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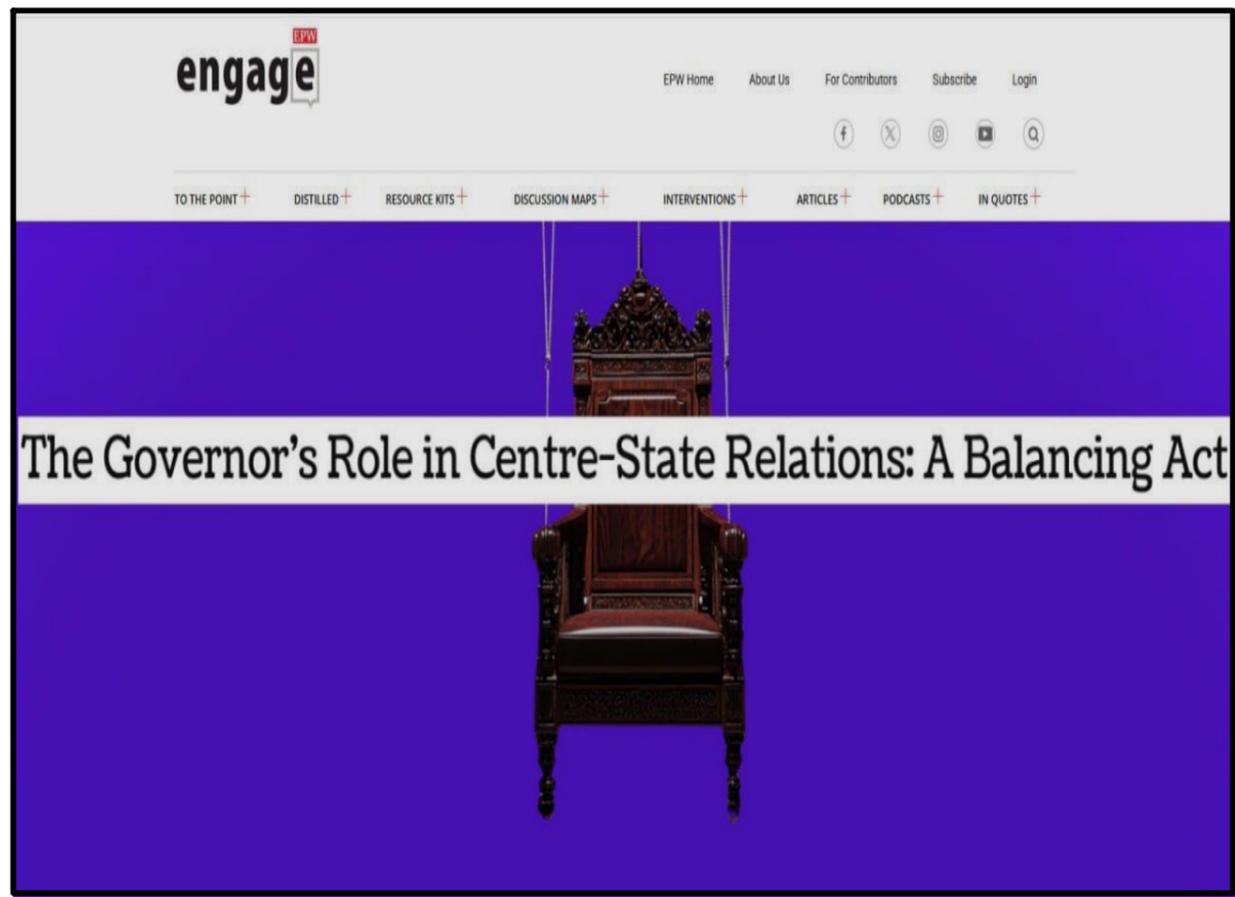
Briefs, scans the best academic platforms, national newspapers, and leading think tanks to pick the most relevant articles and research. It converts them into crisp, high-impact points you can directly use in your Mains answers.



TODAY'S ARTICLES (fill in)

#	Headline / Topic	Source
1	The Governor's role in centre state relations : A balancing act - EPW	
2	India's West Asia reset, more sinned against than sinning - the Hindu	
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Article - 1



Context Office of the Governor, which was meant to be a neutral constitutional link between Centre & the states, has become a source of political conflict over discretion, assent to bills and the health of Indian federalism.

Facts

- *Shamsher Singh and Anr vs. State of Punjab (1974)* reaffirmed that Governor is politically subordinate to the elected Council of Ministers.
- Article 163 (1) says the Governor acts on the aid & advice of Council of Ministers, except where constitution permits discretion.
- Article 167 allows Governor to seek information from CM on legislative & administrative matters; Ambedkar did not see this as a power to overrule the ministry.

- Under Article 200, the Governor has three options on a bill: assent, withhold assent, or reserve it for the President.
- The Punchi Commission recommended deleting the phrase "during the pleasure of the President" so that the office remains neutral & non-partisan.
- In State of Tamil Nadu vs. Governor of Tamil Nadu (2025), the SC said the Governor must decide within one month whether to assent, return or reserve a bill.

Theoretical lens + Verbatim Quotes

B.R. Ambedkar "to advise the Ministry, to warn the Ministry, to suggest to the Ministry an alternative & to ask for a reconsideration."

Shruti Bedi & Ashutosh Kumar

"Constitutional silence cannot be weaponised to stall governance"

**S. Mohan
Kumarangalam**

"The Greater the discretion vested in Governor the greater the possibility of central intervention."

"it must not be forgotten that State in its area of power must be as supreme as Centre in its area."

"the governor, although a constitutional head of State, is not a figure-head or a rubber-stamp, but a functionary designed to play a vital role in the administration of affairs of the State"

"He is a detached spectator, watching from a position of vantage & authority what is going on in the state."

Analytical Crux

The article's main argument is that the Governor's controversy is not only about some individuals; it comes from a deeper structural problem where Governor is appointed by Centre but expected to act neutrally.

When Governor delay or sit on bills, it weakens the mandate of the elected state government & disturbs the federal balance.

The 2025 Tamil Nadu judgement is important because it tries to convert constitutional silence into constitutional accountability.

"The Governor must function as a constitutional bridge & stabiliser not as a parallel political authority of the Centre."

India's West Asia reset, more sinned against than sinning

During the past month, Indian policy towards West Asia has stirred domestic controversy. As substantive Indian interests are at stake, a professional assessment, based on two trends, is offered without wading into the domestic political blame game.

A link to two trends

First, over the past decade, India has raised its diplomatic engagement with West Asia. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has made 15 visits to the six countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) – some after a multi-decade hiatus. He also visited Israel twice, and the Palestinian Authority and Iran each once. Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreements (CEPA) have been signed with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Oman, and similar negotiations are underway with the GCC and Israel.

With over \$160 billion in bilateral trade and 10 million diaspora, the GCC ranks as India's largest socio-economic partner. Last decade's engagements spurred synergy, although the promised investments have lagged. India's political gains include a de-hyphenation with Pakistan, greater strategic convergence with stronger defence and security tie-ups and growing acceptance of India as a responsible and friendly status quo power.

Second, the Gulf monarchies' ardour for a foreign power is normally rooted in the foreign power's potential contribution to the security and stability of their royal family, state and region – in that order. Exceptional turmoil in West Asia since October 2023, and a three-week-old war with the GCC countries under direct Iranian drone and missile attacks and the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, have accentuated their search for a better security paradigm than the eight-decade-old regional Pax Americana.

The recent reset in India's diplomacy in West Asia largely acknowledges the aforementioned two trends and attempts to harness them to serve India's national interest. To their credit, India's policymakers have finally realised which side of the bread is buttered, and have launched a qualitative upscaling of a symbiosis with key West Asian countries. Recent initiatives, such as Mr. Modi's visit to Israel and his individual phone calls to all his GCC counterparts during the early days of the hostilities, have not only assured them of India's categorical support to their security and stability but also conveyed that India shares and prioritises their concerns at this critical juncture. Later, he also spoke with his Iranian counterpart.

The new doctrine is clearer-sighted and emphasises hard diplomacy. This reset is bereft of two traditional aspects that often dampen the bilateral amity: First, India did not chant the traditional please-all mantras that left all



Mahesh Sachdev
is a former Indian Ambassador with an interest in West Asia and oil matters

stakeholders partially satisfied and India at the margins of the arena. There was no attempt to "balance" its public policy on controversial issues such as the "two-state solution" and Iran's quest for nuclear technology. Second, India's statements reflected its views without needless third-party citations. This demonstrates India's growing confidence as a credible and autonomous power.

Some domestic detractors have criticised the policy reset on multiple grounds. First, Mr. Modi's Israel visit (February 25-26) that concluded two days before Tel Aviv unleashed a military campaign against Iran is seen as untimely. Second, the perceived abandonment of India's traditional support for Palestinians and Iran is seen as immoral. Third, South Block is accused of surrendering India's sovereign autonomy to western dictates. Fourth, this activist reset may lead to strategic overreach with concomitant challenges such as exposure to security threats and costly defence tie-ups abroad.

The dates of the Prime Minister's visit to Israel were likely to have been set weeks in advance without any premonition of the February 28 offensive. The West Asian situation being perennially on the front burner makes any such visit risky, giving the ex-post facto criticism of the timing an unfair advantage of 50:50 hindsight. At the same time, the focus of the visit being bilateral renders it in a different domain.

Where other international actors stand

The perceived "immorality" of India's reset is largely misdirected and should be aimed at more worthy targets, such as China, Russia and Pakistan. Beijing siphoned off nearly 90% of the sanctioned Iranian oil exports, rendering only lip service to Tehran; Russia, which signed a 20-year Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Treaty with Iran last year, has also underdelivered. And last year, Pakistani generals promised to nuke Israel if it attacked Iran; they are now U.S. President Donald Trump's favourites. Similarly, even the Arabs and Muslim states were conspicuously silent during the Gaza conflict.

While the Indian reset is a long-overdue recognition of the tectonic geopolitical shifts in West Asia, the pendulum swung to the other extreme and is being gradually realigned with national interests. The regional dynamic being notoriously mercurial, India should strive to keep its options more open. The Palestine Cause cannot be wished away forever. At the end of the day, Iran would remain an important player for India as an oil supplier and as a large market for Indian products, reconstruction projects and services. Iran, which borders Pakistan and Afghanistan, could be a strategic ally. Further, if subterranean trends such as growing Arab unease with the American and Israeli Armageddon, the

Saudi-UAE rift, the Iraq-Iran estrangement, and aggressive positioning by Pakistan and Türkiye are taken on board, a more nuanced reset would have suitably underscored continuity and inclusion. In retrospect, India could have reacted faster to the developments, such as the assassination of Iran's Supreme Leader and the appointment of his successor. Political correctness should not make India tactless, as the diplomatic doublespeak offers many ways to skin the proverbial cat. India's relations with the U.S. and Israel are not so fragile as to be upended by our agreeing to disagree. Finally, India could have rendered more humanitarian relief to millions affected by the hostilities.

An opportunity for India

The ongoing reset should accommodate two incipient, but profound, regional movements with long-term positives for India. First, the long-standing "Oil-for-Security" compact between the Washington-led West and the moderate Arab regimes has become a collateral casualty of the ongoing U.S.-Israel war against Iran. The U.S. joined Israel in attacking Iran without prior notification to the GCC, ignoring the latter's cautionary advice. The West not only failed to protect them from Iranian retaliation, but its military bases on their soil became lightning rods for the Iranian attacks. Now, they fear that the U.S. may abruptly conclude the campaign, leaving them to face Iran's wrath. Once the dust settles, the GCC states may reduce their reliance on the U.S. and diversify their security partnership options to countries such as India, which are less likely to act as a Praetorian Guard. India's response to any such proposal ought to be based on a careful SWOT analysis with clear rules of engagement.

Second, the Iranian retaliations against the GCC have disrupted business activity and supply chains, and an early return to 'business as usual' appears unlikely. The GCC's appeal as an oasis of eco-political stability in the turbulent region has taken a serious long-term knock, leading to some stakeholders' clamour for a "GCC+I" strategy. India's eco-diplomacy must strive to position India as a viable and attractive alternative hub to the GCC's ritzy but fragile hotspots, which thrived by weaning away capital and talent from India. The current commotion is a historic opportunity to seize what is rightfully ours.

To remain relevant and effective, a country needs a dynamic foreign policy grounded in realism and national interest. Its execution requires the right mix of consistency, agility and modulation. As India's West Asia policy matures, it is relevant to recall British Prime Minister Lord Palmerston's maxim, "We have no eternal allies, and we have no perpetual enemies. Our interests are eternal and perpetual..."

India needs balance, sensitivity and agility to leverage emerging opportunities in West Asia

Context The article explains why India is recalibrating its West Asia policy in favour of a more interest-based & security oriented approach, while also arguing that India must still keep balance, flexibility and sensitivity in dealing with the Gulf, Israel, Iran and Palestine.

Facts

- CEPA with UAE & Oman; GCC is India's largest socio-economic partner.
- India's bilateral trade with the GCC – \$160 billion.
- China siphoned off nearly 90% of sanctioned Iranian oil exports.
- Russia signed a 20 year Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Treaty with Iran last year.

Theoretical lens + Verbatim Quotes

 **Mahesh Sachdev** "To remain relevant & effective, a country needs a dynamic foreign policy grounded in realism & national interest."

 **Lord Palmerston** "We have no eternal allies, and we have no perpetual enemies. Our interests are eternal and perpetual."

Analytical Crux

The core argument of the article is that India's West Asia policy is moving from old diplomatic caution to a more realist and interest based approach. The Gulf has become too important for India in terms of trade, diaspora, security & strategic space, so India can no longer remain vague or passive. The real challenge is not choosing one side permanently but keeping India's options open while responding to fast-changing geopolitics. The best West Asia policy for India is one based on realism, balance, agility & national interest.

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