



## Females Pay the Price as Taliban Dodges Sanctions

*Kambaiz Rafi | 18 April 2023*

“The World Food Program projected that between November 2022 and March 2023 the number of food-insecure Afghans would rise to 20 million – 3.2 million of them under the age of five. Some six million people were classed in urgent need of assistance.”

**Read More:** <https://asiatimes.com/2023/04/females-pay-the-price-as-taliban-dodges-sanctions/>

\*\*\*

## Islamic State Khorasan Province is a Growing Threat in Afghanistan and Beyond

*Colin P. Clarke | 29 April 2023*

“Within Afghanistan’s borders, a witch’s brew of terrorist and insurgent groups is metastasizing, and the situation is beginning to feel eerily similar to the pre-9/11 era.”

**Read More:** <https://thediplomat.com/2023/04/islamic-state-khorasan-province-is-a-growing-threat-in-afghanistan-and-beyond/>

\*\*\*

## **Taliban vs the Republic**

*Kabir Taneja | 1 May 2023*

“The crisis in Afghanistan is multidimensional. For the Afghans, it is fast drifting towards a question of survivability; for the international community, how best to deal with the reality of the Taliban remains a challenge.”

**Read More:** <https://www.telegraphindia.com/opinion/taliban-vs-the-republic-crisis-in-afghanistan-is-multidimensional/cid/1933526>

\*\*\*

## **Debt-Riddled Pakistan: An Unwilling Importer of Climate Damages**

*Wajid Islam | 24 April 2023*

“More likely, it is the beginning of the series of devastations confronting the country in coming times; the Global Climate Risk Index (2021) ranks Pakistan among the top 10 countries most vulnerable to the climate crisis.”

**Read More:** <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/southasia/2023/04/24/debt-riddled-pakistan-an-unwilling-importer-of-climate-damages/>

\*\*\*

## **The Post-Musharraf Hybrid Experiment is Approaching its Logical End**

*Raza Rumi | 2 May 2023*

“A long-term caretaker government comprising technocrats is an option under consideration, and given the situation, such a ‘softer breakdown’ of the ‘system’ might be more manageable than an outright military takeover. Will the politicians rise to the occasion?”

**Read More:** <https://www.thefridaytimes.com/2023/05/02/post-musharraf-hybrid-experiment-reaching-logical-end/>

\*\*\*

## **Pakistan and the IMF: Ongoing Politicization and a Burgeoning Trust Deficit**

*Asad Ejaz Butt | 3 May 2023*

“IMF programs typically require financial managers of recipient countries to adopt policies aimed at macroeconomic stability to fix structural issues in the economy. While the IMF took this approach with Pakistan, implementing these policy proves challenging for politicians and the macro-economic managers of the country.”

**Read More:** <https://southasianvoices.org/pakistan-and-the-imf-ongoing-politicization-and-a-burgeoning-trust-deficit/>

## **Military Back In The Thick Of Things In Pakistan**

*Shalini Chawla | 12 May 2023*

“Pak leadership intends to pursue cases against Imran in order to remove him from the political scene.”

**Read More:** <https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/comment/military-back-in-the-thick-of-things-in-pakistan-506954>

\*\*\*

## **Can Imran Khan Escape NAB In Al-Qadir Trust Case?**

*Hassan Naqvi | 17 May 2023*

“Former premier Imran Khan is in hot waters as he may not be able to provide complete documents or give satisfactory answers to NAB.”

**Read More:** <https://www.thefridaytimes.com/2023/05/17/nab-imran-khan-al-qadir-trust-case-exclusive/>

\*\*\*

## **Imran Khan Cannot Win Back Power By Targeting Pakistan’s Military**

*Ayesha Siddiqa | 21 May 2023*

“Supporters’ hopes of following Turkish example are doomed.”

**Read More:** <https://asia.nikkei.com/Opinion/Imran-Khan-cannot-win-back-power-by-targeting-Pakistan-s-military>

\*\*\*

## **Pakistan’s Economy Faces An Uncertain Future**

*Ahtasam Ahmad | 21 May 2023*

“Pakistan’s deteriorating fiscal situation, political unrest, and failure to resume the IMF program have heightened concerns about default and further devaluation of the Pakistani Rupee.”

**Read More:** <https://www.thefridaytimes.com/2023/05/21/pakistans-economy-faces-an-uncertain-future/>

\*\*\*

## **Iran-Saudi Deal and Its Geopolitical Connotations**

*Fazzur Rahman Siddiqui | 16 May 2023*

“In a shifting Middle East landscape, the surprising Iran-Saudi Arabia truce, brokered by China, marks a significant diplomatic development alongside Qatar’s blockade end, Türkiye’s normalization and Syria’s potential Arab League reinstatement.”

**Read More:** [https://www.dailysabah.com/opinion/op-ed/iran-saudi-deal-and-its-geopolitical-connotations?gallery\\_image=undefined#big](https://www.dailysabah.com/opinion/op-ed/iran-saudi-deal-and-its-geopolitical-connotations?gallery_image=undefined#big)

**Paul R. Pillar 6 May 2023***Paul R. Pillar | 6 May 2023*

“The resistance to recognizing that a one-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian is the only realistic way forward at this point has provoked pushback in Washington DC policy circles.”

**Read More:** <https://nationalinterest.org/blog/paul-pillar/denying-reality-israel-palestine-situation-206454>

\*\*\*

**Upcoming China-Central Asia Summit to Offer a ‘New Blueprint’ for Relations***Catherine Putz | 9 May 2023*

“While mulling Beijing’s political and security aspirations in Central Asia certainly predates 2022, the Russian invasion of Ukraine has amplified the opportunities the region presents to China in Moscow’s weakening shadow.”

**Read More:** <https://thediplomat.com/2023/05/upcoming-china-central-asia-summit-to-offer-a-new-blueprint-for-relations/>

\*\*\*

**Bangladesh’s Water Crisis and The Problem of A ‘Green’ Solution***Sonia Ahmad and Neema Kudva | 7 May 2023*

“The negative impact of a water project involving a nature-based solution in the city of Khulna should be a cautionary tale for policymakers.”

**Read More:** <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2023/5/7/bangladeshs-water-crisis-and-the-problem-of-a-green-solution>

\*\*\*

**Bangladesh Can Learn From China’s Development Experience Amid Pressure To Choose Sides***Liu Zongyi | 18 May 2023*

“Like many developing countries, Bangladesh is more focused on climate change, ending poverty and securing investment than geopolitical wrangling. China has first-hand experience with many of the concerns countries like Bangladesh are experiencing and can provide important guidance.”

**Read More:** <https://www.scmp.com/comment/opinion/article/3220827/bangladesh-can-learn-chinas-development-experience-amid-pressure-choose-sides>

\*\*\*

## Myanmar Rohingya: What Future For The Refugee Baby Lucky To Survive?

*Liu Zongyi | 18 May 2023*

“Like many developing countries, Bangladesh is more focused on climate change, ending poverty and securing investment than geopolitical wrangling. China has first-hand experience with many of the concerns countries like Bangladesh are experiencing and can provide important guidance.”

**Read More:** <https://www.scmp.com/comment/opinion/article/3220827/bangladesh-can-learn-chinas-development-experience-amid-pressure-choose-sides>

\*\*\*



## REGION IN PICTURES

Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan meets with Devlet Bahçeli, leader of the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP), Mustafa Destici, leader of the Turkey's Grand Unity Party (BBP) and Onder Aksakal, leader of Democratic Left Party (DSP), in Ankara, Turkey, April 27, 2023.



Pic Credits: - Reuters

\*\*\*

China and Pakistan have agreed to include Afghanistan to be part of the multi-billion-dollar Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) as the sanction-hit country struggles to raise funds for infrastructure.



Pic Credits: WION

\*\*\*

Normal life was disrupted in Sri Lanka's northern and eastern provinces on Tuesday due to widespread protests by the main Tamil party Tamil National Alliance against a new controversial anti-terrorism bill drafted to replace a draconian counter-terrorism law.



Pic Credits: The Indian express

\*\*\*

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar greets his Pakistani counterpart Bilawal Bhutto Zardari as they meet during the SCO Council of Foreign Ministers meeting in Goa.



Pic Credits: The Print

\*\*\*



Centre for Air Power Studies

The Centre for Air Power Studies (CAPS) is an independent, non-profit think tank that undertakes and promotes policy related research, study and discussion on defence and military issues, trends, and development in air power and space for civil and military purposes, as also related issues of national security. The Centre is headed by Air Marshal Anil Chopra PVSM AVSM VM VSM (Retd).

Centre for Air Power Studies

P-284, Arjan Path, Subroto Park, New Delhi 110010

Tel: +91 11 25699130/32, Fax: +91 11 25682533

NOTE: **Regional Opinion and Trends** aims to capture prevailing opinions in South Asia and West Asia.

Editor: Dr Shalini Chawla e-mail: shaluchawla@yahoo.com

Compilation and Designing: Colonel Prateek Prashar, Ms Anadi, Ms Priyadarshini Baruah and Mr Rohit Singh

The views expressed in this brief are those of the author and not necessarily of the Centre or any other organisation.