

# 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

Defence as the anchor of  
US - India foundation:  
ORF

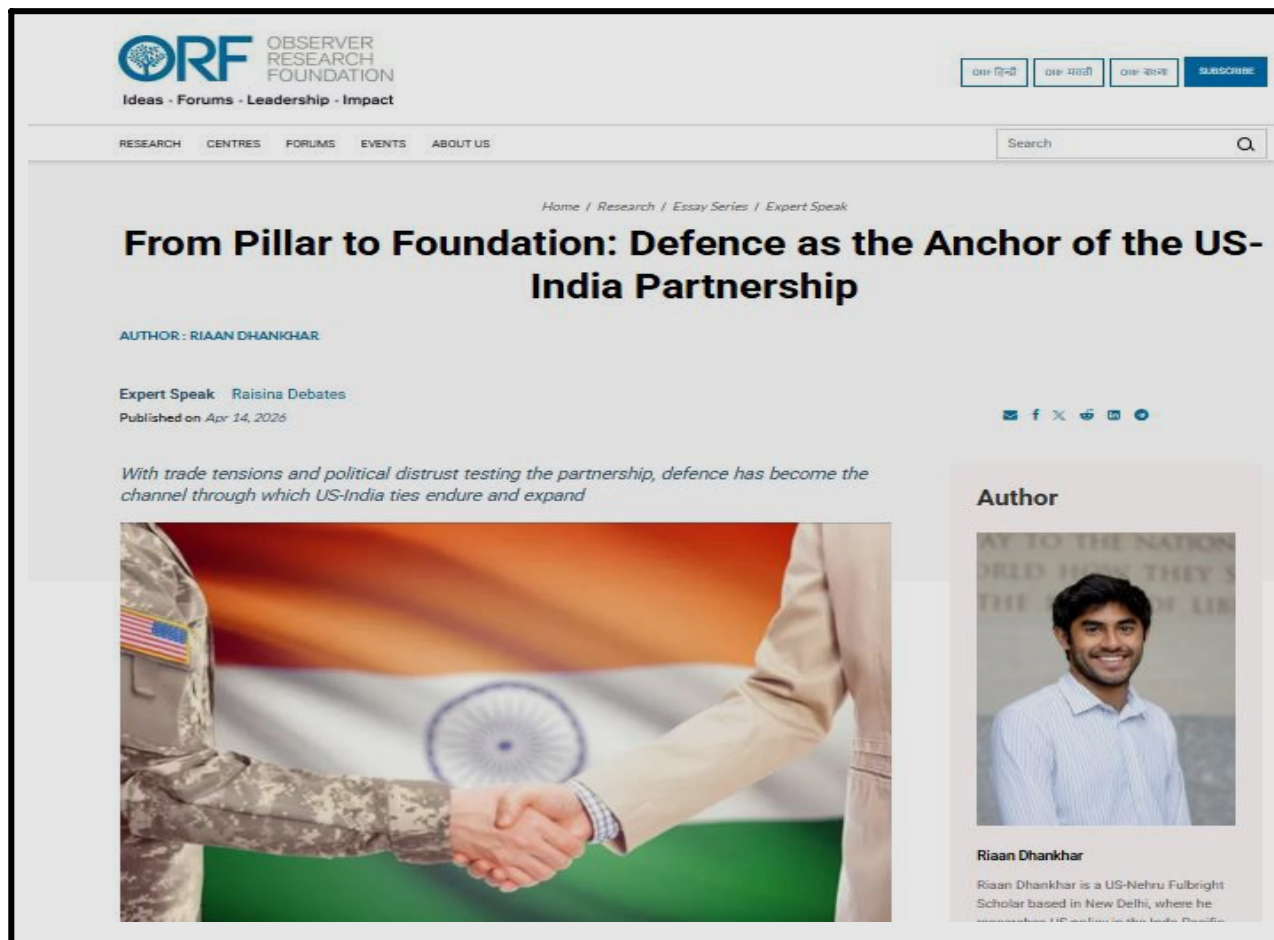
## Article - 2

The real Thucydides trap  
for US and China: Foreign  
Affairs

## Article - 3

Amid a widening Gulf, the  
need for bridge between  
India & South Korea : IE

# Article - 1 : Defence as the anchor of US - India foundation



**Context** Defence cooperation has now become the strongest and most stable base of India-US partnership, even when trade and politics have seen tension.

## Facts

- Defence framework expands interoperability across five domains : land, sea, air, space and cyberspace.
- COMCASA, Industrial Security Annex and BECA - working architecture of deeper defence cooperation.
- India-US have \$24 billion trade in defence since 2008.

## Analytical Crux

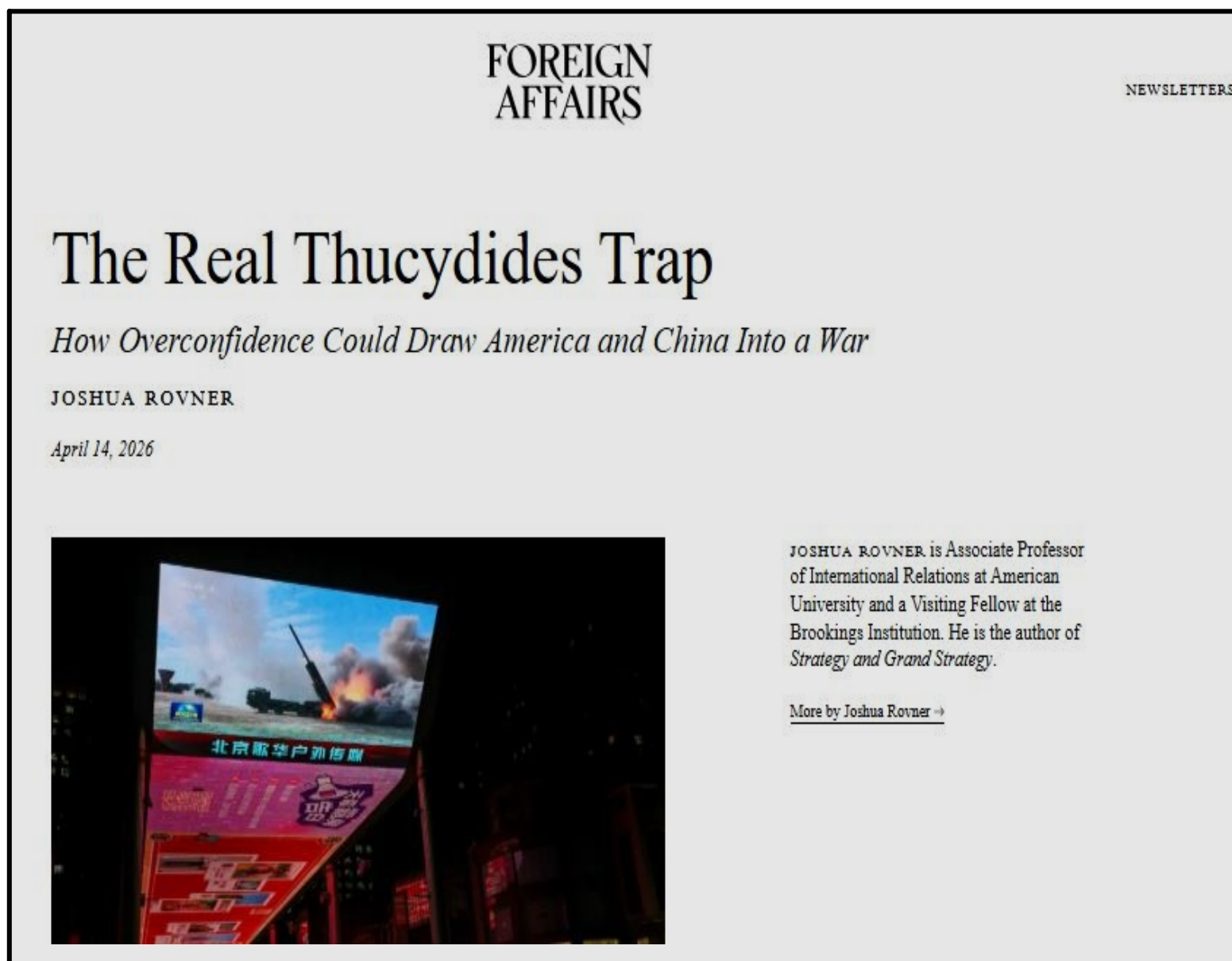
Defence has become the shock-absorber and strongest base of India-US ties. The real depth of partnership is not just in arms sale, but in interoperability, joint production, secure communications, military education and habits of coordination. US is treating India as an autonomous power with its own interests, not a subordinate ally. Shared concern over Indo-Pacific balance and maritime security gives the relationship lasting strategic weight. Defence has moved from being one pillar of the partnership to becoming its working foundation.

## Verbatim Quotes

"The US-India military relationship has acquired enough density, continuity and institutional weight to anchor broader partnership when other areas come under strain."

"Interoperability: two countries' forces operate together, exchange information effectively and plan around common contingencies when interests converge."

## Article - 2 : The real Thucydides trap for US and China



**Context** The real danger in US-China rivalry is not only power transition, but the false belief that new technology can deliver a quick and cheap victory.

### Facts

- Graham Allison's "Thucydides trap" links war to a rising power challenging the leading power.

- Before the Peloponnesian War there was no power transition; instead, there was a stable balance of power.

## Analytical Crux

Biggest danger is US-China rivalry is not a change in power ranking, but the illusion that modern technology can produce a short and cheap war. When two rival powers are strong in different domains, war can become long, expensive and politically damaging. AI, cyber tools and precision strikes may improve early operations, but they do not guarantee surrender or strategic success. The lesson of Thucydides is not excitement about the first blow, but caution about the long war that may follow.

## Verbatim Quotes

“Early encounters with capable rivals demolish prewar expectations.”

“The real trap that Athens and Sparta walked into was the illusion of bloodless victory.”

## Amid a widening Gulf, the need for a bridge between India and South Korea



**RAJA MANDALA**  
C RAJA MOHAN

**A**SIAS LONG-celebrated rise has run into an unexpected vulnerability — not in familiar intra-Asian rivalries, but in the Iran war that now threatens Indo-Pacific peace and prosperity. The conflict has exposed the world's dependence on Gulf energy, but nowhere is that dependence sharper than in Asia. The United States has become a major energy producer, and Europe has diversified its supplies. Asia, by contrast, remains structurally tied to the Gulf. Nearly 70 per cent of its crude imports come from the region, with China, India, Japan, South Korea, and Southeast Asia all deeply reliant on uninterrupted flows through the Strait of Hormuz.

Iran's attempt to assert control over the strait — through which one-fifth of globally traded oil passes — has struck at the heart of Asia's economic security. The prosperity of China, Japan, South Korea, Vietnam, and India rests not only on Gulf energy but on the norms of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea that guarantee freedom of navigation through international waterways.

Asian states cannot accept Iran's claimed right to regulate transit through Hormuz. Singapore's foreign minister, Vivian Balakrishnan, captured a widely shared sentiment when he insisted that transit passage "is not a privilege granted by the bordering state... it is a right of all nations' ships to traverse" the strait. Others may be less outspoken, but they share Singapore's conviction. The world also has much respect for Singapore's significant role in the safe management of the Malacca Strait, through which nearly 40 per cent of global maritime trade moves between the Indian and Pacific Oceans. If Singapore has turned its sensitive location into an engine of economic growth, Tehran has



ILLUSTRATION: C R SASHIKUMAR

sought to weaponise its strategic geography for disruptive political leverage.

India has consistently emphasised two principles since the war began: Energy security and unimpeded navigation through Hormuz. These concerns are shared across Asia, creating space for Delhi to build a regional coalition. While the US is currently doing the heavy lifting in the Gulf, Asian capitals recognise the risks of outsourcing their core interests to Washington's shifting political moods. The region needs its own voice — and eventually its own capabilities — to uphold freedom of navigation.

Some analysts have proposed a cooperative framework that avoids framing the issue as a zero-sum defeat for Iran: An institutional mechanism involving Tehran, its Arab neighbours, and major international consumers to guarantee unimpeded transit. Such an arrangement could offer Iran a face-saving path to lift its attempted control over Hormuz.

South Korean President Lee Jae-myung's expected visit to Delhi later this month offers an opportunity to open a serious Asian conversation on Hormuz. In May, the BRICS foreign ministers — whose Asian members now include

China, India, Indonesia, Iran, and the UAE, with Thailand and Vietnam as partner countries — will gather in Delhi. As the largest consumers of Gulf oil, these states have both the interest and the responsibility to impress upon Tehran the urgency of reopening the Strait. Taken together, these engagements create a rare diplomatic moment to reaffirm the core principles of the law of the sea.

For India and South Korea, the Gulf war presents an opportunity to inject real political content into a relationship long described as "strategic" but driven largely by commerce. For decades, Asian energy flows rested on American naval primacy and respect for international law. That foundation is now less certain. A more transactional US has revived an old demand: That partners assume greater responsibility for securing the commons they depend upon. Combined with the intensifying conflict in the Gulf, this shift has sharpened the sense of vulnerability in Asian capitals and heightened the appeal of intra-Asian cooperation.

Maritime security and energy security offer immediate areas for deeper India-Korea engagement. They can deepen maritime coordination through information-sharing, logistics agreements, and

complementary deployments. This is not alliance-building but functional cooperation to protect sea lanes of communication vital to both economies. India's geographic position astride the Indian Ocean sea lanes and South Korea's advanced naval capabilities create a natural — if still underdeveloped — synergy.

South Korea's global leadership in shipbuilding adds an important industrial dimension. As India seeks to expand its naval and commercial fleet, partnerships with Korean firms could accelerate capacity-building in naval platforms, LNG carriers, and maritime infrastructure. The logic is straightforward: Those who depend on maritime flows must invest in the means to secure them. South Korea's leadership in nuclear energy development makes it a valuable partner on small modular reactors, where interest is rising globally. Bilateral defence industrial cooperation carries significant promise; concrete policy initiatives are necessary to turn opportunities into outcomes. Indian and Korean industries can participate in the massive infrastructure projects now being undertaken by Gulf Arab states to reduce their own dependence on the Hormuz Strait. Pipelines, ports, and road and rail networks are being planned with unprecedented urgency to redesign the economic geography of the Arabian Peninsula.

Tehran may have killed the golden goose of Hormuz, but its Arab neighbours are not waiting for its rebirth. They are determined to reduce their vulnerability to the Islamic Republic's leverage and will invest heavily in new technologies to neutralise Tehran's threats. Delhi and Seoul have an opportunity to participate in this unfolding geoeconomic and geopolitical transformation. The Delhi-Seoul entente will not replace existing security architecture in the Indo-Pacific, but it can become an important pillar in the long-overdue transition toward greater Asian responsibility for Asian security.

*The writer is contributing editor on international affairs for The Indian Express. He is a distinguished professor at the Motwani-Jadeja Institute of American Studies, Jindal Global University and the Korea Foundation Chair at the Council on Strategic and Defence Research*

**For India and South Korea, the Gulf war presents an opportunity to inject real political content into a relationship long described as 'strategic' but driven largely by commerce**

### Context

The Gulf crisis made energy security & freedom of navigation common Asian concerns; India - South Korea operations can help build a wider regional response.

### Facts

Nearly 70% of Asia's crude imports come from the Gulf.

1/3 rd of global maritime trade moves between the Indian & Pacific oceans.

India - Korea cooperation - information sharing, logistics, complementary deployments, shipbuilding and Small Modular Reactors (SMRs).

## Analytical Crux

The Gulf crisis shows that Asia's growth depends on vulnerable sea lanes and energy chokepoints, especially Hormuz. Since Asia is far more dependent on Gulf energy than the US or Europe, freedom of navigation is now a direct Asian security concern. India & South Korea should move beyond a trade-led relationship & build practical cooperation in maritime security, shipping, logistics, energy and defence industry. This is not alliance politics; it is functional cooperation to protect shared economic lifelines.

## Verbatim Quotes

"Asia's long celebrated rise has run into an unexpected vulnerability - not in intra Asian rivalries, but in Iran war that threatens Indo-Pacific peace and prosperity."

"The Indo-Pacific maritime framework & growing convergence of interests between Delhi and Seoul present an opportunity to build a stable & resilient Asian security architecture."

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