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GLOBAL UP-TO-DATE

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The world around us is changing rapidly. Wars, new turn in global politics, human rights issues are occurring every day, posing new challenges and concerns. Global Up-to-Date is an initiative by Centre for Governance Studies (CGS) which will work as a hub for explaining the contemporary global issues.

The regular briefs will focus and explain the issues related to International Politics, Economy, Security, Human Rights, and Development. There will be a monthly printed version newsletter containing briefs of all the contemporary global important issues. The online version contains regular updates of the pressing issues along with the PDF version of the news letter.

Note: The views expressed in this newsletter are solely those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the policies of CGS.

Climate Disruptions and the Shifting Landscape of Global Stability

Roman Uddin

Climate phenomena are increasingly shaping the contours of international politics, diplomacy, and global security. While traditionally viewed as an environmental or scientific issue, climate change has emerged as a fundamental driver of instability and a central factor in the peace and conflict dynamics of the 21st century. It is no longer feasible to isolate climate from broader geopolitical analysis. The weather anomalies and extreme climate events of May 2025 illustrate with sobering clarity the intensifying relationship between atmospheric disruption and global governance challenges.

During May 2025, the world experienced one of its most climatically volatile months on record. According to the Copernicus Climate Change Service, it was the second-warmest May ever documented, trailing only behind May 2024. This was not merely an environmental milestone but a global signal, one that affects food systems, migration patterns, energy security, and the diplomatic agendas of states. The boreal spring (March to May) was similarly ranked as the second-warmest for the Northern Hemisphere, a pattern that aligns with long-term warming trends driven by persistent increases in greenhouse gas concentrations.

The international ramifications of such climatic shifts are not abstract. On May 15–16, the central and southeastern United States experienced a deadly and expansive tornado outbreak, with over 60 confirmed tornadoes including multiple EF4-rated events. These storms, characterized by wind speeds reaching up to 190 miles per hour, left at least 26 dead and inflicted widespread infrastructural damage across multiple states. From a meteorological standpoint, this outbreak was intensified by a combination of heightened surface temperatures, anomalously warm sea surface temperatures in the Gulf of Mexico, and high levels of convective available potential energy (CAPE). Yet beyond the science lies a broader political question: how prepared are states, individually and collectively, to manage the compounded effects of such disasters?

The humanitarian toll and infrastructural collapse resulting from extreme weather have significant implications for state capacity and legitimacy. When natural disasters strike, particularly in regions with pre-existing socio-economic vulnerabilities, the result can be political unrest, forced displacement, and resource conflict. The international system is increasingly recognizing these links. The United Nations Security Council has, in recent years, debated the role of climate change as a "threat multiplier", an intensifier of underlying tensions that can catalyze conflict or exacerbate existing crises. In this light, May's weather extremes are not only natural events but political triggers.

Global diplomacy is already grappling with the burdens of climate-driven disruption. Countries most vulnerable to these changes, particularly in the Global South, are demanding greater accountability and financial assistance from historically high-emitting states. At the core of these negotiations is the principle of climate justice, which acknowledges the disproportionate impact of global warming on those least responsible for its causes. The deadly events of May added urgency to this discourse. In the wake of the tornado outbreak, conversations within international forums such as the UNFCCC and G7 began to reemphasize the need for robust adaptation financing, disaster risk reduction, and technology transfer mechanisms.

The scientific characteristics of this evolving climate reality further complicate the diplomatic terrain. The intensification of the hydrological cycle, rising ocean heat content, and changing jet stream behavior, linked to polar amplification, are all contributing to the unpredictability and extremity of weather systems. The scientific community is warning that these are not episodic anomalies but indicative of a new climate regime.

Such knowledge must inform global governance. Diplomacy in the age of climate change requires an interdisciplinary lens, integrating meteorological data, conflict analysis, and development planning. The frequency of extreme events like those in May 2025 makes it clear that climate resilience is not merely a domestic concern but a matter of collective security. International relations theory must also evolve. Realist paradigms, focused narrowly on military power and territorial sovereignty, fall short in addressing non-traditional threats like climate-induced instability. Instead, cooperative frameworks and multilateral approaches are necessary to navigate the complex interdependencies exposed by climate extremes.

At the heart of these transformations lies the question of global responsibility. As emissions continue to rise, CO_2 concentrations reached a record 423 ppm at Mauna Loa in May, efforts to mitigate further warming remain insufficient.

May 2025 stands not just as a record-breaking month for temperatures and storms, but as a critical juncture for international political awareness. It reminded global actors that climate change is not a distant environmental issue but a present and escalating factor in diplomacy, security, and development. For scholars and practitioners of peace and conflict studies, this recognition must guide future inquiry and policy design. As climate volatility becomes a permanent feature of the international landscape, the institutions of global governance must adapt, or risk being overwhelmed by the very forces they seek to manage.

Reigniting the Fault Lines: Terror Territory, and Tensions in Indo-Pak Relations

Nuzhat Tabassum

While the whole world is fighting to stop the war in Gaza and Ukraine, India and Pakistan almost went to full-blown war, adding another problem to the already hot pot. On April 22, 26 individuals, mostly tourists, were killed by a group of people at Pahalgam, a resort in Indian-administered Kashmir. This was one of the most brutal assaults on people inside Indian territory in decades since the 2008 Mumbai attacks. Numerous eyewitness testimonies indicate that Hindu men were targeted for execution, giving this conflict a religious perspective. India blamed the incident on the Resistance Front (TRF), which has links to Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), a terrorist group based in Pakistan. Not only this, India also blamed Pakistan for being a part of this cross-border terrorism, which was denied by Pakistan and called for a "neutral" investigation which was rejected by India.

On May 7, India initiated a series of missile strikes on Pakistan and Pakistan-administered Kashmir. While they said that the strikes were directed against terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan, Pakistan contended that the missiles hit civilians, mosques, and schools, resulting in over 50 fatalities. On the other hand, at least 15 Indians were killed by Pakistan's shelling. Pakistan also claimed that they have shot down five Indian fighter jets. By May 10, both sides were firing missiles at each other's military bases before they agreed to a ceasefire brokered by the USA. From May 7 - 10, both India and Pakistan were near a full-blown war. India launched 'Operation Sindoor' and Pakistan 'Marka-e-Haq ("Battle for Justice") and 'Operation BunyanumMarsoos'. This is just the third instance of significant, lethal conflict directly between two nuclear powers, with the other instances being the Sino-Soviet confrontations of 1969 and the India-Pakistan Kargil War of 1999. Before this, India, on April 23, decided to suspend the Indus Water Treaty (1960), in which Pakistan responded that any attempt to divert water would be considered an act of war. Pakistan retaliated by suspending the Shimla Agreement, which outlines the Line of Control (LoC), the India–Pakistan border in Kashmir.

Even though India has an official nuclear doctrine, Pakistan, since 1998, has not stated its official nuclear doctrine. However, Khalid Kidwai - then head of the Strategic Plans Division of the NCA - outlined four red lines: major territorial loss, destruction of key military assets, economic strangulation or political destabilization. In 2002, President Pervez Musharraf said that "nuclear weapons are directed exclusively at India" and would be used only if "the very existence of Pakistan as a state" were jeopardized. India, on the other hand, has used a 'no-first-use policy' since 1998. But it has undergone some changes over the years. In 2003, India asserted its right to deploy nuclear weapons in retaliation for chemical or biological attacks, therefore permitting first use under certain circumstances. Following the 2025 incident, New Delhi has started reevaluating its strategy. Modi has warned that India would not endure any nuclear coercion and will respond accurately and resolutely to terrorist hideouts operating under the guise of nuclear intimidation.

Both countries are showcasing their win from the war. For Pakistan, it was able to internationalize the Kashmir issue, which was a longstanding strategic goal of Pakistan. The crisis was managed by the United States, the United Kingdom, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey, and was positively received by Pakistan. They successfully portrayed the ceasefire as a demonstration of the need for foreign intervention. Conversely, Modi successfully bolstered his nationalist support base through military operations, though some hardliners did not like the ceasefire as India always resorted to bilateral negotiations over multilateral ones. India perceives itself as a regional hegemon, particularly with its assertive claim to Kashmir, and believes that international intervention in the Kashmir dispute will result in an equitable resolution. Conversely, Pakistan has shown a willingness for third-party mediation and has endeavored to maintain global attention on the subject. India successfully redirected global scrutiny onto extremist organizations based in Pakistan, reiterating demands for substantial measures from Islamabad. India has consistently alleged that Pakistan finances, trains, and harbors terrorist groups advocating for the independence of Kashmir from India.

Even though the physical fight has ended and a ceasefire has been achieved, the issue has not been solved yet. A new war has started: a diplomatic war. India has sent its diplomats to 33 countries, while Pakistan has visited countries like Turkey and China. Pakistan is highlighting the importance of its own security, adding that it wants to ensure long-term peace and renew the Indus Water Treaty. It seeks to pile the blame on New Delhi. India, meanwhile, is attributing responsibility to Pakistan, asserting that the Pakistani government has sponsored terrorist organizations in the region and that this terrorism has been integral to Pakistan's policy since its establishment.

During the Hasina regime, Bangladesh has favored India. But after her departure, narratives have changed. It now advocates for a balanced engagement with both New Delhi and Islamabad to ensure peace in South Asia. Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus of Bangladesh issued a statement that both India and Pakistan should agree to an immediate ceasefire and engage in dialogue, reinforcing Dhaka's commitment to peaceful conflict resolution.

A war between India and Pakistan is deadly as both of them are nuclear power states in South Asia. The recent incidents remind us of how quickly tensions here can lead to an all-out war. Both countries should resort to peaceful means to resolve this conflict. They need to bear in mind that none of them will win this war if they decide to use nuclear weapons on each other.

The Rise of "Friendshoring":What is the future of globalization?

Sinthia Kamal

In an era defined by geopolitical instability, post-pandemic recalibration, new technologies and climate change, the notion of seamless globalization of three decades is losing its appeal. The essence of globalization is changing as countries' strengthen regional ties and shifting domestic priorities forcing a dramatic reorganization of global supply chains. The modern world has entered friendshoring– a term that has emerged as a strategy for countries and corporations to reassess who they trade with, not just based on the cost efficiency but also on political aligned and trust. Unlike offshoring (Which chased cheap labor) or reshoring (which brought production home), friendshoring is a hybrid strategy balancing cost, resilience and geopolitical risks. This has resulted in the relocation of production which is reshaping economic alliances and potentially dividing the world into competing trade blocs. So the critical question emerges as: If the world economy is splitting into trade blocs, what does this mean for future globalization?

Friendshoring can be seen as a formalization of a post-globalization atmosphere where ideological presence has become more valuable than economic efficiency, as it is challenging long decades of economic orthodoxy. Popularized by the U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen in 2022, the strategy was crystallized as an advocacy for supply chains "among trusted partners to minimize risks." More clearly, the relocation of the supply chain to allied or 'friendly' countries can be considered as a way to reduce dependency on geopolitical rivals– conceivably on China.

From long ago, global trade has been operated on the assumption that economic interdependence would restrain political rivalry. This premise also formed the bedrock of post-Cold War globalization. China's entrance in the World Trade Organization in 2001, the eastern enlargement of the European Union and the vast web of global supply chains were all based on the basis of functionalism, that indisputable economic interest would reduce confrontation.

Friendshoring challenges this hypothesis. It suggests that economic ties can no longer be trusted to keep states away from political confrontation. The U.S.-China trade war, the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russian invasion of Ukraine have all revealed how geopolitics can disrupt global supply chain. This has replaced the old orthodoxy with a new one: trade with those who won't weaponize interdependency. As a result, countries are seeking to "de-risk" their economy by re-orienting their partnerships toward politically reliable actors. It is the re-politicization of trade.This trend reflects both a practical response to today's challenges and a possible threat to global economic stability.

This shift has some profound implications, not only for how goods are produced but also how trust is found, constructed and maintained. The economic blocs forming around the U.S., the EU and China have the potential to fragment the global supply system. Instead of one integrated global economy, the world may get introduced with regional economic blocs, each shaped by shared political and security interests. While some may see this as a return to Cold-War isolation. It is necessarily not. Rather, it's the reality that the global economic order is no longer based on shared liberal framework. The rise of multipolarity with strategic competition defends the argument with the fact that states are now reasserting their sovereignty over trade decisions. Economic policy is now bound with national security, resilience and strategic autonomy.

If friendshoring is pursued aggressively the global economy could get exacerbated while marginalizing developing countries that are left out of the "trusted" circle. For countries who have long depended on export-led growth and global supply chains, the shift raises a pressing question: Who will be seen as a trusted partner and who will be sidelined in this new world order? What's more, trust in global politics is a fragile currency. Today's allies can turn in as competitors in future. Supporting trade only based on political alignment has the ability to create new vulnerabilities rather than resolving the old ones.

So, what's the future of globalization? For now, it's not dead, it is being refined. The world is experiencing a shift from hyper-globalization to strategic-globalization. Which is being built on a new ground principle, "trust". Countries will need to navigate a more complex environment, balancing economic opportunity with strategic attention. The challenge is to maintain a diversity of partners as a strategy rather than ideological homogeneity for the goal; economic resilience. If not, the world may split into two deglobalized blocs or more, the very mistake globalization once sought to overcome.