

GLOBAL UP-TO-DATE

A Monthly Newsletter by Centre for Governance Studies



CONTRIBUTORS

1. Roman Uddin

Senior Research Associate (CGS)

2. Tanzila Hosain Tonny

Research Assistant (CGS)

3. Shurat Rana Rushmi

Research Associate (CGS)



ASSISTANT EDITOR

Roman Uddin

Senior Research Associate (CGS)

A CGS Publication

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.

The Green Planet We Must Not Lose

Roman Uddin



From time immemorial, humans have gazed at the heavens with awe and a sense of wonder. We stand on a small planet, under a sky that seems silent, and yet we keep asking questions of it. The stars do not speak in our language, but they have shaped our language of curiosity. From the first myth of the heavens to the telescope, from mathematics to rockets, the human mind has refused to accept ignorance as its final home. Space reminds us of our smallness, but it also reveals the dignity of our desire to know. Artemis II, which launched on April 1, 2026, and splashed down on April 10 after 9 days, 1 hour and 32 minutes, belongs to this long human story of asking, risking, learning and returning.

The road to Artemis II began long before this mission. It began with the early race to understand flight, with Sputnik, with Yuri Gagarin, with Apollo, and with the astonishing moment when humans first walked on the Moon in 1969. After Apollo, humanity did not abandon space, but it turned toward orbital laboratories, satellites, robotic probes and the International Space Station. Artemis is the next great chapter. Artemis I tested the Space Launch System and Orion without crew. Artemis II carried four astronauts, Reid Wiseman, Victor Glover, Christina Koch and Jeremy Hansen, around the Moon, becoming the first crewed lunar flight in more than half a century.

The astronauts' journey was not a simple sightseeing flight. It was a carefully designed test of human life in deep space. In the first hours after launch, the crew entered a high Earth orbit and began checking Orion's systems. They tested life support, communications, navigation and the spacecraft's behavior with people aboard. They also performed a proximity operations demonstration, using the spent upper stage as a target, an important rehearsal for future missions that will need complex maneuvers near the Moon. These tasks may sound technical, but they are the hidden grammar of exploration. Before a human being can walk safely on another world, the spacecraft must be trusted in silence, distance and danger.

As Orion moved outward, Earth changed before their eyes. What had been ground, city, border and road became a shining sphere. The astronauts crossed into a region that no human had visited for more than half a century. NASA reported that the crew traveled about 695,081 miles and reached more than 252,000 miles from Earth, farther than any humans had gone before. At its closest approach, Orion passed within thousands of miles of the lunar surface before looping around the far side and beginning the return home. The Moon, so familiar in poetry and childhood, became once again a place of human presence, not by landing, but by witness.

Their experience was both scientific and deeply human. They worked through checklists, monitored systems, wore and tested equipment, spoke with mission control and shared images and reflections with the world. The crew's words and photographs allowed people on Earth to travel with them in imagination. Through NASA briefings, live coverage, mission updates and post-flight reports, we came to know their journey not as an abstract achievement, but as a lived passage: launch pressure, weightlessness, the strange rhythm of days inside Orion, the sight of the Moon, and finally the violence and relief of re-entry. The charred Orion capsule after splashdown became a visible reminder that return is also part of exploration. To come home from the Moon requires courage, calculation and a heat shield strong enough to protect life.

The achievement of Artemis II is therefore not only that it went around the Moon. It proved that human deep-space flight can begin again. It gave engineers real data from a crewed Orion mission. It gave future missions confidence in systems that cannot be fully understood in theory alone. It strengthened cooperation between NASA and international partners. It restored to public imagination the possibility that the Moon is not merely a museum of Apollo, but a frontier for science, discipline and shared human purpose.

Yet the deepest lesson of Artemis II may not be about the Moon. It may be about Earth. From space, Earth is not seen as a battlefield of borders. It is seen as one bright, fragile, green-blue home. The atmosphere that protects us is thin. The oceans that feed clouds are finite. The forests that breathe with us are vulnerable. The planet looks peaceful from far away, and that view should shame our violence.

If human intelligence can send a spacecraft around the Moon, it should also be wise enough to protect rivers, soil, air and life. If nations can cooperate to guide astronauts through danger, they should cooperate to reduce hunger, disease, hatred and environmental destruction. The same mind that calculates a lunar trajectory must not be used only to build guns, atom bombs and missiles. Technology without wisdom becomes a threat to its maker.

Artemis II therefore asks a moral question: what kind of species do we want to become? A species that reaches the Moon while poisoning its own home? A species that maps the stars while failing to protect children from war? Or a species that uses knowledge to enlarge compassion?

The Moon does not need us. Mars does not need us. The universe can continue without human applause. But Earth needs human responsibility, because human power has become large enough to wound it. Artemis II should not make us arrogant. It should make us humble. We have crossed a little distance in a vast cosmos, and that little distance should teach us how precious home is.

The astronauts returned from space, but the real return must happen inside human civilization. We must return to care, to reason, to restraint, to the old wisdom that life is sacred because it is rare. Artemis II is a triumph of science. Its greater meaning will depend on whether we allow that triumph to change our conduct on Earth.

Ceasefire Without Trust: The Unfinished Story of the Iran-U.S. Conflict

Tanzila Hosain Tonny



The 2026 Iran war became one of the most serious crises in the recent history of the Middle East. What began as a direct military confrontation involving the United States, Israel, and Iran soon developed into a wider regional crisis. The conflict affected Lebanon, the Gulf states, major oil routes, and the broader balance of power in the region. It caused severe destruction, mass displacement, and significant human suffering. At the same time, the war exposed the weakness of diplomacy in a region shaped by deep mistrust, proxy conflicts, nuclear tensions, and competing security interests.

As the conflict expanded across the region, its humanitarian impact became immediate and severe. Iran suffered heavy destruction, while Lebanon again became a major battlefield after the conflict triggered renewed fighting between Israel and Hezbollah. Thousands of people were reportedly killed in Iran and Lebanon, while Israel and Gulf Arab states also faced casualties from Iranian missile and drone attacks. Millions of people were displaced across the region. In Lebanon alone, more than one-sixth of the population was reportedly forced to leave their homes. For ordinary people, the war meant not only fear and insecurity but also disruption to daily life, including access to shelter, food, healthcare, and basic safety.

From time immemorial, humans have gazed at the heavens with awe and a sense of wonder. We stand on a small planet, under a sky that seems silent, and yet we keep asking questions of it. The stars do not speak in our language, but they have shaped our language of curiosity. From the first myth of the heavens to the telescope, from mathematics to rockets, the human mind has refused to accept ignorance as its final home. Space reminds us of our smallness, but it also reveals the dignity of our desire to know. Artemis II, which launched on April 1, 2026, and splashed down on April 10 after 9 days, 1 hour and 32 minutes, belongs to this long human story of asking, risking, learning and returning.

The road to Artemis II began long before this mission. It began with the early race to understand flight, with Sputnik, with Yuri Gagarin, with Apollo, and with the astonishing moment when humans first walked on the Moon in 1969. After Apollo, humanity did not abandon space, but it turned toward orbital laboratories, satellites, robotic probes and the International Space Station. Artemis is the next great chapter. Artemis I tested the Space Launch System and Orion without crew. Artemis II carried four astronauts, Reid Wiseman, Victor Glover, Christina Koch and Jeremy Hansen, around the Moon, becoming the first crewed lunar flight in more than half a century.

The crisis also had major economic consequences beyond the battlefield. Iran's threats and actions around the Strait of Hormuz disrupted one of the world's most important oil chokepoints. Since a large share of global oil and gas shipments passes through this route, instability in the area immediately affected energy markets. Fuel shortages appeared in parts of Asia, shipping costs increased, and inflationary pressure spread across economies already facing uncertainty. This demonstrated that a Middle Eastern war is never only a regional matter. Its effects can reach households, businesses, and governments far beyond the conflict zone.

After more than five weeks of fighting, the United States and Iran agreed to a ceasefire on April 7 which also included Israel. The ceasefire reduced the intensity of the conflict, but it did not resolve the deeper issues that had caused the war. Iran remained angry over attacks on its territory and leadership. Israel remained concerned about Iran's military and nuclear capabilities. The United States wanted to prevent Iran from using the Strait of Hormuz as a bargaining tool. Gulf states wanted stability, but they also feared being pulled into another round of confrontation.

Following the ceasefire, Pakistan played an important mediating role by hosting talks between the United States and Iran in Islamabad on April 11 and 12. These talks were seen as a final attempt to prevent the war from expanding into a

deeper regional and global economic crisis. However, the negotiations ended after only 21 hours without an agreement. The talks failed mainly because the United States presented a rigid set of conditions, describing them as its “final and best offer.” U.S. Vice President James David Vance said Iran refused the American terms on its nuclear program. However, the failure also reflected deeper problems in the negotiation process. The issues under discussion were highly complex, including Iran’s nuclear activities, ballistic missiles, sanctions relief, the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz, civil nuclear rights, and guarantees that the war would not resume.

The negotiations also failed because the two sides viewed the crisis from very different perspectives. For the United States, the main priority was to restrict Iran’s nuclear program, reduce its missile threat, and limit its regional influence. Washington also wanted assurances that Iran would not threaten energy routes in the Gulf. For Iran, the main concerns were sanctions relief, security guarantees, recognition of its sovereignty, and respect for its claimed right to a civilian nuclear program. Iran also viewed uranium enrichment as a matter of national pride and symbolic recognition. Because these concerns were not properly addressed, the talks became focused more on pressure and fixed demands than on compromise. Pakistan’s mediation helped keep communication open, but it could not produce a final settlement.

The possibility of a second round of talks remained uncertain. A further round of U.S.-Iran negotiations was expected to take place in Islamabad on April 20, 2026, with the aim of extending the two-week ceasefire. However, the process became more fragile after the U.S. Navy intercepted an Iranian-flagged container ship in the Gulf of Oman. Iran described the seizure as “piracy” and questioned whether it would continue negotiations while the naval blockade remained in place. The expected participants included U.S. Vice President JD Vance, Jared Kushner, and Steve Witkoff from the American side, while Iran’s team included Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf and Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi. This showed that diplomacy was still possible, but the political and military environment remained highly unstable.

The future of Iran-U.S. relations remains uncertain. The ceasefire reduced immediate violence, but it did not settle the core disputes between the two countries. Iran is likely to continue demanding sanctions relief, security guarantees, and recognition of its right to a civilian nuclear program. The United States, on the other hand, is expected to continue seeking strict limits on Iran’s nuclear activities, missile program, and regional influence. As a result, tensions may continue even if both sides avoid another full-scale war.

However, Iran war should not be understood only as a short-term military crisis. It was the outcome of long-standing nuclear disputes, regional rivalries, failed diplomacy, and competing security interests. The war showed how quickly a conflict involving Iran, Israel, and the United States can spread across the Middle East and affect the wider world. Although the ceasefire created a temporary pause, lasting stability will depend on whether the main actors can move from military pressure to serious diplomatic engagement. Without patience, trust-building, and compromise, the region may continue to face repeated cycles of confrontation, failed negotiations, and renewed instability.

How the Middle East War Is Fueling a Worldwide Economic Crisis

Shurat Rana Rushmi



Energy is often where distant wars first touch ordinary lives. A missile, a blockade or a threat to a shipping route may happen far from home, but its impact can appear quickly in the price of fuel, food and transport. Brent crude crossing \$100 per barrel is therefore not just another oil-market headline. It is a warning that the Middle East war is spilling far beyond the battlefield. What started as a regional conflict is now rippling through the global economy, affecting fuel prices, food costs, transport expenses, and the daily financial pressures faced by households.

This is the real danger of the current moment. Wars do not remain where they begin. In an interconnected global economy, a conflict in one region quickly becomes inflation somewhere else. The current crisis shows exactly how that transmission works.

The scale of the disruption is already clear. Around 20 million barrels of oil per day roughly one-fifth of global supply normally passes through the Strait of Hormuz. When conflict threatens this route, even partial disruption shakes the entire global energy system. At one point, shipping traffic through the strait reportedly fell by as much as 90 percent, highlighting how fragile global

supply chains can be. The result is immediate. Oil prices surge. Brent crude has crossed \$100 and, in some moments, approached or exceeded \$110. In earlier phases of the conflict, prices even spiked close to \$120 per barrel. This is not just a market reaction. It is the beginning of a wider economic chain.

Oil is different from most commodities because it sits at the center of everything. It powers transport, shipping, agriculture, aviation and manufacturing. It affects fertilizers, plastics, chemicals and food distribution. When oil prices rise, the effect spreads across the economy. The data shows how powerful this transmission is. According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), every sustained 10 percent increase in oil prices can raise global inflation by about 0.4 percentage points and reduce global output by up to 0.2 percent. This means the current surge is not just pushing up fuel prices. It is slowing the entire global economy. The World Bank now expects energy prices to rise by about 24 percent in 2026 due to the conflict. At the same time, inflation in developing economies could rise to 5.1–5.8 percent, while growth may slow to around 3.6 percent. These are not small adjustments. They represent a broad shift in economic conditions.

The impact on trade is equally serious. Higher oil prices raise shipping and logistics costs, making global trade more expensive. The London School of Economics (LSE) analysis warns that energy shocks, shipping disruptions and uncertainty are already weakening trade flows and slowing growth. This matters because trade depends on predictability. Once costs become volatile, investment decisions slow and global demand weakens.

The shock is also feeding into business costs. Some firms are already reporting increases of around 20 percent in oil-linked inputs, including fuel, chemicals and packaging. This shows how oil inflation spreads into everyday goods, not just energy markets.

Food systems are another major concern. Energy and agriculture are deeply connected. Gas is used to produce fertilizer, and oil powers irrigation, transport and processing. The World Bank expects fertilizer prices to rise by around 31 percent, which could push food prices higher and worsen global food insecurity.

Humanitarian agencies are already warning of the consequences. Rising fuel costs are disrupting aid delivery, increasing logistics expenses and threatening food supply chains for millions.

Energy shocks do not affect everyone equally. Wealthier countries can use reserves, subsidies or stronger currencies to absorb some of the impact. Poorer countries and vulnerable households cannot. For them, rising oil prices translate directly into higher food costs, reduced access to services and greater financial stress.

There is also a broader macroeconomic risk. The IMF has warned that in a severe scenario, global growth could fall to around 2.5 percent, while inflation could rise above 5 percent. Some projections suggest that if oil prices remain elevated, the global economy could come close to recession. At the same time, the financial cost of disruption is enormous. Estimates suggest that prolonged instability in the Strait of Hormuz could put between \$330 billion and \$2.2 trillion of global GDP at risk, depending on how long the conflict continues.

We have seen this before. The oil shocks of the 1970s reshaped inflation and growth. The 2008 price surge intensified economic instability. The Russia–Ukraine war exposed Europe’s dependence on energy imports. Now the Middle East conflict is repeating the same lesson: energy dependence creates systemic risk. Yet the response remains familiar. Governments focus on short-term fixes releasing reserves, adjusting prices, offering subsidies. These steps may be necessary, but they do not solve the underlying problem. They only manage the symptoms. The real issue is structural. The global economy still relies heavily on a few critical energy routes and fossil fuel supplies that are vulnerable to geopolitical conflict. As long as that dependence remains, every major crisis in an energy-producing region will trigger inflation worldwide.

The solution is not simple, but it is clear. Countries need to diversify energy sources, invest more in renewables, improve efficiency, strengthen supply chains and build strategic reserves. Energy policy can no longer be treated as separate from inflation, trade or economic stability. It sits at the center of all of them. Brent crude above \$100 is therefore not just a number. It is a signal. It tells us that the global economy is entering a more fragile phase, where conflict, energy and inflation are tightly connected. A regional war should not determine how much people pay for food, transport or electricity. Yet today, it does. Until that link is weakened, every geopolitical crisis will continue to show up in the same place: the cost of living. And that is the real cost of conflict.