



Where did the Afghan Refugees Go – and Where Next?

Sadiq Amini | 10 November 2023

“The majority of Afghans who fled the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan in 2021 now reside in Pakistan and Iran. The living standards and treatment of these refugees are often very poor, facing discrimination and prejudice from authorities and difficulty accessing necessities such as employment, shelter and healthcare. And hanging over them is the constant threat of deportation.”

Read More: <https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpretor/where-did-afghan-refugees-go-where-next>

It's Time for a New International Approach for Peace and Reconciliation in Afghanistan

Yussof Ghafoorzai | 17 November 2023

“To change the status quo and place Afghanistan on a trajectory toward stability, a new approach needs to be adopted by the international community in dealing with Afghanistan.”

Read More: <https://thediplomat.com/2023/11/its-time-for-a-new-international-approach-for-peace-and-reconciliation-in-afghanistan/>

A Revival of Online Terror Propaganda Ecosystems in Afghanistan and Pakistan

Kabir Taneja | 06 November 2023

“While there is little opposition to the Taliban’s control, the transition from insurgency to governance has further solidified its near-absolute control. Despite levels of violence in the country actually going down by early 2023, this era following the US withdrawal is marked by regional, strategic, tactical, and ideological rivalries and fractures are playing out both on the ground and perhaps more significantly, in the digital realm.”

Read More: <https://gnet-research.org/2023/11/06/a-revival-of-online-terror-propaganda-ecosystems-in-afghanistan-and-pakistan/>

With Nawaz Sharif’s Return, Politics Comes Full Circle in Pakistan

Sushant Sareen | 23 October 2023

“Nawaz Sharif is coming back to a very different Pakistan than the one he left in 2019. The country is sharply polarised, economically bankrupt, and in the midst of a serious jihadist insurgency. The PML-N has lost significant ground to the PTI and Imran Khan, and its support base has shrunk. If Imran Khan is allowed a free hand in the forthcoming general elections, he would sweep the polls.”

Read More: <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/with-nawaz-sharifs-return-politics-comes-full-circle-in-pakistan/>

Can Pakistan and its Proxies do a Hamas-Like Operation in India?

Lt Gen Syed Ata Hasnain | 23 October 2023

“For many years there have been comparisons between the situations in West Asia in terms of the Israel-Palestine conflict, and the proxy war existing in Jammu & Kashmir (J&K). Pakistan continues to believe that historically it is the rightful owner of the territories of J&K. The Palestinians on the other hand believe that they have been unjustly evicted from their lands which they aim to regain; organisations such as Hamas are externally sponsored to employ all means to achieve their aim.”

Read More: <https://chanakyaforum.com/can-pakistan-and-its-proxies-do-a-hamas-like-operation-in-india/>

Decoding Pakistan and Afghanistan's Public Responses to the Israel-Hamas War

Vasu Sharma | 14 November 2023

“The gruesome conflict between Israel and Hamas in the Gaza Strip is having a cascading effect on South and West Asia’s security environments, especially in relation to the Islamic world. The range of responses from different countries outlines their respective statures within the Islamic world. Of all the Asian governments responding to the conflict, the outlook of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan have particular prominence.”

Read More: <https://southasianvoices.org/pakistan-and-afghanistan-responses-israel-hamas-conflict/>

A Tough Election Awaits Embattled Tehreek-i-Insaf

Mansoor Malik | 15 November 2023

“The PTI leaders’ attempts to hold corner meetings or workers’ conventions are being translated into police raids, ransacking of party offices and leaders’ residences, and arrest of supporters. The party leadership believes an election without giving equal opportunities to all parties will neither be accepted by most Pakistanis nor the world at large, and will serve as a pain in the neck for both the new government and the establishment.”

Read More: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1789396/a-tough-election-awaits-embattled-tehreek-i-insaf>

ISKP's Urban Bombing Campaign: What it Implies for India

Priyadarshini Baruah | 20 November 2023

“While the Taliban and Al Qaeda have historically focused more on regional or localised objectives (such as controlling territory within Afghanistan or opposing Western influence), ISKP’s ideology is globally oriented, seeking to establish an Islamic caliphate beyond Afghanistan and Pakistan, potentially reaching Central and South Asia.”

Read More: https://capsindia.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/CAPS_IB_PB_20_11_23_NIS.pdf

Assessing Challenges of Climate Change for Bangladesh

Anadi | 09 November 2023

“Bangladesh’s susceptibility to climate change primarily stems from its geographical factors, which render it highly exposed to natural disasters and the threat of rising sea levels. Even without the influence of climate change, Bangladesh has consistently faced significant vulnerability to naturally occurring threats. This vulnerability is attributed to its low-lying terrain, with over half of its landmass situated at an elevation of less than two meters above sea level.”

Read More: <https://capsindia.org/assessing-challenges-of-climate-change-for-bangladesh/>

Rise of Radical Nationalism in Bangladesh

Shafi Mostofa | 31 October 2023

“The self-proclaimed interpretation of the spirit of liberation by the Bangladeshi government under the Awami League has led to the rise of a radical form of nationalism termed ‘political nationalism.’ This form of nationalism divides the country into an ‘us’ and ‘them’ mentality, with the AL positioning itself as the righteous and patriotic force – heirs to the liberation spirit – while labelling the opposition, including the BNP-Jamaat alliance, as the ‘other’.”

Read More: <https://southasianvoices.org/rise-of-radical-nationalism-in-bangladesh/>

Sri Lanka needs Economic Integration with India

Talal Rafi | 17 November 2023

“Sri Lanka was the first country in South Asia to open its economy in 1977. India started opening its economy only in 1991. Since liberalising, Sri Lanka has frequently been to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for assistance and is currently in its 17th IMF programme, however, India has not gone to the IMF since liberalising its economy. As Sri Lanka recovers from its worst economic crisis since independence, it needs to look at India for guidance and work closer with India for economic growth in the long term.”

Read More: <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/sri-lanka-needs-economic-integration-with-india/>

What’s Behind the Increased Diplomatic Push in Kazakhstan?

Nikola Mikovic | 10 November 2023

“Russia is Kazakhstan’s largest trading partner, with bilateral trade reaching a record \$27 billion last year. More importantly, Kazakhstan’s energy export routes remain heavily dependent on its northern neighbor. Indeed, from the energy perspective, Russia is Kazakhstan’s major gateway to Europe, since 80 percent of its oil exports to the European Union are transported through Russian territory.”

Read More: <https://thediplomat.com/2023/11/whats-behind-the-increased-diplomatic-push-in-kazakhstan/>

The West can Support the People of Afghanistan via Central Asia

Andrew Gilmour | 06 November 2023

“Confronted with an isolated neighbour grappling with a humanitarian crisis, some countries in Central Asia, starting with Uzbekistan, have concluded that viewing Afghanistan solely through the lens of threat does not serve their interest. Instead, they view Afghan stability as being of vital importance to their longer-term development strategies. They are taking calculated risks in creating regional incentives for peace, on the grounds that economic interdependency should lead to stability.”

Read More: <https://thediplomat.com/2023/11/the-west-can-support-the-people-of-afghanistan-via-central-asia/>

The Day that Changed the Middle East

Scot Faulkner | 05 November 2023

“The story of how Iran went from a reliable pro-West ally to the centre of fundamentalist terror begins with President Jimmy Carter, and his administration’s involvement in the Iranian Revolution.”

Read More: <https://sundayguardianlive.com/world/the-day-that-changed-the-middle-east-2>

War, Hypocrisy and Tragedy

Maleeha Lodhi | 06 November 2023

“How has the world responded to Israel’s continuing war on Gaza and the humanitarian catastrophe there? Clearly, the UN Security Council failed in its duty to stop hostilities. This from a world body whose primary responsibility is to maintain international peace and security.”

Read More: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1786870>

Israel-Palestine: It’s not too Late for the Two-State Solution

Ben Scott | 10 November 2023

“Because public opinion is hardening on both sides and trust is at an all-time low, there is little point at this stage in bringing the two sides together “so they can work out their differences”. Rather, the first goal should be to change the wider environment. The breakthroughs of the 1990s were initiated by inspired individuals, but ultimately enabled by major geopolitical shifts: the end of the Cold War and America’s “unipolar moment”.”

Read More: <https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/israel-palestine-it-s-not-too-late-two-state-solution>

How the Israel-Gaza War could Disrupt the Middle East's Climate Progress

Frederic Wehrey | 18 October 2023

“Still, the conflict will invariably intrude on COP28. Civil society activists who attend will likely raise the plight of Gaza, drawing attention to how an escalating Israeli invasion, with its attendant destruction of water infrastructure and services and massive displacement, will have catastrophic and generational effects on Palestinians’ already severe vulnerability to climate change. These calls may well expand into a critique of Arab regimes’ normalization and cooperation with Israel, challenging the COP’s hosts to uphold their pledge of inclusion and free assembly.”

Read More: <https://carnegieendowment.org/2023/10/18/how-israel-gaza-war-could-disrupt-middle-east-s-climate-progress-pub-90796>

REGION IN PICTURES

Russian President Vladimir Putin visited Kazakhstan, part of his efforts to cement ties with the ex-Soviet neighbor and major economic partner in the midst of tensions with the West over Ukraine.



Pic Credits: - Al Jazeera

Union Minister for Earth Sciences Kiren Rijju meets the new President of the Maldives Mohamed Muizzu, in Male, Maldives on November 18.



Pic Credits: The Times of Israel

The President of France, Emmanuel Macron embarked on his visit to Uzbekistan on November 1, where he arrived in Samarkand city late Wednesday, as part of his two-day tour to Central Asia.



Pic Credit: Arab News

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz (R) and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan address a news conference before talks at the Chancellery in Berlin on November 17, 2023.



Pic Credits: The Diplomat



Centre for Air Power Studies

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

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