

CROSS & CLIMB ROHTAK

Institute of Research Based Learning & Competition

Current Affairs - 10 May 2025

INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND (IMF)



- The IMF is a specialised UN agency, established in 1944 at the Bretton Woods Conference to ensure global monetary stability post the Great Depression.
- It promotes **monetary cooperation**, ensures **financial stability**, facilitates **international trade**, supports **high employment**, and works to **reduce poverty**.

Functions of the IMF

- Provides **economic surveillance** of member countries and **policy advice**.
- Offers **financial assistance** to countries facing **balance-of-payments crises**.
- Delivers **technical assistance and capacity-building support** for sound economic governance.

Membership and Voting Power

- The IMF has **190 member countries**.
- Each member contributes a **quota**, based on its **economic size and performance**, which determines its **voting power and access to funding**.
- Voting is determined by a formula: **1 vote per 100,000 SDRs of quota + basic votes**.
- **SDRs (Special Drawing Rights)** are an IMF-created **international reserve asset**, not a currency, but can be exchanged among members for freely usable currencies.

Organisational Structure

- The **Board of Governors** (usually finance ministers or central bank governors) is the highest decision-making body.
- Day-to-day affairs are run by a **24-member Executive Board**.
- The **Managing Director**, often a European, is the **Chair of the Executive Board** and leads the IMF staff.
- The IMF is headquartered in **Washington, D.C.**

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A NEW NORMAL IN INDIA-PAKISTAN TIES

India and Pakistan have shared a **history of conflict since partition**, with **Pakistan** adopting a strategy of **proxy warfare** to challenge India's territorial integrity.

The evolution of **Pakistan's 'Thousand Cuts' doctrine** and **India's calibrated responses** have shaped a volatile and high-stakes security environment in South Asia.

However, a doctrinal shift in India's security strategy (after 2016) has established a **new normal**, one where it directly targets terrorist infrastructure within Pakistan in response to attacks.

Doctrinal Shift - Post-Uri and Beyond:

- **Surgical strikes (2016):**
 - Following the JeM attack at the Indian Army Brigade headquarters in Uri (J&K), which killed 19 soldiers, India conducted a **cross-border operation targeting terror launchpads and safe houses** in PoK.
 - This was **India's first direct cross-border operation in PoK** targeting terror infrastructure across the Line of Control in response to attacks.
- **Balakot airstrike (2019):**
 - Retaliation for the deadly suicide bombing in Pulwama.
 - Strikes extended into **Khyber Pakhtunkhwa**, Pakistan (not limited to PoK).

Operation Sindoor (2025), Pakistan's Response and Escalation Risks:

- **Operation Sindoor (2025):** In a response to the Pahalgam massacre, India **struck 9 locations**, including Pakistan's heartland **Bahawalpur and Muridke** in Punjab, marking its **largest aerial operation on Pakistani soil since 1971**.
- **Escalation post-Balakot:**
 - Pakistan responded with aerial dogfight.
 - An Indian pilot was captured and later returned.
- **Operation Sindoor fallout:**
 - **Pakistan chose to escalate** by targeting military stations at Jammu, Pathankot and Udhampur with drones and missiles, which were "**swiftly neutralised**".

Current Affairs - 10 May 2025

- India launched its counterattacks in the same domain and same intensity as Pakistan.

Strategic Implications and the 'New Normal':

- India's new posture:
 - **Emphasis on military retaliation** alongside diplomatic and economic tools.
 - **Sends a clear signal** that sub-conventional war under nuclear cover is no longer tolerable.
- **Changing rules of engagement:**
 - India's doctrine now includes **cross-border operations**.
 - **Raised costs for Pakistan's continued proxy war.**

Key Challenges and Outlook:

- **Risks of escalation:**
 - Every terror attack may now demand a military response from India, **raising stakes**. Future governments may face **domestic pressure to retaliate forcefully**.
- **Pakistan's strategic dilemma:**
 - **Domestic instability:**
 - Islamist militancy,
 - Baloch insurgency,
 - Political crisis,
 - Economic dependence on the IMF.
 - Raises doubts about **Pakistan's capacity to sustain long-term hostility**.

Conclusion:

India's post-2016 doctrinal shift **signals its resolve to respond militarily to terrorism** emanating from Pakistani soil, **redefining the terms of engagement** between the two **nuclear-armed neighbors**.

While this strategic assertiveness aims to deter proxy war, it also increases the **risks of escalation, demanding careful long-term calibration and diplomatic balancing**.

THE PAKISTAN-TURKEY NEXUS

Turkey's interests in Pakistan

- **Historical and Ideological Bond**
 - Shared Islamic identity has historically underpinned the Turkey–Pakistan relationship.
 - During the **Cold War**, both were part of Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) and the Regional Cooperation Development (RCD).
 - Pakistan supported Turkey in the Cyprus conflicts (1964, 1971) and pledged early recognition of Turkish Cyprus in 1983.
 - The rise of **Recep Tayyip Erdoğan** and his **political Islamism** deepened the ideological alignment with Pakistan post-2000.
- **High-Level Political Engagement**
 - Erdoğan has visited Pakistan at least **10 times** since 2003.
 - He co-chaired the **7th Pakistan-Türkiye High-Level Strategic Cooperation Council** in February 2025, reflecting close bilateral ties.
- **Strategic Balancing Against Gulf Powers**
 - Turkey, alongside Qatar, competes with Saudi Arabia and the UAE for influence in the Muslim world.
 - It seeks alternative alliances with non-Gulf states like Pakistan and Malaysia.
 - The 2019 Kuala Lumpur Summit, supported by Pakistan and Turkey, was viewed as an attempt to challenge Saudi leadership.
- **Indian Ocean Region (IOR) Engagement**
 - Turkey is expanding its presence in the IOR:
 - Established its largest overseas military base in Somalia (2017).
 - Sold Baykar TB2 drones to Maldives (2024).
 - Turkey has held numerous naval exercises with Pakistan's Navy, the second-largest in the IOR, while avoiding similar engagement with India.

Turkey–Pakistan relationship and India

- **Turkey’s Consistent Support to Pakistan on Kashmir**
 - Turkey’s repeated support for Pakistan on the Kashmir issue has long strained India-Turkey ties.
 - In 2013, the then Indian Foreign Minister criticized Turkey’s actions, urging it not to forge friendships “at India’s expense.”
 - Turkey’s pro-Pakistan stance continues despite India’s gestures, such as humanitarian aid after the 2023 earthquake.
- **India’s Strategic Counters to the Turkey-Pakistan Nexus**
 - **Eastern Europe: Support to Cyprus and Greece**
 - India backs the Greece-supported Republic of Cyprus, in opposition to Turkey and Pakistan’s support for the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. Greece reciprocates by supporting India’s stance on Kashmir.
- **South Caucasus: Military Alliance with Armenia**
 - India has become Armenia’s top arms supplier, surpassing even Russia by 2024.
 - This aligns India against Azerbaijan, which is militarily backed by Turkey and Pakistan.
 - In 2024, Pakistan signed a \$1.6 billion arms deal with Azerbaijan, and held a trilateral summit with Turkey and Azerbaijan.
- **Divergence in Global Strategic Alignments**
 - Pakistan is increasingly isolated in US foreign policy, with no mention in the 2022 Indo-Pacific Strategy, while India featured prominently.
 - India's growing ties with the US reflect its rise as a strategic Indo-Pacific partner, further distancing Islamabad.
- **Competing Infrastructure Visions**
 - Turkey has criticized IMEC and is now pushing its own “Iraq Development Road” project as a rival.

Current Affairs - 10 May 2025

PRADHAN MANTRI FORMALISATION OF MICRO FOOD PROCESSING ENTERPRISES (PMFME) SCHEME



- Launched on June 29, 2020, PMFMPE is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme by the Ministry of Food Processing Industries.
- It is designed to address the challenges faced by micro-enterprises and to tap the potential of groups and cooperatives to support the upgradation and formalization of these enterprises.
- Objectives: To build the capability of microenterprises to enable:
 - Increased access to credit by existing micro food processing entrepreneurs, FPOs, self-help groups, and co-operatives.
 - Integration with an organized supply chain by strengthening branding & marketing.
 - Support for the transition of existing 200,000 enterprises into a formal framework.
 - Increased access to common services like common processing facilities, laboratories, storage, packaging, marketing, and incubation services.
 - Strengthening of institutions, research, and training in the food processing sector; and
 - Increased access for enterprises to professional and technical support.
- Outlay:
 - The scheme envisages an outlay of ₹ 10,000 crores over a period of five years from 2020-21 to 2024-25.
 - The expenditure under the scheme would be shared in a 60:40 ratio between Central and State Governments, in a 90:10 ratio with the Northeastern and the Himalayan States, a 60:40 ratio with UTs with the legislature, and 100% by the Center for other UTs.

Current Affairs - 10 May 2025

- **Coverage:**
 - Under the scheme, **2,00,000 micro food processing units** will be directly assisted with **credit-linked subsidies**.
 - Adequate, **supportive common infrastructure and institutional architecture will be supported** to accelerate the growth of the sector.
- **Benefits:** The program has four broad components addressing the needs of the sector:
 - Support to individuals and groups of micro-enterprises.
 - Branding and Marketing support.
 - Support the strengthening of institutions.
 - Setting up a robust project management framework.
- **The Eligible Borrowers** for PMFMPE can be:
 - Farmer Producer Organization (FPO)
 - Self-Help Groups
 - Co-operatives
 - Existing Micro Food Processing Entrepreneurs
 - New Units, whether for individuals or groups, would only be supported for One District One Product (ODOP).

BALUCHISTAN



- Balochistan lies **mostly in western Pakistan** but also **extends into southeastern Iran**.
 - It is the traditional homeland of the Baloch people, after whom it is named.
- Balochistan (also spelled Baluchistan) is **bounded on the north by Afghanistan** and on the **south by the Arabian Sea**.
- The **Pakistani province named Balochistan** covers an area of 347,190 sq.km.
 - It is the **country's largest but least populated province**.
 - Its **capital is Quetta**.

Current Affairs - 10 May 2025

- The **Baloch and Pashtun people** make up the two major and more distinct ethnic groups. The **third major group** consists of people who are of mixed ethnicity but mainly of **Sindhi origin**.
- **Most of the people practice Islam**, and most speak languages of the Iranian branch of the Indo-Iranian language family.
- The **main languages are Balochi, Brahui, Pashto, and Sindhi**.
- The **largest towns** and main trade centers in Balochistan are **Quetta, in Pakistan, and Zahedan, in Iran**.

History:

- It was ruled by the Greeks after being **conquered by Alexander in 330 BC**.
- Arabs held most of the region from the 7th to the 10th century.
- The **British annexed most of Balochistan to India in the late 19th century**.
- **When British rule ended in India in 1947 and the colony was divided, much of Balochistan became part of Pakistan**.

MANAS NATIONAL PARK



- It is located in the **foothills of Himalayas in Assam**.
- Sprawling in a large area of 950 sq.km, the national park shares a **border with Bhutan's Royal Manas National Park**.
- **The Manas River**, from which its name has been derived, flows through the west of the park and is the main river within it.
 - The **river also acts as an international border between India and Bhutan**.
 - Manas River is a **major tributary of the Brahmaputra River** and divides into two separate rivers, the Beki and Bholkaduba, as it reaches the plains.
- The park's elevation ranges from 60 to 1,500 meters (200 to 4,900 feet) above sea level, contributing to its rich biodiversity.

Current Affairs - 10 May 2025

- The area has the unique distinction of being a **Natural World Heritage Site**, a **Tiger Reserve**, an **Elephant Reserve**, a **Biosphere Reserve**, and an **Important Bird Area**.
- It is one of the first reserves included in the tiger reserve network under Project Tiger in 1973.
- It forms part of a large tiger conservation landscape which includes Buxa-Nameri-Pakke-Namdapha tiger reserves and protected areas of Bhutan and Myanmar.
- The park is inhabited by several **indigenous communities**, including the **Bodo**, who have a deep connection with the land and its wildlife.

Flora:

- In general, the vegetation comprises **Sal (Shorea robusta)**, scrub forests, old plantations (in buffer areas), **semi-evergreen and mixed deciduous forests**, interspersed with grasslands and riparian vegetation (in core area).
- The **most presiding plant** species found here are **hollong trees**. Some other prominent species available here are Amari, Dewa Sam, Himolu, Garjan, etc.

Fauna: The Park is known for its rare and endangered endemic wildlife, such as the **Hispid Hare**, **Pygmy Hog**, **Golden Langur**, **Indian Rhinoceros**, **Asiatic Buffalo**, etc.