



## Why Humanitarian Aid is Vital to Afghanistan

*Matiullah Qazizada | 27 September 2023*

“Short-term income generation from aid projects cannot support vulnerable people to escape poverty, but it can prevent the situation from worsening. A UN Development Program report indicates that in the year since August 2021, more than 700,000 people benefited from wages in support of infrastructure projects. Almost 300,000 benefited from emergency income and sustained income generation activity.”

**Read More:** <https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/why-humanitarian-aid-vital-afghanistan>

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## **The Moscow Format Meeting and Russia's Afghanistan Policy**

*Aleksei Zakharov | 9 October 2023*

“Moscow is trying to employ the carrot-and-stick approach towards the Taliban... According to Kabulov, Russia will not “impose” particular ethno-political groups being included in the governing process, because the intra-Afghan dialogue should be promoted by the Taliban themselves. Yet, Russia has also stepped up its ties with the anti-Taliban forces, implicitly signalling its displeasure with the situation in Afghanistan.”

**Read More:** <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/the-moscow-format-meeting-and-russias-afghan-policy/>

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## **The Benefits of Afghanistan's Mineral Riches May not be so Forthcoming**

*Nadia Ahmad and Luke Danielson | 23 September 2023*

“Afghanistan's economy is heavily reliant on agriculture, making it vulnerable to climate change, market fluctuations, and external economic shocks. The influx of mining investments could contribute to much-needed economic diversification. By branching out into sectors other than agriculture, Afghanistan can mitigate its vulnerability to various risks and lay the foundation for a more robust economy.”

**Read More:** <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2023/9/23/the-benefits-of-afghanistans-mineral-riches-may-not-be-so-forthcoming>

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## **Pakistan Out to Reset Ties with the US**

*Aaron Y. Zelin | 11 September 2023*

“Given the evolving nature of the US-Pakistan relations, it appears that Islamabad will try and create space for a security dimension. Another critical aspect of Pak-US relations is that Islamabad's ties with Beijing, by and large, have not been impacted by Pakistan's strategic choices and ties with the US.”

**Read More:** <https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/comment/pakistan-out-to-reset-ties-with-the-us-549501>

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## **Where does Pakistan's Democracy go from Here?**

*Ailia Zehra | 7 October 2023*

“In a complete departure from their earlier position against the military’s role in politics, the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) parties that made up the coalition government were seen appeasing the establishment. Less than two months after taking office, Sharif deviated from his party’s stance of civilian supremacy by authorizing the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) to screen civil servants before their postings.”

**Read More:** <https://thediplomat.com/2023/10/where-does-pakistans-democracy-go-from-here/>

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## **Pakistan's Foreign Policy is well Past its Shelf Life. Here's why it Needs a Paradigm Shift**

*Touqir Hussain | 4 October 2023*

“Pakistan would do well by studying and adapting to the far-reaching changes the world has undergone at all levels. Under the umbrella of an unsteady world order, led by the US and China, there are several middle and aspiring big powers multi-aligning and networking through mini-forums, ad hoc groupings and shifting coalitions at the global and regional levels with or without getting involved in the US-China rivalry.”

**Read More:** <https://www.dawn.com/news/1778939>

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## **Assessing ISKP's Expansion in Pakistan**

*Ayesha Sikandar | 25 September 2023*

“Ideological and sectarian conflicts, along with the personal interests and dynamics of revenge, have created a spiral of terrorist violence that is deteriorating regional security. While the threat from Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) cannot be disregarded, ISKP’s growing influence will undeniably challenge policymakers in Islamabad in the coming years, especially amidst navigating multiple internal challenges.”

**Read More:** <https://southasianvoices.org/iskr-expansion-in-pakistan/>

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## **Emerging India-Japan Partnership in Bangladesh**

*Simran Walia | 26 September 2023*

“Japan has been working extensively on financing the large infrastructure and development projects in Bangladesh, which also involve the construction of a coal-fired power plant as part of the new coastal economic corridor. Bangladesh’s ties with Tokyo have expanded in recent times, and in 2016, Bangladesh also supported Japan’s bid to obtain a permanent seat in the UN Security Council.”

**Read More:** <https://capsindia.org/emerging-india-japan-partnership-in-bangladesh/>

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## **Sri Lanka Gradually Returns to Macroeconomic Stability, but Risks Remain**

*Anjali Hewapathage and Thilina Panduwawala | 25 September 2023*

“Emerging signs point to a measured and gradual economic recovery. Growth in lending to the private sector has turned positive in June 2023 with the gradual unwinding of tight monetary conditions... The influx of tourists rebounded strongly, with the highest number of inbound tourist arrivals since before the onset of COVID-19 (as recorded in July 2023). Inward remittances have also recovered significantly.”

**Read More:** <https://www.9dashline.com/article/sri-lanka-gradually-returns-to-macroeconomic-stability-but-risks-remain>

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## **Changing Power Dynamics in the Indian Ocean Region: A Case Study of Sri Lanka**

*Danish Yousuf | 9 October 2023*

“As a crucial crossroads for global trade and geopolitics, the IOR is witnessing significant shifts in power, influence, and strategic partnerships. Sri Lanka, with its pivotal location, plays a vital role in this complex equation.”

**Read More:** <https://www.claws.in/static/IB-387-09102023.pdf>

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## **Maldives' Presidential Election was not a Referendum on India or China**

*Mimrah Abdul Ghafoor | 12 October 2023*

“Moreover, it is essential to recognize that despite the international media framing the election as a geopolitical tug-of-war between Beijing and Delhi, the concerns of Maldivian voters remain primarily domestic. These include an acute housing crisis in the overly centralized capital, stalled projects like the Greater Malé Connectivity Project, rampant corruption, a looming debt crisis exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, and the tension between economic growth and environmental sustainability.”

**Read More:** <https://thediplomat.com/2023/10/maldives-presidential-election-was-not-a-referendum-on-india-or-china/>

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## **Israel, Iran, and China Put to the Test**

*Thiago de Aragao | 13 October 2023*

“Tehran saw in China an opportunity to reshape its foreign trade, as the Western market has been closed to Iran for decades. China has offered Iran generous lines of credit that are paid through exports of barrels of oil at below market prices. This revitalization of Iranian coffers, however, is not enough. The country faces very serious economic problems, even though China is close by to ease the burden when necessary.”

**Read More:** <https://thediplomat.com/2023/10/israel-iran-and-china-put-to-the-test/>

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## **Central Asia and the South Caucasus Draw Closer Together**

*Emil Avdaliani | 6 October 2023*

“Even beyond the calculations of external powers, the countries of the South Caucasus and Central Asia are converging in their foreign policy outlooks. In the face of broader geopolitical shifts, they have embraced multi-vector foreign policies and deepened cooperation with each other.”

**Read More:** <https://carnegieendowment.org/politika/90731>

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## **Hamas is Now What Al-Qaeda Became after 9/11**

*Kabir Taneja | 12 October 2023*

“‘ Hamas’ mandate is not simple. While it encapsulates a pro-Palestine, Islamist bend, it also works against a political solution, prioritises military actions, and has an ‘absolutist’ view, meaning it largely stands against a ‘two-state solution’. It is also not the only such group incubated by the Israel-Palestine issue; others such as the Palestine Islamic Jihad (PIJ), and ones stationed beyond the geography of Gaza, like Hezbollah in Lebanon, also operate around this fault line.”

**Read More:** <https://www.deccanherald.com/opinion/hamas-is-now-what-al-qaeda-became-after-911-2723048>

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## **Israel-Gaza War: A Major Shock and a few Lessons**

*Harsh V. Pant | 8 October 2023*

“As the world is grappling with enough instability, the renewed conflagration between Israel and Palestinians has added another, more dangerous layer, to the mix. And it’s not the usual stuff even by the standards of the Middle East. This is being termed as Israel’s 9/11 moment - a moment that will redefine how Israel deals with its security challenges going forward and how various regional stakeholders recalibrate their strategies.”

**Read More:** <https://www.ndtv-com.cdn.ampproject.org/c/s/www.ndtv.com/opinion/israel-gaza-war-a-major-shock-and-a-few-lessons-4461852/amp/1>

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## **How Israel was Lulled into a False Sense of Security as Hamas Launched ‘Never -Ending’ War**

*Utpal Kumar | 12 October 2023*

“Saturday attack on Israel reveals: Hamas remains a fanatical Islamist outfit not averse to restoring to the worst form of terrorism that may give ISIS and Al Qaeda a run for their money.”

**Read More:** <https://www.firstpost.com/opinion/how-israel-was-lulled-into-a-false-sense-of-security-as-hamas-launched-never-ending-war-13237092.html>

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## REGION IN PICTURES

Russia's President Vladimir Putin has met Kyrgyzstan's President Sadyr Japarov during a rare overseas trip.



Pic Credits: - Al Jazeera

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Saudi Deputy Foreign Minister Waleed Abdulkarim Al-Khuraji meets with Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Ali Sabry in Colombo on Oct. 10, 2023.



Pic Credit: Arab News

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Newly appointed Saudi ambassador to the Palestinians Nayef al-Sudairi arrived in Ramallah to present his credentials to the Palestinian Authority.



Pic Credits: The Times of Israel

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President Shavkat Mirziyoyev of Uzbekistan, President Emomali Rahmon of Tajikistan, President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev of Kazakhstan, U.S. President Joe Biden, President Sadyr Japarov of Kyrgyzstan, and President Serdar Berdimuhamedov of Turkmenistan attend the C5+1 presidential summit in New York, U.S., Sep. 19, 2023.



Pic Credits: The Diplomat

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