

AI and the Entertainment Revolution

By Uday Kumar Varma

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A New Stage for Creativity, Commerce, and Caution

In the constellation of global industries, few shine as brightly — or are as emotionally resonant as entertainment. From big-screen cinema and television broadcasting to OTT platforms and immersive digital media, entertainment is not just business; it shapes culture, identity, and collective imagination. Today, Artificial Intelligence (AI) is poised to become the next seismic force to transform this sector — redefining creativity, economics, and global cultural influence in ways as profound as sound in film or colour in television once did.

At the heart of this transformation is the convergence of content, data, and technology. AI is no longer confined to narrow backend applications; it is intimately woven into how stories are conceived, produced, personalised, distributed, and monetised across the entire entertainment ecosystem.

A Monumental Market — On the Cusp of Expansion

Globally, the entertainment and media industry remains a colossus. According to PwC, the sector is projected to reach \$3.5 trillion in revenue by 2029, with digital formats like connected TV, gaming, and personalised advertising driving much of this growth. AI-powered advertising alone is expected to be a key revenue booster, supporting this expansion and rewarding agile innovators.

Specific to AI in media and entertainment, market projections show the global AI segment reaching nearly \$100 billion by 2030, growing at over 24% annually. These AI tools span automatic content tagging, smart recommendations, scalable personalisation, and real-time analytics that help platforms better understand — and serve — their audiences.

In India, too, the scale of entertainment is enormous and rapidly growing. The Indian media and entertainment sector was estimated at around ₹2.5 trillion (\$28 billion) in 2024, and is projected to rise to ₹3.1 trillion by 2027, roughly a 7% annual growth. Even more dynamic is the AI subset: the Indian AI in media and entertainment market could grow from roughly \$1.7 billion in 2024 to over \$7.8 billion by 2030, expanding at a ~28% CAGR.

These numbers matter because they illustrate not only current value but potential scale. They underline entertainment's economic muscle and hint at opportunity for wealth creation, jobs, creative diversification, and exportable cultural assets.

From Creation to Consumption: The AI Impact Across the Pipeline

AI's influence touches nearly every part of the entertainment value chain:

- **Content Creation:** Generative AI tools are assisting writers, directors, and editors by suggesting plot structures, improving dialogues, and even composing music.

Studios are using AI to automate aspects of script processing and early conceptualisation. These tools do not replace artistic sensibilities but augment them, enabling creators to explore more ideas with greater speed and lower cost.

- **Production & Post-Production:** AI is transforming visual effects (VFX), rendering, colour grading, sound design, and even real-time virtual production workflows. In India, the VFX segment has grown robustly because of digitalisation and AI adoption, while the streaming video market — powered largely by algorithmic recommendations — is projected to reach \$7 billion by 2027.

- **Recommendations & Engagement:** Streaming platforms use machine learning to personalise suggestions — a key reason why viewers spend more time on services tailored to their tastes. The impact is not trivial: personalised recommendations can lift watch-time metrics dramatically by showing users what they are most likely to enjoy.

- **Distribution & Monetisation:** AI enables dynamic ad placement, predictive pricing, and even forecasting content performance before launch. For OTT and television, this means not just efficiency, but smarter monetisation aligned with real-time user behaviour.

Collectively, these capabilities suggest a future where storytelling and data insights work in tandem — a fusion that increases efficiency, lowers barriers to entry for creators, and expands audience reach.

India's Strategic Imperatives: Embrace, Empower, and Regulate

India stands at an inflection point. Traditionally holding around 2 % of the global media and entertainment market, Information and Broadcasting leaders have warned that the country risks losing ground in the global content economy if AI adoption lags.

Yet India possesses unique advantages: a multilingual creative talent pool, a booming young audience, and a rapidly growing digital ecosystem. Government forums like WAVES 2025 have sought to bridge creativity and technology, promoting India as a global hub for film, digital content, gaming, and animation.

For policymakers, the task is threefold:

- **Encourage Innovation and Investment:** Through incentive regimes, R&D support, and access to infrastructure, India can accelerate AI adoption in entertainment.

- **Protect Rights and Creators:** The rise of AI has sparked global debates over copyright use and content training data. In India, industry groups are pressing for new legal frameworks to protect creators' intellectual property in an AI era.

- **Ensure Responsible, Ethical Use:** Algorithmic bias, data privacy, and job displacement are real concerns. Responsible AI policies should combine innovation with fairness — protecting cultural diversity and human creativity without stifling technology.

Balancing Optimism and Critical Reality

AI is not a magic wand. There are structural challenges: high implementation costs, privacy regulation hurdles, and infrastructure gaps can slow adoption — especially for smaller enterprises. Ethically, unchecked automation could erode jobs, homogenise artistic voices, or over-amplify dominant cultural narratives. Even globally, voice artists and other professionals are pushing back against unregulated use of AI models that could supplant human nuance.

But these challenges are not reasons to resist progress. Rather, they are calls to shape a thoughtful, equitable future for AI in entertainment — one where technology augments rather than replaces human imagination, and where policy supports both innovation and inclusion.

Conclusion

AI is reshaping entertainment with unprecedented speed and potential. For India — especially in the context of global forums like the World AI Summit — the mission is clear: embrace AI with ambition but deploy it with responsibility. Doing so could unlock not just economic value, but a more vibrant, diverse, and globally resonant creative ecosystem for decades to come.

The Changing World Order: A Rebalancing of Global Power Equations

By – Viraj Vaidya

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Ever since Donald Trump returned to the Oval Office for the second time, you have been listening to about disruption in world order. This is not an overnight disruption, but a gradual, time-consuming process that never settles, as history shows, and it is stretched over a much longer time frame, it is only that Trump's foreign policy has accelerated this process.

When we talk about disruption or sporadic change in world order, one should never take it at face value because the world order continues to rebalance itself. So, in short, it is not a disruption but a rebalancing of global power equations. And to understand this process of rebalancing, we would take help from a very interesting concept in international relations, that is the Balance of Power (power equilibrium), a realistic approach to global politics.

But before we delve deep into what leads to change in world order, one must understand what we mean by World Order. In very lucid language, the world order is the power relation among countries, that is, the overall system that governs how power, rules and relationships are organised among nations.

Now, to understand the change in world order, let's start with our understanding of the Balance of Power. In realist theory, the balance of power refers to a system where major powers distribute capabilities so that no single state dominates. For example, after the disintegration of Soviet Union in 1991, the USA emerged as the sole superpower, dictating terms on which the world functions, that too by subjugating the interests of other countries to American interests. Imposing sanctions by taking advantage of economic leverage through Dollar dominance and unilateral military measures against countries not toeing the American interests became the daily business of White House. This led to excessive accumulation of power, both economic and military, in the USA's favour, and to balance this imbalance of power, countries started coming together by forming regional economic setups like SCO or BRICS, to offset the impact of dollar dominance, and in this way, countries distribute their capabilities to reduce dominance of a single power and maintain balance of power.

Similarly, another striking example of the balance of power is the formation of QUAD (India, USA, Japan and Australia) to counter the aggressive rise of China in the Indo-Pacific region. This is how countries form alliances to counter a single dominant force in the region. Hence, the Balance of power is such an interesting concept in geopolitics that you can predict the direction in which the world will be moving in the future.

Now, let's apply the concept of balance of power to understand the change in world order by dividing modern world history into four timeframes.

Period of World Wars (Multipolar World)

The period of world wars was the period of multipolarity, wherein there were many centres of decision-making, and each state went on to increase its economic or military power vis-à-vis other countries, leading to a power struggle among the nations. Therefore, the balance of power was always unstable, creating a security dilemma for countries lower in the power hierarchy and to maintain the balance of power, these countries would take such actions that led to the power struggle, eventually turning into wars and therefore World War I and World War II.

Though a multipolar world gives strategic autonomy to countries, but it also leads to a power struggle among nations to become a regional hegemon or a global hegemon because countries always try to fill the power gap. Another feature of a multipolar world is that it gives rise to regionalism, you would see regional economic groups emerging on the global platform and often these groups are led by a regional power, that aspires to become a global hegemon.

Period of Cold War (Bipolar World)

Often, the shift in polarity is due to a major geopolitical event, in this case, the shift from a multipolar world to a bipolar world was because of World War II. After the war, Europe was completely devastated, with many European colonial empires collapsing one by one, leaving the USSR and the USA as the two superpowers, proclaiming the start of the bipolar world order.

A bipolar world order, as described by John Mearsheimer in his book *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, is the most stable form of balance of power, as power is evenly distributed between two countries, discouraging a country from taking any unilateral military measures against another country due to deterrence. In a nutshell, the Cold War exemplifies the stability of the bipolar world order, with the USA and the USSR being equally formidable in military prowess and nuclear capabilities.

Period of Post-Cold War (Unipolar World)

The Bipolar world order ended with the disintegration of the USSR in 1991, which in the words of Vladimir Putin, was the greatest tragedy of the 20th century. Cold War ended with the USA emerging as the sole surviving superpower, which started the era of unipolar world order, wherein the world was at the mercy of the USA's narrow political and economic interests.

The 1990s-2000s were marked by US-led globalisation and interventionist foreign policy (Iraq, Afghanistan). The unipolar world order represents an imbalance of power, a temporary dominance rather than a stable equilibrium and therefore unipolar world cannot last. Other powers will rise or align to restore balance and that leads to powers like India, China and Russia reasserting themselves. The trilateral forum, RIC (Russia, India and China), is a perfect example of the emergence of a strong force against the USA to maintain the balance of power (equilibrium).

Decline of the US Hegemony (Re-emergence of Multipolar World)

Multipolarity is the common sense in today's world and it is still emerging. The world has not just become more multipolar, it has also become more regional and that's a subset of multipolarity. In a Multipolar world, the ability of the major powers to get involved in everything is less and the ability of regional powers to contest they getting involved in everything is more.

Whenever there is a shift to multipolarity, the world becomes directionless for the initial phase, as many centres of decision-making (nations with influence) emerge on the global platform and want to have their say or get their national interests fulfilled. So, during a multipolarity, the world becomes volatile and when a leader like Donald Trump comes into the picture, it becomes more volatile. Trump's foreign policy has worked as a catalyst, which has given impetus for more volatility, leading to economic and political uncertainties across the globe.

Conclusion

The shifting world order is not an abrupt revolution but a natural readjustment in the international balance of power. History has proven that each dominant order eventually calls forth counterweights. The post-Cold War unipolar moment under American hegemony is yielding to a multipolar, more regionalised system where influence and power are distributed and not concentrated.

In the present era, the emergence of new economic blocs, regional groupings, and alternative economic systems indicates the quest for balance in the world. While this realignment reinforces strategic autonomy for most states, it also introduces uncertainty and competition. The emerging world order, thus, will not be characterised by a single hegemon but by the dynamic interactions between several regional powers.

In essence, the age of globalisation is quietly giving way to an age of regionalism and power pluralism, where cooperation and contestation will coexist. The world is not descending into chaos, it is merely finding a new balance.

Recurring Bailouts Expose Flaws in Pakistan's Economic Framework

By N C Bipindra

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Pakistan's economic crises have unfolded with a familiar pattern for decades. It emerges from a balance-of-payments shortfall with foreign exchange reserves dwindling and its government running for emergency support from friendly capitals and multilateral lenders.

As temporary relief arrives and the immediate crisis subsides, it has never led to any meaningful reforms in the country's economic architecture, and hence allows the same cycle to repeat recurrently.

This pattern has hardened into something more troubling over the decades, which is Pakistan's structural dependency on external aid, but without the political will to reform the economy that requires it like breathing air.

Pakistan's current economic distress demonstrates this dynamic with much clarity, with its financial fragility once again pushing it to seek assistance from traditional lenders, including the International Monetary Fund (IMF), China, and the Gulf states.

But what distinguishes this moment is not merely Pakistan's need for aid but the growing reluctance of its creditors to continue providing support without a meaningful change in the country's economic management.

Facing mounting pressure, and exacerbated by external shocks like the ongoing Middle Eastern war between the US-Israel combine, and Iran that has disrupted global energy flows and strained import-dependent economies like Pakistan, it has again turned to its external benefactors.

According to Pakistani media reports, Islamabad has in recent months submitted as many as eight separate requests to Saudi Arabia, the country that has bailed Pakistan repeatedly, seeking urgent financial assistance.

These requests include converting \$5 billion currently deposited in the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) into a long-term facility that could last up to a decade.

The original deposit, which began at \$3 billion in 2024 before expanding to \$5 billion, was meant to stabilise Pakistan's dangerously low foreign exchange reserves, which had gone below \$8 billion after the country narrowly avoided default in 2023.

In addition to restructuring the existing deposit, Pakistan has also requested that Saudi Arabia expand its deferred oil payment facility from \$1.2 billion to \$5 billion.

There is a telling silence from the Saudi side, which has yet to respond positively to any of these Pakistani appeals. But it reflects a broader reassessment underway in Saudi Arabia and other creditor capitals regarding Islamabad's long-term economic credibility.

While Pakistan's partners for years assisted largely out of strategic calculation or diplomatic goodwill, today those same partners appear increasingly unwilling to write blank checks.

A part of this hesitation from Pakistan's international lenders stems from concerns about how aid is used once it arrives in the country. Oftentimes, it has been reported that the financial assistance, which is intended to stabilise the economy, dissipates within a governance system marked by weak administrative oversight, political patronage networks, and persistent institutional inefficiencies.

Rather than catalysing structural reforms of Pakistan's economy, these external funds have frequently served as temporary patches that delay bigger changes.

These concerns have been further compounded by the perception that portions of economic assistance are indirectly absorbed by Pakistan's powerful military establishment.

Since the country's armed forces wield enormous influence over national decision-making and maintain extensive economic interests through military-run enterprises, this external aid therefore runs out of the formal economy into the parallel military economy.

While these institutions are used to provide benefits to the military ecosystem, they do little to address the broader structural weaknesses of the civilian economy. This dynamic raises questions for Pakistan's foreign lenders, who are left wondering how much assistance actually translates into sustainable economic improvement.

In this context, Saudi Arabia has already been signalling its answer. In 2023, its finance minister, Mohammed al-Jadaan, during a speech at the World Economic Summit at Davos, made it clear that Riyadh's approach to foreign aid was changing as the era of giving "direct grants and deposits without strings attached" was effectively over.

While the message was directed broadly at countries dependent on Saudi support, including Jordan and Egypt, it resonated particularly strongly in Pakistan as al-Jadaan stressed that future assistance would come with expectations that recipient countries undertake genuine economic reforms.

Riyadh explicitly stated that Islamabad would need to expand its tax base, implement fiscal reforms, and address structural distortions in its economy if it hoped to receive continued financial backing. "We are taxing our people, we are also expecting others to do the same, to make their efforts. We want to help, but we also want you to do your part," al-Jadaan argued.

It is instructive how even personal diplomacy has struggled to overcome these new conditions. Earlier, when Pakistani leaders could secure economic aid on the back of a call from its Gulf partners, now even requests from its powerful army chief, General Asim Munir, are shrugged off.

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Kolkata Tram @153: The Last Rolling Memory of a Fading City of Joy

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Which is the only city in India where trams still run? It is Kolkata. But that is not its only distinction. It is also the only city in Asia where an electric tram service, born in the 19th century, still survives on active tracks. On February 24, 2026, Kolkata celebrated 153 years of its tramways — a system that began on February 24, 1873, when horse-drawn carriages clattered along iron rails between Sealdah and Armenian Ghat Street. Those early trams moved at a humble three miles per hour, introduced during the tenure of Lord Ripon. What started as a slow, horse-pulled novelty would go on to become one of the defining features of the city. As a Malayali traveler stepping onto the streets of Kolkata, I did not see the tram merely as a mode of transport. I saw it as a moving museum, a breathing relic of India's layered urban history. The tram here is not just steel and wire; it is sentiment and memory. In 1902, under the supervision of the Calcutta Tramways Company, electric trams began running between Esplanade and Kidderpore, and between Esplanade and Kalighat. The city's face changed forever. The tram network expanded steadily, connecting Kolkata and Howrah — twin cities divided by the Hooghly yet bound by commerce and culture. The growth of Howrah as one of India's busiest railway complexes owed something to this silent, steady connector. At its peak, Kolkata's trams operated along 25 routes. Today, barely six remain. Around 15,000 commuters still depend on them, choosing this cheapest and most environmentally friendly form of transport over the city's chaotic traffic. There was a time when trams were not unique to Kolkata. Madras, Bombay, Baroda, Nasik, Kanpur, Patna — all had their tramlines. In 1895, India's first electric tram ran in Madras. Between 1930 and 1970, tram services flourished across these cities. But gradually, one by one, they shut down — victims of financial losses, epidemics, falling passenger numbers, and the rising dominance of motor vehicles.

Even Kerala had a tramway. The Cochin State Forest Tramway operated from 1907 to 1963, transporting teak and timber from the forests of Parambikulam to Chalakudy. It was an industrial tram, not a passenger service, but it remains part of our forgotten transport history. Bombay electrified its tram system in 1907 under the Bombay Electric Supply and Tramways Company (BEST). Delhi had trams until 1963; Bombay until 1964. Madras ended its service in 1953 after bankruptcy. Patna became the first Indian city to close its tram service as early as 1903. Nasik shut down in 1933 following famine and plague.

Today, Kolkata stands alone. The tram service is now directly managed by the West Bengal Transport Corporation. Yet it survives in what can only be described as a prolonged gasp between life and death. Critics argue that tramlines obstruct modernization, occupy valuable road space, and slow down traffic on already congested roads. Many tracks have been covered with tar because removing them entirely would be too expensive. In some places, the rails peek through the asphalt like faint palm lines — reminders of a destiny the city once embraced. When I visited the Gariahat tram depot, it felt like walking into an abandoned ancestral home. Rusted tracks, blue-and-white tramcars resting in silence, and a haunting stillness told stories of a glorious past. In the 1980s, traveling by tram in Kolkata was a dignified experience — slow, breezy, and affordable. Today, those same carriages appear like relics awaiting judgment. Kolkata was once called the City of Joy — a phrase immortalized by Dominique Lapierre and later popularized globally. Now, many whisper a different description. After decades of political turbulence, industrial stagnation, and what critics call ideological rigidity, the city seems trapped in a cycle of economic fatigue. Youth are leaving in large numbers — migrating to Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Pune, even abroad — in search of opportunity. The tram's fading blue paint mirrors the fading confidence of a generation.

As a Malayali, I cannot help but compare Kolkata's tram story with Kerala's own transport debates. In our cities, we rush toward flyovers, metro rails, and highways. We rarely pause to preserve heritage mobility. In Kolkata, modernization has often meant erasing tracks rather than integrating them. Yet, when I boarded a tram from Esplanade, something magical happened. The vehicle moved gently, almost meditatively. Unlike buses that roar or taxis that weave aggressively, the tram glided with restraint. It allowed me to observe the city — colonial facades, old bookstores, tea stalls, street debates — at human speed. The tram does not hurry. It remembers. On its 153rd anniversary, the state transport department organized “Tramjatra,” attracting tram enthusiasts even from Germany and Australia. That global affection contrasts sharply with local apathy. For outsiders, Kolkata's tram is romance. For many residents, it is inconvenience. But perhaps the tram's slow pace is precisely what this restless century needs. In an era of climate crisis, electric public transport from the 19th century seems surprisingly futuristic. Long before sustainability became fashionable, Kolkata's trams were already eco-friendly. The deeper question is not whether trams slow traffic. It is whether a city that erases its memory can sustain its soul.

Kolkata's tram is more than transport. It is testimony — to colonial engineering, to post-independence optimism, to socialist planning, to decline, and to resilience. The dark shade of the tram cars reflects a darker narrative of West Bengal's political and economic journey. But within that darkness lies continuity. As I stepped off the tram near Howrah, watching the wires crisscross the grey sky, I felt both nostalgia and unease. The tram survives, but barely. The city breathes, but heavily. If the tram stops someday, it will not merely mark the end of a transport system. It will signal the silencing of a 153-year-old conversation between steel tracks and human footsteps. Kolkata may no longer be the City of Joy in the way it once was. But as long as a tram bell rings somewhere between Sealdah and Esplanade, history still moves — slowly, stubbornly, beautifully — through its streets.

From Strategic Inertia to a Pro-active Peace Initiative: Ending the Iran / US-Israel War – Part -1

By Sardar Sanjay Matkar

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The Dawn newspaper of Pakistan reported in its 5th April, 2026 edition that the Failed Marshal Asif Munir, the Supreme Leader of Pakistan met with Shia clerics in Rawalpindi to discuss “matters of national security and the role of ulema in societal harmony” and warned them that “Violence in Pakistan, on the basis of incidents occurring in another country, will not be tolerated”. The Pakistani military is trying to manage its domestic environment amid the US-Israel war against Iran, that saw protests erupting in early March following the start of the war and the killing of Iran's Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, that led to several casualties and a security crackdown, particularly in Karachi and Gilgit-Baltistan. This warning was not particularly welcomed by the Shia clerics and created a new fissure between the Failed Marshal where they have reportedly accused him of being insulting and abusive and it seems that in the Friday sermons advised him to move to the USA if he loved that country more.

There is no doubt that Pakistan is trying desperately to act as a security guarantor of the Middle-East, a position that is not without its dangers for a country that is offering to mediate peace between an erratic and uncontrollable President of the USA who is supporting a fanatic Israel that is focused on the destruction of Iran, and an Iran that is focused on delivering the maximum possible violent damage not only to Israel, but also to the Gulf countries surrounding it.

And, while playing the peacemaker, Pakistan conspicuously avoids any mention of its state of "open war" with the Taliban in Afghanistan, and with Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), against whom Pakistan launched "Operation Ghazab il-Haq" (Righteous Fury) in late February 2026 leading to the deaths of thousands of people in those regions.

Coming back to Pakistan's ambition to be the peace-broker in the Middle East conflict, we must first look at the Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement (SMDA) signed on September 17, 2025, in Riyadh, a major pact between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia that commits both nations to treat aggression against one as an act against both. This binding treaty covers all military means, aiming to strengthen joint deterrence amidst rising Middle East tensions.

In March 2026, Pakistan's Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar warned Iran to respect Pakistan's strategic defence pact with Saudi Arabia, with the intension of avoiding escalation after Iranian strikes in the Gulf. Dar confirmed Pakistan is obligated to protect Saudi Arabia under the SDMA agreement, urging Iran to ensure Saudi territory is not targeted in the conflict. The Iranians responded by stating that they will ONLY target American bases located in Saudi Arabia that were used to launch attacks against Iran; and then went on to successfully strike the U.S Embassy in Riyadh, destroy U.S. military aircraft based on Saudi soil, targeted the Ras Tanura refinery and the Saudi Aramco-Exxon refinery, both of which sustained superficial damages. Interestingly, Iran denied responsibility for the refinery attacks and called it a false-flag operation by Israel.

The conflict reached a critical point when the Israelis attacked the Iranian gas fields in Pars and destroyed Iranian energy infrastructure in the region. They wanted to goad Iran into an infernal response that would lead to the destruction of all local energy infrastructure in the region and force all the Arab states into a direct and open conflict with Iran. The Iranians were measured in their response, when they could've been much more violent, and said that any further attack on their infrastructure will invite an escalatory response. However, this one incident seems to have pushed Iran and the Arab nations towards a breaking point.

On March 19, 2026, Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud warned Iran that patience regarding attacks on Saudi Arabia is limited, stating the Kingdom reserves the right to take "military action". This warning is interesting in its nature since Saudi Arabia seems to be threatening Iran with attacks by Pakistan under their SMDA treaty, which by any means does not really sound dangerous, or effective on the ground. After all, Pakistan is ruled by its own king, Failed Marshal Asif Munir who thinks that his each action is the best for himself and by extension to his country, and if he takes a decision to engage in a conflict with Iran on behalf of Saudi Arabia, the consequences might be not be the ones envisaged by him or his Prime Minister.

The reality is that Pakistan is home to the second largest Shia population in the world, accounting to roughly 12-15% of its population. More importantly, Pakistan is itself a majority Muslim nation, where most of its populace are supporting Iran against Israel and the USA. There is also a growing belief in Pakistan and other Muslim enclaves across the world that this is a "Holy War" between Muslims and the Christian-Zionists, a new crusade against the Muslim world.

Iran has also played an active part for the current situation that the world is facing. Its proxy network across the region; the Hezbollah, the Houthis, the Shia militias in Iraq and Syria; constituting a network of Iranian-backed proxies, often referred to as the "Axis of Resistance", have worked actively to destabilize the Middle East through armed conflict, terrorism, and maritime disruption. Since October 2023, these groups have expanded their regional influence by conducting coordinated attacks against Israel, U.S. forces, and commercial shipping, aiming to exert strategic pressure and advance Iranian geopolitical interests.

While, on one hand, Iran cultivated the Shia political influence across Pakistan, Lebanon, Iraq and Syria; on the other hand, it also allowed anti-Pakistan activities within its own borders by giving access of Chabahar port to India,

turning a blind eye to Indian intelligence agencies operating across its territory to destabilize Pakistan, creating safe havens for members of the Baluchistan Liberation Army to recuperate from its fights with the Pakistani Army, and allowing safe passage of Indian goods directly to Afghanistan while bypassing Pakistan. Essentially, while creating their own geopolitical strategy, they have narrowed the options on countries that will support it during times of conflict and allowed the Pakistani State to become its opponent. Its open hatred for the USA and Israel is legendary in its scope and ferocity. So, while we can consider Iran to be a destabilizing force for the region, the ongoing war against it is turning out to be catastrophic for the entire world. By choking energy supplies to the world, Iran has decimated economies of nations that are far out-of-reach of their drones and missiles and yet have cause harm that will take years to rectify.

Esmail Baghaei, spokesman for Iran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on Monday acknowledged diplomatic efforts by Pakistan, which has shared a plan with Iran and the United States to end hostilities, according to Reuters report of 06 April 2026. The deal, tentatively dubbed the "Islamabad Accord", would include a regional framework for the strait, with final in-person talks in the capital of Pakistan, wherein a ceasefire would take effect immediately, with the reopening the Strait of Hormuz with 15 to 20 days given to finalise a broader settlement. This agreement, as proposed by Pakistan is expected to include Iranian commitments not to pursue nuclear weapons in exchange for sanctions relief and the release of frozen assets, as per Reuters.

The Islamabad Accord seemed dead before delivery since Tehran responded by stating that it will not reopen the strait as part of a temporary ceasefire, a senior Iranian official told Reuters on Monday, adding that it will not accept deadlines as it reviews the proposal. U.S. President Donald Trump on his side has decided that the only way to declare victory is to post expletive laden posts on Truth Social, his own media platform, threatening Iran with attacks on its civilian infrastructure, which as per legal experts across the world would constitute war crimes against humanity. While these peace talks are being proposed by Pakistan, Israel and Iran are carrying out constant attacks on each other, leading to mutual destruction of infrastructure in both countries and killing of civilians. At this point it is clear, that Israel is not conforming to the idea of peace, since it goes against its ultimate goal of the complete destruction of Iran and being the sole "super-power" of the Middle East, a goal identical to that of Iran which seeks the destruction of Israel.

A peace accord, any peace accord; is the necessity of these uncertain times. Based on reports as of early April 2026, Russia and China are providing support to Iran during its ongoing conflict with the U.S. and Israel, but they have largely avoided direct military intervention, opting for indirect, diplomatic, and logistical assistance. This cooperation is primarily focused on enabling Iran to sustain its defensive efforts while aiding Russia's own strategic interests. Currently, the global economy is under massive stress with developing countries facing economic meltdowns due to unavailability of affordable energy resources. If the USA was to physically invade with troops on-the-ground on Iranian soil, this will be more than a repeat of the US – Iraq war of 2003, or the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan. It will be the start of a global war.

China and Russia will get proactively involved in widening the scope of this conflict, with Russia escalating its war against Ukraine to take control of more territory of Eastern Europe, while China attempts to take over Taiwan. Both countries are aware that the United States military is stretched thin across multiple fronts, with a weak leadership thanks to the purge of senior U.S. military officials by the Trump administration. If China invades Taiwan, its key ally North Korea will join in the war by attacking U.S. forces in South Korea. This will put pressure on Japan to get involved in the war against China and North Korea to defend its own sovereignty. Essentially, the war that Israel and USA started will engulf NATO countries, Eastern Europe and Asia.

The Iran war is also transforming Africa, delivering an immediate economic shock with far-reaching consequences, devastating the energy systems, disrupting maritime trade and food supply chains and changing the architecture of political alliances that ensured some form of international security. The Sahel region has been previously instable due to the mix of structural and economic factors, the expansion of armed militias, weak governments and recurring military coups. Mali, Niger, and Burkina Faso's central governments have struggled to maintain effective territorial control, creating security vacuums exploited by armed organizations, smuggling networks, and cross-border criminal groups. The Iran war is deepening the security vacuum due to limited international security engagements. With the U.S. and French forces already withdrawn from direct involvement in the security of the Sahel region, NATO's presence in the region, through the presence of Turkish forces will contract as the war widens in scope and intensity.

The available energy supply prices and food prices are increasing rapidly, worsening the economic pressures in countries that depend heavily on imports of both. Such rapid economic shocks tend to intensify social instability and leads to public discontent, conditions that favour radical armed groups that exploit such circumstances to enhance their influence through recruitment of fighters, expansion of social and political influence and attempt, many times successfully, to shift political balances in their favour.

Currently, India is largely acting as a strategic mediator rather than a lead peacemaker in the Iran war, balancing its relationships to protect its energy supplies and large diaspora in the Gulf. While possessing strong ties with both Iran and the U.S., India had initially chosen a "wait-and-see" approach, focusing on safe passage of its cargo ships through the Strait of Hormuz rather than direct mediation. Unfortunately, this "wait-and-see" approach was not strategic autonomy; it was strategic inertia, signalling that India's foreign policy is reactive rather than proactive, and preferring the safety of the sidelines over the risks of responsible global leadership. However, over the last few days, this has changed.

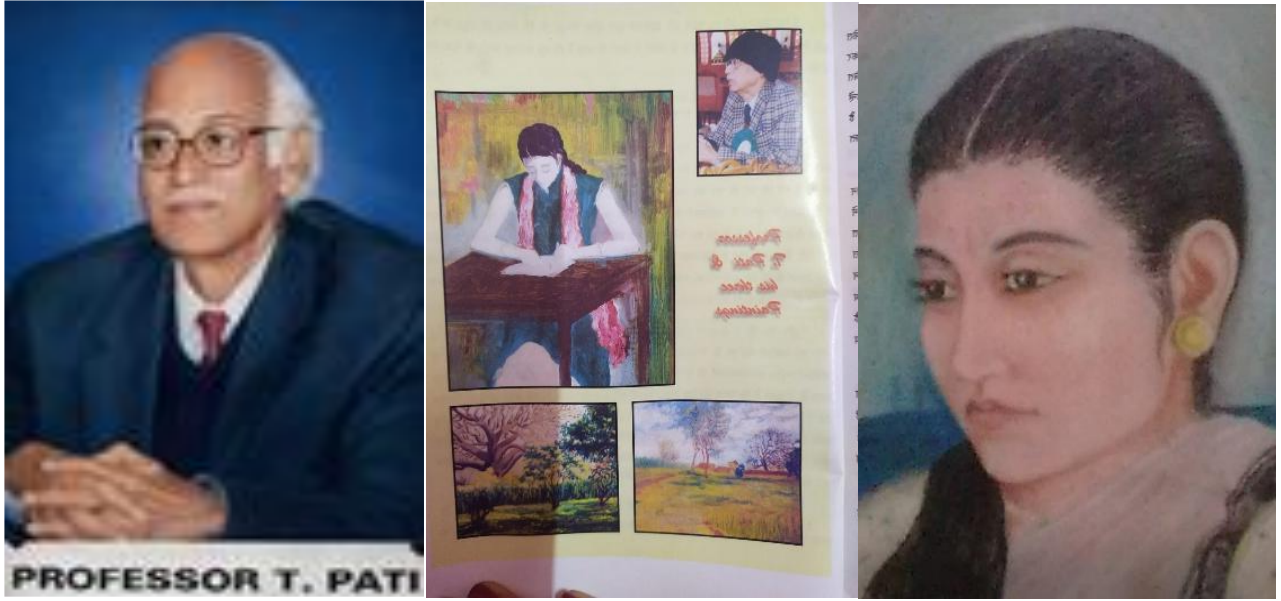
India has adopted a pragmatic, multi-aligned diplomacy to manage the US-Iran conflict, prioritizing energy security, maritime trade, and regional stability. Currently, New Delhi is actively leveraging high-level diplomatic outreach with both Iran and Gulf states to de-escalate tensions and secure critical shipping lanes, seeking to avoid being drawn directly into a high-risk mediation role, preferring to promote peace in a way that aligns with its own economic and security interests rather than acting as a proxy for Western powers. However, there is a trap that India must avoid, and that is its over enthusiastic friendship with Israel. Since India imports more than 80% of advanced military technology from Israel, technology that should have been developed in India itself, under the 'Atmanirbhar' (self-dependency) policy in effect since 2015; it is unwilling to criticize Israel for its open hostility towards the Palestinian population and its land-grab in Gaza and Lebanon. The Indian government has decided to remain silent on these issues, hoping that it will not be drawn into the Israel – Palestine /Lebanon conflict. However, it is an urgent necessity that India must proactively reduce its engagement with Israel on an immediate basis, lest it be tainted with the sins of this current Israeli – Zionist leadership under Benjamin Netanyahu.

To be continued in next issue....

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors. They do not purport to reflect the opinions or views of the FINS or its members.

India is Proud of:

Prof Tribikram Pati (23 October 1929 - 2 July 2008)



Tribikram Pati was a mathematician of great repute. He was the first Odia person to hold the office of Vice Chancellor of Allahabad University. He became famous worldwide for his solution to the mathematical theorem Riemann Hypothesis. This hypothesis was unsolved for more 150 years. In addition to this, he also solved over 150 other unsolved mathematical problems.

Prof T Pati, the grandson of Utkalmani Gopbandhu Das was born in Cuttack. He was a brilliant student from his childhood and used to stand first in all his classes. He graduated from Utkal University and completed his post-graduation from Allahabad University in 1950.

After post-graduation, in 1950, he joined Allahabad University as a research scholar. His research work was published in many national and international journals. In 1953, at the age of 24, Allahabad University awarded him a Doctorate in Philosophy and in 1956 a Doctorate in Science. He was the youngest professor at the university to receive a Doctorate in Science. He was the Head of the Department of Mathematics at Burla Engineering College for a brief time. In 1958, he returned to Allahabad University and started working as an Associate Professor in the Department of Mathematics. He spent most of his working life at Allahabad University. He also served as the Head of the Department of Mathematics at Jabalpur University for about ten years.

Nearly 30 scholars got their PhD/DPhil under his guidance and four of them received D.Sc. degree. During Prof Pati's tenure in Allahabad University, there were many great personalities as faculty in many departments of Allahabad University.

In one of the interview to press Prof Pati says "I have seen Dr S Radhakrishnan bowing at the feet of Prof RD Ranade, former HoD of Philosophy, Allahabad University. It was a treat to hear lectures delivered by Prof Ishwari Prasad, Prof SC Deb, Firaq Gorakhpuri and former Dean, Faculty of Law, Prof KK Bhattacharya. I can never forget the melodious recitation of 'Madhushala' by Dr Haribansh Rai Bachchan." Quote-Unquote

Apart from mathematics, he was also proficient in Sanskrit. He also held the position of Vice Chancellor of Shri Jagannath Sanskrit University, Puri. He was also an acclaimed poet and composed poetry in Odia, Hindi, Urdu and Sanskrit. He was highly respected and praised painter in his own capacity.

He was associated with many institutions like the Odisha Mathematical Congress, the Institute of Mathematics and Applied Sciences, the Odisha Science Academy, and the "Ahmedabad Mathematical Congress".

Prof Pati was awarded Collis Memorial Lectureship Honors and Rajiv Gandhi National Unity Award for his academic excellence.

Today many people closely related to Prof Tribikram Pati have made their own niche in the field of mathematics and higher science. His Son in Law, Prof Vedang Das Mohanty is renowned scientist with specialization in Experimental High Energy Physics at National Institute of Science Education and Research, (NISER) Bhubneshwar.

It can be rightly said about this great mathematician "He was born in a family, which had already amassed a huge wealth of knowledge. But, he was not just satisfied by maintaining the same and went miles ahead to add to it. He earned laurels not only in his subject Mathematics, but also left indelible imprints in the poetry of Sanskrit, English and Oriya. Besides, he was a wonderful painter."

Professor Tribikram Pati left for heavenly abode, away from Odisha in Allahabad on 02 July 2008.

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