

PSIR & GS-2

DAILY BRIEF

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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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Spiral of War Escalation Across Geographies, and the Interlocking Geopolitics

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ASEAN Centrality Under Pressure: Navigating Energy Security,
The recent Association for Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) 59th F

Africa's Green Minerals Strategy: Can Africa Build

Context Russia - Ukraine and US - Iran wars can no longer be viewed as isolated conflicts. Their interconnected supply chains, military assistance & strategic partnerships are creating a wider transnational conflict.

Facts

US patriot interceptor stocks fell from about 2300 to fewer than 827 during conflict.

China - Russia trade reached \$ 134.2 billion in H1 2026, rising 25.6% year-on-year.

Iran supplies Shahed drones to Russia; Russia provides intelligence to Iran, while Ukraine has supplied air-defence specialists to Gulf states.

Analytical Crux

The central argument is that contemporary conflicts are increasingly interlocked through military supply chains, intelligence and strategic partnerships. Simultaneously, the limits of hard power are becoming evident as even major powers face ammunition constraints and prolonged resistance. For India, this reinforces the value of multi-alignment and strategic autonomy rather than bloc politics. In an unpredictable environment, India must diversify partnerships, strengthen indigenous defence capabilities and preserve flexibility while navigating competing interests among the US, Russia and West Asia.

Verbatim Quotes

"The two most dangerous regional wars in the world can fuse into one very large, very dangerous conflict."

The 'hands-off' doctrine in election disputes



1 Columns

The 'hands-off' doctrine in election disputes: A case for reconsideration

A constitutional court that is reluctant to arrest an illegality at its inception, particularly in a domain as central to democracy as elections, does the democratic project no service.



Context The judicial practice of refusing to intervene in electoral disputes while an election is underway, is being questioned in the recent times.

Facts

Kihoto Hollohan vs. Zachillu recognised democracy and free & fair elections forming part of basic structure.

The hands-off doctrine originated in N.P. Ponnuswami and was reaffirmed in State of Goa vs. Fouziya Intiaz Shaikh.

ECI vs. Ashok Kumar permits judicial intervention where an action is without jurisdiction, ultra vires or violates natural justice.

Analytical Crux

The article highlights the tension between electoral certainty & judicial review. The hands-off approach prevents courts from disrupting time-bound elections, but excessive restraint can render judicial remedies meaningless when an elected body's tenure expires before adjudication. A calibrated approach is therefore preferable: courts should respect Article 329(b), while intervening in exceptional cases involving jurisdictional illegality, violation of natural justice or unlawful electoral rolls. This balances institutional restraint with the constitutional commitment to free & fair elections.

Verbatim Quotes

"The country's democratic architecture is kept, in the end, not by the parchment of its guarantees but by the institutions alert enough to enforce them in time."

From Hashtags to Handcuffs

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A STRATEGIC AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC POLICY PLATFORM

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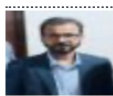
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From Hashtags to Handcuffs: When Digital Democracy Becomes Digital Surveillance

India therefore needs a serious conversation on algorithmic accountability. If AI increasingly informs policing, citizens deserve clarity on its legal basis, safeguards against misuse, limits on data retention, independent oversight and effective judicial remedies.



By Dr Khwaja Md Afroz | Aug 09, 2026



Context

India's rapid expansion of smartphones, social media & digital platforms has transformed political participation, enabling decentralised & leaderless mobilisation.

Facts

India has 970 million + internet subscribers and 460 million + active social-media users.

NEET mobilisation demonstrated how leaderless movements can coordinate through Instagram, Whatsapp, Telegram etc.

The 5 safeguards : legal basis, anti-misuse safeguards, data-retention limits, independent oversight & judicial remedies.

Analytical Crux

Digital technology has transformed citizens from passive recipients of information into powerful networked political actors, but the same infrastructure enables unprecedented state surveillance. Through Foucault's observation-based power and Zuboff's surveillance framework, the article highlights the risk of citizens self-censoring because they feel watched. The challenge is therefore not to reject technology but to institutionalise accountability through clear legal authority, proportionality, data minimisation, independent oversight and effective judicial remedies, ensuring that digital governance strengthens rather than weakens democratic freedoms.

Verbatim Quotes

"Democracy has entered an era where every act of political participation is simultaneously an act of data generation."

- **GS-2 2025 (15m):** "Energy security constitutes the dominant kingpin of India's foreign policy, and is linked with India's overarching influence in Middle Eastern countries." How would you integrate energy security with India's foreign policy trajectories in the coming years?
- **PSIR 2023, Paper II (15m):** What are the challenges and limitations in India-Iran relations?
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- **PSIR 2025, Paper I (15m):** There is a debate on the procedure for appointment of the Chief Election Commissioner and Election Commissioners to the Election Commission of India. Analyse its various aspects.
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