

# PSIR & GS-2 Daily Brief

**About this initiative :** Briefs, scans the best academic platforms, national newspapers & leading think tanks to pick the most relevant articles & research. It converts them into crisp, high-impact points you can directly use in your mains answers.

PSIR  
Optional by  
Amit Pratap  
Singh  
| ForumIAS |



## Article - 1

Triangular geopolitics:  
U.S - China rivalry :  
Vivekananda foundation

## Article - 2

In West Asia a realistic  
bargain may be in  
sight : Indian express

## Article - 3

Islamabad channel:  
India must stand for  
peace : Indian Express

# Article - 1 : Triangular geopolitics: U.S - China rivalry

The screenshot shows the website of the Vivekananda International Foundation. The header includes navigation links: AREAS OF STUDY, PUBLICATIONS, ACTIVITIES, RISING INDIA, NEW, QUESTIONS FOR EXPERTS, NATIONAL SECURITY, DATABASE, TAGS, SAMVAD. The main banner features the foundation's logo and name, 'VIVEKANANDA INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION', with the tagline 'Seeking Harmony in Diversity'. Below the banner, the article title 'Triangular Geopolitics: U.S.-China Rivalry and the Reconfiguration of Latin America' is displayed. A video player shows a man pointing at a map of Latin America. The author's name, 'Dr. Joseph N. Sanate, Senior Research Associate, VIF', is listed. A 'Listen to this article now' button is visible. The article title is repeated at the bottom of the page.

## Context

The article explains how U.S.-China rivalry is reshaping Latin America, where countries are no longer simply following U.S. but are balancing both powers to protect their own interests.

## Verbatim Quotes

“Currently, the region shows a pattern of fragmented reactions to U.S. pressure indicated by pragmatic hedging and selective alignment.”

“A complex geopolitical triangle now dictates the balance of power in the Americas.”

“The new triangular relationship illustrates how LatAm states continue to balance Washington & Beijing against one another to maximize economic concessions & sovereign autonomy.”

“The Western Hemisphere has evolved into a heavily contested region where great powers are negotiating influence rather than imposing it.”

## Facts

China has become South America's top trading partner & a major infra. financier.

Trump's three key Latin America priorities are China, trade & migration.

The November 2025 U.S. NSS clearly prioritised pushing back against China in West.

Latin America is moving away from unquestioned U.S. dominance toward a multipolar world.

## Analytical Crux

The main point is that Latin America is no longer a passive U.S. sphere of influence. China's long economic entry has changed the structure of power & Latin American states are now bargaining with both sides. Trump's pressure-based approach may force short-term adjustments, but it cannot undo China's deep economic role in the region. So the region is moving from old-style hegemony to competitive multipolarity, where influence will depend more on useful partnerships than on coercion.

# Article - 2 : In West Asia a realistic bargain may be in sight



R SWAMINATHAN

## In West Asia, a realistic bargain may be in sight

AFTER WEEKS of sustained escalation, marked by over 15,000 American and Israeli strikes on Iran and more than 5,000 Iranian missile and drone attacks across Israel and the Gulf, the announcement of a two-week ceasefire offers a much-needed reprieve to the region and the world at large. However, as delegations prepare to meet in Islamabad this Friday, the hard work of translating this temporary reprieve into a lasting geopolitical settlement has only just begun.

For the US, the immediate victory is the imminent reopening of the Strait of Hormuz without front-loading concessions to Tehran. American negotiators are set to head to Islamabad with the main objectives of the total removal of nuclear material from Iran, enforcing a halt on uranium enrichment, and neutralising the ballistic missile threat.

Iran's Supreme National Security Council framed it as a political victory, asserting that Washington had accepted Tehran's 10-point proposal as the basis for negotiations. At the same time, Iran has emphasised that the ceasefire does not terminate hostilities and that the negotiations will be conducted under conditions of distrust toward the US. Tehran has demanded that any eventual agreement be anchored in a binding UNSC resolution. The core elements of Iran's proposal include security guarantees against future American or Israeli strikes; comprehensive sanctions relief

For the first time in this crisis, the pragmatic needs of both nations align. The US needs an economic reprieve and a political victory; Iran needs survival, reconstruction, and sovereignty

and recognition of Iranian control over the Strait of Hormuz with Oman, with a regulated transit regime. The plan also calls for regional de-escalation, including the cessation of Israeli operations against Hezbollah.

The contours of a realistic bargain are beginning to take shape. If Iran can secure sovereign control over the strait as an insurance policy against future attacks, it can offer significant concessions such as diluting its 60 per cent enriched uranium and transferring it to a third party like Russia as it did after the 2015 JCPOA, capping future enrichment at 1 per cent, suspending enrichment for several years, and resuming IAEA inspections under the Additional Protocol. Further, a renewed *fatwa* forswearing nuclear weapons could provide the ideological cover to finalise the deal, alongside limits on the deployment of advanced long-range missiles.

The Strait of Hormuz requires an innovative legal framework. A viable solution is to apply the principles of the 1936 Montreux Convention, which affirmed Turkey's sovereignty over the Bosphorus and Dardanelles straits while guaranteeing peacetime civilian navigation and restricting wartime naval access. A "Hormuz Convention" could balance international shipping needs with Iranian security. Under Iran's proposal, civilian commerce would flow freely, potentially subject to a \$2 million transit fee shared with Oman to com-

pensate for wartime losses, while Iran retains the right to restrict the passage of hostile warships. However, the durability of any Hormuz regime would depend on robust enforcement mechanisms and credible security guarantees.

Ultimately, the strongest guarantor of this ceasefire is the American political calendar. Rising gasoline prices and attendant inflation threaten to sink Trump's approval ratings months before the mid-term elections. By securing the strait's reopening, he can claim he has achieved his primary military and economic objectives. If this requires a phased lifting of sanctions, which he can sell as a lucrative opportunity for American businesses, and non-aggression guarantees, he could take the deal. Trump also has the leverage to force a reluctant Israel to fall in line.

For the first time in this crisis, the pragmatic needs of both nations align, though the GCC countries, barring Oman, will have reservations over Iran's control of Hormuz. The US needs an economic reprieve and a political victory; Iran needs survival, reconstruction, and sovereignty. If negotiators can utilise blueprints like the Montreux Convention to navigate the treacherous waters of the Strait of Hormuz, this ceasefire may just pull the Middle East back from the brink.

The writer is former governor of India to the International Atomic Energy Agency, Vienna, former ambassador to Egypt and former permanent representative to the Arab League

**Context** This article argues that after a dangerous round of U.S - Israel - Iran escalation, a workable settlement may emerge through a hard bargain on Iran's nuclear programme, missiles, sanctions and the strait of Hormuz.

### Facts

The escalation involved 15,000+ US- Israeli strikes & 5000+ Iranian missile / drone attacks.

The U.S. wants an end to Iran's nuclear material, enrichment & missile threat.

Iran may accept strong nuclear limits, including a 1 percent enrichment cap & IAEA oversight.

Hormuz Convention, inspired by 1936 Montreux Convention, as legal key to a durable deal.

## Analytical Crux

The deeper argument is that peace will come not through victory but through a face-saving bargain. Iran wants survival, sovereignty and sanctions relief; the U.S. wants nuclear restraint, missile limits and open sea routes. The strongest insight is that **Horzum is not just a shipping issue but the centre of the strategic settlement.** Domestic political pressure in America and survival needs in Iran are pushing both sides toward compromise.

## Verbatim Quotes

"The contours of a realistic bargain are beginning to take shape."

"A 'Horzum Convention' could balance international shipping needs with Iranian security."

"For the first time in this crisis, the pragmatic needs of both nations align."

# Article - 3 : Islamabad channel: India must stand for peace

## Islamabad channel: India must stand for peace, whoever the broker may be



**THAROORTHINK**  
BY SHASHI THAROOR

**I**N THE volatile theatre of West Asian geopolitics, the script has taken an improbable turn. For decades, the corridors of power in Washington and Tehran were paved with mutual suspicion, separated by a chasm that no amount of traditional diplomacy could bridge. Yet, as the 2026 Iran-US conflict reaches a fever pitch, the most consequential diplomatic bridge is being built not in Geneva or Doha, but in Islamabad, where negotiations begin on Friday.

The emergence of Pakistan as the indispensable broker in this crisis is a development that demands a mature and sophisticated response from New Delhi. While the historical reflex of our establishment might be one of disparagement, strategic anxiety, or both, the sheer scale of the current conflagration, US President Donald Trump's threat of a "civilisation-ending" cataclysm, and the malign effects on the region all necessitate a more statesmanlike posture. True, the Pakistani Prime Minister's social-media gaffe in posting a message apparently drafted in Washington suggests that the US may merely be using Pakistan to give the ceasefire a neutral, third-party face, allowing both the US and Iran to de-escalate without appearing to back down directly to one another. But even if Pakistan is a diplomatic fig leaf rather than the real initiator, India must now navigate this development with a combination of strategic

restraint, regional responsibility, and a renewed commitment to its role as the voice of the Global South.

To understand why Pakistan has suddenly become the pivot point for the Trump administration and the Iranian leadership, one must look at the unique "connectivity matrix" it has cultivated. The relationship between Field Marshal Asim Munir and President Donald Trump is no longer a matter of back-channel rumour; it is an operational reality. Trump's penchant for personalised diplomacy, especially one over-valuing the strongman archetype, has found a mate in Munir, whom he calls his "favourite field marshal". This personal rapport, forged during the heat of the 2025 India-Pakistan crisis over Operation Sindoor, has bypassed the formal bureaucracy of the State Department, creating a direct, high-velocity channel to the Oval Office.

Simultaneously, with a Shia population of 40 million (the largest outside Iran), Islamabad possesses a cultural and sectarian asset that resonates in Tehran. Unlike the Sunni Gulf monarchies, which Iran views through a lens of existential rivalry, or Turkey, whose NATO membership creates a permanent glass ceiling of mistrust, Pakistan is perceived as a neighbour, albeit one that is not always friendly (or kind to its Shia minority) but that has "skin in the game". A 900-km shared border means that for Pakistan, a regional war is not abstract geopolitics but a domestic nightmare of potential refugee surges and sectarian spillover.

This is the "Islamabad channel" — a conduit that has already shown its potency by reportedly influencing Israeli targeting lists and facilitating the transmission of the earlier 15-point American ceasefire proposal. Its viability is enhanced by Pakistan's "all-weather" alliance

with China, its recent defence treaty with Saudi Arabia, and its stature as the second-most populous nation in the Islamic world, reinforced by the foreign ministers of Egypt, Turkey and Saudi Arabia flying to Islamabad recently.

As this initiative unfolds, India stands at a crossroads. The instinct to dismiss a Pakistani diplomatic win is a relic of a zero-sum era that the geopolitics of the third decade of the 21st century has disrupted. Instead, New Delhi should adopt a three-tiered strategy that prioritises regional stability over parochial rivalry.

First, India must lead a resonant call for peace on behalf of the Global South. As the US and Israel assault Iran and Iran retaliates against its Gulf neighbours, the rest of the world is currently paying the highest price for this conflict in the form of energy inflation and ruptured supply chains. As a leading voice of these nations, India's moral and diplomatic weight should be used to demand a cessation of hostilities. By championing peace without condemning either belligerent, India has reinforced its identity as a responsible global power that values the stability of the international order.

Second, India must watch the Pakistani initiative with the keen eye of an interested neighbour rather than that of a resentful critic. There is no strategic benefit in rooting for the failure of a peace process. If the

"Islamabad channel" manages to bring Washington and Tehran onto the same page, it will be a triumph for regional security. A de-escalated Iran War means a stabilised energy market and the protection of Indian interests. Why should we disparage it?

If the Islamabad dialogue succeeds, India should be among the first to celebrate the return of peace. Celebrating a neighbour's

successful mediation does not diminish our standing; it is a recognition that in a nuclear-armed neighbourhood, a win for stability is a win for everyone. To sneer at it would signal to the world that India's foreign policy is driven by spite rather than by substance. Regional resentments should never trump a clear-eyed assessment of the larger national interest.

However, the path to peace is littered with potential shipwrecks. If the Pakistani effort fails — whether due to Iranian intransigence, American domestic politics, Israeli fury or the sheer unworkability of the peace plan — India must resist the temptation to gloat. A failed mediation is a tragedy for the region. Analysis, not celebration, should follow any setback. Does it leave room for a different kind of Indian effort? Could India's own unique relationship with the US and its historical ties with Iran offer an alternative track? If the Islamabad process hits a wall, the vacuum it leaves will be dangerous, and India must be ready to step into the breach, not with a "told-you-so" attitude, but with a "let's try something else" mentality.

The world of 2026 is no longer a unipolar playground. With China backing the Pakistani channel and other Islamic countries in support, the geopolitical tectonic plates are shifting. Amid the wreckage of the old order, India must maintain strategic autonomy while being ready to act as a bridge-builder.

In this moment of supreme peril, let the "Islamabad channel" be tested. Let us watch it with the maturity of a nation that understands that peace is not a trophy to be won, but a foundation upon which all our futures are built. India's voice must be clear: We are for peace, whoever the midwife may be.

The writer is a fourth-term Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha) for Thiruvananthapuram and chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs

## Context

This article argues that India should respond maturely to Pakistan's mediation between U.S. and Iran & support any peace effort that helps regional stability and India's own interests.

## Facts

The Islamabad channel reportedly carried 15-point American ceasefire proposal.

Pakistan's leverage comes from its ties with China, Saudi & wider Islamic world.

The conflict is causing energy inflation and supply-chain disruption, which matter directly for India.

## Analytical Crux

India has to act like a serious power, not a reactive rival. Pakistan's role as mediator may be uncomfortable, but peace in West Asia matters more than diplomatic ego. If the mediation works, India benefits through energy stability and regional calm; if it fails, India should be ready to step in with its own track. The larger lesson is that strategic autonomy means keeping national interest above old resentments.

## Verbatim Quotes

"Celebrating a neighbour's successful mediation does not diminish our standing; it is a recognition that in a nuclear-armed neighbourhood, a win for stability is a win for everyone."

"To snipe at it would signal to the world that India's foreign policy is driven by spite rather than by substance."

"Peace is not a trophy to be won, but a foundation upon which all our futures are built."

## PSIR & GS2 Daily Brief

**The Programme in Political Science and International Relations emphasize research, critical thinking, and enhances interdisciplinary understanding. It provides comprehensive coverage in structured key way for strategic advantage in upsc.**

### PSIR OPTIONAL FOUNDATION

The program focuses on Comprehensive coverage of the topic mentioned in PSIR Syllabus supplemented with regular handouts.

Upcoming Batch: 6th July, 2026

### OGP (OPTIONAL GUIDANCE PROGRAM)

Focus will be on conceptual clarity and building the ability of the candidates to interlink static portion with current developments.

Upcoming Batch: 9th June, 2026

### PSIR DYNAMICS

The program focuses on Current-Relevant dedicated classes cover national and international developments, integrated with PSIR syllabus.

Upcoming Batch: 22nd June, 2026

### ATS (AUGMENTED TEST SERIES)

ATS sharpens structure, presentation, and depth converting effort into higher score.

Upcoming Batch: 26th April, 2026

### O-AWFG (ANSWER WRITING FOCUS GROUP)

The answer writing program creates discipline and enhances skills. It helps students develop structure, articulation, coherence, and approach.

Upcoming Batch: 20th April, 2026

### O-AWFG PRIME

The test series program enhances speed, flow and dynamic understanding of the subject.

Upcoming Batch : 20th April, 2026

### PYQ Mastery Series

The series focuses on PYQ practice anchored in conceptual clarity and contemporary relevance.

Upcoming Batch: 22 June, 2026

### Contact for Mentorship - 9311704432

Telegram: @ | Website: <https://academy.forumias.com/>

**Note:** Edit program names/offerings as per the latest ForumIAS schedule.