

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.

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ORF

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Foreign Affairs

Article - 1 : The end of Nuclear arms control-what comes next?

The End of Nuclear Arms Control: What Comes Next?

AUTHOR : DEBAK DAS

Originally Published *ORF Middle East* Published on May 05, 2026



Spotlight

- With the expiry of the New START, and ambitious nuclear modernisation among the United States, Russia, and China, vertical nuclear proliferation will increase.
- The breakdown of the arms control framework has direct implications for the broader nuclear non-proliferation regime.
- The nuclear states must take steps to reaffirm their obligations to Article VI of the NPT. Failure to do so risks undermining the credibility of the treaty

Author

Debak Das

Debak Das is a PhD candidate in International Relations at the Department of Government Cornell University. His research focuses on the development

Context The expiry of New START has removed the main arms-control guard rail between the US and Russia, creating fresh pressure on the NPT and the global non-proliferation order.

Facts

For the first time in 5 decades- no nuclear arms control treaty between the US and Russia.

New START capped US and Russian strategic nuclear warheads at 1550 each.

New START expired on February 5, 2026.

Analytical Crux

Arms control is not about reducing weapons; it is about trust, transparency & the legitimacy of the nuclear order. When nuclear weapon states expand arsenals & suggesting others not to acquire nuclear weapons, the NPT becomes unequal and weak. It creates a security dilemma: every state modernises for safety, but the result is greater insecurity for all.

Verbatim Quotes

“In the absence of treaty-based guardrails, vertical nuclear proliferation is going to intensify & jeopardizing the future of the global non-proliferation regime.”

-Debak Das

“The ambitious nuclear modernisation programs of both the US and Russia suggest that an increase in nuclear arsenals might be imminent.”

-Debak Das

Article - 2 : The return of Japanese hard power

The Return of Japanese ...

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

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The Return of Japanese Hard Power

Why Tokyo Is Bulking Up Its Defense Industrial Base

MATTHEW FINKEL

May 5, 2026



Japanese military helicopters in Funabashi, Japan, January 2026

MATTHEW FINKEL is an International Affairs Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations and a Technology and Human Rights Fellow at the Harvard Kennedy School.

[More by Matthew Finkel →](#)

Context Japan is moving away from its long pacifist security posture & rebuilding its defence industry because of china's rise, doubts over US guarantees and lessons from Ukraine.

Facts

■ Japan to double defence spending from \$35 billion in 2022 to \$60 billion by 2027.

■ Japan is the ninth-biggest military spender in the world.

Analytical Crux

Japan's shift is not militarisation ; it is a strategic correction after decades of underinvestment in defence production. China's assertiveness and uncertainty over US protection is pushing Japan to convert economic & technological strength into hard power.

Verbatim Quotes

“ After decades of association with the country's past militarism, Japan's defense industry is experiencing a renaissance.”

- Matthew Finkel

“ A Japanese defense renaissance, if successful, represents a wholly new source of arms for middle powers.”

- Matthew Finkel

Article - 3 : Trump's China trap

Trump's China Trap

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

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Trump's China Trap

Why Xi Keeps Winning the Summitry Game

MICHAEL KOVRIG

May 5, 2026



Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney and Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing, January 2026

SEAN KILPATRICK / REUTERS

MICHAEL KOVRIG, a former Canadian diplomat who served in China, is Founder of StrategicEffects and CEO of Kovrig Group.

[More by Michael Kovrig →](#)

Context Trump's pressure on allies is pushing many countries toward Beijing, allowing china to use summit diplomacy, trade leverage and fragmented deals to weaken Western coordination.

Facts

- China's trade surplus reached \$ 1.2 trillion.
- China's 30% of global manufacturing output, to reach 45% by 2030.

Analytical Crux

China gains when democracies bargain separately. Trump's transactional style weakens alliance trust, and Beijing converts that mistrust into diplomatic advantage.

China does not need every country to support it; it only needs them to break ranks on trade, technology, Taiwan, sanctions and supply chains.

Verbatim Quotes

"The growing distance between Washington and its partners is a diplomatic gift for Beijing."

- Michael Kovrig

"The perception is that the world is coming to Beijing and that decoupling is impossible."

- Michael Kovrig

UPSC LINK

- **PSIR 2025:** “India’s reluctance to perceive any ‘existential threat’, inevitably made the multilateral path to nuclear security a ‘default option’ until it decided to cross the nuclear Rubicon in 1998. Identify and analyzesome of the major reasons behind this shift in India’s position on the nuclear question.”
- **PSIR 2025:** “Historical ties between India and Japan grew into a ‘special strategic and global partnership’. Comment.”
- **PSIR 2024:** “The changing global order and ongoing regional conflicts, with the global powers taking sides, have jeopardised the progress made towards disarmament in the past. Comment.”
- **GS-II 2024:** “‘The West is fostering India as an alternative to reduce dependence on China’s supply chain and as a strategic ally to counter China’s political and economic dominance.’ Explain this statement with examples.”
- **PSIR 2023:** “Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD) performs an important role in India’s strategic balancing act to withstand the dominance of China in Asia. Discuss.”
- **PSIR 2023:** “‘India’s Nuclear policy is deeply influenced by its cultural beliefs and the pragmatic approach of its foreign policy.’ Discuss.”

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.

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Upcoming Batch: 22nd June, 2026

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Upcoming Batch: 26th April, 2026

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Upcoming Batch : 20th April, 2026

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Upcoming Batch: 22 June, 2026

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