclear smuggling (TIS: 7.2) as critical threats. Pakistan's garrison state model, driven by military dominance and ethnic repression, fuels instability. Recommendations include designating Pakistani Army and ISI as a terrorist organisation, enhancing border security with AI drones, and supporting Baloch/Pashtun movements. Data gaps in ISI networks require enhanced intelligence. These measures align with India's regional leadership goals.

Pakistan's ideological foundations, rooted in the two-nation theory, and its military-driven governance pose multifaceted threats to India. The conference highlighted Pakistan's internal crises—Baloch and Pashtun insurgencies, economic decline, and water scarcity—exacerbated by its reliance on terrorism and Chinese support. This report applies the Threat-Impact-Severity (TIS) model to quantify risks, integrating interdisciplinary insights from geopolitics, military strategy, and human rights. It provides a scientific, policy-relevant analysis for India's National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS), Prime Minister's Office and Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).

Threat Identification and Quantitative Assessment

The TIS model calculates threat scores as $TIS_i = L_i \times S_i \times \sum (W_j \times I_{ij})$, where L_i is likelihood (0–1), S_i is severity (1–5), and I_{ij} is impact (1–5) across security ($W_1=0.5$), economic ($W_2=0.3$), and political ($W_3=0.2$) domains. Data draws from conference insights, intelligence estimates, and recent events (e.g., Pahalgam attack).

Table1: Threat-Impact-Severity (TIS) Analysis

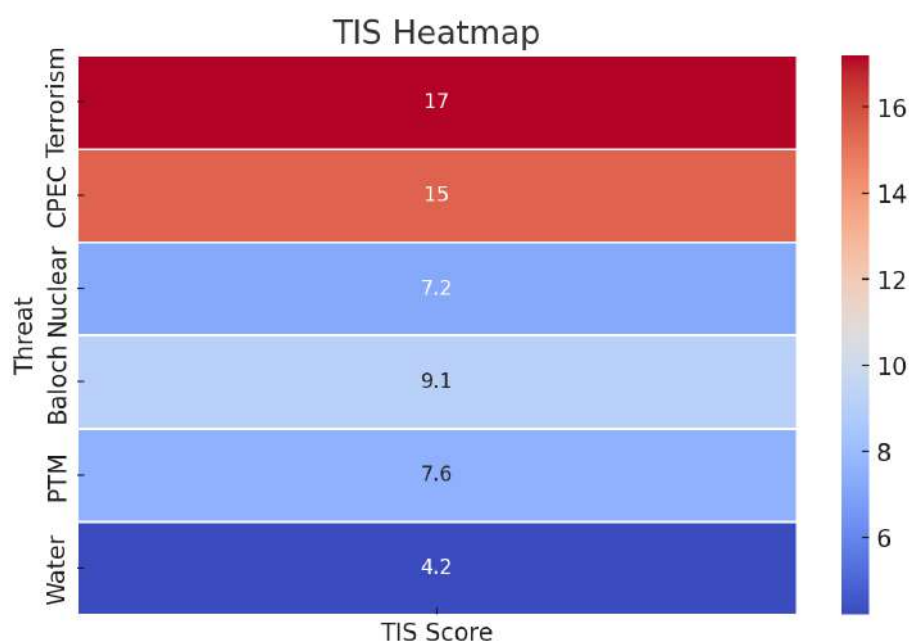
Threat	Likelihood	Severity	Security Impact (W=0.5)	Economic Impact (W=0.3)	Political Impact (W=0.2)	TIS Score	Mitigation
State-Sponsored Terrorism	0.8 (High)	5 (Critical)	5	4	3	17.2	Counter-intelligence, global sanctions
CPEC Expansion	0.9 (High)	4 (High)	5	4	3	15.48	Naval patrols, expose CPEC failures
Nuclear Smuggling	0.3 (Low)	5 (Critical)	5	5	4	7.2	IAEA intelligence sharing, CBRN defenses
Baloch Insurgency	0.6 (Medium)	4 (High)	4	3	3	9.12	Support Baloch advocacy, border security
PTM Suppression	0.5 (Medium)	4 (High)	4	3	3	7.6	Engage PTM leaders, monitor TTP-ISKP
Water Crisis	0.5 (Medium)	3 (Moderate)	3	3	2	4.2	Diplomatic leverage, treaty monitoring

Quantitative Analysis

- **State-Sponsored Terrorism (TIS: 17.2):** High likelihood (80%) due to ISI's history (e.g., 26 deaths in Pahalgam). Critical severity reflects mass casualty potential. Impacts include security strain (5/5), tourism losses (\$100M/year, 4/5), and diplomatic challenges (3/5).
- **CPEC Expansion (TIS: 15.48):** Near-certain (90%) due to Chinese investments. High severity from military enhancements (e.g., Gwadar base). Impacts include naval threats (5/5), trade losses (\$500M/year, 4/5), and strained Gulf ties (3/5).
- **Nuclear Smuggling (TIS: 7.2):** Low likelihood (30%) due to oversight, but critical severity from catastrophic potential. Impacts include urban threats (5/5), recovery costs (\$10B/event, 5/5), and global pressure (4/5).

- **Baloch Insurgency (TIS: 9.12):** Medium likelihood (60%) from rising BLA attacks. High severity from regional spillover. Impacts include border costs (4/5), aid expenses (\$50M/year, 3/5), and diplomatic opportunities (3/5).
- **PTM Suppression (TIS: 7.6):** Medium likelihood (50%) from PTM's growth. High severity from TTP-ISKP and AQIS risks. Impacts include Afghan project risks (\$3B, 4/5), trade disruptions (\$200M/year, 3/5), and regional influence loss (3/5).
- **Water Crisis (TIS: 4.2):** Medium likelihood (50%) from water stress. Moderate severity from diplomatic risks. Impacts include LoC tensions (3/5), agricultural losses (\$300M/year, 3/5), and image concerns (2/5).

Sensitivity analysis ($\pm 10\%$ on weights) confirms TIS stability (e.g., terrorism TIS range: 15.48–18.92). Monte Carlo simulations estimate likelihood ranges (e.g., nuclear smuggling: 25–35%).



3. Impact Analysis

- **Security:** Terrorism and CPEC pose existential threats, requiring enhanced counter-terrorism and naval capabilities. Nuclear smuggling, though less likely, demands robust CBRN defenses. Baloch and PTM issues strain border resources but offer diplomatic leverage.

- **Economic:** CPEC's trade disruptions and terrorism's tourism losses erode India's economic edge. Nuclear risks could incur catastrophic costs. Water and ethnic crises have moderate but cumulative economic impacts.
- **Political:** Terrorism and CPEC challenge India's global image and regional leadership. Supporting Baloch/PTM movements can expose Pakistan's abuses, but water disputes risk diplomatic backlash.

Limitations and Uncertainty

- **Data Gaps:** Incomplete intelligence on ISI networks and nuclear smuggling risks due to covert operations. Mitigated by enhanced HUMINT and IAEA collaboration.
- **Assumption Risks:** PTM's 50% likelihood relies on partial data; Afghan intelligence sharing can refine estimates.
- **External Factors:** U.S. policy under Trump 2.0 and Gulf states' transactional ties with Pakistan introduce volatility. Sensitivity analysis accounts for $\pm 10\%$ weight variations.

Pakistan's garrison state, driven by ISI terrorism, CPEC militarization, and ethnic repression, poses critical threats to India. The TIS model prioritizes terrorism (17.2) and CPEC (15.48) for immediate action, with nuclear risks (7.2) requiring vigilance. India must adopt a multi-pronged strategy—kinetic, diplomatic, and technological—to counter Pakistan's destabilizing ideology. Supporting Baloch and PTM movements, enhancing border defenses, dismantling Wahabi influenced Muslim schools of thought in India which promote the legacy of two nation theory and isolating Pakistan globally align with India's regional leadership goals.

Conclusion

The "Decoding the Idea of Pakistan" conference, convened by the Indic Researchers Forum on April 25-26, 2025, provided a comprehensive and multidimensional analysis of Pakistan's ideological foundations, military strategies, and geopolitical manoeuvres, with a particular focus on their implications for India's national security. Anchored by the tragic Pahalgam terrorist attack on April 22, 2025, which claimed 26 lives, the conference underscored the urgency of addressing Pakistan not merely as a neighbouring state but as a destabilizing ideological construct rooted in the flawed two-nation theory. Through rigorous interdisciplinary discussions spanning history, geopolitics, military strategy, and human rights, the conference illuminated Pakistan's internal contradictions and external aggressions, offering actionable policy recommendations to safeguard India's strategic interests and regional leadership.

The sessions collectively reiterated Pakistan as a garrison state, where the military's dominance over governance, economy, and society perpetuates a cycle of instability and aggression. Shri M.J. Akbar's inaugural address framed Pakistan as a "state of mind," driven by fear, illusion, and an unsustainable theocratic ideology that collapsed with Bangladesh's independence in 1971 and continues to unravel through Baloch and Pashtun freedom struggles. The historical analysis in Session one debunked the two-nation theory's legitimacy, highlighting its failure to account for Muslim heterogeneity and its role in fostering extremism.

Subsequent sessions detailed the Pakistan Army's hybrid warfare tactics, including proxy terrorism by groups like Jaish-e-Mohammed and Lashkar-e-Taiba, orchestrated by the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). The ISI's role as a "state within a state," engaging in narco-terrorism, organized crime, and influence operations across India, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh, emerged as a critical threat. The conference also addressed Pakistan's deepening alliance with China through the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), its waning influence in the Islamic world, and its strained relations with the United States under a potential Trump 2.0 administration.

The threat matrix and Threat-Impact-Severity (TIS) analysis provided a scientific framework to prioritize risks, identifying state-sponsored terrorism (TIS: 17.2), CPEC expansion (TIS: 15.48), and nuclear smuggling (TIS: 7.2) as critical threats. These findings underscore the need for immediate action to counter ISI-orchestrated attacks, mitigate China's strategic

encirclement, and secure nuclear materials. High-impact threats, such as the Baloch insurgency and Pashtun Tahafuz Movement (PTM) suppression, offer India diplomatic opportunities to expose Pakistan's human rights abuses while preparing for potential spillover effects. Moderate threats, including Pakistan's water crisis and cyber warfare, require sustained diplomatic and technological responses. The conference's policy recommendations—ranging from designating the Pakistani Army and ISI as terrorist organizations to supporting Baloch and Pashtun advocacy—provide a roadmap for India to neutralize Pakistan's multifaceted challenges and dismantling Wahabi influenced Muslim schools of thought in India which promote the legacy of two nation theory.

India's strategic response must balance kinetic, diplomatic, and technological measures to address Pakistan's destabilizing ideology and actions. The suspension of the Indus Water Treaty in April 2025, justified by Pakistan's persistent terrorism, exemplifies India's willingness to leverage strategic tools, though it demands careful calibration to avoid diplomatic backlash.

Enhancing border security with AI-based drones, strengthening naval presence in the Arabian Sea, and engaging non-Islamist forces in Bangladesh are critical to countering the emerging Pakistan-Bangladesh Islamist axis. Diplomatically, India should capitalize on its global influence to isolate Pakistan, particularly by securing U.S. sanctions against the ISI and amplifying Baloch and Pashtun voices at international forums. Internally, counter-radicalization programs and community policing are essential to prevent ISI exploitation of communal fault lines.

The conference's call for a long-term Pakistan doctrine, to be drafted by the National Security Council, is a pivotal step toward a cohesive strategy that transcends political cycles. This doctrine should integrate the conference's insights, prioritizing intelligence-driven operations, defense modernization, and regional coalitions to counter Pakistan's garrison state model.

By supporting ethnic movements like the Baloch and Phastun Tahafuz Movement, India can weaken Pakistan's territorial cohesion while reinforcing its commitment to human rights. Simultaneously, exposing CPEC's economic unsustainability and Pakistan's terror financing through global platforms will undermine its strategic narrative.

In conclusion, the "Decoding the Idea of Pakistan" conference has laid bare the ideological and structural flaws that render Pakistan a persistent threat to India and regional stability. As Pakistan grapples with its imploding garrison state—marked by economic decline, ethnic unrest, and military overreach—India has a strategic opportunity to assert its leadership. By implementing the conference's recommendations, India can not only neutralize Pakistan's threats but also reshape South Asia's geopolitical landscape in favor of stability, pluralism, and progress. The path forward demands resolve, precision, and a commitment to confronting Pakistan's destabilizing ideology head-on, ensuring a secure and prosperous future for India and the region.

Key Policy Recommendations to the Government of India

1. Designate Pakistani Army and ISI as Terrorist organisations

Specifically lobby the U.S. and UN to designate Pakistani Army and ISI as the terrorist organisations by presenting evidence of ISI's role in attacks like Pahalgam (April 2025), measurable by achieving sanctions within 12 months. Achievable through India's diplomatic influence in G20 and UNSC dialogues. Relevant to isolate Pakistan and curb its terror financing to offshoots like JeM, LeT etc. Time-bound to secure designation by April 2026.

2. Support Baloch Self-Determination

Specifically provide platforms for Baloch leaders like Dr. Mahrang Baloch at global forums covertly, measurable by hosting 3 events annually. Achievable via India's existing think tanks and UN engagements. Relevant to weaken Pakistan's territorial control and expose human rights abuses. Time-bound to establish a Baloch advocacy network by December 2026.

3. Amplify Pashtun Tahafuz Movement (PTM)

Specifically invite overseas PTM leaders to India for dialogues, measurable by 5 annual conferences. Achievable through MEA's outreach programs. Relevant to counter Pakistan's narrative and support ethnic rights. Time-bound to amplify PTM's global presence by mid-2026.

4. Enhance Border Security Technologies

Specifically deploy AI-based drones along the LoC, measurable by reducing infiltration incidents by 30% in 2 years. Achievable with DRDO and private sector collaboration. Relevant to counter Pakistan's infiltration tactics. Time-bound to complete deployment by December 2027.

5. Counter ISI's Influence Operations

Specifically establish a special cyber task force under R&AW, measurable by disrupting 10 ISI networks annually. Achievable with existing intelligence infrastructure. Relevant to neutralize propaganda and covert operations. Time-bound to operationalize by June 2026.

6. Strengthen Naval Presence in Arabian Sea

Specifically increase naval patrols near Gwadar, measurable by 20% more exercises annually. Achievable with Indian Navy's current fleet expansion. Relevant to counter China-Pakistan maritime threats. Time-bound to enhance presence by March 2027.

7. Leverage U.S. Relations under Trump 2.0

Specifically brief Trump administration on ISI's terror links, measurable by securing U.S. sanctions on ISI by 2026. Achievable via PM Modi's bilateral engagements. Relevant to align U.S. policy against Pakistan. Time-bound to achieve by December 2026.

8. Engage Non-Islamist Forces in Bangladesh

Specifically hold 5 bilateral meetings with BNP leaders annually, measurable by signed agreements. Achievable through India's diplomatic channels. Relevant to counter Pakistan-Bangladesh Islamist axis. Time-bound to strengthen ties by April 2026.

9. Expose CPEC's Failures Globally

Specifically publish 10 reports on CPEC's economic unsustainability, measurable by media citations. Achievable via think tanks like IDSA, Indic Researchers Forum (IRF). Relevant to undermine Pakistan's development narrative. Time-bound to complete by October 2026.

10. Develop Cyber Defense Capabilities

Specifically train 1,000 cyber experts annually, measurable by reduced cyber incidents. Achievable through CERT-In and private partnerships. Relevant to counter Pakistan's cyber warfare. Time-bound to establish by June 2027.

11. Monitor Nuclear Smuggling Risks

Specifically share intelligence with IAEA, measurable by 5 joint operations annually. Achievable via existing global partnerships. Relevant to mitigate CBRN threats. Time-bound to enhance monitoring by December 2026.

12. Utilize Water as a Strategic Tool

Specifically review Indus Water Treaty compliance, measurable by 3 diplomatic démarches annually. Achievable through MEA and water ministries. Relevant to pressure Pakistan's water-stressed economy. Time-bound to implement by April 2026.

13. Support Anti-Terrorism Coalitions

Specifically lead to 2 Indo - Israel anti-terror drills annually, measurable by participation rates. Achievable via India's Israel bilateral security ties. Relevant to counter TTP, AQIS and ISKP threats. Time-bound to strengthen coalitions by March 2027.

14. Promote Baloch and Pashtun Voices on Social Media

Specifically fund 50 social media campaigns annually, measurable by 1 million engagements. Achievable through digital agencies. Relevant to counter ISPR propaganda by ADG PI. Time-bound to launch by September 2026.

15. Counter Pakistan's Kashmir Narrative

Specifically issue 10 UN statements on PoK abuses annually, measurable by global media coverage. Achievable via India's UN mission. Relevant to debunk Pakistan's claims. Time-bound to sustain campaign through 2027.

16. Strengthen Intelligence Sharing with Gulf States

Specifically sign 3 intelligence-sharing agreements with UAE/Saudi Arabia, measurable by joint operations. Achievable through existing Gulf ties. Relevant to track Pakistan's terror financing. Time-bound to finalize by June 2026.

17. Invest in Precision Strike Capabilities

Specifically acquire 50 advanced MBRL systems, measurable by deployment along LoC. Achievable through defense budgets. Relevant to deter Pakistan's provocations. Time-bound to complete by December 2027.

18. Engage Afghanistan's Taliban Strategically

Specifically provide \$100 million in aid annually, measurable by project completions. Achievable via India's Afghan programs. Relevant to counter Pakistan's influence. Time-bound to expand engagement by April 2026.

19. Address Internal Vulnerabilities

Specifically train 5,000 police in counter-radicalization annually, measurable by reduced communal incidents. Achievable through MHA programs. Relevant to prevent ISI exploitation. Time-bound to implement by March 2027.

20. Formulate a Long-Term Pakistan Doctrine

Specifically draft a policy by NSC, measurable by parliamentary approval. Achievable with inter-ministerial coordination. Relevant to address Pakistan's multifaceted threats. Time-bound to finalize by December 2026.

Annexures

Our Previous Events

Fall of Kabul: Taliban Takeover of Afghanistan (September 2021)

Key Speakers



Maj Gen Rajan Kochhar
Former MGAOC Central
Command, Indian Army



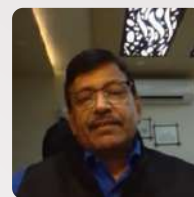
Dr. John Nomikos
Director, RIEAS



Syed Anwar Dawar
PTM Core Committee
Member, Pakistan



Harjit Sandhu, IPS
Former DIG, Counter-
Insurgency Ops, Manipur



AVM PK Srivastava
Former Director,
Bharat Dynamics Ltd.



Amb. M Ashraf Haidari
Afghanistan's Ambassador
to Sri Lanka



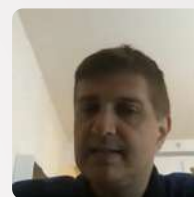
Shahmahmood Miakhel
Former Deputy Defense
Minister, Afghanistan



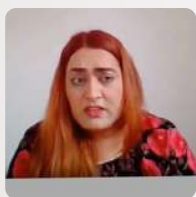
Habiba Sarabi
Former Governor Bamiyan
Province, Afghanistan



Dr Hans J. Schindler, Fmr.
Coordinator, ISIL, Al-Qaeda &
Taliban Monitoring team, UNSC



Dr. Christian Kaunert, Prof.
of International Security,
Dublin City University



Levsya Bayankhail
Secretary
PTM Europe



Maj Gen Shashi Asthana
Security Analyst



Dr. Nanda Kishor M S
Associate Professor
Pondicherry University



Lalit Ambardar
Security & Current Affairs
Analyst



Dr. Dheeraj P C
Lecturer
University of Hull

Indo-Pacific Conference (November 2021)

Key Speakers



Madhav Das Nalapat
Editorial Director,
ITV Network



Lt Gen Shokin Chauhan
Former DG, Assam Rifles



Cmde SL Deshmukh, Senior
VP, SUN Group's Aerospace
& Defence Vertical



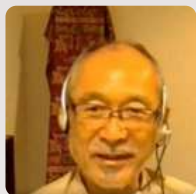
Velina Tchakarova
Founder, FACE



Dr. Nanda Kishor M S
Associate Professor
Pondicherry University



Maj Gen Shashi Asthana
Director Courses,
USI of India



Dr. Yoichiro Sato
Professor, Ritsumeikan
Asia Pacific University



Cmde Anil Jai Singh
VP, India Maritime
Foundation



Don McLain Gill
Lecturer, De La
Salle University



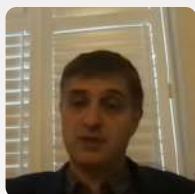
Prof V Yoga Jyotsna
Hon. Adjunct Fellow
National Maritime Foundation



Maj Gen Rajan Kochhar
Former MGAOC
Central Command



Frank Lehberger
Sinologist



Prof. Christian Kaunert
Professor, Dublin City
University



Cmde Johnson Odakkal
Honorary Adjunct Fellow
National Maritime Foundation



Dr. Amrita Jash
Assistant Professor
MAHE

Internal Security Conference (February 2022)

Key Speakers



Rajiv Malhotra
CEO, Infinity Foundation



Lt Gen Rakesh Sharma
Ex- Adjunct General,
Indian Army



Dr. AP Maheshwari
Former DG, CRPF



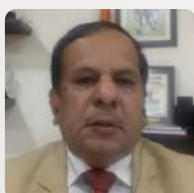
Lt Gen Vinod Bhatia
Former DGMO,
Indian Army



GBS Sidhu
Former Secretary, R&AW



V. Admiral Shekhar Sinha
Former Chief of Defense
Integrated Staff



Lt Gen AB Shivane
Fmr. DG, Mechanised
Forces, Indian Army



Lt Gen K J Singh
Former Western Army
Commander, Indian Army



Dr. Debi Dash, Coordinator
& Member, UNSC's Panel
of Experts on Yemen



Aditya Raj Kaul
Executive Editor
TV9 Network



Maj Gen Binoj Basnyat
Nepal Army; Strategic
Analyst, South Asia



Dr. Anshuman Behera
Associate Professor
NIAS



Maj Gen Rakesh Bhaduria
Head, Centre for Strategic
Studies & Simulations, CS3



Maj Gen Shashi Asthana
Director Courses,
USI of India



Dr. Abhinav Pandya
CEO, Usanas
Foundation



Dr. Nanda Kishor M S
Professor, Pondicherry
University



Maj Gen Rajan Kochhar
Former MGAOC
Central Command



Dr. Bhibhu Routray
Visiting Faculty, Naval War
College, Goa



Bashir Assad
Author, Editor-in-
-Chief, Kashmir Central



Cmde SL Deshmukh
Senior VP
SUN Group



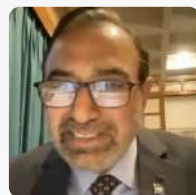
Dr. Dheeraj P C
Lecturer, University
of Hull



Lt Gen Shokin Chauhan
Former DG
Assam Rifles



Rami Desai
Author & Columnist



Harjit Sandhu, IPS
Former DIG, Counter-
Insurgency Ops, Manipur



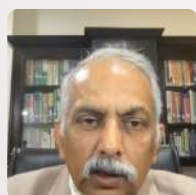
Vicky Nanjappa
Special Correspondent,
OneIndia



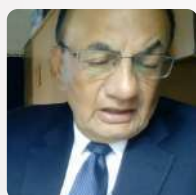
Brig. Rahul Bhonsle
Director, Security Risks
Asia



Gurdial Pandher, IPS
Former Director General
National Security Guards



Lt Gen Vinod Khandare
Principal Advisor,
Ministry of Defense



V. Admrl Dilip Deshpande
Board of Directors
Mazgaon Shipyard



Col DPK Pillay
Research Fellow
IDSA



Col Ram Athavale
CBRN expert



Dr. Pushp Bajaj,
Res. Fellow National
Maritime Foundation



Dr. Charru Malhotra
Tech expert, Professor
IIPA

Decoding the Idea of China Conference (April 2022)

Key Speakers



Air Marshal Anil Khosla
Former Vice Chief of Air
Staff, Indian Air force



Amb. Anil Trigunayat
Senior Advisor, Economic
Council of India



Prof. Salvatore Babbones
Associate professor,
University of Sydney



Dr. Swaran Singh
Visiting Prof., University
of British Columbia



Dr. Satoru Nagao
Fellow (Non Resident),
Hudson Institute



Dr. Jagannath Panda
Head, SCSA-IPA
Stockholm



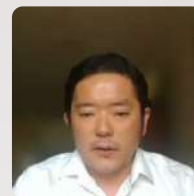
Dr. Stephen Nagy
Professor, International
Christian University



Zubayra Shamseden
Uyghur Human Rights
Activist



Tsering Passang, Founder,
Global Alliance of Tibet
& Persecuted Minorities



Russel Hsiao
Executive Director,
Global Taiwan Institute



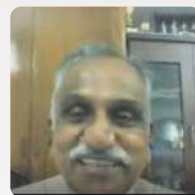
Catherine Li
Independent Artist &
Activist, Hong Kong



Chitanga Hlamalani
Research Associate African
Centre for the Study of USA



Dr. Zeno Leoni
Lecturer, King's
College London



Cmde RS Vasan
DG, Chennai Centre
for China Studies



Velina Tchakarova
Founder, FACE;
Former Director, AIES



Maj Gen Shashi Asthana
Director Courses,
USI of India



Prof. Benjamin Barton
Associate Professor, University
of Nottingham, Malaysia



Don McLain Gill
Lecturer, De La
Salle University



Dr. Nanda Kishor M S
Professor, Pondicherry
University



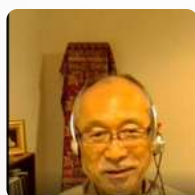
Maj Gen Naresh Badhani
Senior Advisor, Global
Education & Leadership Foundation



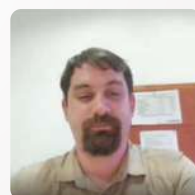
Col Pavithran Rajan
Director, DbauX
Technologies



Maj Gen PK Chakravarthy
Former ADG, Artillery
Indian Army



Dr. Yoichiro Sato
Professor, Ritsumeikan
Asia Pacific University



Prof. Stephen Westcott
Assistant Professor
MAHE



Lt Gen Shokin Chauhan
Former DG
Assam Rifles



V. Admiral Shekhar Sinha
Former Chief of Defense
Integrated Staff



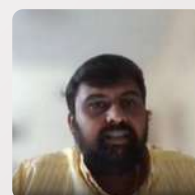
Lt Gen CA Krishnan
Fmr. Deputy Chief,
Indian Army



Prof. Dattesh Parulekar,
Assistant Professor
Goa University



Prof V Yoga Jyotsna
Hon. Adjunct Fellow
National Maritime Foundation



Balasubramanian C
Senior Research Officer
C3S Chennai



Lt Gen Vinod Bhatia
Former DGMO,
Indian Army



Cmde Vijesh Garg
Executive Director
C3S, Chennai



Maj Gen Rajan Kochhar
Former MGAOC
Central Command



Cmde SL Deshmukh
Senior VP
SUN Group



Lt Gen Rakesh Sharma
Ex- Adjunct General,
Indian Army



Dr. Pooja Bhatt
Consultant, Ministry
of External Affairs



Grp Capt Dr. R Srinivasan
Editor-in-Chief
EJSSS



Rajaram Muthukrishnan
Director, Voice Snap
Services Pvt. Ltd.



Dr. Anand V
Assistant Professor
MAHE



Dr. Amrita Jash
Assistant Professor
MAHE

International Counter-Terrorism Conference (August 2022)

Key Speakers



Lt Gen Vinod Khandare
Principal Advisor,
Ministry of Defense



Chuck Freilich
Former Deputy NSA,
Israel



Brig. Gen. Rami Efrati
Cyber Security Expert,
Israel



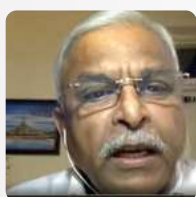
Lt Gen Dushyant Singh
Director General,
CLAWS



Col. Shlomo Mofaz
Director, Meir Amit Intel.
& Terrorism Centre



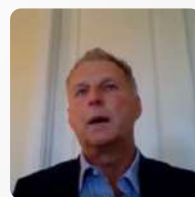
Maj Gen SVP Singh
Fmr. ADG, Artillery,
Indian Army



Lt Gen CA Krishnan
Fmr. Deputy Chief,
Indian Army



Jaganathan Saravanasamy
Fmr. ADGP, Mumbai Police
Maharashtra



B J Moravek
Director, AML & Sanctions
Compliance, Kaufman Rossin



Vicky Nanjappa
Special Correspondent,
OneIndia



Jassim Haji, President
Artificial Intelligence
Society, Bahrain



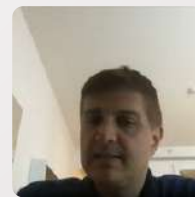
Col Ram Athavale
CBRN expert



AVM PK Srivastava
Former Director,
Bharat Dynamics Ltd.



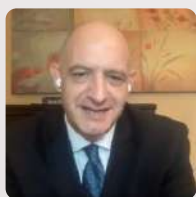
Cherise Abela Grech
Partner, GTG Advocates
Malta



Prof. Christian kaunert
Professor, Dublin
City University



Lt Gen Vinod Bhatia
Former DGMO,
Indian Army



Hans. Schindler
Director, Counter
Extremism Project



Dr. Debi Dash, Coordinator
& Member, UNSC's Panel
of Experts on Yemen



Cmde SL Deshmukh
Senior VP
SUN Group



Harjit Sandhu, IPS
Former DIG, Counter-
Insurgency Ops, Manipur



Pawel Bernat
Senior Lecturer
Polish Airforce University



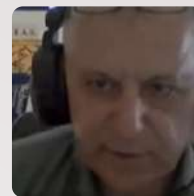
Dr. Malkanthi Hettiarachchi
Clinical Psychologist;
Counterterrorism Instructor



Maj Gen Rakesh Bhaduria
Head, Centre for Strategic
Studies & Simulations, CS3



Maj Gen Rajan Kochhar
Former MGAOC
Central Command



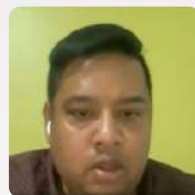
Dr. John Nomikos
Director, RIEAS
Athens



Dr. Michael Barak
Senior Researcher, Institute
of Counter-Terrorism



Dr. Abhinav Pandya
CEO, Usanas
Foundation



Mubashar Hasan, PhD
Adjunct Fellow, Western
Sydney University



Maj Gen Shashi Asthana
Director Courses,
USI of India



Meghna Muralidharan
Geopolitical Risk Analyst
Max Security



Lt Gen AK Bhatt
Former GOC 15 Corps
Indian Army



Adil Rasheed
Research Fellow
MP-IDSA



Dr. Dheeraj P C
Lecturer, University
of Hull



Dr. Rohan Gunaratna
Professor, Nanyang
Technological University



Lt Gen Shokin Chauhan
Former DG
Assam Rifles



Dr. Nanda Kishor M S
Professor, Pondicherry
University

Russia-Ukraine War (March 2022 & 2023)

Key Speakers



Ram Madhav
National Executive
Member, RSS



Dr. Ajay Kumar
Fmr. Defence Secretary,
Min. of Defence



Lt Gen Raj Shukla
Member, UPSC



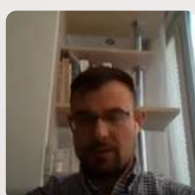
Lt Gen PR Shankar
Fmr. DG, Artillery,
Indian Army



Lt Gen RS Panwar,
Cyber Security Expert



Alexander Dudchak
Political Scientist and
Economist, Russia



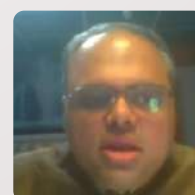
Igor Fedyk
Analyst, Centre for Army
Conversion & Disarmament
Studies, Kyiv



Przemyslaw Ozierski
Researcher & Consultant,
Central Asia Region



Cmde RS Vasan
DG, Chennai Centre
for China Studies



Prof. Dattesh Parulekar,
Assistant Professor
Goa University



Hans. Schindler
Director, Counter
Extremism Project



Air Marshal Anil Khosla
Former Vice Chief of Air
Staff, Indian Air force



Velina Tchakarova
Founder, FACE



AVM PK Srivastava
Former Director,
Bharat Dynamics Ltd.



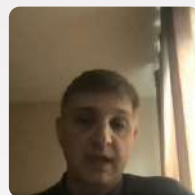
Dr. Nanda Kishor M S
Professor, Pondicherry
University



Prof. M D Nalapat
Editorial Director
Itv Network



Dr. Satoru Nagao
Fellow (Non Resident)
Japan



Prof. Christian Kaunert
Professor, Dublin
City University



Maj Gen Shashi Asthana
Director Courses,
USI of India



Lt Gen Shokin Chauhan
Former DG
Assam Rifles



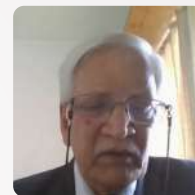
Amb. Anil Trigunayat
Former Indian Ambassador
to Jordan, Libya and Malta



Dr. Swaran Singh
Visiting Prof., University
of British Columbia



Maj Gen Rajan Kochhar
Former MGAOC
Central Command



Cmde SL Deshmukh
Senior VP
SUN Group

Bharat-Nippon (Japan) Indic Dialogue (October 2023)

Key Speakers



Tomohiko Taniguchi
Former Special Advisor
to Late PM Shinzo Abe



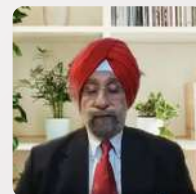
Bajjant Panda
National Vice President
BJP



Ikuo Kawauchi
India Researcher &
Consultant



Dr. Jagannath Panda
Head, SCSA-IPA
Stockholm



Maj Gen SVP Singh
Former ADG, Artillery
Indian Army



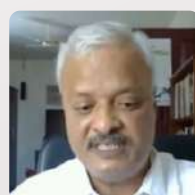
Prof. Satoshi Ikeuchi
Professor, University
of Tokyo



Nupur Tewari
Motivational Speaker,
India-japan Relations Expert



Prof. M D Nalapat
Editorial Director
Itv Network



Grp. Capt. Dr Srinivasan
Editor-in-Chief
EJSSS



Dr. Nanda Kishor M S
Professor, Pondicherry
University



Dr. Satoru Nagao
Fellow (Non Resident)
Japan



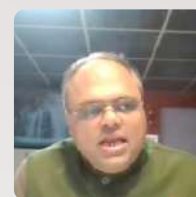
Maj Gen Rajan Kochhar
Former MGAOC
Central Command



Cmde Sujeet Samaddar
Director & CEO,
Shinmaywa Industries



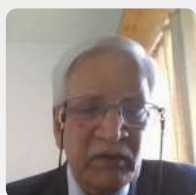
Brig. Ramesh Balan
Chief of Staff, SWYM
Tech Pvt. Ltd.



Prof. Dattesh Parulekar
Assistant Professor
Goa University



Nanae Baldauff
Associate Research
Fellow, UNU-CRIS



Cmde SL Deshmukh
Senior VP
SUN Group



Siddharth Deshmukh
President, India-Japan
Business Council



M S Sudhakaran
Founder & CEO
Suja Shoei Industries

Countering Islamic Jihad: A Collaborative Approach (November 2023)

Key Speakers



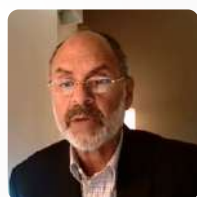
Naor Gilon
Israel's Ambassador
to India



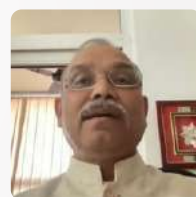
Maj Gen GD Bakshi
Editor, Indian Military
Review



**Michael Rubin, Senior
Fellow, American
Enterprise Institute**



Prof. Chuck Freilich
Former Deputy NSA
Israel



Lt Gen Dushyant Singh
Director, CLAWS
New Delhi



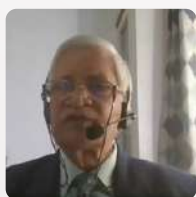
Maj Gen Rajan Kochhar
Former MGAOC
Central Command



Dr. John Nomikos
Director, RIEAS
Athens



Dr. Anshuman Behera
Associate Professor
NIAS



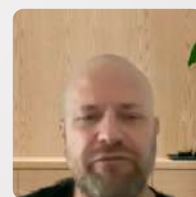
Cmde SL Deshmukh
senior VP
SUN Group



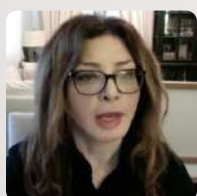
Hans. Schindler
Director, Counter
Extremism Project



Francesco B. Errico
Executive Director
Monitoring Jihad Project



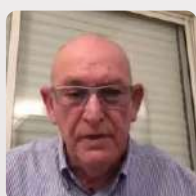
Prof. Ami Pedahzur
Director, Chaikin Chair
for Geo-Strategy



Cynthia Farahat
Author; Counterterrorism
Expert



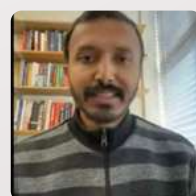
Lalit Ambardar
Security Analyst



Brig Gen Rami Efrati
Cybersecurity Expert;
Former IDF



Dr. Nanda Kishor M S
Professor, Pondicherry
University



Dr. Dheeraj P C
Lecturer, University
of Hull



Prof. Christian Kaunert
Professor, Dublin
City University

Pakistan's Pashtun Challenge and Pashtun Tahafuz Movement

Key Speakers



Tilak Devasher
Member, National Security
Advisory Board



Fazall-Ur Rahman Afridi
Head, PTM Committee on
International Advocacy &
Foreign Affairs



Syed Anwar Dawar
PTM Core Committee
Member, Pakistan



Levsya Bayankhail
Secretary PTM
Europe



Prof. M D Nalapat
Editorial Director
Itv Network

Launch of Two-and-a-Half Front Security Publication 2023 (December)

Key Speakers



Lt Gen Vinod Bhatia
Former DGMO
Indian Army



Lt Gen Shokin Chauhan
Former DG
Assam Rifles



Cmde SL Deshmukh (Retd.)
Senior Vice President
SUN Group (Defense &
Aerospace)



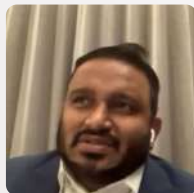
Grp. Capt. Dr Srinivasan
Editor-in-Chief
EJSSS



Yashas Arya
Founder & Managing Director
Indic Researchers Forum

India-Maldives Relations and Operation Cactus 2024 (January)

Key Speakers



Ahmed Ateeb
Former Vice President;
Former Tourism Minister
Maldives



Lt Gen Vinod Bhatia
Former DGMO
Indian Army



Prof. Nanda Kishor M S
Associate Professor
Pondicherry University

Red Sea Crisis & India as Net Security Provider in the Region 2024 (February)

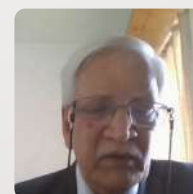
Key Speakers



Srikumar Menon, IFS (Retd.)
Former Ambassador to Angola,
South Sudan and Sao Tome &
Principe



Cmde Anil Jai Singh (Retd.)
National Vice President
India Maritime Fondation



Cmde SL Deshmukh (Retd.)
Senior Vice President
SUN Group (Defense & Aerospace)

Civil Society: The New Frontier of War (May 2023)

Key Speakers



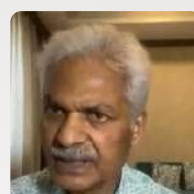
Dr. Suresh P. Prabhu
Fmr. Union Cabinet Minister
Fmr. G7 & G20 Sherpa



Amb. Kanwal Sibal
Chancellor, Jawaharlal
Nehru University



Rajiv Malhotra
CEO, Infinity Foundation



Yashovardhan Azad
Fmr. Special Director
Intelligence Bureau



Lt Gen Raj Shukla
Member, Union Public
Service Commission



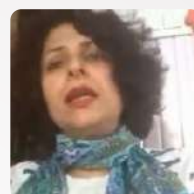
Amb. Anil Trigunayat
Fmr. Indian Ambassador to
Jordan, Malta & Libya



Michael Rubin
Senior Fellow, American
Enterprise Institute



Amb. Soumen Ray
Fmr. Indian Ambassador
to West Asia & Africa



Aarti Tikoo Singh
Editor-in-Chief
The New Indian



Lt Gen RS Panwar
Distinguished Fellow
USI of India



Rami Desai
Author, Anthropologist,
Scholar, Northeast India



Maj Gen GD Bakshi
Editor,
Indian Military Review



Maj Gan Rajan Kochhar
Former MGAOC Central
Command



BVS Saikrishna, IRS (Retd.)
Director & CEO
Pinaca Technologies



Maj Gen Rajiv Narayanan
Former ADG,
Military Operations



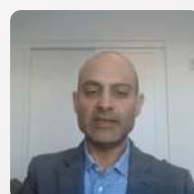
Madhav Das Nalapat
Editorial Director,
ITV Network



Lt Gen Shokin Chauhan
Former DG, Assam Rifles



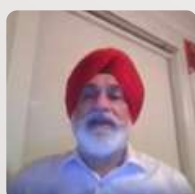
Cmde SL Deshmukh, Senior
VP, SUN Group's Aerospace
& Defence Vertical



Samir Kalra
Managing Director
Hindu American Foundation



Dr. Abhinav Pandya
Founder & CEO,
Usanas Foundation



Brig. Kuldip Singh
Fmr. Principal Director
National Security Council



Dr. Anshuman Behera
Associate Professor
NIAS

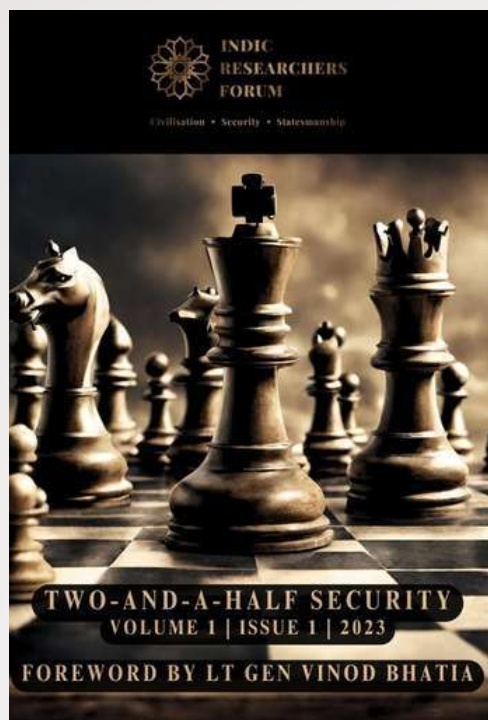


Lt Col JS Sodhi
Editor, Global & Strategic
Defense News

Published Reports, Journals and Research Articles

Two-and-a-half Front Annual Security Journal

Link : https://indicrf.org/uploads/geopolitical_report/de6be07982fcde815d66d617d2a35d96.pdf



In Memory of Late General Bipin Rawat

PVSM, UYSM, AVSM, YSM, SM, VSM, ADC



(Photo by Arvind Yadav/Hindustan Times via Getty Images)

First Chief of Defense Staff

16 March 1958 - 8 December 2021

Foreword

Indic Researchers Forum in the inaugural issue aptly dedicated to India's first CDS General Bipin Rawat, has come up with high-quality content, and well-researched articles on security and geopolitical challenges and opportunities impacting India's peace, progress, and stability. The journal covers the 'Two and a Half Front' - the primary security threat facing India. The first chapter is on India's China challenge, detailing the



multi-domain threats to include maritime security in the Indo-Pacific region including the perspective of various stakeholders as well as the convergence of interests. The interview with Commodore SL Deshmukh a known China and maritime expert captures the Indo-Pacific maritime dimension. The complex and vexed India-China 'Boundary Question' touches the historical background in brief and goes on to discuss the contentious areas and CBMs, in an easy to comprehend manner. China's Challenge in the information and cyber domains is well covered, as are the measures initiated by India to meet and mitigate the Cyber threat and Information warfare being waged by China.

The second chapter of the journal is on 'Internal Security'. The interview with General Shaubin Chauhan on the strife in Manipur and the road map for peace gives a pragmatic and factual insight on a sensitive subject. Then there is an article each on Energy Security, Countering Extremism and radicalisation and Countering Terrorism. The Internal security challenges are one too many, however, the Journal keeps the focus on key issues, critical to national security, rather than attempting to cover all Internal security threats.

The third and final chapter is on Pakistan - our Western adversary. The interview with Mr. Fazal Ur Rehman Afridi of Pakistan details the Pakistan armies terror factory and counter-terrorist strategy of employing F 16 Fighter aircraft and heavy Artillery against Pashtuns killing nearly 80,000 people, and the growth of the Pashtun Tahafuz Movement (PTM). The researched article on Laskar - E - Taiba (LeT) analyses major terror attacks carried out by LeT, discussing the terrorist organisation's strategic alliance and global reach. A major emerging threat of narcotics emanating from Pakistan and its implications for India specially Kashmir and Punjab is well analysed.

The final article in the journal comprehensively covers the Indus Water Treaty and Pakistan's water security challenges.

Indic Researchers Forum has provided an excellent platform through this well-conceptualised journal for young scholars to analyse and argue critical security challenges impacting India. The quality of research is exceptional and easy to read and comprehend, contributing to policy formulation.

December 2023

Lt Gen Vinod Bhatia, PVSM, AVSM, SM (Retd.)
Senior Advisor, Indic Researchers Forum
Former Director General, Military Operations

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Published Reports, Journals and Research Articles

Decoding Islamic Jihad: A Collaborative Approach Report

Link : https://indicrf.org/uploads/conference_report/1dc5ebacede015601a008e116db41201.pdf



YOUTUBE LINKS

INAUGURAL SESSION

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SESSION 1: JIHAD IN SUBCONTINENT AND BHARAT'S NATIONAL SECURITY

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SESSION 2: DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF JIHAD

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH](#)



SESSION 3: JIHAD IN WEST ASIA AND ITS GLOBAL RAMIFICATIONS

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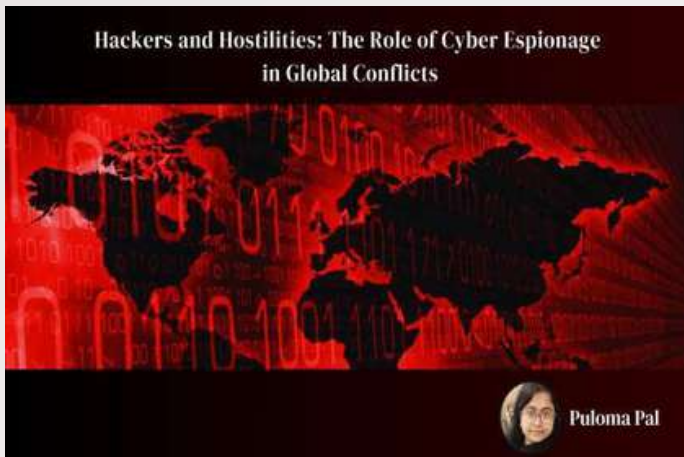
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Published Reports, Journals and Research Articles

Research Articles

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Published Reports, Journals and Research Articles

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Website - <https://indicrf.org/>

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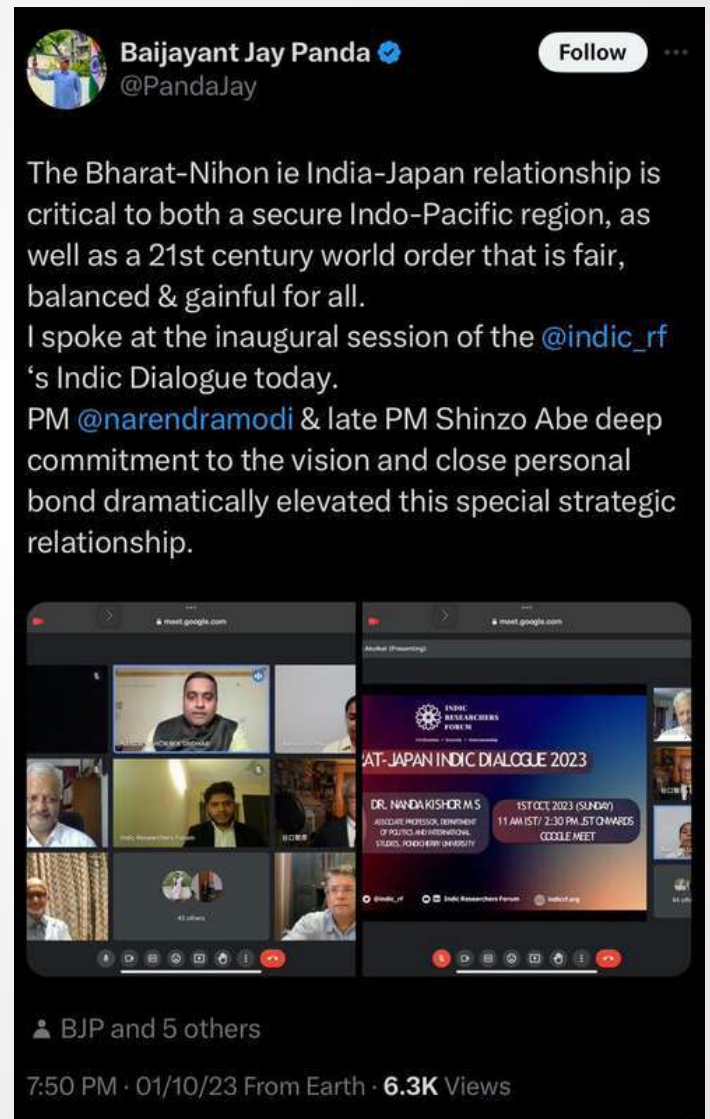
Twitter - [/indic_rf](#)

Youtube: [indicrf](#)

LinkedIn - [/indic-researchers-forum](#)



Dr. Suresh Prabhu, (Former Union Cabinet Minister for Railways, Civil Aviation & Commerce & Industry)- delivering the inaugural address at Civil Society: The New Frontier of War Conference



Baijayant Panda (National Vice President of BJP)- delivering the inaugural address at Bharat-Japan Indic Dialogue 2023

Indic Researchers Forum on Social Media



Afghan Embassy Colombo
@AfghanistanInLK

Ambassador @MAshrafHaidari spoke on a panel hosted by @indic_rf re "Fall of Kabul: Recalibrating the Security Challenges." He discussed the recent developments in Afghanistan with far-reaching implications for regional stability and international peace and security. @UNAMAnews



5:56 pm · 25 Sep 21 · Twitter for Android



Velina Tchakarova @vtchak... · 12/03/22

Tune in to this highly interesting panel discussion on Decoding the Global Order following Russia's war on Ukraine.

📅 Tomorrow, March 12, 2022

🕒 at 7pm IST/2:30pm CET onwards.

@asthana_shashi @MD_Nalapat

@ChristianKaune1 @OfficerNagao @indic_rf

@RajivMessage

Indic Researchers Forum · 11/03/22

Registration Link- forms.gle/XdGdB6sLdFGsGt... @asthana_shashi @vtchakarova @MD_Nalapat @ChristianKaune1 @OfficerNagao



🗨️ 7 📌 36



Major General (Dr) S B Asth... · 17/05/22

Pleasure chairing session with eminent speakers representing #Xinjiang #Tibet #HongKong #Taiwan @asthana_shashi @indic_rf @india_narrative @IndoPac_Info @InsightGL @DhAnAnjAyParkhe

Indic Researchers Forum · 17/05/22

Session 8: Decoding Chinese Aggression and Occupation | Decoding the I...
youtu.be/yq1VnwzXfrc via @YouTube



Session 8: Decoding Chinese Aggression and Occupation



Siddharth Deshmukh @siddh... · 28/09/23

I am thrilled to have been invited as a keynote speaker for the Bharat-Japan Indic Dialog 2023! 🇮🇳 🇯🇵 I am looking forward to discussing the prospects of Japanese investment in India's energy sector. 🌍 Let's power up for a brighter, greener future! ⚡

Indic Researchers Forum · 28/09/23

Registration Link: docs.google.com/forms/d/18SjBw...

E- certificates will be given to the participants. It is mandatory to attend all the sessions. @siddhud





Raj Shukla
@Gen_RajShukla

Follow

One year of Ukraine and Implications For India.
Courtesy Indic Research Forum

YouTube



Lt Gen Raj Shukla (Retd.) | Member, UPSC |
Keynote Address | One Year...

Website - <https://indicrf.org/> Instagram - https://www.instagram.com/indic_rf/ Twitter - https://www.instagram.com/indic_rf/ LinkedIn - <https://www.linkedin.com...>

6:05 PM · 13/03/23 From Earth · 3.8K Views

8 Reposts 33 Likes 7 Bookmarks



Amb Rtn. Anil Trigunayat @an... · 18/05/22

Those interested may like to watch this interesting discussion by @indic_rf @AmbTrigunayat

Indic Researchers Forum · 17/05/22

Session 6: Decoding China's Geopolitical Ambitions | Decoding the Idea... youtu.be/S3SPfoLg-D8 via @YouTube



Session 6: Decoding China's Geopolitical Ambitions



Post



Lt Gen P R Shankar (R)
@palepurshankar

Follow

It was a pleasure to take part in the event...it led me to convert my presentation into an article in the Financial Times. Read @<https://gunnersshot.com/2023/03/13/lessons-from-the-russo-ukrainian-war-on-civil-military-fusion-by-lt-gen-p-r-shankar-r/>

Indic Researchers Forum @indic_rf · 14/03/23

Session 1: Warfare Strategies and Battlefield Lessons from the War | One... youtu.be/ISPm9-92ns via @YouTube @AnilKhosla16 @chauhan_shokin @palepurshankar @asthana_shashi @ltgenrspanwar

3:21 PM · 14/03/23 From Earth · 543 Views



Michael Barak PhD, ... מיכאל ברק · 16/08/22

Many thanks to @indic_rf for hosting me at the conference. I spoke on three non-state terror actors Hamas, PIJ and the Global Jihad organizations.



Levsa Bayankhail ليوٽا بيانخييل · 05/02/22 ...

First of all my compliments to Indic Researchers Forum for organising this event on the occasion of the birth anniversary of Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan.

It was a privilege to celebrate this day in honour of a great spiritual leader who fought for independence of the subcontinent 1/



Indic Researchers Forum

Celebrates

BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF BACHA KHAN

in conversation with



PROF. MADHAV DAS NALAPAT
Vice-Chair of the Manipal Advanced Research Group at the Manipal University and Editorial Director of ITV Network



LEVSA BAYANKHAIL
Human Rights Activist, Former Information Secretary, Pashtun Tahafuz Movement

FEBRUARY 5, 2022 | 4:30 PM (IST) | PLATFORM: GOOGLE MEET

GBS Sidhu @GbsSidhu · 27/02/22 ...

Thanks @indic_rf for organizing d webinar. Good discussion. Hope the concerned authorities would take note of my suggestion regarding the appointment of TRC to resolve this festering issue. @swatichopra1



Indic Researchers Forum · 26/02/22

Decoding the Khalistan Movement-Punjab Militancy | Two-and-a Half Front:...
youtu.be/eubb8gYxqdU via @YouTube
@harjitss1 @GbsSidhu

Lt. General Vinod G. Khand... ✓ · 25/03/22 ...

Thank you @indic_rf, it's an honour to once again be in service of the nation and to be able to inspire young minds in doing the same!



Indic Researchers Forum · 25/03/22

Heartiest Congratulations to Lt Gen Vinod Khandare, @VGK_India on being appointed as Adviser in the Ministry of Defence. @indic_rf as a youth-led Think Tank looks up to your commitment to the nation as a...

7 3 45

Christian Kaunert @ChristianKaune1 ...

Many thanks for this kind invitation, @indic_rf !! I very much enjoyed being at your great event!!

@eucter @LawGovDCU @HumanitiesDCU @USWISRM @USWPolicing_Sec @usw_flse @ErasmusIMSISS @MYBISA @UACES @europeanisa @ECPR_SGIR @ECPR_SGEU @NATO



Indic Researchers Forum @indic_rf · 23/08/22

Session 3: Decoding the Terror Threats in West | ICTC 2022 | Indic Resea... youtu.be/w-KW1vw8b8c via @YouTube @rieasgreece @ChristianKaune1

12:59 PM · 23/08/22 From Earth

Post

Maj Gen (Dr)GD Bakshi SM,VSM(retd) ✓ @GeneralBakshi ...

Indic Researchers Forum organised excellent seminar on countering IsalmiJihad: a Collaborative effort.Gave keynote adress along with HE Ambassador of Israel. Also spoke on immediate lessons learnt from 7/10 . So far south asia has not seen use of mass rockets strikes.

10:36 PM · 17/11/23 From Earth · 5.1K Views

10 Replies 76 Likes



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BHUTTO HANGED

Govt Press note on execution of Z. A. Bhutto

Ex-PM buried in family graveyard of Nau Dero

Four others await decision on mercy petitions

RAWALPINDI, APRIL 9. — A Press note issued to the Ministry of Interior said that Z.A. Bhutto, the former Prime Minister, was hanged at 11.30 a.m. today at the gallows erected in the Mauj-e-Azeem Jail, Rawalpindi. The body of the former Prime Minister was taken to the family graveyard of Nau Dero, near Rawalpindi, for burial. The body was taken to the graveyard by a motorcade. The motorcade was led by the Minister of Interior, Mr. Iqbal Khan. The motorcade was followed by a large crowd of people. The body was buried in the family graveyard of Nau Dero. The body was buried in the family graveyard of Nau Dero. The body was buried in the family graveyard of Nau Dero.

