

CENTRE FOR WEST ASIAN STUDIES

JAMIA MILLIA ISLAMIA

Al-Nahda

The West Asian Herald



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Al-Nahda Editorial Team

Centre for West Asian Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi

The Centre for West Asian Studies is proud to present the Al-Nahda Editorial Team a vibrant ensemble of students and faculty united by creativity, passion, and a deep curiosity for the world around them. Guided by the Subject Association, this team transforms Al-Nahda into far more than a newsletter; it is a dynamic stage for fresh perspectives, thoughtful dialogue, and imaginative expression on the diverse issues shaping West Asia and beyond.

Each edition reflects their unwavering commitment to insightful analysis, cultural exploration, and the joy of learning. From in-depth articles and interviews to reflections on art, history, and society, the team brings the region's stories to life with clarity, nuance, and flair. Al-Nahda is not just a publication it is a celebration of ideas, a forum for intellectual engagement, and a space where curiosity meets creativity, inspiring readers to think, question, and explore.

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Faculty Column

Continuity and Change: West Asia's Journey Through 2025

Dr. Atik Ur Rahman

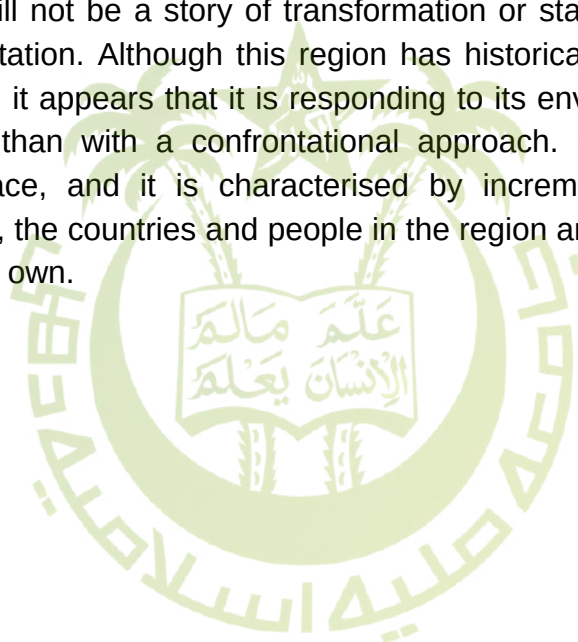
**Centre for West Asian Studies,
Jamia Millia Islamia**

The course of West Asia in 2025 was marked by an established, but changing pattern of ongoing structural challenges and cautious change. The ongoing issues of unresolved conflict, pressures for governance, and foreign involvement continued to plague the region, while simultaneous indications of slow economic diversification, realignment of diplomacy, and a new pragmatism have begun to emerge. The continuous interplay between continuity and change has shaped the political, financial, and strategic environment of the region over the course of the year. The most significant continuity factor has been the longstanding conflict between the Israelis and Palestinians, as the Israeli–Palestinian conflict served as the primary point of destabilization for the region and influenced diplomatic relations between many countries in the region and people's perspectives on these nations. Countries such as Syria, Yemen, and Lebanon continue to struggle with protracted political paralysis as well as a humanitarian emergency. Humanitarian organisations estimate from the region identified that over 35 million people still required humanitarian assistance in 2025. These estimates reflect how embedded humanitarian emergencies have become and demonstrate the prevalence of weak institutions, fragmented authority, and inadequacies in the management of conflict through external means. On the other hand, there were also significant regional behaviour changes in 2025.

The primary focus of these changes has been on economic resilience; all Gulf economies are diversifying at an unprecedented rate as part of their long-term national strategies. In many of the Gulf states, the non-oil sector contributes to more than 50% of GDP, largely due to investments in logistics, tourism, renewable energy, and digital infrastructure. This reorientation of the economy is not only a domestic phenomenon; it is also having an increasing influence on foreign policy as trade partnerships and cross-border investment are increasingly viewed as central diplomatic tools. Regional connectivity initiatives that connect Gulf ports with markets in the Levant and South Asia are an example of this evolving regional environment, where regional connectivity projects have been increasingly viewed to reduce political tensions, even among states with unresolved disputes. These projects illustrate the impact of economic interests on moderating political tensions. In 2025, the security environment in West Asia was characterized by both a continuation of traditional security threats and the evolution of the nature of warfare. In addition to continuing to face large-scale wars, countries expressed a preference for deterred war, limited war, and crisis management. Regional investment in missile defense systems, maritime surveillance, and cyberspace capabilities has continued to increase. The total regional defense budget is estimated to exceed USD 180 billion collectively, but regional budgets have shifted from being based upon projecting military power to preventing conflict and repairing damage to regional relations.

As this shift occurred, it was recognized that the economic costs and political ramifications as a result of open conflict are unsustainable. From a diplomatic perspective, the diplomatic environment in West Asia has transformed over the last year to exhibit a relatively cautious move toward more active forms of engagement. The channels of dialogue established between regional rivals have grown, with regional and non-regional actors influencing the opportunities for communication. As regional countries continue to experience high levels of mistrust with one another, there is a strong recognition of the importance of interdependence, particularly regarding energy markets and maritime security. Societal pressures have remained constant. In many West Asian countries, approximately 60% of the population is under 30 years old and is pushing for jobs, services, and accountability, especially from their governments. The economic reforms were necessary; however, they also highlighted inequalities and adjustment costs, creating an important reminder for policymakers that stability cannot rely solely on economic growth indicators.

West Asia through 2025 will not be a story of transformation or stagnation. It will instead be a process of controlled adaptation. Although this region has historically been shaped by conflict and structural weaknesses, it appears that it is responding to its environment more often with a strategic approach rather than with a confrontational approach. Continuity exists; however, change is also taking place, and it is characterised by incrementalism, pragmatism, and inconsistencies. As a result, the countries and people in the region are attempting to redefine the meaning of stability on their own.



Sudanese Civil War and the Global Failure of Responsibility

Sadiya Inam

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There was no secrecy or quiet in the Sudanese conflict; it unfolds with devastating clarity in an open and restless manner. It happened with devastating clarity, in an open and relentless manner. Since the conflict began in April 2023, a large number of civilians have been raped, starved, bombed in their homes, driven from their neighbourhoods, and killed. Sudan now has the greatest displacement crisis in the world, with over 10 million people displaced. Cities have been completely hollowed out. Hospitals have been destroyed or plundered. Mass murders and ethnic violence have resurfaced in Darfur with a savagery reminiscent of some of the worst periods in recent memory. All of this is undeniable. The evidence has been collected, confirmed, and documented. The war continues to rage. Therefore, an important question must be asked: how did the world allow a country to collapse so completely; while watching it happen in real time?

The framing of Sudan's conflict is one factor. As if Sudanese civilians are just caught in the crossfire of an inevitable conflict, it is frequently characterised as an internal power struggle or a conflict between opposing military forces. This framing of the conflict is dangerous in addition to being deceptive. It is impossible to explain the scope and longevity of this conflict without recognising the involvement of foreign parties who have actively maintained it. The United Arab Emirates is frequently cited among these actors. The UAE has been repeatedly implicated of arming, financing, and providing logistical support to the Rapid Support Forces, a militia with a lengthy and well-documented history of atrocities against civilians, despite mounting evidence (Documented by United

Nations experts, investigative journalists, and human rights organisations). These allegations are will be food tomorrow, whether a child can be transported to a hospital that is still operational, and whether staying at home is riskier than escaping into the unknown, are hhave been denied, but denial does not neutralise facts, and it does not absolve responsibility.

The lived reality of common Sudanese civilians' people is so erased by this framing. The daily calculations of survival, such as whether thow this war is perceived rather than geopolitics or strategy. Families have been split up internationally. Children have missed years of education. Women bear the weight of trauma in silence and frequently lack access to psychological or medical support. Displacement, violence, and loss are shaping an entire generation instead of opportunity or stability, and the longer the war is allowed to go on, the more profound and irreversible the damage becomes. Such wars cannot go on without assistance. Advanced weaponry, supply routes, and territorial control are not independently maintained by militias. Every choice to arm, fund, or politically support a force such as the RSF prolongs the conflict and increases the suffering of civilians. It is not just the direct perpetrators of violence who bear responsibility when villages are destroyed, aid is obstructed, or famine spreads. It also rests with those who chose to use strategic influence over human life and those who enabled that violence.

However, the failure extends well beyond a single nation. Hesitancy, selectivity, and neglect have characterised the international response to Sudan.

Despite inquiry of famine, humanitarian appeals are still severely under resourced diplomatic efforts have been erratic and feeble. When imposed, sanctions have been limited and simple to get around. Ignorance is not the cause of this. It is the outcome of computation. Due to the low political cost of doing so, Sudan has been viewed as a crisis that can be handled, postponed, or ignored.

Why is that? Why are some civilian lives treated as an emergency while others are treated as an unfortunate footnote? Why does the language of human rights lose its urgency when the victims are African, poor, and strategically inconvenient?

When Sudan is taken into account in conjunction with the events in Gaza, it becomes impossible to avoid these questions. Despite having distinct histories, these conflicts all point to the same moral “breakdown of the rule based order “Civilians are suffering in both locations as a result of political decisions that were made outside of their control. International law is used selective application in both situations. Again, the ‘strong ally’ support for the RSF is pointed as a fact here while earlier being framed as an accusation.

How is this allowed to happen? How can the mass displacement of millions of people be normalised? How can famine be considered as a war crime? How do governments that profess to uphold human rights still provide weapons and support to those who carry out crimes? And how can the world's populace take in the facts, recognise the horror, and then move on? Neither Sudan nor Gaza is invisible. The ongoing atrocities are manifest, and the culpability of the actors involved is established. The question is no longer whether the world is aware. It is whether it is willing to act as though all human lives carry equal weight.

“Where are we as humans? Where is humanity? When this is allowed to happen in Gaza, and when this is allowed to happen in Sudan? The persistence of these tragedies proves one thing: the global problem is not information, it is intent.”



Jamia Millia Islamia Celebrates 105th Foundation Day

Jamia Millia Islamia marked its 105th Foundation Day with pride and enthusiasm, reflecting on its rich legacy and contributions to education. Established in 1920 during the Indian freedom struggle, the institution was founded by nationalist leaders such as Hakim Ajmal Khan and Dr. Zakir Husain with the vision of promoting progressive and inclusive education.

Over the decades, Jamia has evolved into a premier central university known for academic excellence, research, and cultural diversity. The Foundation Day celebrations included academic events, cultural programs, and tributes to its founders, highlighting its journey from a modest institution to a nationally and internationally recognized university.

The occasion reaffirmed Jamia's commitment to knowledge, social responsibility, and nation-building.



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