



Houston Area Model United Nations Crisis Committee

Ashes to Ashes East: Aftermath of a Nuclear War

Crisis Directors | Owen Butler, **Gabriel Bolanos**,
and Jawad Kazi

HAMUN 48 | February 2-3, 2023

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Note to Delegates

Esteemed delegates:

Greetings from the apocalypse! My name is Gabriel Bolanos, and I can't wait to serve as one of your crisis directors for the Ashes to Ashes crisis committee. I'm currently a sophomore at Rice University majoring in neuroscience and minoring in biochemistry and—possibly—history. I've been a part of MUN for six years now and involved in crisis (as a delegate and staffer) for four years. However, this will be my first time as an official crisis director and my first time staffing for HAMUN.

To me, the premise for this crisis rests on a simple thought experiment: *what would you do if you knew the world were ending?* We've done our best to follow the idea of an impending nuclear winter to its natural conclusion, complete with food shortages, refugee crises, and a general global panic. But we also wanted to see what humanity might be capable of at its best during times when the universe is at its worst. I'm so excited to help bring this future we've constructed to life—a future that you delegates will have an active hand in shaping.

Please let me know if you have any questions, want clarification on the world or characters we've built, or need help with anything else while preparing for this committee. Also, feel free to reach me at this email if you have any questions about HAMUN in general. I hope you guys enjoy this crisis, and I'll see you at conference!

Sincerely,

Gabriel Bolanos

Crisis Director - Eastern Council

gcb7@rice.edu





Ashes to Ashes

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Introduction

“All go to the same place; all come from dust, and to dust all return.” - Ecclesiastes 3:20

To many, the early 21st century seemed to be a period of endless progress and wealth, ushering in an expansion of democracy and peace throughout the world. But this hope was short-lived... and the facade would soon start to crack.

Invasion of Taiwan

The world as we knew it began to end on December 29th, 2028, when the People’s Republic of China invaded Taiwan. Despite several initial Chinese victories, Taiwanese forces launched a stubborn resistance, maintaining a tenuous control on the island. But as the situation grew more dire, Taiwan formally declared war on China, joined in by many NATO and East Asian allies.

Peace Talks in Moscow

Just as a new world war seemed inevitable, the main international powers agreed to hold an emergency peace conference in Moscow. The heads of states of the warring nations and the top diplomatic minds of the greatest states in the world met for weeks while a ceasefire was declared, and for a time, it seemed possible that peace would prevail.

The night of February 28th at 18:00 Moscow time, a nuclear detonation was detected near the Kremlin, and communications from the city ceased.

Nobody from the conference survived.



Footage of the Moscow attack caught on social media. February 28, 2029.

The War of Ashes

In the coming hours after the Moscow attack, the world erupted into nuclear war. Cries of peace were drowned out as people of the world looked upon its broken governments and longed for revenge. Blaming each other for the attack on Moscow, members of NATO and the Chinese bloc retaliated by firing missiles piecemeal into each other.

This resulted in a massive nuclear exchange, known afterwards as the War of Ashes for the devastating death toll and destruction left in its wake. One by one, almost all of the major cities of the Western and Eastern world were wiped off the map by hellfire.

Now, the old age of progress, wealth, and peace has been replaced by utter chaos. And a new world order has emerged.



Drone shot capturing the wreckage of Shanghai after the War of Ashes. April 2, 2029.



An American refugee's artistic depiction of the nuclear bombing of Los Angeles. March 12, 2029.



European refugees arrive in Greece by ship. February 23, 2029.



Australians are stranded while attempting to evacuate from Sydney. February 14, 2029.

Two Months Later...

Today is April 11, 2029. Six weeks after the end of the world, survivors have begun to reorganize, reformulating local governments and new leadership out of the rubble. Yet there is still much work to be done.

Hundreds of millions of desperate **refugees** have fled to all corners of the world.

Famine, caused by the collapse of the American, Chinese, and Ukrainian food crop and the onset of nuclear winter, is now fast approaching.

A major **energy** crisis, caused by the lack of American and Russian oil, ravages many major cities that have held onto a semblance of civilization.

International trade has dragged to a halt as world shipping routes lay lined with refugees, and military vessels have become a new terrifying pirate menace.

And due to the loss of modern infrastructure and technology, **half of the world** has been **cut off** from each other.

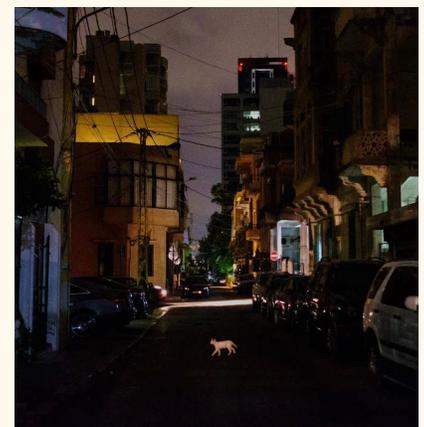
Now, leaders from what was once the Mediterranean and Asia have gathered to rebuild society and plan for the crises that lie ahead.

Peace and political rights are no longer the issues of the day. Now states must worry about life and death. And what wouldn't a nation do to provide for its starving people? What wouldn't those starving do? Sometimes, not everyone can win—and sometimes nobody wins.

The die is cast: what will you make out of dust and ashes?



The King of Thailand tours local rice fields to monitor current production. March 19, 2029.



Beirut suffers from another partial blackout. February 24, 2029.

Timeline

Red = Western event
Blue = Eastern event
Black = Global event

May 23, 2023 - A successful pro-Democratic coup by members of the Turkish armed forces results in the end of Prime Minister Erdogan's leadership.

February 2025 - The Libyan Civil War ends, and as-Senussi is restored to power.

June 2026 - The Iraqi Civil War ends, and Kurdistan officially gains its independence.

March 2027 - After an escalation in Indian-Pakistani relations concerning the Kashmir border, nuclear war is successfully avoided due to diplomatic efforts. India and Pakistan pledge to renew peace and ceasefire agreements.

August-November 2028 - Following the death of Kim Jong-Un, his sister and successor Kim Yo-Jong enters diplomatic talks with South Korean president Choi Mun-hee concerning possible reunification.

December 2028 - Tensions between the United States and the Republic of China reach an all-time high after Taiwan elects to assert its independence against China. US President Nicholas Hale pledges to lend Taiwan military support in the event of a Chinese attack.

December 29-January 1, 2029 - The People's Republic of China officially invades Taiwan, sparking what would be dubbed by Western media as the New Year's Invasion. Taiwan declares war on China three days later, and the nations of the world announce general mobilization.

Timeline

Red = Western event

Blue = Eastern event

Black = Global event

January 2029 - Many members of NATO, most notably the United States, announce their support for Taiwan. Towards the end of the month, most of these countries officially join in the war against China. Japan and India remain neutral, though they adopt defensive postures. The first NATO troops leave the United States for Taiwan.

January 24-29, 2029 - As fighting stalls outside of Taipei, China agrees to a temporary ceasefire and enters peace talks with other major powers, on the condition that the emergency peace conference be held in Moscow. World leaders from nearly every country arrive in Russia, and peace talks officially begin on the 29th.

February 12, 2029 - The conference is suddenly cut short by a nuclear attack originating from a detonation within downtown Moscow. This event sparks panic across the world and causes several governments to collapse, leading to the start of the War of Ashes. It is unknown which nation or group was responsible for this initial nuclear attack.

February 12-19, 2029 - The War of Ashes takes place across the world. During this week, most major cities are reduced to rubble due to nuclear bombings, and many countries unaffected by the bombs nevertheless collapse due to the chaos.

February 13, 2029 - The Pakistani government undergoes a violent military coup, and multiple generals take control of various regions in Pakistan. This causes relations between India and the newly-forming Pakistani city states to deteriorate, and it serves as a precursor to the fall of many other world governments.

Timeline

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February 13, 2029 - Japanese Prime Minister Chikao Fujimori places Japan on lockdown, dividing it into six sections and appointing provisional governors to lead each section. After the end of the War of Ashes, this provisional government becomes permanent, marking the beginning of the reign of the New Zaibatsu. The Big Six of the New Zaibatsu broker a truce with China, promising not to intervene in world affairs any longer in exchange for avoiding nuclear attack.

February 13, 2029 - Chinese military units retaliate by launching nuclear weapons, hitting most major American population centers. NATO units respond likewise, laying waste to much of eastern China.

February 13, 2029 - Taking advantage of the chaos, North Korean general Pak Chul-Moo declares himself Supreme General in Kim Yo-Jong's absence and declares war on South Korea, bombarding major South Korean cities with a myriad of nuclear weapons. However, the rapid change in government causes North Korea to lose control of the Korean Demilitarized Zone, leading to a massive emigration of people to South Korea.

February 14, 2029 - Numerous countries, such as Australia and New Zealand, launch a state of emergency and successfully begin evacuation of major metropolitan areas. India attempts to do the same, but evacuation is undermined by large levels of unrest. While this originated from the attack on Moscow, it is further exacerbated by rising tensions between India and Pakistani city-states, as well as general discontent with the Indian government.

Timeline

Red = Western event
Blue = Eastern event
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February 15, 2029 - The Russian provisional government in St. Petersburg opens up the Russian arsenal, and many units individually decide that the attack on Moscow was the fault of Western powers. A large-scale exchange occurs between most European nations and the Russians, utterly destroying almost all major cities in Western Europe. This is collectively known as the “Day of No Night” in Europe.

February 17, 2029 - The remnants of the Chinese government gain control of several other nuclear bombs, which are used to preemptively destroy several major Canadian and Australian cities, as well as Taiwan and Hong Kong.

February 13 to 17, 2029 - Over the span of 5 days, large refugee groups manage to escape from mainland China, traveling by sea to many other Asian countries. Unfortunately, many countries turn refugees away. Other refugee groups reach cities shortly before they are destroyed by nuclear weapons and are forced to further flee to other areas. The largest cohort of refugees embark in Australia, although a significant portion also end up in Indonesia, New Zealand, and the Philippines.

February 18, 2029 - The Egyptian Anarchy begins as the new Egyptian government is unable to reassert control. After a terror attack on the British navy in the Suez, Vice Admiral MacDonald seizes and secures the canal zone to provide a safe zone for his troops and fleet.

February 18-March 2, 2029 - After a week of general unrest and panic marked by power outages, political uncertainty, and lack of international trade, the Indian government finally collapses from within. Several local leaders rise up, causing India to fragment into a myriad of small states and warlords. After around 2 weeks, India coalesces into four main governments, each fighting for control of the entire subcontinent.

Timeline

Red = Western event
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March 2029 - At this point, most civilizations from the pre-Ashes era have collapsed and re-formed into shadows of their former selves, leading to the worldwide creation of dictatorships, revival of kingdoms, and increased importance of local government. The few democracies that still exist desperately cling to existence. Radio broadcasts are the new dominant form of communication, and some governments attempt to rebuild landline communications.

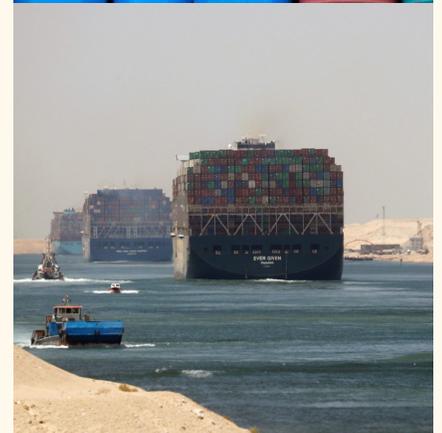
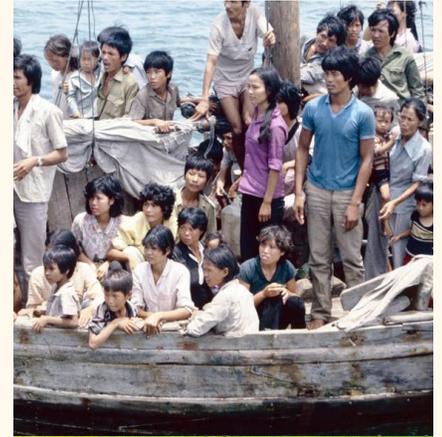
March 21, 2029 - The newly formed Kingdom of Thailand successfully manages to reestablish some trade connections with important port cities in Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia, which slowly begin to ship rice from Thailand to other parts of Asia. Scientists across the globe note that temperatures are already several degrees cooler than typical, and they begin warning local governments about the onset of a nuclear winter.

March 24, 2029 - Communication networks in the Mediterranean are finally linked with that of Asia. World leaders in both regions agree to joint worldwide councils to discuss rebuilding efforts, as well as major crises that loom ahead.

Present Day (April 11, 2029) - All delegates finally arrive at the Malta (Western) and Lahore (Eastern) Conferences. These delegates will have to confront a pressing refugee crisis, as well as the food and energy crises that lay ahead. As the first worldwide event to occur since the War of Ashes two months ago, only time will tell how these first summits will shape the future...

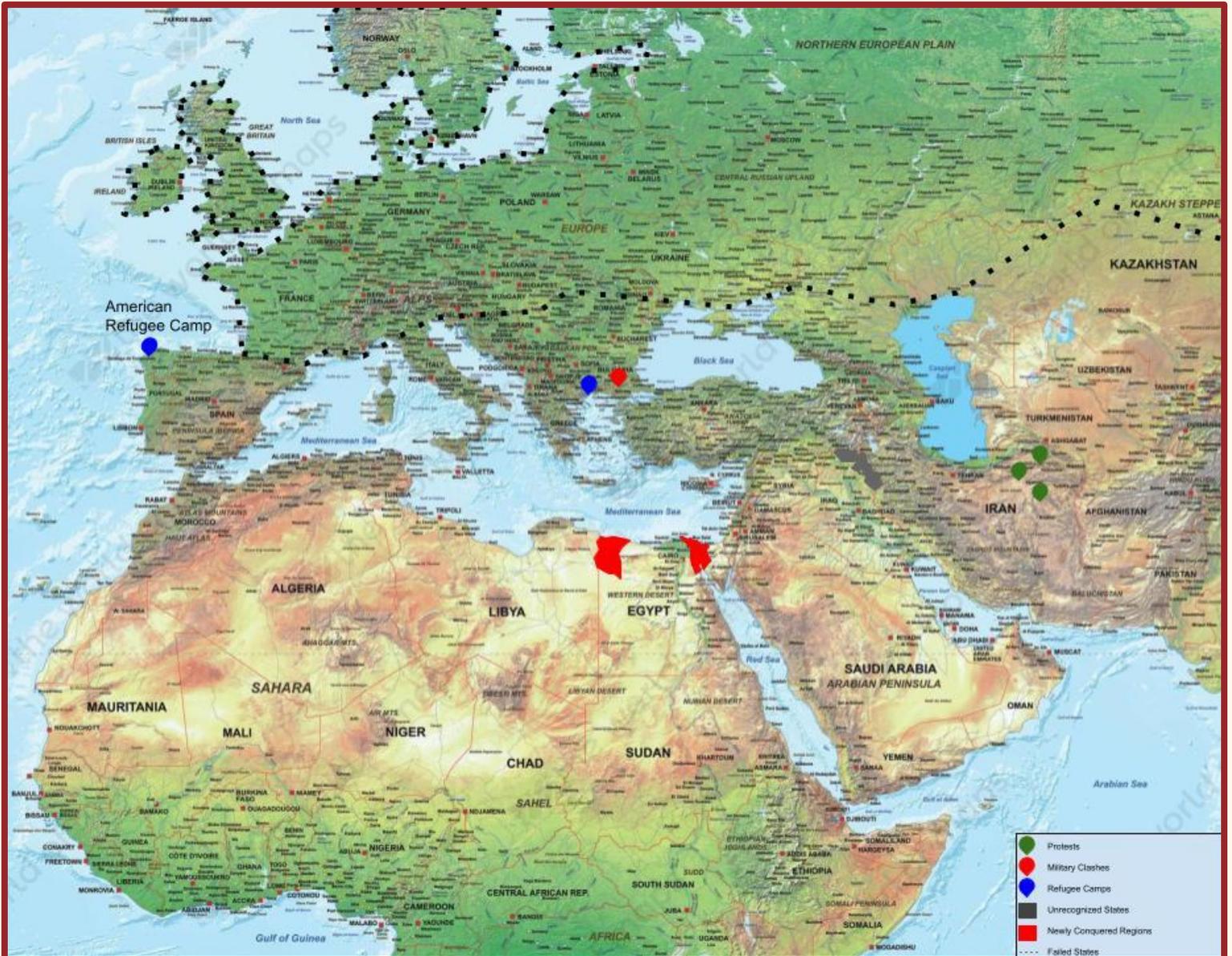
Major Issues

1. Peacefully resolve the ongoing **refugee crisis**.
 - ❑ Hundreds of millions of displaced people from affected areas currently seek shelter throughout the Mediterranean and Asia.
2. Prepare for the inevitable **food crisis** that will occur in a couple of months.
 - ❑ Apart from certain areas, like the Kingdom of Thailand and parts of former India, most regions are unprepared to grow their own crops.
3. Tackle the major **energy crisis** caused by the lack of American and Russian fuel.
 - ❑ Certain resources, such as Saudi oil, are still available but inaccessible to the rest of the world due to the collapse of international trade.
4. Consider **rebuilding international trade routes** and **reestablishing worldwide connection**.
 - ❑ Although more long-term goals, this would help resolve the three issues mentioned above. Trade and information could be your most valuable assets.



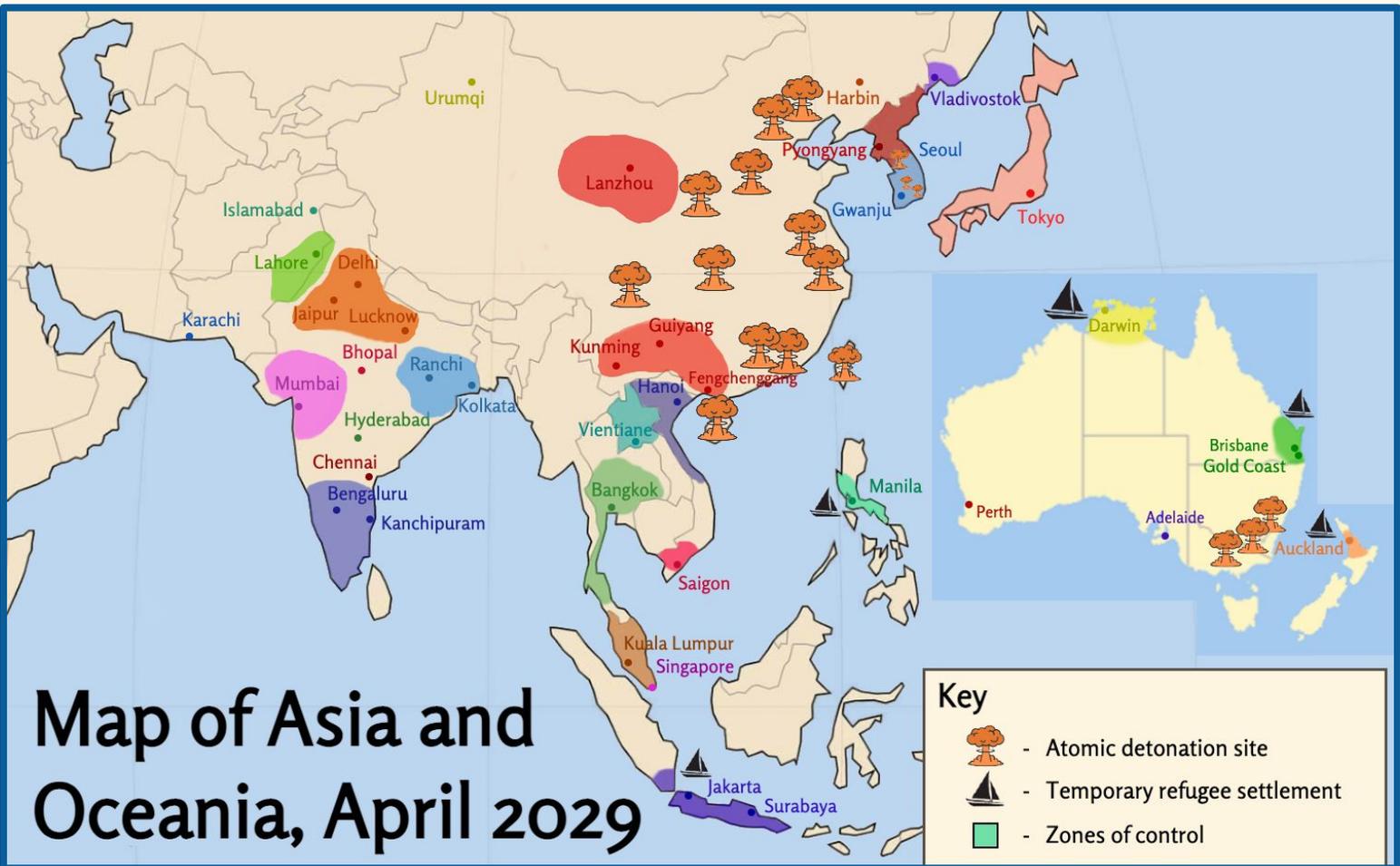
Western Council Map

North Africa, the Middle East, and Europe on April 11th



Eastern Council Map

Map of Asia and Oceania, April 2029



Map of Asia and Oceania, April 2029

Key

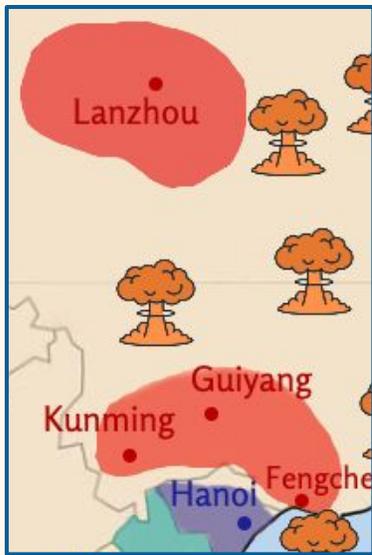
-  - Atomic detonation site
-  - Temporary refugee settlement
-  - Zones of control



Ashes to Ashes: Eastern Council Crisis Director | Gabriel Bolanos Houston Area Model United Nations 48 February 2-3, 2023

Status of the East

Republic of Western China



All major cities in Eastern China have been destroyed—yet Western China still remains. One lower-ranking official, Xie Guoshi, has quickly become the de-facto head of “The Republic of Western China”.

Xi has mandated lockdowns in all major cities and getting power plants back online. Yet despite his efforts, cities like Kunming and Guiyang are still plagued by mass power outages and an influx of Eastern Chinese refugees.

In addition, Western China suffers from a scarcity of arable land and has little access to ports. Because of this, facilitating trade with cities like Hanoi will be critical to its survival. Perhaps most crucially, Guoshi has gathered China’s greatest agricultural scientists together to Lanzhou: could technology be the answer to Western China’s food scarcity?

“New Zaibatsu” Japan



It is said that Prime Minister Chikao Fujimori made a “deal with the devil” with China: in exchange for Japan’s neutrality, China would not attack with nuclear weapons. As such, Japan has been spared from nuclear destruction—a reward for what some called isolationist cowardice.

To prevent unrest, Fujimori quickly invoked emergency powers to temporarily divide the country into six provinces, each with active governors. All six happen to be CEOs of large conglomerates.

Under this “New Zaibatsu” system, Japan has achieved a remarkable level of stability through its pursuit of total isolationism. However, many question whether the “Big Six” can sustainably maintain this status. After all, Japan can’t grow its own food or keep the power on by itself for long...

United Korean Federation

A year ago, following reunification talks, the idea of the United Korean Federation was born. Today, it consists of the remnants of South Korea, aided by a growing number of North Korean defectors.

The UKF is led by three individuals: a retired commander named Lee Kang-Dae, a senator named Seon Jin-Kyong, and a North Korean defector named Yong Hyun. Using Gwangju as their main base of operations, they fight the Second Korean War for freedom for the North and justice for the South.

Although the UKF has been on the defensive, they've slowed North Korea down tremendously after sabotaging its supply of nuclear weapons. Their ultimate goal is to wage a war of attrition while sabotaging North Korea from within and slowly whittling down the North Koreans' will to fight until they are forced to sue for peace. With help from the international community, the UKF could successfully repel North Korea's advances and perhaps even unify all of Korea. However, the UKF will have to request for food, energy, and maybe even military aid to help Korea—all of it—finally get back on its feet.



Democratic People's Republic of Korea

When the War of Ashes began, General Pak Chul-Moo seized the chance to... remove... Kim Jo-Yong from her position. Now, as Great General, he is determined to "unify" Korea by force.

Unfortunately, due to his mutiny, Pak Chul-Moo's public opinion is dwindling at home, and too many citizens are sympathetic to the UKF. Combined with the embarrassing loss of nuclear weapons, the Great General's unification has turned into more of a stalemate than anticipated.

Thankfully, this summit gives North Korea a chance to win the Second Korean War. For the first time, the DPRK is on an even playing field with the rest of the world, and its mission, as always, is not to play nice. It must stifle the UKF's call for help at any cost, while leveraging international agreements to gain the supplies it needs to fight on. And in this new world order, North Korea may be able to make more allies than anticipated...



City of Vladivostok

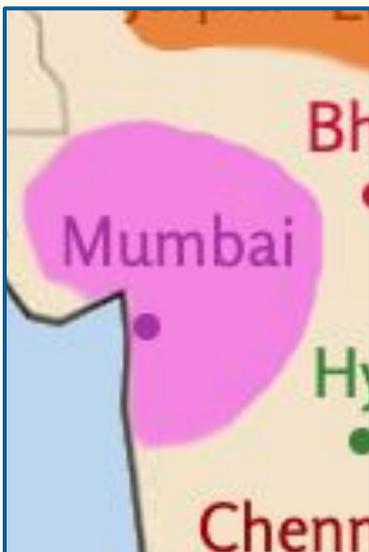


With the world's once largest country reeling from nuclear strikes, Russia has lost communication with its eastern cities, which have since been forced to fend for themselves.

Functioning as a city-state, Vladivostok has maintained its status as an important port city in this new world order. By leveraging the vast amount of oil reserves it controls in nearby territory, the city has largely been able to restore its energy over the past two months.

In spite of this comeback, Vladivostok is cursed with an inability to grow its own food—meaning that the threat of famine is on the horizon. The city also suffers from limited trade with its closest neighbors, due to poor relations with isolationist Japan and tumultuous internal politics in the United Korea Federation. Despite this, Vladivostok's successes with energy and critical port status leave it in a powerful negotiating position—should it play its cards right.

Principality of Mumbai



In the face of this turmoil of the War of Ashes, Bollywood's most popular celebrities became instrumental spokespeople and an unlikely source of strength in Mumbai. Some even took this role a step further, using their immeasurable wealth and influence to stockpile supplies for what they saw as the inevitable. Their foresight would become critical in keeping the city alive.

After the War of Ashes, one particular celebrity has become the face of hope and survival—Kalyani Maharaj. Now better known as the "Protector of Mumbai", Maharaj has faced some backlash due to complaints of favoritism towards her closest followers and concerns of what some declare a de-facto dictatorial reign. Regardless, the vast majority of citizens respect the Protector of Mumbai for what they call her "selfless bravery" and "heroism".

Although the Principality of Mumbai has thus survived off of stockpiles of food and other resources, this stability cannot last for long. While Maharaj is rumored to have pulled some strings to temporarily power Mumbai, the territory surrounding Mumbai under Maharaj's control still suffers from frequent power outages. In addition, there are rumors that the Principality of Mumbai has insufficient military strength to defend itself from invaders. Maharaj must use skillful diplomacy to prevent outside attacks and provide military aid for her people while restoring Mumbai's previous trade networks to its former glory.

Lao People's Democratic Republic



While Laos is under similar turmoil to the rest of the world, its government maintained stability solely due to the decision of President Tayvihane to assert dictatorial rule over the communist republic. However, recent violent revolts ended in the president's sister, Leilani Tayvihane, taking power in his stead, her brother bedridden with an unexplained "illness." Due to the Mekong River, Laos has become a minor hydroelectric energy powerhouse and has started diversifying energy sources via wind turbines. While the region is historically very poor, the new order means this small country has the potential to become much richer by offering its hydroelectric and wind energy to neighboring countries—in exchange for a price, of course.

Laos' land remains arable and, with the help of stockpiles, their rice farmers produce barely enough for rice for the population to not starve, but there is certainly not enough to trade. Leilani Tayvihane, a scientist by trade, will be looking for more advanced methods to increase Laos' wealth, status, and food production in the new era.

Java, Indonesia



Already a fragmented archipelago nation, the Indonesian government splintered into pieces following the War of Ashes. Centered in Java, the main government currently tenuously holds control over a slim majority of the population, bolstered by isolationism and growing anti-foreign sentiment.

Due to the War of Ashes, historical anti-Chinese sentiment has only deepened in Indonesia. While the Javanese government has allowed Chinese refugees to stay in minor port cities like Surabaya, provided that Jakarta remains open for trade, the government has done little to prevent Chinese xenophobia from festering. Recent taboos surrounding nuclear blast survivors have only exacerbated conflicts between the Indonesians and the Surabayan Chinese refugees.

Due to their industrialization before the nuclear fallout, Indonesia had recently enjoyed the status of Southeast Asia's largest economy. To maintain these gains, Java will need to revitalize its trading networks—especially as industrialization has wiped out most of their agricultural infrastructure. As such, the Javanese government will be particularly interested in trade to feed their starving population. Finally, due to its massive renewable energy potential, Indonesia is looking to further research technological advances in energy.

Metro Manila

The Philippines only needed a spark to light the fire of revolution. In response to growing resentment against the Apoyo family and their quasi-dictatorial stranglehold on national politics, the people revolted during the War of Ashes following rumors that the Apoyos were fleeing the country. However, as the revolution spread, the islands fell into chaos, eventually collapsing into a series of city states.

The largest city-state, commonly known as Metro Manila, has managed to stay intact due to the leadership of its recently elected mayor, Roberto Santos. As the newly autonomous region cannot produce food on its own, it relies heavily on trade with neighboring city-states to procure resources. In addition, Manila suffers from a lack of energy; Santos seeks to convince fellow city states to further invest their largest potential source of energy: geothermal energy.

Manila has also become one of the most actively accepting regions of Chinese refugees, seeking to incorporate all refugees into the larger city. However, Santos's opponents question whether Manila, a relatively impoverished and space-constrained city, has the means to provide for these new citizens.



Peninsular Malaysia

While the old Malaysian government has struggled to maintain control, the Bornean military has done what so many militaries did in the ashes and gained control of East Malaysia... only to reduce its significance and population to negligible amounts and leave Kuala Lumpur, still under the tight control of the old Malaysian government, the only significant remainder of Malaysia before the War of Ashes. Amongst their campaign for power, the old Malaysian government has dealt with significant backlash from corporations and other wealthy stakeholders in the country over the authoritarian policies they have used to keep the population ignorant of the world around them, hurting consumer trade in the meantime.

As one of the few oil-rich countries in the region, it may seem like the old Malaysian government doesn't need much support to run its government as it pleases, but a starving country causes problems for any regime. Realizing their errors, the old Malaysian government has recently expressed interest in trading with some of their staunchest allies, Thailand and Vietnam, for food, encouraging a liberal foreign policy while maintaining a desperate and oppressive domestic policy.



Republic of Singapore

From an outsider's perspective, Singaporean democracy is alive and well, but don't let that fool you. The Yong family controls all effective routes to power in the country, and under their sway the divide between rich and poor has increased significantly since the War of Ashes. Despite their dominance, the Yongs exist as only one family and they still struggle to maintain their position above other powerful families all clamoring for control.

Recent trade agreements with Laos and Java have allowed Singapore to partially restore energy to the city. As it stands, the Yongs have an outwardly positive stance on Chinese refugees and have allowed a small number to migrate to the city, though further observation notes that these incoming "refugees" exclusively consist of those from wealthy Chinese families.

Luckily, Singapore is located in a prime location between Asia and the Mediterranean for trade. However, due to the War of Ashes, international trade at large has dropped significantly; restoring trade networks as well as obtaining food and energy has become of singularly significant importance to Singapore. There are talks that the Yongs have sought to strengthen ties with the Syndicate of Saigon, but who can say for sure?



Kingdom of Thailand

As Thailand crumbled under increasingly divisive politics leading up to the War of Ashes, King Rama XI rose in prominence as a positive force for stability—and after the democratically elected Thai government failed to respond to the nuclear crisis effectively, the king used his support from Thailand's royalist faction and the military to seize political power via a bloodless revolution.

King Rama XI's latest efforts to maintain cultivation of rice have been remarkably effective, and the newly founded Kingdom of Thailand has become a worldwide leader in food production. While Bangkok has remained relatively self-sufficient due to its abundant food supply, it is nonetheless reeling from a lack of trade. While not currently pressing, this could become deadly in the event of nuclear winter: crop failure could lead to mass starvation for the Thai.

While Thailand has the potential for great power in this new world order, it must remember that blessings are not infinite. Active efforts in using newfound technologies to ensure continued prosperity will likely be necessary.



Socialist Republic of Vietnam

Similarly to many other nations, Vietnam lost control of much of its borders as its institutions failed. Most notably, Ho Chi Minh City fell out of control following a violent revolt that killed numerous government officials, including the General Secretary of Vietnam. However, the remnants of the Communist Party, led by Prime Minister Anh Duong Huynh, have managed to hold onto Hanoi and some surrounding areas. While Vietnam still has control over a sizable amount of arable land, its control over the people is tenuous at best. At worst, Vietnam teeters on the brink of rebellion due to malcontent from peasant farmers.

Similar to Thailand, Vietnam seeks to maintain relevancy by offering food to the struggling world, hopefully in exchange for military aid to gain further control of arable land and its current population. In addition, Vietnam must find ways to trade for stable sources of energy to power Hanoi and surrounding territories while navigating an increasingly unstable political situation.



Territory of Punjab

After a military insurrection, the military itself turned on each other. Pakistan split up into various city states, each led by warlords. Three main warlord territories exist: Punjab, Islamabad, and Karachi. Punjab is the largest by area, mostly due to having a charismatic leader able to unite most of the region by shared cultural identity, but other regions are none too happy with this development and will be looking to change it.

Punjab has had the luxury of being more or less stable during the period following the War of Ashes, although this stability has been the result of autocratic rule. However benevolent this rule may be, there are concerns that the peace won't last for long. Punjab faces countless attacks both from outside neighbors and within (internal dissent over the leader's rule).

Punjab currently only produces enough food to feed its own citizens, but the current leader is working on efficiency, etc. to be able to become an exporter. This is critical since they are heavily dependent on other nations for energy, and power outages were already common in Pakistan before the War of Ashes. They are currently relying on limited sources of hydroelectric energy and brokered a tenuous deal with the warlord state of Karachi for the rest. The best hope for Punjab's future is finding a way to broker more deals for energy.



Delhi Triumvirate

Soon after the War of Ashes, Sarthak Mukherjee of New Delhi is rumored to have forged a secret deal with the municipal commissioner of Lucknow and a businessman in Jaipur to seize control and jointly secede from India. In any case, after the national government crumbled to pieces, the three cities soon formed an alliance that became known as the Delhi Triumvirate, with Mukherjee serving as the main leader.

Together, the Triumvirate controls a large amount of arable land and is quickly gaining reputation as “the new bread basket of India”. However, the possibility of prosperity in the Delhi Triumvirate has constantly been threatened by intermittent power outages, corruption caused by an increasingly autocratic old-guard government, and a lack of resources due to the loss of vital trade networks. In addition, there is a growing number of proponents of isolationism amongst the Delhi Triumvirate, possibly thwarting attempts to negotiate with neighboring nations.

As the Triumvirate is landlocked and currently surrounded by hostile neighbors, they must act quickly to secure trade agreements both domestically and abroad. Thankfully, if their leaders can skillfully navigate a complicated political environment, they have the chance to maintain the shaky stability they so far enjoy and potentially become an agricultural powerhouse in their own right.

Syndicate of Saigon

While the Vietnamese Communist party has sought desperately to maintain control of the surrounding regions, the former Ho Chi Minh City has all but been written off as a lost cause. The criminal organization popularly known as the Syndicate of Saigon has seized power in the city and renamed it back to Saigon largely due to the prowess of its leader, Tony Ngo, often referred to as “The Snake of Saigon.”

While Saigon has become a den of crime and illicit activity following the War of Ashes, its people are well fed and protected from outside threats compared to many in other areas of the world, primarily due to raids in the Viet and Thai countryside. Given its success, the Syndicate is looking to expand its reach internationally, offering food to countries for a price, and always looking to profit and power as motivating factors in the new world order.



People's Republic of Naxal

After years of small-scale guerilla warfare, the Naxalite movement seized the opportunity created by the War of Ashes to spread the ideals of communism throughout Eastern India. Amidst the chaos, Naxalites rose up, starting populist revolts throughout the region that eventually led to the overthrow of the Indian government and the creation of the People's Republic of Naxal.

Centered in Ranchi, the Naxal Republic has since begun a campaign to spread communism to the rest of India—by force. Under the command of Aadesh Rathore, Naxal's military has recently captured Kolkata, thus securing a vital trading outpost for the Republic. Using Naxal's sources of coal as leverage, Rathore hopes to trade for food, as the Republic has little arable land. While Naxal has had success in maintaining power so far, some capitalist naysayers are beginning to express their dissatisfaction of Rathore's strict food rationing policy.

For Naxal, the clearest path forward is by pursuing the twin policies of conquest and diplomacy. By forging trade deals with its neighbors and possible communist allies while waging war against its enemies to gain precious arable land, Naxal hopes to gain the food and supplies it needs to fight the good communist fight.



Holy Kingdom of Tamil Nadu

Shortly before the Indian-Pakistani escalation two years ago, a married couple named Amrit and Deva Chaudhari gained attention after prophesying the end of the world. While nuclear war never occurred in 2027, the self-proclaimed Followers of Kalki nevertheless quickly gained prominence, becoming an increasingly popular right-wing Hindi nationalist movement. Following the Indian government's collapse, the Followers of Kalki violently seized power, instituting the Chaudharis as king and queen of the Holy Kingdom of Tamil Nadu. The Holy Kingdom has since become a militaristic state bent on conquest in preparation for the next stages of the apocalypse.

While relatively prosperous and one of the largest proponents of renewable energy in India, Tamil Nadu suffers from a lack of arable land and general popular discontent. In fact, a resistance group comprised of religious minorities and Hindus opposed to the Followers of Kalki has arisen, leading to countless revolts within the Holy Kingdom. As such, the Chaudharis must either pursue further conquest of agricultural land, forge trade agreements with the "heretical" outside world, or find a balance between the two.



City of Auckland



While New Zealand's government has lost political control of much of the countryside, this has caused remarkably little turmoil in this distant, agrarian island. Not struggling with agricultural crisis, New Zealand produces plenty of food to feed its meager population of natives and the sizable number of Chinese refugees slowly taking up home in Auckland, although not so much that they are inclined to take up trade. Auckland has slowly integrated more refugees into the city, many settling in rich areas and causing dissension among natives of New Zealand. Despite government officials' best interests, this has encouraged hatred based on taboos around Acute Radiation Syndrome and other effects and conspiracies around the nuclear fallout, leading to growing public support for an isolationist stance in regard to the crisis.

Despite dealing with internal turmoil, Auckland is remarkably okay compared to the rest of the world. They are leaders in agricultural technology and, while having lost many imported sources of energy, maintain several renewable sources that lead the island to be stable for now, and with more resources poured into them, could lead the island to be entirely self sufficient.

Queensland, Australia



As major cities in Australia such as Sydney, Melbourne, and Canberra were wiped off the map in the War of Ashes, many refugees from those cities have fled to Brisbane and, to a lesser extent, Adelaide, leaving the Australian government struggling to keep up with their own refugees, much less Chinese immigrants. The Australian government split into four (West, North, South, and Queensland), where two sectors (Queensland and Northern Australia) handled many refugees and the remaining sectors fell off the grid of international politics, maintaining just enough self sufficiency to manage their own population while not maintaining communications structures.

A large number of Gold Coast residents are anti-Chinese, a situation certainly not helped by the growing taboo towards survivors of nuclear fallout. However, their acceptance of Australian refugees makes this look a lot like classic racism.

Queensland maintains a small amount of arable land and will be looking towards technology or trade to augment their minimal food production.

Northern Australia



Similar to Queensland, Northern Australia maintains minimal arable land and struggles to produce food to keep up with their population. However, unlike in Queensland, Northern Australia has accepted the main body of Chinese refugees to Darwin, Australia, especially as most Australian refugees fled towards Queensland.

So far, the government of Northern Australia has taken a middle ground stance towards the refugees and allowed them to stay in Darwin provided they live on ships (either the ones they arrived on, or the variety of cruise ships and yachts provided by Darwin). However, this has created a chokepoint when it comes to trade with other cities, interrupting trade on several levels.

Unfortunately, Darwin itself is a relatively small city to the point where Chinese refugees are almost equal in number to Darwin residents, causing increased internal strife and a government struggling as to the correct response.

Chinese Refugees

More than 1.5 billion people lived in Eastern China. Only around 30 million—20% of that population—escaped from the nuclear attacks. And of that 30 million, hundreds of thousands are scattered in various cities across Western China and Southeast Asia, creating a refugee crisis the likes of which have never been seen before. Of those left alive, the toll of exposure to a nuclear blast is significant, and many suffer Acute Radiation Syndrome, lasting from hours after the blast to several months after. Many survivors are turned away over fears that the sickness is somehow contagious, and those unlucky enough to have skin damage can hardly find refuge anywhere.

Many Chinese refugees unfortunate enough to have been turned away or forced to wait at the docks have learned how to survive on cramped, uncomfortable boats while catching fish (if they get lucky). Others have received more accommodating residences on container ships, ferries, and cruise ships, while still others have been somewhat integrated into the larger city. However, all agree that they tend to feel like they have been pushed aside or forgotten about for “larger concerns”, and a few people have come forward as leaders to speak for those who cannot: the 1.4 billion who died in the nuclear aftermath.



Characters

Liang Jianyu - Leader of Chinese Refugees (Darwin)

Liang Jianyu always thought he was nothing more than an ordinary man. But no ordinary man could have survived the ordeals he had encountered on his journey from Tianwan, China all the way to this conference.

After dropping out of medical school, Liang found a job as a nuclear power plant worker, eventually starting a family in Tianwan. Years later, he would flee that same city with his wife and seven-year-old daughter, enduring an arduous month-long voyage to Darwin, Australia. Despite (or because of) his soft-spoken and warm-hearted nature, he found himself in a position of leadership, serving as a mediator and compassionate yet unflinching source of authority. In addition, he has become highly valued for his knowledge of Acute Radiation Syndrome and his previous background in medicine and nuclear power. As a proponent of realpolitik and compromise, while Liang disagrees with many of Thea McKenzie's decisions, he is still on good terms with the Lady Mayor of Darwin. Yet he has promised never to compromise on behalf of the Chinese refugees—and on behalf of the hope that his daughter can still have a future in this post-nuclear world.

Xie Guoshi - Leader of Western China

Make no doubt about it, Xie Guoshi is a survivor—and he is committed to making sure the rest of Western China survives alongside him. As the former Administrative Chief of Lanzhou Prefecture and a pragmatist through and through, he had no qualms about splitting from the rest of the CCP if it meant securing the wellbeing of his people. After all, he was never really dedicated to the cause in the first place. As Xie was the first highest-ranking official to disobey orders from Beijing and act on his own accord, he has effectively become known as the leader of Western China. His no-nonsense practicality and complete dedication to the task at hand may be off-putting to some, but those who know him well know that his lack of charm belies a sense of true dedication to the people he is called to serve. He lives now as his parents did, back when they were peasant farmers: he keeps his head down and works for something that will survive beyond himself. And for him, that is the establishment of reliable sources of food and energy, proper management of the Chinese refugee crisis, and sustainable survival beyond today's short-term concerns. Whoever he may have to cross in his path to achieve those goals is of no concern to him.

Takahiko Okumura - Zaibatsu Governor of Hokkaido and Tohoku

Don't underestimate the "most junior partner" of the New Zaibatsu—like any other member of the Big Six, Takahiko Okumura has a reputation for cutting deals. While Okumura is the youngest, he has been chosen as leader of the Japanese delegation for a reason; due to his kind, affable nature, he's known as the most diplomatic of the Six. Don't get him wrong, though—like any good businessman, Okumura can leverage bargaining power and information to suit his goals: in this case, pursuing peace by any means. As the CEO of the Okumura corporation, he owns the largest supermarket chain in Japan and has recently begun investing agricultural technology. As such, Okumura is principally concentrated on resolving Japan's food and energy crisis by bartering for additional technological information, and as such he is not opposed to limited contact between Japan and the outside world. Nonetheless, he mostly adheres to an isolationist stance, believing that the best way to protect Japan from war is by cutting ties with the rest of society. While he is sympathetic to the Chinese refugees, Okumura begrudgingly accepts that letting them into Japan would likely only cause more instability his country. His eagerness to prove himself may cause conflict with the other members of the Big Six, though, as may his ambition and reluctance to completely adhere to isolationism.

Ananda Suksabaijai, King Rama XI - King of Thailand

Five years ago, "powerful politician" was the last phrase anyone would have used to describe Crown Prince Ananda Suksabaijai. Young, dumb, and the son of the richest monarch in the world, Ananda spent most of his life abroad in Lietchenstein, gaining quite the reputation as a playboy and philanderer. Infamous for his debauchery and lavish lifestyle, Ananda surprised many by quickly sobering up in response to his father's unexpected death, moving back to Thailand to be an immediate comfort for his people. After formally ascending to the throne in August 2024, the new King Rama XI was often criticized for his playboy past. Yet time and time again, Ananda has continued to surprise his detractors. Using his charm, strength of personality, and political savvy, King Rama XI has amassed considerable cultural and political power—aided by his support from the royalists and the military. In addition, his establishment of agricultural and humanitarian programs and frequent tours to the countryside have garnered goodwill from the common people. Despite the War of Ashes and his new role as political head of Thailand, Ananda's popularity has only grown since then. In Thai culture, the king serves as a paragon of morality, beacon of strength, and source of stability - all concepts Ananda never aspired to uphold five years ago. He can only hope that he represents them all now.

Kang Dae-Hyun - North Korean Military Commander

Like any other loyal citizen, Kang Dae-Hyun grew up fervently devoted to his Great Leader and the North Korean cause. After being drafted into the army, he was eager to serve his great country and rose quickly through the ranks, soon becoming a commander. However, the higher the office he gained, the more he realized that the “Great Leader” was nothing more but an empty position designed to prevent his people from achieving true greatness. So when Pak Chul-Moo called for a military revolt, Kang gladly assisted his superior officer in removing the false Great Leader from her throne and entrusting North Korea to the true advocates of communism. Under the banner of the Supreme General, Kang fought long and hard on the frontlines of the Second Korean War, but has recently been relegated to civilian duties while recovering from a debilitating gunshot wound to his leg. However, this injury has not diminished Kang’s ferocious temperament, honorable nature, and jingoistic zeal; he arrives at this conference as fierce and prepared for battle as ever. Kang Dae-Hyun’s greatest hope is that his comrades in the South someday experience the glory of a Korea united under communism—and he is willing to do whatever it takes to ensure that North Korea wins this war.

Jimmy Larrikin - Australian Survivalist

Everybody called Jimmy Larrikin crazy. Well, who’s laughing now? As the star of the ten million subscriber Youtube channel “Larrikin Unlocked”, Jimmy has thrived off of controversy (read: telling people that the apocalypse is coming) and conspiracy (read: telling people that the apocalypse is coming). Not only is he the most (in)famous resident of Gold Coast, Australia, he’s also a well-seasoned survivalist and explorer in his own right, able to brave the worst of the Great Victoria Desert. As such, he’s a bit of an expert on post-apocalyptic survival strategies; naturally, paired with his “apocalyptic alarmist tendencies”, he was more than prepared when the bombs hit Australia. After inviting more than a hundred of his top tier subscribers to like and survive in his underground bunker (which totally exists), Larrikin and his followers hunkered down and waited for the worst to pass—and was surprised when Gold Coast was left unscathed. Now, faced with pressure from the Gold Coast government to house Chinese refugees in his underground bunker, Larrikin has bribed his way into attending this conference in Gold Coast’s stead. He’d like to find... another solution to the refugee crisis so he doesn’t have to reveal the secret location of his bunker (which totally exists). In addition, he’s extremely worried about the threat of nuclear winter and, as such, seeks information on the latest advances in agricultural technology.

Kalyani Maharaj - Bollywood Actress, Protector of Mumbai

World-renowned actress, self-made billionaire, Mumbai's greatest philanthropist: the "Queen of Bollywood" has made quite a name for herself. Descended from the Maharaj's—only the most powerful political dynasty in India—Kalyani chose a rather different path to public stardom. After using her family's wealth and resources to launch a wildly successful acting career in the early 2000's, she's become the dame of the silver screen and one of the richest celebrities in all of Mumbai. Since retiring from the stage, however, Kalyani has kept herself busy: she's started a lifestyle brand, donated billions to the poor... oh, and she recently became leader of the largest city in India. Splendid. If the self-assumed title of "Protector of Mumbai" doesn't give you any clues, Kalyani is notorious for being a bit of a diva. But while her arrogant, high minded attitude may turn some away, her wit, charm, and charity more than make up for it. Rest be assured, Maharaj's heart is in the right place. And thanks to her farsightedness, careful planning, and lest we forget, immeasurable wealth, Kalyani has shown time and time again that her governance lives up to the people's high expectations. However, recent developments in neighboring Indian states have threatened Mumbai's peaceful existence. Will this actress continue to deliver a stand-out performance, or will this be the curtain call for the Queen of Bollywood?

Arif Iskandar Muljana - CEO of Pelindo, "Portmaster" of Jakarta

After his father died of a supposed heart attack shortly before the War of Ashes, Arif Iskandar Muljana has taken over the family business—Indonesia's most important trading company in the world. While he suspects that the increasingly autocratic Indonesian government in Java intends to use him as a puppet, Muljana has so far successfully resisted their control. Instead, Arif has endeavored to use his new position to induce change in the old, decrepit Indonesian government. Fresh out of business school, Muljana has lots of ideas to modernize port infrastructure and bolster Indonesia's trade capabilities. Not to mention, he's a large proponent of technology and has become a voice in Indonesian government in favor of renewable energy. Secretly, Muljana wonders if his father's death was actually foul play, and has suspicions that Chinese businessmen were somehow involved. However, he tries to get past his uneasiness with the ethnic Chinese. While he has lingering doubts about the Chinese refugees in Surabaya, he still wants to find a way to accept them into Indonesian society—given that they can prove their trustworthiness to Indonesia beforehand. Muljana has been criticized for his lack of experience and an overeagerness to institute technological advancements without considering the repercussions. However, his tech-savvy nature and efforts to modernize have already made him a popular figure in Jakarta, especially in regards to trade.

Deva Chaudhari - Queen of Tamil Nadu, Avatar of Parvati

People, rejoice! Your new queen and savior has arrived. You may call her “Prophet”, “Queen Mother”, or “Glorious Avatar of Parvati”—but the name Deva Chaudhari will also suffice. Just as her divine title suggests, Deva is the reincarnation of the goddess Parvati and the very pinnacle of holiness. Together with her husband Amrit, the self-styled “Avatar of Shiva”, they have risen from humble backgrounds as office workers in Kanchipuram to their rightful places as king and queen. As Followers of Kalki, Amrit and Deva firmly believe that they will give birth to a son, who they shall name Kalki; as the last avatar of Vishnu, he shall destroy this world to rebuild it anew. While Kalki’s coming is close at hand, the Chaudharis must first prepare a kingdom for him so he can fight valiantly against the forces of evil. While Amrit continues to wage war against the godless, Deva has traveled to this conference to seek provisions for her children in Tamil Nadu... and perhaps convert some delegates to her cause. As befits an avatar of Parvati, the Queen Mother is (presumably) lauded for her charitable spirit and generosity, as well as her gentleness and... humility. As the state builder of the duo, she is not opposed to trade agreements with the ungodly, sharing of technological information (which Tamil Nadu is rich in), or ceding of all land and authority to the Holy Kingdom. The Queen Mother would much prefer the latter.

Seon Jin-Kyong - United Korean Federation Leader

As the daughter of a North Korean defector and senator of Gwangju, Seon Jin-Kyong has spent her entire political career advocating for the reunification of Korea. Now, she is one step closer to finally realizing that goal—but at the cost of millions of irreplaceable Korean lives. While she may not have started this war, Seon will do whatever it takes to end it as quickly and mercifully as possible. As the sole civilian leader of the United Korean Federation, Seon Jin-Kyong has focused her efforts on managing logistics on the home front, successfully securing the supply chain for wartime munitions amidst a drought of international trade. In addition, she has so far skillfully navigated an internal refugee crisis caused by the influx of North Korean defectors, as well as numerous victims of the nuclear attacks in Seoul and Busan. In these efforts, Seon Jin-Kyong has earned a reputation as a passionate and forceful leader, tempered by compassion and a genuine heart towards freedom for all. As Seon’s ultimate goal is the unification of her people, she is not above using other resources to foment discord in North Korean territory. As such, she has partnered with her good friend and North Korean defector, Yong Hyun, known for his skills in reconnaissance, while her ally Lee Kang-Dae handles military operations. Together, they are cautiously optimistic that they can win this war of attrition, changing the hearts and minds of the North Korean people so they can one day fight as one.

Roberto Santos - Mayor of Metro Manila

The only thing Roberto Santos hates more than rich people are cowards... not to mention rich cowards. Recently elected in response to a revolt against the Apoyo family's corrupt dictatorship, Santos is a proud proponent of liberation theology; in other words, he takes the opportunity to say grace before he eats the rich. While the majority of his support comes from a broad coalition, comprised of organizations from the Filipino Catholic Church to the Communist Party of the Philippines, Santos is especially popular among the young and the poor—both of whom were instrumental in toppling the Apoyo regime and establishing the current network of city states. In only a year, Santos has already enacted sweeping legislation to welcome in as many Chinese refugees as possible, both as a humanitarian Catholic mission and as a boon to Filipino communists who saw China under the CCP as their ally. Despite his large base of Catholic support, the archbishop of Manila, Bagwis Asención, has been increasingly critical of the mayor's "idealistic and impractical" ideas. According to Asención, Santos has prioritized the woes of foreign refugees over the pressing needs of his own countrymen. In addition, it has been difficult for Santos to find monetary support to fund his humanitarian efforts, especially since money from the church is running dry and Santos continues to criticize billionaires throughout the globe, not just in the Philippines. However, nobody can silence this mayor - he will continue to speak truth to power, whatever the cost.

Wei Hualing - Chinese Agricultural Scientist

The morning of February 13, Wei Hualing received instructions from her good friend Xie Guoshi, telling her to take her thirteen-year-old son and mother, leave behind her tenured position at Shanghai University, and escape to a secret bunker in Lanzhou Prefecture. She would not be teaching that day.

Wei Hualing understood that Xie Guoshi only saved her and her family due to her extensive background in agricultural science and technology, and so she threw herself into efforts to find a new way to sustainably grow crops during a possible nuclear winter. So far, her work at Gansu Agricultural University in Lanzhou has been critical in kickstarting what some are calling "the Third Green Revolution". (Wei insists that such claims are currently unfounded.) Although incredibly intelligent and skilled at argumentation due to her years as a tenured professor, Wei struggles from survivor's guilt and feelings of inadequacy, often wondering why her friend Xie Guoshi chose to rescue her instead of her talented colleagues and beloved students at Shanghai University. Despite that, she is committed to fighting for her fellow Chinese refugees and saving as many people as she can to make up for those she has lost.

Akshar Bhakta - Lieutenant of the Republic of Naxal

Long before the War of Ashes, Akshar Bhakta knew that the world would violently end one day—and when it fell, he was going to be standing at the top of it. Drawn to Karl Marx's writings, Bhakta joined the Naxalites soon after graduating from Orissa University. Due to his ambition, drive, and general ruthlessness, he quickly infiltrated Aadesh Rathore's inner circle, serving as one of Rathore's closest advisors during the movement's rapid expansion into East India. This was primarily due to Bhakta's suggestion that they use agents to infiltrate local academic institutions, which helped Naxalism spread anew throughout urban areas (while granting Bhakta a powerful new network). Through this infrastructure, Bhakta and his agents were well positioned to foment unrest during the War of Ashes throughout cities like Bhakta's hometown Orissa, which soon became the new headquarters of the Naxalite movement. Newly promoted to second in command to Rathore, Akshar Bhakta has now been entrusted with the recently captured city of Kolkata, and he intends to use this newfound position to his advantage. While some of his opponents have criticized him for being "opportunistic", Bhakta would characterize that as a (fatal) mistake. After all, he is loyal to Rathore—or at least, his cause. But Akshar Bhakta is done playing second fiddle. Now, it's his turn to be on top.

Zulfiqar Waqas Mirwani - Warlord of Punjab

When Zulfiqar Waqas Mirwani joined the army, he became known for his hardworking, dutiful, and dependable nature—not to mention his natural charisma and ability to inspire others to obey him. In short, Mirwani was a natural leader. Yet, for years, he has been happy to follow the commands of his leading officer and focus on the people of Punjab, rather than pursue any national role. However, in response to the brutal military takeover of Pakistan, Mirwani realized he had no choice but to step up to the plate and protect the Punjabi people of Pakistan from any further harm caused by any rogue soldiers. In doing so, he eventually became known as the "Warlord of Punjab". Known not just for his strength in combat, Mirwani is an honorable man who truly has no other goal than to serve his people—and as such, he has waged a campaign to bring other historically disputed Punjabi territories and end decades of fighting, also hoping to preemptively prevent another nuclear war from occurring. In addition, he enjoys a good relationship with the Warlord of Karachi, whose expertise in trade has been crucial in ensuring the prosperity of both territories (in exchange for Punjab's oil supplies, of course). While perhaps a bit too concerned with people's obedience to authority and natural hierarchy, Mirwani's heart is in the right place—devoted to the people of Punjab.

Carol Henare - Mayor of Auckland, New Zealand

Born to a Maori father and Australian mother, Carol Henare grew up on the family farm milking cows and herding livestock. While serving as mayor of Auckland is definitely different, it sometimes feels just as hard to keep the people of New Zealand in line. After the federal government lost most of its power, Henare rose to the occasion, using her background as a farmer to convince the New Zealanders in the countryside that she could best manage their resources. From years spent advocating for Maori rights as mayor, Henare understands what it's like to be a marginalized group fighting against the odds; however, at times she feels like her hands are tied when dealing with the Chinese refugees, mostly due to Auckland's increasingly xenophobic tendencies. Thankfully, Henare's reputation as a no-nonsense pragmatist with the ability to "put potholes before politics" has helped her maintain control over the city. While Henare seeks for a common ground between the Chinese refugees and Auckland elites, she hopes that her down-to-earth disposition and practical nature will help New Zealand eventually become self-sufficient and independent: just as she always has been.

Joanna Yong - Singaporean Heiress

As the daughter to Singapore's richest and most powerful family, Joanna Yong has grown up in the lap of luxury. Don't count her out, though: the Yongs may be the very definition of "old money", but they've raised their children to be highly knowledgeable about politics and business to keep the Yong dynasty strong. That being said, Joanna admits that she can be a bit self-absorbed and oblivious to the plight to the poor... but she's trying her best. For example, after the War of Ashes, Joanna started a charity dedicated to helping refugee animals who were displaced during the attacks, and she's even donated millions of dollars to it herself! Generous, right? While her father is busy in Singapore "establishing control over the other families", he's sent Joanna to this conference in his stead, and she's determined not to let her dear father down. While she can be a bit naive, Joanna is more politically and economically savvy than she may appear at first glance. For starters, she's already used her vast sources of wealth and connections to broker deals with countries like Thailand and Vietnam on her father's behalf. After all, she's great at making friends (and she's already become close with the King of Thailand). Most of all, Joanna is dedicated towards helping the people of Singapore—and just like her father says, anything that's good for the Yong family is good for the Singaporean people.

Lev Kulikov - Retired Naval Commander of Vladivostok

A man of few words, Lev Kulikov can come across as blunt and maybe a little scary to those who don't know him well. But underneath that seemingly cold disposition is a generous heart and a desire to do right by the people of Vladivostok. Raised in a blue collar family, Kulikov sticks out in stark contrast to the wealthier members of Vladivostok society: mostly in his willingness to actually get things done. His work ethic and perseverance—and his ability to keep the people of Vladivostok fed—has risen him to a sort of folk-hero status among the survivors. Although some Russians balk at his abrasive nature, especially when it comes to “white-collar folks”, the “Lion of Vladivostok” makes no exceptions for anybody. Just as it was supposed to be in the old communist days, Lev treats everybody the same. Not afraid to get his hands dirty, Kulikov has done whatever he can to get supplies for the people of Vladivostok. However, he knows that his limited connections back from his days in the government won't be enough in the long run. That's why he's come to this conference to bargain for trade deals with food-rich countries like Thailand and Vietnam... if he can manage to get more of Vladivostok's oil supplies out of the hands of the money-grubbing old guard, that is. Like the wrestlers he's so fond of like to say, Kulikov is ready to rumble.

Sarthak Mukherjee - Leader of the Delhi Triumvirate

For better or worse, Sarthak Mukherjee is the embodiment of old-guard Indian politics. He is one of the oldest career politicians in India and has patiently risen through the ranks over time to, until recently, become the Minister of Agriculture. But he has always set his sights on much higher than a position like that... Incredibly politically savvy, Mukherjee knew that the Indian federal government was a disaster waiting to happen, so during the revolts, he abandoned ship and betrayed the government instead. Thankfully, being so firmly entrenched in Indian politics, Mukherjee has picked up a couple of “connections” along the way. As such, he used his “resources” not only to get rid of... certain people in his way, but also to form an alliance with two of his long-time friends in Lucknow and Jaipur. Of course, nobody else knew about this “behind closed doors” deal until the three of them had already established the Delhi Triumvirate. While Mukherjee may have betrayed his own government, make no mistake: he is truly a patriot at heart. As the senior leader of the Delhi Triumvirate, his ultimate goal is to restore India to its former glory, just how it was before the English invaded so many years ago. While he may not have the resources yet to make this dream a reality, Mukherjee is confident that India will one day rise again. Until then, he must be patient as he has always been and put India first—after himself, of course.

Tuan Anh “Tony” Ngo - “The Snake of Saigon”

Ruthless, cunning, and clever as a fox, Tony Ngo is aptly known as the "Snake of Saigon": technically the second Snake, as he's inherited a large criminal empire from his predecessor back in the 1990's. After hiding and regrouping in the shadows, the Syndicate has slowly but surely resurfaced, becoming a stronger criminal organization than ever thanks to Tony's efforts. Recruited from the streets of Ho Chi Minh City, rough living has definitely hardened his edges, making him a man not to be trifled with. But he also surprisingly has a soft side, especially when it comes to members of the "family". The same goes for the citizens of Saigon, at least after he had all of the government officials assassinated: the Snake is here to make sure "his people" are well fed and properly taken care of. And anyone who would dare to deny the Syndicate's hospitality are... also taken care of. Not to mention, Tony Ngo is a shrewd arms dealer and black market insider, using his abilities to acquire several valuable assets prior to the government takeover. And most of all, Ngo values loyalty: ironic for the "Snake", but critical for the boss of one of the largest criminal empires of the world. Rest be assured, Ngo is quite the "family" man. And anyone who dares to trifle with him, or his "family", will pay the price.

Goro Matsui - Zaibatsu Governor of Kansai

If Takahiko Okumura is the peacemaker of the Big Six, then Goro Matsui is the realist. Even among fellow CEOs, Matsui is held in high acclaim for his business acumen and capability with economic matters, causing him to effectively serve as their minister of trade and commerce—ironic, since he is also the most staunchly isolationist governor. While many find Matsui to be a bit... difficult to work with at times, he insists that his pride and stubbornness only stem from a proven track record. After all, if you're always right, what's the point in listening to others? As a member of the Japanese delegation, Matsui is here to keep compromisers like Okumura in check, ensuring that Japan remains isolationist and keeps all foreigners where they belong—outside of their country. While there are rumors that a shrewd businessman like Matsui would be willing to trade with certain countries off the grid in an attempt to keep Japan alive, Matsui swears that he would never commit such an act. As a true patriot, he firmly believes that Japan will survive alone with the aid of technology, efficiency, and Japanese might, just as it had before the Westerners opened it up to foreign interference... Or so he says. Who knows if the great Goro Matsui will adhere to the same ideals once push comes to shove and time runs out for the Japanese people?

Thea McKenzie - Lady Mayor of Darwin

Prim and proper, Thea McKenzie has governed Darwin well for many years—but nobody could have been prepared for the tragedy of the War of Ashes and a sudden influx of Chinese migrants that would put this city on the center stage. Heir to old Darwin money, her family has long been rich (from mining); however, Thea made a name for herself in her earlier years as a leading oncologist in Sydney before retiring and shifting her focus to politics. Recently, she has become known as the “Grand Dame of Darwin” and a political force to be reckoned with. While elegant and sophisticated due to her upper-class upbringing, she is also known to be quite personable and easy to get along with, making for a rather unpredictable (and temperamental) mix. Good friends with Liang Jianyu, McKenzie genuinely wants to support the Chinese refugees—but she also has stressed a “Darwin first” approach, intended to first bolster Darwin’s infrastructure and agricultural prowess. After all, what use is welcoming the refugees in if they all starve? Not to mention, McKenzie has been fighting against strident xenophobic tendencies among upper class Darwinites, making it difficult for her to provide any more aid... especially after she forced the upper class to donate their yachts and pleasure ships to the refugees. Despite the veritable storm at home, McKenzie is more than willing to lend her medical and political expertise to this conference—granted that she gets something in return, of course.

Duyen Thi Tran - Wife of Vietnamese Prime Minister

Duyen Thi Tran has spent her entire life languishing in the shadow of powerful men. As the daughter of a politician, Tran is no stranger to political intrigue—after all, she herself was forced to marry for power. A strong-willed and intelligent politician in her own right, Tran retired from a promising political career to become the “perfect wife” for Anh Duong Huynh, a rising star in the Communist Party. Unfortunately for her father, once Huynh became prime minister, her husband’s status did little to advance her father’s political standing. Although saddening, it was a bit of a relief for Tran after her poor father passed away in the Ho Chi Minh City revolt... what an *unfortunate* coincidence. While power has since passed from the deceased General Secretary to her husband, Tran has been less than impressed by Huynh’s management of Vietnam. In her eyes, he comes across as unnecessarily dictatorial and inept; especially egregious is his mismanagement of agricultural land. In his place, Tran would fashion herself as more of a benevolent dictator taking care of her beloved people... ah, a woman can dream. Until then, Tran will have to settle being chief advisor to her idiot husband and the diplomatic envoy for a failed state. And if things go her way, she’ll only have to be the “perfect wife” for a little bit longer...

Chen Xiuying - Leader of Chinese Refugees (Surabaya)

Ever since her days as a student during the 2019 Hong Kong protests, Chen Xiuying has devoted her life to human rights activism and fighting against corrupt governments. To Chen, the fight against the xenophobic and openly racist Indonesian government is just more of the same. After escaping on a boat from Hong Kong, she landed at Jakarta before being unceremoniously turned away by the Indonesians, then Singapore before again being tossed to the side due to her perceived “lack of wealth or status”. Despite these setbacks, Chen has become one of the most prominent proponents for the refugees in Indonesia. While her opponents would describe her as “loud”, “stubborn”, and “annoying”, she prefers to use the words “outspoken”, “strong-willed”, and “relentless”. After all, Chen’s efforts and experience with leading protests have directly led to the Indonesian government relenting and allowing the Chinese refugees to temporarily stay in Surabaya. Unfortunately, the situation in Surabaya has steadily worsened for the Chinese refugees, and their already meager supplies are quickly running low. At this conference, Chen Xiuying hopes to gain an international platform from which to gain further support for the fight against xenophobia, anti-Chinese racism, classism, and intolerance.

Akham Ibrahim - Malaysian Minister of Trade

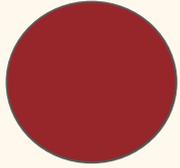
Akham Ibrahim will never be mistaken for a man with a high regard for human rights and freedoms, but he does care about the success of his country. If that means liberalizing his trade policies so his people don’t starve, he will do so—while keeping as much power for himself as he can. Under his tenure, Malaysia has opened up to trade with Thailand and Vietnam while still strictly regulating domestic trade, including rationing the limited food that remains after the War of Ashes. Ibrahim has also realized that Kuala Lumpur could become a major trading network and essential to international trade—if he plays his cards right. Ibrahim will be looking to potentially forge foreign deals with more countries, especially in regards to oil supplies. This is largely possible from his position as Minister of Trade, given that he has de facto control over Petronal, the main Malaysian oil company. He hopes to use Petronal to increase Malaysia’s importance and bargaining power on the international stage. All this being said, Ibrahim is not the top dog in Malaysia, and other powers that be within the country are seeking a more isolationist stance. While Ibrahim has become adept at wielding his own power to great effect, if he tries to step too far off the beaten path, there’s no guarantee this power will remain his.

Leilani Tayvihane - Acting President of Laos

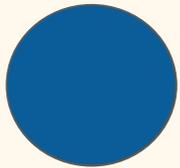
Leilani Tayvihane always knew that she and her twin brother Atsawin were destined for greatness. Although both twins differed greatly in personality—Atsawin was charismatic and outgoing, whereas Leilani was analytical and reserved—both were incredibly intelligent and self-motivated, and they were extremely close. After being adopted by a wealthy Vietnamese family at an early age, the Tayvihane twins received a top-notch education abroad, returning to Laos as accomplished professors in political science and mechanical engineering, respectively. While Atsawin used his charm and wit to climb the ranks of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party, Leilani used her engineering knowledge to lead a government project that refined Laos's hydroelectric power output, helping to make Laos one of the leading producers of electricity in the Mekong River valley. Even though the Tayvihane twins argued constantly about how best to help Laos (Atsawin wanted to open Laos up to democracy, while Leilani advocated for a tighter autocracy), it seemed that Atsawin had finally got his way after becoming president. However, before he was able to institute any reforms, Atsawin suddenly fell ill for... unexplained reasons. With her brother rendered comatose, Leilani has taken it upon herself to serve as his replacement—just as he would have wished. Thankfully, her calculating nature has rendered her quite successful in maintaining control and efficiently quelling revolts, and Leilani has instituted several... measures to keep hydroelectric power plants operating at full capacity. Poised and collected at all times, Leilani has always made the most out of a tragedy, and this is no exception. Will she be able to help Laos reach its full potential in her brother's stead?



Style Guide



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