

HORIZON

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RESEARCH AND POLICY PLANNING UNIT
PAKISTAN MUSLIM LEAGUE - NAWAZ

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Dear Readers,

May 2025 will be remembered as a pivotal chapter in Pakistan's modern history, a month that tested the nation's resolve, maturity, and unity under fire. In the face of grave provocation, Pakistan not only upheld its sovereignty but also redefined its global image as a responsible nuclear power committed to peace and transparency.

The crisis began on April 22 with the tragic Pahalgam attack in Indian-administered Kashmir, where 26 civilians, mostly Indian tourists, were killed. An obscure outfit The Resistance Front, initially claimed responsibility for the attack, though later denied involvement. India swiftly blamed Pakistan-based groups, though Islamabad categorically denied involvement and called for an impartial international investigation.

India's response was swift and severe: suspending the Indus Waters Treaty, closing the Wagah-Attari border, expelling Pakistani diplomats, and launching Operation Sindoor. When Indian missiles struck civilian areas, killing 40 innocents and injuring 46, Pakistan responded not with reckless escalation, but precision. Its air force downed six Indian jets, including three French Rafales, shattering India's military aura. This was no fluke: it revealed disciplined coordination of indigenously developed missiles, Chinese electronic warfare systems and Turkish drones, turning the skies into a graveyard of hubris.

But the true victory lay beyond the battlefield. Pakistan's calibrated restraint, responsible conduct under extreme provocation, and unprecedented transparency, including its call for international verification of events, earned it newfound respect in global capitals, transforming its image from a regional trouble spot to a credible, level-headed nuclear power. While India flailed, suspending the Indus Waters Treaty and scrambling for allies, even courting the Taliban it once scorned, Pakistan's Foreign Office steered the crisis with cold clarity. The nation united, soldiers and citizens alike, to repel an aggressor whose lies collapsed under global scrutiny.

This resilience echoes May 1998, when India's nuclear tests dared Pakistan to kneel. We refused then, restoring strategic parity despite Western threats. This May, we again defied coercion, not with bluster, but with unity, technology, and moral authority. India's isolation today mirrors its miscalculation 27 years ago: underestimating a nation that turns pressure into purpose.

May 2025 didn't just test Pakistan; it revealed a nation that outmanoeuvres adversaries not through size but resolve. We stood tall when targeted, spoke truth when smeared, and chose restraint when provoked. In a world weary of reckless powers, Pakistan emerged as the adult in the room, and rewrote its destiny in the process.

Sincerely,
Saira Bano
Editor-in-Chief

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Top military and civilian leadership of Pakistan and Azerbaijan in a group photo during a visit of Pakistani delegation led by Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif. Baku. 27 May 2025

PAKISTAN'S DIPLOMATIC WIN A WAR THAT RESHAPED SOUTH ASIA

RESEARCH AND POLICY PLANNING UNIT

The brief but intense air conflict that erupted between India and Pakistan in May 2025 did more than rattle the skies over Kashmir; it fundamentally reshaped the diplomatic landscape of South Asia. Pakistan's unexpected dominance in air combat, where it downed six Indian aircraft — including three advanced French Rafales — using coordinated electronic warfare platforms, dealt a severe blow to India's military prestige and exposed vulnerabilities in a fighter jet long marketed as invincible. Yet the true victory unfolded not in the stratosphere but in the global arena, where Pakistan executed a diplomatic masterclass that left its larger neighbour isolated and scrambling.

Pakistan's success began not with rhetoric, but with remarkable military effectiveness. Leveraging sophisticated Chinese-supplied electronic warfare platforms and air defence systems — a testament to the

deep “iron brotherhood” — Pakistani forces achieved what few thought possible. In swift, coordinated engagements, they downed six Indian aircraft, including three French Rafales, the crown jewels of India's air force. This was not just a tactical victory; it was a strategic earthquake. The myth of Rafale's invincibility evaporated overnight, dealing a severe blow to Indian military prestige and French defence exports. Simultaneously, Turkish drones like the Bayraktar TB2 proved their lethal worth, further cementing the Ankara-Islamabad axis.

While Indian missiles flew, Pakistan executed a masterful diplomatic offensive. Unlike the isolation it faced after Balakot in 2019, Islamabad secured robust, vocal backing. Turkey's President Erdogan stood firm, offering not just words but critical military supplies via cargo flights. Azerbaijan echoed this support, forming a potent regional bloc. Crucially, China provided the



“INDIA’S DECADES-LONG CAMPAIGN TO BRAND PAKISTAN A TERRORIST STATE COLLAPSED UNDER THE WEIGHT OF ITS OWN FAILURE TO PROVIDE CREDIBLE EVIDENCE JUSTIFYING ITS INITIAL STRIKES.”

technological edge while maintaining a posture of quiet deterrence on the Himalayan border, preventing India from even contemplating a two-front scenario. India, conversely, faced a diplomatic desert. Its decades-long campaign to brand Pakistan a terrorist state collapsed under the weight of its own failure to provide credible evidence justifying its initial strikes. The much-vaunted Quad partners offered no meaningful backing. Only Israel provided discreet support, while a secretive visit by a Taliban official – whose government India doesn’t even recognise – served only to highlight New Delhi’s profound isolation and desperation. The world’s major capitals and media, significantly, largely accepted Pakistan’s narrative of defending its sovereignty against unprovoked aggression.

The ceasefire, brokered under intense US pressure, was merely the prelude to Pakistan’s diplomatic victory lap. The real sting came when the US President, while praising both leaderships, repeatedly offered to mediate on Kashmir – a direct affront to India’s core diplomatic position that the issue is strictly bilateral. This “hyphenation” of India and Pakistan as equals on the international stage was a bitter pill for New Delhi, representing the utter collapse of its de-hyphenation strategy.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, accompanied by the newly promoted Field Marshal Asim Munir, embarked immediately on a triumphant tour of Turkey, Iran, Azerbaijan, and Tajikistan. These weren’t just courtesy calls; they were strategic partnerships solidified, showcasing Pakistan as a responsible regional power seeking stability, starkly contrasting India’s image as a reckless aggressor. Agreements for deeper defence cooperation, particularly with Turkey, flowed from the proven battlefield effectiveness of their shared technology.

India emerged bruised, isolated, and facing a harsh new reality. Its foreign policy, seemingly oblivious to the seismic shifts in global alliances and the rise of the Turkey-Pakistan-Azerbaijan nexus, appeared dangerously out of touch. The failure to sell its narrative internationally, the humiliating public offers of Kashmir mediation it couldn’t block, and the exposure of its military overreach revealed a nation that had profoundly miscalculated its own strength and global standing. India’s suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty, branded by Pakistani leaders as an “act of war,” only served to further validate Islamabad’s warnings about New Delhi’s belligerence internationally.

The May 2025 conflict lasted only days, but its legacy is enduring. Pakistan demonstrated that in the modern era, victory is secured not just in the air but through alliances, technological prowess, and narrative control. It shattered India’s military aura, exposed the fragility of its diplomatic influence, and forcefully reasserted Pakistan as a responsible, capable, and connected player on the world stage. The downed Rafales became more than wreckage; they became symbols of a dramatic geopolitical shift in South Asia. India, meanwhile, is left seething, isolated, and forced to confront a future where its ambitions far outstrip its diplomatic and strategic grasp ■



PAF'S DOMINANCE IN INDIA-PAKISTAN CONFLICT

AIR CDRE (RETD) MUHAMMAD ASAD ALI AKBAR

The Pakistan Air Force (PAF) remains committed to ensuring Pakistan's airspace sovereignty and pursuing peace through strength. The PAF has played a decisive role in countering attempts to establish a new normal under the hegemonic designs of a supremacist regime, while simultaneously reestablishing deterrence.

IAF'S BUILD-UP AND PAF'S RESPONSE

The situation unfolded at 0010 hours midnight on 7 May 2025, when the Indian Air Force (IAF) began mobilising its aircraft near Azad Kashmir and Pakistan's eastern border. Pakistan's advanced electronic sensors immediately detected the activity, prompting a rapid response from the Pakistan Air Force (PAF). By 0012 hours, just two minutes later, the PAF had scrambled its jets to pre-empt and deter any potential misadventure.

According to defence sources, the IAF had assembled approximately 60 aircraft, including 14 Rafale jets. The IAF's arsenal was later reinforced, bringing the total to over 70 aircraft. This formidable strike package was poised to unleash a devastating aerial assault on Pakistan.

Undaunted by the IAF's numerical superiority, the PAF deployed 40 state-of-the-art aircraft to defend Pakistan's skies. With its operational readiness and strategic planning, the PAF effectively countered the IAF's aggression, safeguarding the nation's territorial integrity.

PAF'S BRILLIANT DISPLAY OF AERIAL PROWESS

In a remarkable display of military might, the Pakistan Air Force (PAF) engaged in a fierce and historical

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TO MAINTAIN STRATEGIC SUPERIORITY, PAKISTAN MUST CONTINUE TO ENHANCE ITS CAPABILITIES, REFINE ITS STRENGTHS, AND STAY PREPARED FOR EMERGING AND EVOLVING THREATS.

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dogfight with the IAF, resulting in the downing of five IAF fighter aircraft and one unmanned vehicle (UAV), which makes a total of six kills.

The intense aerial battle saw PAF pilots skillfully manoeuvre their jets to gain the upper hand, leveraging beyond visual radar (BVR) missiles to devastating effect. During the entire engagement, PAF retained the first shoot capability. The IAF losses included three Rafale jets, one Su-30, one MiG-29, and a UAV. This historic engagement, involving over 100 aircraft from both sides, has set a new benchmark in modern air warfare. The PAF's bravery, tactical brilliance, and operational readiness were on full display.

THE NIGHT OF 6 AND 7 MAY

The night between 6th and 7th May will be engraved in the annals of air combat history as a benchmark for operational readiness, strategic foresight, and multi-domain excellence. This engagement will be studied in air combat institutions around the world as a testament to the PAF's tactical brilliance and operational mastery. This remarkable display of military prowess will undoubtedly inspire future generations of air warriors.

The PAF utilised its first multi-domain operation successfully during this conflict, entailing integrated, seamless and synchronous utilisation of electronic warfare, cyber capabilities, and space-based assets. To achieve air supremacy, control over the electromagnetic spectrum is imperative for dominating the conflict. Spectrum warfare capabilities integrate electronic warfare, cyber operations, space assets, and command, control, communication, infrastructure, and information (C3I) across air, land, and sea domains. Together, these elements form a comprehensive electronic warfare network. The effectiveness of this multi-domain approach will become evident in the following paragraphs.

PAKISTAN'S DECISIVE RESPONSE

On 10th May, the Indian Air Force launched an air offensive using UAVs targeting Pakistan's civilian population. Despite the drones' low radar cross-section, our advanced radar systems detected them promptly. Leveraging cutting-edge indigenous capabilities, Pakistan successfully neutralised the drone threat through multiple methods: soft kill techniques involving sophisticated GPS jamming and data denial systems to disrupt drone operations;

SATCOM denial systems that severed satellite communication links, rendering the drones ineffective; and hard kill measures that physically intercepted and destroyed the UAVs.

Pakistan's swift and precise response not only neutralised the immediate threat but also demonstrated its prowess in modern warfare. By grounding the IAF's fleet, restricting its operational options, and delivering a blow to its pride, the PAF gained a significant strategic advantage.

In absolute desperation, India escalated the offensive by launching surface-to-surface missiles (SSMs) / long-range vectors (LRVs). Leveraging its advanced capabilities, the PAF closely monitored the real-time launch, flight and terminal phases of all incoming missiles, successfully neutralising the threat. By inducing GPS errors, the PAF rendered the SSMs ineffective.

This operation demonstrated the PAF's dominance in two critical areas: first, its multi-domain expertise, reflected in the seamless integration of electronic warfare, cyber capabilities, and space assets; and second, its supremacy over the electromagnetic spectrum, enabling effective control and calibrated escalation through spectrum warfare. The successful defence was a result of the PAF's indigenous technological development and strategic acumen.

PAKISTAN'S STRATEGIC GAINS

On 10th May, Pakistan executed a groundbreaking operation, delivering precision strikes against IAF airfields and ground targets with unprecedented accuracy and lethality. Leveraging its niche disruptive capabilities, the PAF penetrated deep into enemy territory along India's western border and Azad Kashmir, targeting military elements directly involved in violating Pakistan's sovereignty and killing innocent civilians.

The operation included precision strikes on key assets such as IAF airfields, ammunition depots, a BrahMos missile site, and vital command and control systems. Most notably, the PAF neutralised the S-400 Air

Defence System — considered the enemy's centre of gravity — at Adampur and Poonch, delivering a severe blow to India's air defence posture.

Employing an effects-based operational approach, the PAF executed swift, calibrated strikes that exhibited its advanced capabilities and strategic planning. This operation not only demonstrated Pakistan's ability to manage escalation effectively but also exposed critical vulnerabilities within enemy defences.

LESSONS FROM PAF'S COMBAT TRIUMPH

The PAF's recent combat success highlights several key factors that contributed to its resounding victory. At the core was visionary leadership, where clear and bold decision-making shaped strategic actions. This was matched by exceptional operational readiness, as the PAF demonstrated swift and coordinated response capabilities. Superior training enabled personnel to execute complex operations with precision, while multi-domain excellence — through the seamless integration of electronic warfare, cyber capabilities, and space assets — proved decisive on the battlefield. Dominance over the electromagnetic spectrum further gave the PAF a critical edge, catching the adversary by surprise. The ability to deliver the first strike using beyond-visual-range missiles added another layer of strategic advantage. These successes were underpinned by robust indigenous capabilities, reflecting self-reliance in defence technologies, and an unwavering spirit that fuelled the PAF's determination and resolve.

As we celebrate the achievements of our heroes and honour this dignified victory, it is vital to remain vigilant and forward-looking. The adversary will no doubt assess its shortcomings, strengthen its defences, and seek to neutralise our advantages. To maintain strategic superiority, Pakistan must continue to enhance its capabilities, refine its strengths, and stay prepared for emerging and evolving threats.

Pakistan zindabad!

The writer is a retired officer of the Pakistan Air Force.



EXPOSING THE LIES

HOW PAKISTAN DEFEATED INDIA'S DISINFORMATION

SAFDAR ALI DANISH

In the modern era, warfare is no longer confined to the battlefield, it is fought on multiple domains, including the digital realm, where narratives shape perceptions and truth becomes the ultimate weapon. The India-Pakistan conflict of May 2025 was a stark reminder of this reality. While India unleashed a torrent of lies, fake news, and baseless military claims, Pakistan countered with facts, restraint, and strategic precision. The defining moment came on 10 May 2025, when the Pakistan Air Force (PAF) shot down six Indian jets, including advanced Rafale fighters, exposing India's hollow military boasts and shattering its propaganda machine.

INDIA'S WEB OF LIES: MANUFACTURING FAKE VICTORIES

From the very beginning of the conflict, Indian media and officials engaged in deliberate misinformation

campaigns, spreading fabricated claims to portray false victories. Notably, outlets such as Republic TV and Times Now circulated recycled footage, and even scenes from video games, to support the absurd assertion that the Karachi Port had been captured. Similarly, India claimed to have destroyed key Pakistan Air Force bases at Sargodha and Rafiqui, despite satellite imagery conclusively debunking these allegations. Another baseless rumour suggested that Quetta had fallen under militant control, a claim quickly disproven by independent sources. This web of deceit highlights a systematic effort to manipulate public perception through sensationalism and outright falsehoods.

Amid the recent military hostilities, Pakistani officials raised serious concerns over the Indian Army's fabricated claim of a Shaheen missile launch. This deliberate misinformation aimed to exploit

“ IN THE FACE OF ESCALATING CONFLICT AND PROPAGANDA, PAKISTAN'S MEDIA DEMONSTRATED REMARKABLE RESPONSIBILITY. OUTLETS SUCH AS DAWN, GEO NEWS, AND OTHERS MAINTAINED JOURNALISTIC INTEGRITY BY RELYING ON VERIFIED DATA, SATELLITE IMAGERY AND OFFICIAL BRIEFINGS TO REPORT DEVELOPMENTS ACCURATELY. ”



international fears of nuclear escalation, thereby deflecting attention from India's own aggressive actions during Operation Sindoor.

CENSORSHIP AND SUPPRESSION OF TRUTH

In an attempt to conceal its shortcomings, India took extensive censorship measures by blocking over 8,000 social media accounts, including those operated by Pakistani and other international news outlets. The Indian government pressured platforms such as YouTube and Meta to take down content favourable to Pakistan. Furthermore, foreign journalists have been barred from accessing conflict zones, a move aimed at controlling the global narrative. In stark contrast, Pakistan lifted restrictions on X (formerly Twitter), allowing for the dissemination of real-time, verified information. This step has been widely appreciated by international observers as a commitment to transparency and freedom of information.

HISTORY OF FALSE-FLAG OPERATIONS

India has a long-standing history of staging false-flag operations to justify aggressive actions against

Pakistan. A notable example is the Pulwama incident in 2019, where a so-called suicide bombing was quickly blamed on Pakistan despite the absence of credible evidence. Similarly, in the Pahalgam massacre of 2025, India rushed to accuse Pakistan following the tragic killing of tourists. However, the director general of Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) later presented forensic evidence that clearly indicated the attack had been orchestrated by India itself. These incidents highlight a troubling pattern of misinformation and manufactured pretexts aimed at escalating regional tensions.

PAKISTAN'S MILITARY TRIUMPH

During this conflict, Pakistan achieved a decisive military breakthrough that marked a turning point in the conflict. The Pakistan Air Force (PAF) demonstrated overwhelming air superiority by shooting down six Indian fighter jets, including three Rafales, two Su-30s, and a Mirage 2000. These claims were backed by electronic warfare data, which left India with no room for plausible deniability. In response, Indian officials issued only a vague statement, remarking that "losses are part of war," deliberately avoiding direct acknowledgement of the setback.

PAKISTAN'S MEDIA: A WALL AGAINST DISINFORMATION

In the face of escalating conflict and propaganda, Pakistan's media demonstrated remarkable responsibility. Outlets such as Dawn, Geo News, and others maintained journalistic integrity by relying on verified data, satellite imagery and official briefings to report developments accurately. This approach stood in stark contrast to Indian media channels like Times Now, India Today, Aaj Tak, NDTV and Republic TV, which resorted to sensationalism, spreading AI-generated videos and recycling old war footage in an attempt to manipulate public perception. Pakistan's commitment to credible reporting not only strengthened internal unity but also earned international credibility amid a storm of misinformation.



Pakistan demonstrated to the world that it stands firm on principles of discipline, integrity, and unity. Its armed forces showcased unmatched skill and professionalism, its media upheld credibility in the face of widespread disinformation, and its people stood resolutely united against external aggression. Pakistan's responsible conduct effectively neutralised decades of propaganda portraying it as a sponsor of terrorism. It soon became evident that there were no longer any willing takers for such false narratives.

YOUM-E-MARKA-E-HAQ

At the heart of this conflict lies a powerful message from DG ISPR Lt Gen Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry: "We will never bow down to Indian hegemony. Pakistan wants peace but will never surrender to aggression." This declaration embodies Pakistan's unyielding spirit, a nation committed to peace, yet steadfast in defending its sovereignty and dignity against any form of aggression or domination. While India relied on deception, Pakistan responded with facts, precision, and unity proving that its strength lies not only in military capability but in moral clarity.

In this spirit, Pakistan honoured its martyrs and military heroes who defended the nation with unwavering courage. The resounding success of Operation Bunyanum Marsoos, literally meaning the "Impenetrable Wall", exposed the hollowness of India's Operation Sindoor and became a defining symbol of national resilience. To commemorate this historic achievement, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif declared the 10th of May "Youm-e-Marka-e-Haq" (The Day of the Righteous Battle), a day to celebrate Pakistan's moral and strategic triumph, and to reaffirm national solidarity in the face of propaganda and aggression ■

GLOBAL FALLOUT: INDIA'S HUMILIATION AND CEASEFIRE

As tensions escalated dangerously close to a nuclear confrontation, the international community stepped in to prevent catastrophe. US President Donald Trump played a pivotal role by mediating a ceasefire, recognising the threat of nuclear war. With overwhelming evidence pointing to India as the aggressor, New Delhi was left with no diplomatic room and was forced to comply. The UN and several international human rights organisations condemned India for its targeting of civilians and violation of the Indus Waters Treaty, further isolating the country on the global stage. The sequence of events presented by Pakistan was largely accepted as accurate, as major international news outlets confirmed the downing of the Indian planes, which India was fervently denying or obfuscating. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's electoral gamble — intended to stir nationalist fervour — ultimately backfired, as the world saw through his war-mongering propaganda, exposing the recklessness of his approach.

PAKISTAN'S MORAL VICTORY

Pakistan's victory in the conflict has earned the country tremendous respect around the world. While India became entangled in its own web of deception,

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UNLOCKING AFRICA TRADE, OPPORTUNITY AND PROSPERITY

DR SOHAIL BADAR

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif envisions a self-reliant Pakistan driven by export-led growth, with the ambitious goal of surpassing \$100 billion in annual exports by 2033. Currently, Pakistan's worldwide exports stand at around \$36 billion and are steadily rising. The country's main export destinations include the United States, Europe, and the Middle East. However, exports to other regions, such as Africa, South and Latin America, Central Asia, Southeast Asia, and Oceania, remain significantly below potential, largely due to a longstanding lack of strategic focus on these markets.

With 54 countries — more than any other continent — Africa is an emerging economic powerhouse, with a population exceeding 1.6 billion and a collective GDP of over \$3.5 trillion. This represents a vast and expanding consumer market, marked by rising purchasing power and rapidly developing infrastructure across the continent. The era of civil

wars is almost over in most African countries, allowing a stronger focus on infrastructure and economic growth. With the continent's economy growing at one of the fastest rates in the world, it is projected to expand tenfold to over \$35 trillion within the next two decades. It is encouraging that the Senate unanimously passed a resolution declaring 25th May as Pakistan-Africa Friendship Day, accompanied by a pledge from Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar to expand Pakistan's relations with African countries.

Almost all African countries were colonies of European countries during the 19th and 20th centuries, resulting in strong economic ties with their former colonial rulers. In the 21st century, alongside Europe and the United States, four additional countries — China, Russia, India, and Turkey — have strengthened their presence in Africa, emerging as key trading and economic partners while also expanding their political influence across the continent.

“AFRICA TODAY REPRESENTS ONE OF THE LARGEST UNTAPPED EXPORT DESTINATIONS FOR PAKISTAN, WITH A RAPIDLY GROWING RATE OF URBANISATION AND INCREASING CONSUMER DEMAND.”



Unfortunately, Pakistan has lagged behind in developing strong economic ties with African countries, primarily due to a lack of strategic focus. Over the past few years, Pakistan's total exports to Africa's 54 nations have ranged from \$1.5 to \$1.8 billion annually, a figure that must be significantly increased. In comparison, Africa's bilateral trade volume stands at over \$265 billion with China, around \$100 billion with India, and nearly \$70 billion with Turkey, highlighting the vast potential Pakistan has yet to tap into.

Major challenges faced by Pakistani exporters include high transport and logistics costs, an unfavourable business environment, corrupt practices and, most critically, limited access to trade finance. Transport and logistics expenses remain high due to elevated shipping and insurance costs. It is essential that Pakistani goods are shipped on a 'free-on-board' (FOB) basis rather than an 'on-delivery' basis to reduce risks and costs. Additionally, it is imperative that the Government of Pakistan actively negotiates duty-free tariff agreements with a greater number of African countries to enhance market access and competitiveness.

Pakistan must develop a clear strategy to boost its exports to Africa, aiming for \$10 billion by 2030 and \$30 billion by 2050. Two of Africa's strongest economies, Nigeria and Egypt, are members of the D-8 Organisation for Economic Cooperation, of which Pakistan is also a key member. This shared platform presents a valuable opportunity to strengthen economic ties and mutually beneficial trade partnerships.

Africa is commonly divided into five regions — Northern, Western, Central, Eastern, and Southern

Africa. Of the 54 countries on the continent, Pakistan currently maintains embassies or high commissions in 20. These include five each in Northern Africa (Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco) and Western Africa (Senegal, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Niger, and Nigeria), seven in Eastern Africa (Kenya, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Uganda, Sudan, and Djibouti), and three in Southern Africa (South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Mauritius). Ironically, Pakistan does not have a diplomatic presence in any country in Central Africa, despite the region including significant economies such as Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Cameroon, and Gabon. Establishing embassies in Angola and the DRC is urgently needed. Notably, the opening of five new embassies in Rwanda, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Djibouti, and Uganda three years ago has already yielded tangible benefits, with exports to these countries having doubled.

While Nigeria, South Africa, Egypt, and Kenya are among Africa's largest markets, Ethiopia holds the greatest political influence on the continent. As the headquarters of the African Union, Ethiopia enjoys direct diplomatic engagement with almost every African country. It is one of only four entities globally, alongside the United States, China, and the European Union, that maintains 160 or more embassies worldwide. Notably, Ethiopia is the only African country that operates direct flights to Pakistan, reflecting its strategic policy of direct connectivity with countries across the globe.

The African continent offers enormous export potential across a wide range of sectors, including textiles, yarn, garments, pharmaceuticals, light machinery, electrical equipment, household goods, agri-engineering, automobiles, cosmetics, leather



“**PAKISTAN'S RECENT SUCCESS IN DEFENCE INNOVATION AND PRODUCTION, PARTICULARLY FOLLOWING OPERATION BUNYANUM MARSOOS, HAS CREATED NEW OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPORT AIRCRAFT, WEAPONS, AND AMMUNITION TO MARKETS ACROSS THE WORLD, PARTICULARLY IN AFRICA, WHERE DEMAND CONSISTENTLY EXCEEDS SUPPLY.**”

products, footwear, plastic goods, agribusiness, livestock and dairy, defence production, sports goods, and surgical instruments. Pakistan's recent success in defence innovation and production, particularly following Operation Bunyanum Marsoos, has created new opportunities to export aircraft, weapons, and ammunition to markets across the world, particularly in Africa, where demand consistently exceeds supply. In addition to the manufacturing sector, there is tremendous potential for Pakistan in the services sector, particularly in information technology, including software development, telecommunications, data services, digital transformation, artificial intelligence, e-commerce, banking and financial services, training, healthcare, engineering, institutional development, and even sports. This potential can be unlocked by offering more market-linked incentives tailored to African markets. Moreover, Pakistan's extensive experience in agriculture and allied fields holds significant value. Many African countries are eager to develop their agriculture, livestock, and dairy sectors to bridge the growing gap between demand and supply, creating enormous opportunities for Pakistan to contribute expertise, technology, and services in these areas.

The morale of the Pakistani nation is at an all-time high following a glorious victory in the war against India. There is renewed confidence in the country's leadership and its vision to make Pakistan a strong

and respected nation. With a robust economy, Pakistan is well-positioned to play a significant role both regionally and globally, and it is already progressing toward economic strength and emerging as a major regional power. However, to fully realise these ambitions, three key policy measures are essential: expanding the volume of trade, providing sustained government support to the private sector, and diversifying economic engagements across sectors and regions.

Africa today represents one of the largest untapped export destinations for Pakistan, with a rapidly growing rate of urbanisation and increasing consumer demand. It is high time we take coordinated and sustained action, through effective government policy-making alongside greater incentives and facilitation for the private sector. By enhancing our global competitiveness through robust policy reforms such as improving the ease of doing business, advancing digital initiatives, forging strategic trade agreements, and strengthening both manufacturing and services ecosystems, we can move confidently toward our export targets. Vibrant public-private partnerships will be key to unlocking Pakistan's full potential in African markets ■

The writer has a diverse career as a medical doctor, writer, and businessman across multiple countries, with a special interest in research and narrative building.



YOUTH CRAFT PAKISTAN'S FIRST YOUTH AND ADOLESCENT POLICY

SABA ALI

With one of the largest youth populations in the world, Pakistan stands at a pivotal moment in its history. The energy, creativity, and resilience of its young people represent an unparalleled national asset. Recognising this immense potential, the Prime Minister's Youth Programme (PMYP) is leading efforts to ensure that every young Pakistani is empowered with the education, opportunities, and environment they need to thrive and contribute meaningfully to the country's future.

Spearheaded by PMYP, Pakistan is set to launch the National Adolescent and Youth Policy (NAYP)—a groundbreaking framework with the potential to reshape the nation's future by unlocking the promise of its young population. Supported by UNICEF, the policy addresses the diverse needs of adolescents and youth aged 10 to 29, promoting their holistic

development in education, employment, engagement, and environmental sustainability.

A POLICY “FOR YOUTH, BY YOUTH”

The National Adolescent and Youth Policy (NAYP) is being crafted through youth inclusion. Rooted in the powerful principle of “For Youth, By Youth,” the policy places young people at the heart of its creation. This inclusive and collaborative framework ensures that the diverse voices of adolescents and youth, from bustling cities to remote villages, shape the path ahead. Through nationwide consultations, this initiative integrates their voices, aspirations, and challenges into a dynamic roadmap for progress.

To ensure extensive representation, consultations are being held in 25 cities across Pakistan, engaging



“ TO ENSURE EXTENSIVE REPRESENTATION, CONSULTATIONS ARE BEING HELD IN 25 CITIES ACROSS PAKISTAN, ENGAGING 50,000 TO 60,000 YOUTH FROM UNIVERSITIES, VOCATIONAL INSTITUTES, MADRASSAS, AND GRASSROOTS COMMUNITIES. ”

50,000 to 60,000 youth from universities, vocational institutes, madrassas, and grassroots communities. With the first framework presentation held in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, enthusiasm continues to build in southern Punjab and Balochistan. This collective effort strengthens provincial foundations and ensures a unified approach to youth development.

A DIGITAL REVOLUTION IN YOUTH PARTICIPATION

Technology is amplifying youth voices in Pakistan like never before. A nationwide youth survey has been launched to capture insights directly from

young individuals. Integrated into the Digital Youth Hub (DYH) platform, the survey allows participants to contribute via the DYH mobile app and official website (www.pmyp.gov.pk).

This historic initiative marks a monumental shift in Pakistan's approach to youth development, ensuring that young people are not just dreamers but decision-makers. With collaboration from global institutions, private sector stakeholders, youth networks, and multilateral organisations, Pakistan's NAYP is setting a bold benchmark for youth empowerment worldwide. The future is not just approaching; it is being shaped by today's youth. And with the NAYP, their journey towards a brighter, more inclusive Pakistan has truly begun.

The writer is a digital media executive at the Prime Minister's Youth Programme.



SENATE PASSES RESOLUTION TO BOOST PAKISTAN-AFRICA TIES

DR RANA KHALID MEHMOOD

May 2025 witnessed a significant acceleration in the activities of overseas chapters of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), as connections between the Pakistani diaspora and the Government of Pakistan deepened further. Following the historic Overseas Convention held in Islamabad in April, various PML-N overseas chapters actively expanded direct and constructive engagement with the government. The aim has been clear: to unlock new avenues for economic, cultural, and human resource collaboration, and to ensure meaningful contributions to Pakistan's national development.

SENATE RESOLUTION ON TIES WITH AFRICA

On 22 May 2025, a major milestone in Pakistan's diaspora diplomacy was achieved when a landmark resolution was introduced in the Senate of Pakistan, aimed at deepening relations with the African nations.

This development was the outcome of sustained efforts by overseas Pakistanis in Africa, particularly the Pakistan Association of Southern Africa (PASA), in close coordination with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Africa Desk led by Additional Secretary Hamid Asghar.

The initiative received strong backing from Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Ishaq Dar, Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani and Chair of Parliamentary Committee on Pakistan-Africa Friendship MNA Dr Nafisah Shah. Their engagement has elevated Africa as a new priority in Pakistan's foreign policy landscape.

This resolution paves the way for enhanced trade, investment, and diplomatic cooperation with African markets. The Pakistani diaspora in Africa, especially PASA, has been the driving force behind this success. The community is now encouraged to promote

awareness of the resolution across the continent so that more Pakistanis can benefit from the opportunities it presents.

HONG KONG: DIALOGUE ON INVESTMENT AND DEVELOPMENT



In Hong Kong, President PML-N Hong Kong Chapter Imran Khan and Nation Youth Council Member for Hong Kong and China Zain Ali organised a special event to mark Pakistan Day. The gathering was graced by Punjab's Minister for Finance Mian Muftaba Shuja-ur-Rehman. Under the leadership of Chapter President Imran Khan, a broad segment of Hong Kong's Pakistani business community convened for an open discussion session with the minister.

Topics discussed included investment opportunities, trade incentives, tax facilitation, and the export of skilled Pakistani labour. The minister highlighted Punjab's investor-friendly policies and extended an invitation to overseas Pakistanis to actively participate in the country's economic growth.

CANADA: A DAY OF GRATITUDE



In Canada, a well-attended "Day of Gratitude" was organised under the patronage of Syed Waseem Ali Shah. The event celebrated Pakistan's recent diplomatic and strategic successes, bringing together notable Pakistani personalities from across the country, including Salamat Hussain, Shafqat, Yousaf,

Waqas Amjad, Muhammad Shakeel, and Sohail Meera.

Participants expressed pride in Pakistan's recent triumphs and highlighted government diplomacy and the valour of the armed forces. They noted that Pakistan's achievements had earned admiration from international communities, especially those in Arab countries, where congratulations poured in for the Pakistani diaspora.

In his address, Waseem Ali Shah emphasised the need to educate younger generations about Pakistan's ideological foundations and the two-nation theory. He announced plans to launch a series of seminars aimed at fostering a deeper understanding of Pakistan's history and values among Canadian-born Pakistanis.

SOUTH AFRICA: A CELEBRATION OF UNITY AND IDENTITY



On 18 May 2025, a vibrant "Day of Gratitude" event was held in Johannesburg, South Africa, hosted by PML-N Chief Patron Ashfaq Anwar. The ceremony featured participation from Pakistan's Ambassador to South Africa Fahad Amjad, Air Force and Naval Attaché Muhammad Usman Niazi, Cultural Attaché Saad Nawaz, and Political Counsellor Dr Hassan Rabbani, and Trade Attaché Ms Farah, alongside local councillors, community leaders, and a large public turnout.

The event featured patriotic songs and traditional Pakistani cuisine, creating a festive yet reflective atmosphere. Speakers emphasised the pride felt by the diaspora over Pakistan's recent achievements, which were viewed as a source of honour not just for Pakistanis but for the entire Muslim world. Guests from Arab nations also congratulated the Pakistani community■

PICTURE GALLERY



AZERBAIJAN PRESIDENT ILHAM ALIYEV, TÜRKİYE PRESIDENT RECEP TAYYIP ERDOĞAN, AND PRIME MINISTER MUHAMMAD SHEHBAZ SHARIF STAND TOGETHER DURING THE TRILATERAL SUMMIT HELD IN LACHIN, AZERBAIJAN, REAFFIRMING BROTHERHOOD IN WAR AND PEACE. 28 MAY 2025



PRIME MINISTER MUHAMMAD SHEHBAZ SHARIF HOLDS A CORDIAL MEETING WITH PRESIDENT ILHAM ALIYEV OF AZERBAIJAN IN BAKU. 27 MAY 2025



PAKISTAN'S FOREIGN MINISTER MUHAMMAD ISHAQ DAR, CHINESE FOREIGN MINISTER WANG YI, AND ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER AMIR KHAN MUTTAQI OF AFGHANISTAN POSE FOR A PHOTO DURING THE INFORMAL TRILATERAL MEETING HELD IN BEIJING. 21 MAY 2025



PRIME MINISTER MUHAMMAD SHEHBAZ SHARIF PAYS A COURTESY CALL ON SUPREME LEADER AYATOLLAH SAYYED ALI KHAMENEI IN TEHRAN. 26 MAY 2025



A HIGH-LEVEL DIALOGUE TAKES PLACE BETWEEN IRAN AND PAKISTAN IN TEHRAN, TO DISCUSS REGIONAL COOPERATION, ECONOMIC TIES, AND SECURITY COLLABORATION. 26 MAY 2025



PRIME MINISTER MUHAMMAD SHEHBAZ SHARIF HOLDS BILATERAL TALKS WITH PRESIDENT EMOMALI RAHMON OF TAJIKISTAN AT THE PALACE OF NATION IN DUSHANBE. 29 MAY 2025



CHAIRMAN PAKISTAN PEOPLE'S PARTY BILAWUS BHUTTO ZARDARI LEADS A DELEGATION TO MEET PRIME MINISTER MUHAMMAD SHEHBAZ SHARIF. 23 MAY 2025



PRIME MINISTER MUHAMMAD SHEHBAZ SHARIF AND PRESIDENT ASIF ALI ZARDARI CONFERR THE BATON OF FIELD MARSHAL UPON CHIEF OF ARMY STAFF SYED ASIM MUNIR. 23 MAY 2025



PRIME MINISTER MUHAMMAD SHEHBAZ SHARIF DISTRIBUTES RELIEF CHEQUES AMONG FAMILIES OF MARTYRS OF MA'ARKA-E-HAQ IN MUZAFFARABAD. 22 MAY 2025



PRIME MINISTER MUHAMMAD SHEHBAZ SHARIF MEETS WITH A VISITING IMF DELEGATION LED BY JIHAD AZOUR, ISLAMABAD. 22 MAY 2025



PRIME MINISTER MUHAMMAD SHEHBAZ SHARIF INTERACTS WITH SOLDIERS WHO PARTICIPATED IN OPERATION BUNYANUM MARSOSS. 14 MAY 2025



PRIME MINISTER MUHAMMAD SHEHBAZ SHARIF ADDRESSES PAKISTAN NAVY OFFICERS DURING HIS VISIT TO THE NAVAL DOCKYARD, KARACHI. 19 MAY 2025



PAKISTAN'S TOP CIVIL AND MILITARY LEADERSHIP AT A CEREMONY TO CELEBRATE NATIONAL UNITY, PRIDE, AND GRATITUDE IN ISLAMABAD. 17 MAY 2025



UK FOREIGN SECRETARY DAVID LAMMY CALLS ON PRIME MINISTER MUHAMMAD SHEHBAZ SHARIF IN ISLAMABAD. 17 MAY 2025



PRIME MINISTER MUHAMMAD SHEHBAZ SHARIF VISITS CMH TO MEET INJURED PERSONNEL OF OPERATION BUNYANUM MARSOSS IN RAWALPINDI. 16 MAY 2025



PRIME MINISTER MUHAMMAD SHEHBAZ SHARIF VISITS THE KAMRA AERONAUTICAL COMPLEX TO CELEBRATE VICTORY IN MA'ARKA-E-HAQ WITH PAF OFFICERS. 15 MAY 2025



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