

Introduction: constitutional change in Pakistan

The amendment to the Constitution approved by the Pakistani Parliament and signed by President Asif Ali Zardari—the 27th since its enactment in 1973¹ —brings enormous changes that reconfigure the structure of political power, consolidating military control over the system and significantly reducing the autonomy of the judiciary, thus weakening an already fragile institutional balance. In principle, the most striking aspect of this amendment was the fragmentation of the legal structure through the creation of a new Federal Constitutional Court, to which powers previously held by the Supreme Court of Pakistan were transferred, giving it the authority to interpret the Constitution and hear cases relating to fundamental rights. Under the amendment, the members of the Constitutional Court will be appointed directly by the government and this body will assume the power to control the executive branch, thus eliminating an institutional counterweight, since until now it was the Supreme Court that ruled on cases such as the dismissal of prime ministers or the control of government policies. In fact, two Supreme Court judges immediately resigned from their posts following the approval of the amendment².

However, beyond the judicial aspect, the amendment also implies a profound reform in the constitutional protection of the military and the structure of the Pakistani Armed Forces. Relevant members of the Army are completely outside the civil judicial system, as five-star generals are granted lifelong legal immunity, placing them *de jure* above any responsibility for their actions. Currently, only Field Marshal Asim Munir holds this status. Furthermore, his dismissal will require an absolute two-thirds majority in Parliament, with no action by the executive branch in this regard, while the government itself can be brought down by a simple majority.

The amendment also creates a new supreme position: that of Chief of the Pakistan Defence Forces, held by the Chief of the Army, Marshal Munir, which in practice enshrines his supremacy over the Navy and Air Force, centralising them under his sole command. Munir is given a five-year term as Chief of the Defence Forces, but this could

¹ SENATE OF PAKISTAN. *Constitution of Pakistan* (27th amendment, text). 2025. Available at: https://senate.gov.pk/uploads/documents/1762777118_819.pdf (accessed on 5/12/2025).

² "Two judges of the Pakistani Supreme Court resign after constitutional amendment is passed," *Swissinfo*. 2025. Available at: <https://www.swissinfo.ch/spa/dimiten-dos-jueces-del-tribunal-supremo-paquistan%C3%AD-tras-aprobarse-enmienda-constitucional/90329594> (accessed on 5/12/25).

be extended to ten years. Another notable development is that the Prime Minister must appoint, on his recommendation, the commander of the National Strategic Command, the new head of the nuclear arsenal, which was traditionally a command not part of the conventional army structure³.

To pass the amendment, current Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif secured the support of his coalition partners, his own Muslim League and Bilawal Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party, but the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), the party with the most seats in Parliament led by former Prime Minister Imran Khan, now imprisoned and awaiting several trials, opposed it. The amendment could transform Pakistan from a political system with a traditional and strong military influence since independence in 1947 to a new hybrid system in which the army governs *de facto* without altering the political structure. This is the so-called *Munir model* — an apt definition by journalist and editor Mehreen Zahra-Malik — a system where military control of the country is exercised from within a shell of formal democracy⁴.

The omnipresence of the military

Since independence in 1947, Pakistan's political life has oscillated between civilian governments and military dictatorships. The last of these dates back to 1999, when the then head of the army, Pervez Musharraf —who would end up ruling until 2008— led a coup against Nawaz Sharif, brother of the current prime minister, taking advantage of the climate of uncertainty that the country was experiencing after the Kargil conflict with India in the spring of that same year, which also marked the end of Indo-Pakistani negotiations to limit the possible consequences of both countries having nuclear weapons⁵. History is repeating itself, in part, and today Munir, like Musharraf yesterday, is consolidating his power at a time of high conflict with India and other actors, such as Afghanistan. The

³ COLOM-PIELLA, Guillem. *Two doctrines and one destiny. India, Pakistan and the risk of nuclear war*. Opinion Paper IEEE 34.1/2025 (Ministry of Defence, 2025). Available at: [Two doctrines and one destiny. India, Pakistan and the risk of nuclear war - CESEDEN](#) (accessed on 9/12/25).

⁴ ZHARA-MALIK, Mehreen. "Pakistan's Quiet Coup," *Foreign Affairs*. 2025. Available at: <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/india/pakistans-quiet-coup> (accessed 11/12/25).

⁵ SARRALDE, Rafael. "Explainer: A historical trail of Pakistan's powerful military enterprise," *The Conversation*. 23 May 2023. Available at: [Explainer: A historical trail of Pakistan's powerful military enterprise \(theconversation.com\)](#) (accessed 5/12/2025).

difference is that Musharraf directly assumed the presidency of the country in 2001, while Munir exercises his influence in a theoretical background role.

In 2008, Musharraf was forced to resign following a ruling by the Supreme Court of Pakistan — now stripped of its powers — which invalidated his candidacy for a new term, but not before ordering the bombing of southern Afghanistan in retaliation for Taliban support for the newly created terrorist group Therik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), formed a year earlier as an insurgent organisation in the border region of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. These events were similar to the current situation, with the recent conflict between Pakistanis and Afghans over Taliban support for the TTP⁶.

After Musharraf's fall, Pakistan gradually regained its democratic framework under civilian rule, as expressed in successive elections. This led to the victory and short-lived government of Imran Khan's PTI in 2018, a disruptive figure in the traditional Pakistani political elite, who was removed from office four years later after losing a vote of no confidence that was, *in fact*, orchestrated by the military, which was hostile to him, and supported by the then political opposition—now in power—which elevated the current prime minister, Shehbaz Sharif, to replace Khan. The main figure opposed to him was General Amin Munir, once a close collaborator and head of Pakistan's powerful intelligence service, the ISI, who became an enemy when Khan interpreted him as a political threat and attempted to undermine his authority by dismissing him. A few months later, Munir instigated the opening of corruption cases against Khan and his entourage, and succeeded in getting General Qamar Bajwa, head of the Army, to publicly withdraw the support of the Armed Forces⁷.

As interim prime minister, Shebaz Sharif took office amid a difficult economic and political situation, with an extremely weak transitional government and Khan's supporters protesting en masse in the streets of Pakistani cities. In November of that same year, 2022, he promoted Munir to head of the Army, as General Bajwa was completing his term and had to be relieved. Munir thus assumed the most important position in the

⁶ HATTAK, Daud. "In 'Dangerous' Escalation, Pakistani Drone Strikes Kill Two Senior Taliban Members In Kabul," *RFE/RL*. 2025. Available at: <https://www.rferl.org/a/pakistan-taliban-ttp-afghanistan-strikes-drone/33556513.html> (accessed 9/12/25).

⁷ "Pakistan's army chief to end his six-year-long tenure," *Al Jazeera*. 2022. Available at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/11/25/pakistans-army-chief-to-end-his-six-year-long-tenure> (accessed 9/12/25).

Pakistani Armed Forces, with authority over the ground forces, but not over the Navy, Air Force or nuclear capabilities.

The subsequent elections in February 2024, in which the PTI was outlawed although its candidates ran as officially independent, and with Khan in prison, further polarised the political situation in Pakistan. The PTI won a victory recognised by the electoral authority, but Sharif returned to head the government thanks to a fragile coalition, supervised by Munir and the military, to whom he owes the security of his position and the repression of the riots by Khan's supporters. These protests, often confused with demonstrations over the poor economic situation, included attacks on military installations, which were harshly suppressed in 2023, with thousands of detainees imprisoned after being tried by military courts⁸.

Over the last two years, Pakistan has seen its internal insurgency and its manifestations change, shifting from attacks against Pakistani security forces to terrorist attacks targeting the civilian population and, on occasion, even Chinese citizens, reflecting China's influence in the country's economic and infrastructure projects. All this has led to the army becoming more important as the guarantor of order and its influence in the country's political architecture becoming indispensable, especially in controlling the Baloch insurgency of the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA), which operates in Balochistan, and the Islamist movement of the TTP in Khyber, whose operations are expanding to other parts of Pakistani territory and whose effects are multiplying⁹.

The constitutional amendment granting immense power to Munir and the military establishment is also endorsed by the discourse of multiple external threats to Pakistan, such as the crises with India, terrorism supported from Afghanistan or Iran, and the recent involvement in Gulf security with the defence agreement with Saudi Arabia. This increase in Pakistani influence in the region, including the escalation towards open conflict with its neighbouring states, reinforces the internal narrative of the need for army hegemony, as

⁸ FRASER, Simon & DAVIES, Caroline. "Imran Khan: Mass protests across Pakistan after ex-PM arrest," *BBC News*. 2023. Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-65531648> (accessed 9/12/25).

⁹ Pakistan, *The Armed Conflict Survey 2025*. IISS, Routledge, 2025. Available at: <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/mono/10.4324/9781003743996-44/pakistan> (accessed 9/12/25).

this would better prepare the country in the event of an escalation to high-intensity conflicts and also enable it to respond to domestic problems¹⁰.

Regional implications and proxy wars

Historically, war as a means of resolving conflicts in this area, stretching from Afghanistan to Kashmir, has not solved the outstanding border or sovereignty issues. In the words of Aziz Amin and Atif Masahl: "Wars in this region are not won through air power or coercive posture. They are shaped by resistance, geography and narrative." It is therefore difficult to believe that, for example, even with the disparity in capabilities between Pakistan and Afghanistan, Islamabad believed that the Afghan Taliban regime's support for TTP terrorists could be resolved by force of arms. There are internal reasons to believe that the Pakistani campaign against the Taliban government in Kabul was an initiative taken within the military to reduce pressure on the Armed Forces in the face of increasingly virulent attacks by the TTP, rather than a decision by Prime Minister Sharif's cabinet¹¹.

We must go back to January 2024, when, in the midst of internal conflict in Pakistan during the parliamentary election campaign with Khan in prison, Iran unexpectedly bombed Pakistani territory against alleged Baloch insurgent camps. Pakistan responded with its own bombings, and both countries even carried out cross-border air strikes against "terrorist elements". After several days of tension, both governments re-established diplomatic relations and the crisis cooled down, although since then the relationship between Tehran and Islamabad has been marked by extreme caution. Munir and the army then presented themselves as the only guarantors of the country's security, as in April Munir himself met with the then Iranian president-, Ebrahim Raisi, to recalibrate relations and even propose greater collaboration on security and economic matters¹².

¹⁰ FERNÁNDEZ APARICIO, Javier. *Pakistan: political developments and security challenges*. IEEE Analysis Document 45/2024. Available at: https://www.ieee.es/Galerias/fichero/docs_analisis/2024/DIEEEA45_2024_JAVFER_Pakistan.pdf (accessed on 9/12/25).

¹¹ AMIN, Aziz & MASHAL, Atif. "Pakistan's Generals Are Marching Toward Another Disaster," *The Diplomat*. 2025. Available at: <https://thediplomat.com/2025/11/pakistans-generals-are-marching-toward-another-disaster/> (accessed 11/12/25).

¹² "Pakistan Army Chief Meets Iranian President To Improve Ties," *Iran International*. 2024. Available at: <https://www.iranintl.com/en/202404239641> (accessed 9/12/25).

Following the turmoil and repression of protests by Khan's supporters over the election results, Pakistan once again turned its attention to the external threat. Accusing Islamabad of supporting the terrorist group Lashkar-e-Taiba, responsible for the massacre of 26 people in Pahalgam, Kashmir, on 22 April 2025, India launched Operation Sindoor, which included air raids and bombings of terrorist camps on Pakistani territory. As in the previous conflict with Iran, but this time fuelled by more bellicose rhetoric, the Pakistani army put up determined resistance and even, in the domestic narrative, emerged as the clear victor in its response to the attack from India, where even the opposition PTI and Khan suspended their demonstrations in support of the Pakistani military reaction.

Munir took advantage of this conflict to achieve greater pre-eminence, and the military began to articulate itself as a true "deep state," gradually taking control of Pakistan's political levers, relying on its broad internal acceptance and imposing itself on the Sharif government, known for its previous attempts at diplomatic rapprochement with India. In this regard, the then General Munir argued that Kashmir was in the "jugular veins" of the country and advocated for an exclusively Muslim Pakistan as opposed to an exclusively Hindu India¹³. He soon became an omnipresent figure in Pakistan and the subject of a wave of growing popularity, to the point that he was promoted by Sharif's government to field marshal, a five-star general. For his part, Pakistani Defence Minister Khawaja Asif has acknowledged that the constitutional amendment granting Munir powers and immunity is deserved because "he won the war against India"¹⁴.

The position of field marshal for Munir represents not only real power, but also symbolic power. It is the highest rank in the Pakistani Army and has only been awarded twice in history: to Ayub Khan in 1959, in his capacity as dictator at the time, and now to Asim Munir. It represents the highest echelon of the Army, with power over all branches of the military, and with the constitutional amendment, Munir even controls the once autonomous nuclear force, now under his authority in the new National Strategic

¹³ FERNÁNDEZ APARICIO, Javier & PANDEY, Harsh. *After Pahalgam: Rethinking the Security Calculus in South Asia*. IEEE Analysis Paper 32/2025. Available at: https://www.defensa.gob.es/ceseden/-/ieeee/despues_de_pahalgam (accessed 9/12/25).

¹⁴ ELLIS-PETERSEN, Hannah. "Asim Munir: Pakistan's army chief and the rise of the 'Munir model'," *The Guardian*. 2025. Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/dec/03/asim-munir-pakistan-army-chief?CMP=Share_AndroidApp_Other (accessed 9/12/25).

Command Authority (¹⁵). He will also be, *de facto*, responsible for Pakistan's economic diplomacy through his control of the Special Investment Facilitation Council, a body that centralises foreign investment, especially in strategic Pakistani industries such as defence, energy, agriculture and mining. Although formally chaired by the prime minister, the council's highest decision-making body is headed by the army chief. This council has concluded agreements, such as a \$500 million contract with a US company to export rare earths, attributed to Munir's direct impetus¹⁶.

Meanwhile, on 18 September, Pakistan signed a defence pact with Saudi Arabia, marked by an embrace between Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and Prime Minister Sharif, with the acquiescence of Munir and the Pakistani military establishment. This rapprochement with Saudi Arabia could intensify rivalry with Iran and drag Pakistan into conflicts in an area as volatile as the Middle East, but it also presents Pakistan as a Muslim nuclear power and reinforces the central role of the Pakistani army as a provider of security beyond its borders. This relationship also acts as a counterweight to the Indo-Saudi partnership, another genuine comprehensive strategic association, albeit one that is far removed from security issues and based on energy agreements and supply chains¹⁷.

Later, in October, conflict broke out between Pakistan and Afghanistan, following months of rapid deterioration in relations between the two governments, with Islamabad accusing the Afghan Taliban regime of supporting TTP terrorism, with increasing attacks affecting the Pakistani Armed Forces in particular, as they are their main target. In fact, this terrorist organisation has intensified its campaign on the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan, expanding further and further inland. Data from the specialised platform Armed Conflict Location & Event Data (ACLED) puts the number of TTP attacks in

¹⁵ FAISAL, Muhammad. "The 27th Amendment and Pakistan's Emerging Military Posture," *The Diplomat*. 2025. Available at: <https://thediplomat.com/2025/11/the-27th-amendment-and-pakistans-emerging-military-posture/> (accessed 9/12/25).

¹⁶ ANI. "The reason I had him here was I wanted to thank him for not going into the war, says Trump on meeting Pak COAS General Asim Munir," *Financial Express*. 2025. Available at: <https://www.financialexpress.com/world-news/reason-i-had-him-here-was-trump-on-meeting-pak-coas-general-asim-munir/3885164/> (accessed 9/12/25).

¹⁷ SIVECH, Mohammed Sinan & KHAWAJA, Ambar. "Pakistan-Saudi Arabia Ties: Explaining the Shifts in Proximity," *Observer Research Foundation*, No. 848. 2025. Available at: [20251127101153.pdf](https://www.orf.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/20251127101153.pdf) (accessed 9/12/25).

Pakistan at almost 100 per year in 2024, to more than 500 between January and October this year alone¹⁸.

Thus, since 9 October, following Pakistani air strikes on Kabul, fighting and bombing have continued, causing dozens of deaths on both sides of the border. Mediation by Qatar and Turkey has resulted in a weak ceasefire, as border incidents continue and both sides remain entrenched in their positions: Afghanistan denies its support for the TTP and seeks alternative trade agreements, such as with India, while Pakistan closes border crossings and threatens new offensives if further terrorist attacks occur¹⁹. Pakistan's air strikes, which demonstrate a certain inability to tackle the problem, are also interpreted in domestic terms, as the army once again resorts to force to justify its primacy in the country, thereby highlighting an institutional erosion of civilian power that makes it indispensable and strengthens its position²⁰.

US support for the Pakistani military elite

In June this year, almost a month after the Indo-Pakistani conflict ended following the Pahalgam attack, Marshal Munir visited Washington alone and US President Trump dubbed him "my marshal" and congratulated him for being the supposed architect of peace with India, also conferring on him the image of being a privileged architect of a new strategic relationship between Pakistan and the United States after years of estrangement, and talking about agreements that would be decided by a civilian government, for example in the areas of trade, energy or strategic minerals²¹.

On 30 September, during another visit by Munir to Washington, this time accompanying Prime Minister Sharif, Trump presented his peace plan for Gaza, citing both as preferred supporters on the same level. In addition, Sharif acknowledged there, *de facto*, that the real leadership of the country now lies with the marshal: "We have won the war by the

¹⁸ "Understanding the armed escalation between Pakistan and Afghanistan," *The Grand Continent*. 2025. Available at: <https://legrandcontinent.eu/es/2025/10/13/comprender-la-escalada-armada-entre-pakistan-y-afganistan/> (accessed 9/12/25).

¹⁹ "Clashes between Pakistan and Afghanistan leave at least four dead," *France 24*. 2025. Available at: <https://www.france24.com/es/video/20251206-enfrentamientos-entre-pakist%C3%A1n-y-afganist%C3%A1n-dejan-al-menos-cuatro-muertos> (accessed 9/12/25).

²⁰ AMIN, Aziz & MASHAL, Atif. *Op. cit.*

²¹ MASON, Jeff; SHAH, Saeed & PATEL, Shivam. "India will not accept third-party mediation; relations with Pakistan, Modi tells...", *Reuters*. 2025. Available at: <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/india-will-not-accept-third-party-mediation-relations-with-pakistan-modi-tells-2025-06-18/> (accessed on 9/12/25).

grace of God through our brave armed forces under Asim Munir, who led from the front with unwavering resolve." All this in the presence of Trump, who visibly showed his agreement with these words. For their part, internal movements in Pakistan and, above all, the escalation in confrontations with India or Afghanistan — although also their de-escalation, as well as the agreement with Saudi Arabia — cannot be understood without US acquiescence or diplomatic intervention²² .

Trump's arrival in the White House has brought about a certain change in US policy in South Asia, bringing it closer to Pakistan. While the United States had strategically backed India for decades—something that was reflected in the previous Biden administration's Indo-Pacific Strategy—this is also reflected in the Trump administration's new National Security Strategy, where, although the United States cooled relations with India by imposing total tariffs of 50% as punishment for India's purchase of Russian crude oil, India remains an important partner in terms of security and is expected to play an active role in preserving regional stability, especially in protecting Indo-Pacific maritime routes²³ .

For its part, with regard to Pakistan, which until recently appeared to be an unreliable partner, too close to China and ambiguous in the fight against Islamist terrorism, the tide seems to have turned and there has been an unexpected thaw in relations, but more specifically not so much with the political class, but with General Munir and the Pakistani army, which, for example, quickly attributed the ceasefire during the Indo-Pakistani conflict in May to US mediation, presenting it as a defused nuclear crisis. For its part, after another personal visit by Munir to the White House at the end of July, it was agreed to keep US tariffs on Pakistan relatively low, at around 19%, in exchange for US access to some oil fields — some in the troubled Baluchistan region — and strategic minerals, offered by Munir as a bargaining chip²⁴ .

Washington's approach seems to continue to focus on its strategic partnership with India, but at the same time it is reincorporating Pakistan into its regional architecture of interests,

²² "Shehbaz, COAS Munir fully back Gaza peace plan – Trump," *The News*. 2025. Available at: <https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/1347381-shehbaz-coas-munir-fully-back-gaza-peace-plan-trump> (accessed 9/12/25).

²³ *2025 National Security Strategy*. The White House, Washington D.C., 2025. Available at: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/2025-National-Security-Strategy.pdf> (accessed 9/12/25).

²⁴ JANJUA, Haaron. "Why are the US and Pakistan making an oil deal?", *DW*. 2025. Available at: <https://www.dw.com/en/why-are-the-us-and-pakistan-making-an-oil-deal/a-73498835> (accessed on 9/12/25).

possibly with the intention of acting as a pivotal player vis-à-vis China, based on the premise that it will remain an indispensable partner for Islamabad, but not as dependent. In fact, on 9 December, the International Monetary Fund announced a \$1.2 billion loan to Pakistan, which had been frozen until now and was subject to certain conditions, with US approval²⁵.

As has happened in other historical contexts, the United States prioritises the existence of stable power in the country, a stability that today seems to be embodied by General Munir and the military establishment—reinforced after the recent constitutional amendment—rather than Sharif's fragile executive, conditioned by precarious parliamentary balances and threatened by persistent political, social and ethnic conflict, compounded by a particularly delicate economic situation with an uncertain outlook²⁶.

Outlook for Pakistan and the region

The rise to power in Pakistan of Marshal Munir and the military establishment means, in practice, witnessing a new model of power in a political system that can now be described as hybrid. Following the constitutional amendment, we cannot speak of a democracy with separation of powers and judicial independence, but neither can we speak of direct authoritarianism or a dictatorship such as those that have marked Pakistan's history: it is halfway there and will undoubtedly have repercussions on regional geopolitics. India has described the Pakistani constitutional amendment directly as a 'military-inspired constitutional coup'²⁷.

Unlike the dictatorships of the past, cloaked in presidencies—such as those of Ayub (1958-1969), Zia (1978-1988) or Musharraf (2001-2008)—the Constitution has not been suspended and democratic institutions have not been shut down. The novelty of the hybrid system lies in the covert and firm way in which the army and its commander-in-chief, Munir, are integrated into the Pakistani political architecture with decisive influence,

²⁵ "IMF board approves Pakistan review, releases £1.2 billion in funding," *Reuters*, 2025. Available at [IMF board approves Pakistan review, releases £1.2 billion in funding | Reuters](#) (accessed 11/12/25).

²⁶ YUSUF, Moeed. "Why America Should Bet on Pakistan," *Foreign Affairs*. 12 September 2025. Available at: <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/pakistan/why-america-should-bet-pakistan> (accessed 9/12/25).

²⁷ "Pakistan army chief Asim Munir power grab: Islamabad with Shehbaz Sharif-backed coup, constitutional amendment," *India Today*. 11 November 2025. Available at: <https://www.indiatoday.in/world/story/pakistan-army-chief-asim-munir-power-grab-islamabad-with-shehbaz-sharif-backed-coup-constitutional-amendment-2816891-2025-11-11> (accessed 9/12/25).

while the political parties and the government will be publicly responsible for the country's future, threatened by economic instability, insurgencies, terrorism and, now, growing conflict with neighbouring countries: Iran and, to a greater extent, India and Afghanistan.

But what will happen if, in this area of security, attacks increase, insurgency grows and a possible war against its neighbours does not go as expected? Pakistani society may blame an incompetent cabinet, and the military may continue to retain its prestige.

Thus, the *Munir model* analysed is an updated version of a reality already known in Pakistan, where the military rules and civilians play a secondary role, while we witness the concentration of power in a single person: Marshal Munir, whose decisions are increasingly relevant to the state. These range from the internal situation in terms of security or the political future of Khan and the PTI, which is key to Pakistan's future²⁸, to possible actions regarding Iran, India or Afghanistan, where, let us not forget, Munir controls the country's nuclear capabilities thanks to the amendment.

Domestically, Munir's rhetoric is often forceful, religiously charged and quite aggressive, as he is a supporter of the two-nation theory under the formula "Pakistan for Muslims and India for Hindus", with obvious implications for his powerful Indian neighbour²⁹. During a harsh speech at his inauguration as army chief on 8 December, Munir warned India that Pakistan was "invincible and protected by warriors full of faith" and that, in any future conflict, "Pakistan's response will be even swifter and more severe. India should not be a victim of self-deception", words that alerted the Modi government³⁰.

With all institutional checks and balances removed but supported by a controlled parliamentary majority and judiciary, Munir may be tempted to increasingly assert his hegemony and that of the military as guarantors of Pakistan's survival, in the current climate of instability and even regional conflict, as in the nearby cases of Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka, whose armies are caught between profound institutional changes

²⁸ "Imran Khan death rumours: Pakistan jail health rumours amid hospitalisation," *Firstpost*. 2025. Available at: <https://www.firstpost.com/explainers/imran-khan-death-rumours-pakistan-jail-health-13954724.html> (accessed 9/12/25).

²⁹ "Different from Hindus in every possible aspect, Pakistan Army Chief reaffirms Two-Nation Theory; urges youth to remember Pakistan's origins," *The Economic Times*. 2025. Available at: <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/new-updates/different-from-hindus-in-every-possible-aspect-pakistan-army-chief-reaffirms-two-nation-theory-urges-youth-to-remember-pakistans-origins/articleshow/120372006.cms> (accessed 9/12/25).

³⁰ "India shouldn't be in delusion...' How Pakistan's Asim Munir continues warmongering," *Firstpost*. 2025. Available at: [What is Asim Munir's first message to India as Pakistan's new Chief of Defence Forces? – Firstpost](https://www.firstpost.com/news-international/india-shouldnt-be-in-delusion-how-pakistan-s-asim-munir-continues-warmongering-120372006.cms) (accessed 10/12/25).

and the discrediting of the political system, to cite a few recent examples, where these armed forces may find in the Pakistani *Munir Model* a mirror in which to see themselves, while maintaining legality at all times³¹ .

In short, Pakistan's 27th constitutional amendment and the *Munir Model* represent a genuine change in the constitutional regime that formalises military dominance over domestic politics and, secondly, concentrates all its military capabilities, now including nuclear ones, under the command of a single man, just when, or because, Pakistan is in a state of open hostility with Afghanistan, maintains a historic rivalry with India and is experiencing a relationship of contained tension with Iran. The country is thus at a turning point that could exacerbate its political instability, strengthen authoritarian tendencies and become a source of uncertainty in regional geopolitics, with implications for its relations with the two global powers: the United States and China.

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³¹ 'Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh uprisings — what's driving protests in South Asia', *ABC*. 2025. Available at: <https://www.abc.net.au/asia/nepal-sri-lanka-bangladesh-uprisings/105783610> (accessed 9/12/25).