

India china relations

INTRODUCTION

- *The year 2020 marks the 70th anniversary of diplomatic normalization between China and India,*
- **From commemorating the historical ties between two great nations. *confrontation and hostility have consequently become the overwhelming theme between China and India this year.***

The Middle Kingdom With a Medieval Mindset

INTRODUCTION

Sun Tzu's Art of War - "He who wishes to fight must first count the cost."

DESCRIBING CHINA'S RISE

- **Economic growth and prosperity have not liberated China's mind from the medieval worldview of the 'Middle Kingdom', nor has it tamed its lust for land , territory.**
- *From building islands in what it calls the South China Sea to seeking to colonise countries far and wide by luring them into a debt trap called BRI (in Pakistan's case, renamed CPEC) and turning them into handmaidens of Beijing,*
- *The 'Great Wall of China' is an indicator of how the country has expanded its territory over the centuries through the expedient means of smash and grab.*
- **Xinjiang (1949) and Tibet (1950-51) have been annexed by violent means. Just like its land border – drawn, erased and redrawn, only to be erased and redrawn again –**
- *China's history too has been continuously tailored and retrofitted to its insatiable greed for territory.*
- **Zhongguo, or the 'Middle Kingdom', as imperial China described itself, was supposed to be the 'civilised' centre of the world, surrounded by 'barbarians' and 'savages**

AFTER EFFECTS ON INDIA

- **The border dispute between India and China, and the latter's illegitimate claim on Indian territory based on jaundiced history authored by Communist Party of China's fiction writers as part of their party propaganda literature, stems from that medieval urge.**
- *China's aggression in 1962, leading to war, is only notionally over; it continues by other means, like incursions across the Line of Actual Control that runs for 3,488 km between India and Tibet.*

- **Twenty-two rounds of border talks have resulted in little else than parrot-like repetition of the pious commitment to maintain 'peace and tranquillity' along the LAC, a commitment that has been more honoured in the breach than in the observance by Beijing.**
- **On the face of it, there is little for China to gain in a barren land devoid of either human habitation or vegetation. But then, China did grab Aksai Chin in 1962. it now eyes Ladakh: A nibble here, a nibble there and then make an attempt to devour the whole territory.'**

- An authoritarian regime that has given Xi Jinping absolute power has now become predatory in its external engagements and is a caricature of an insecure bully
- The courtesies of diplomatic speak have been dispensed with as it referred to Australia as a “giant kangaroo that serves as a dog of the US”

INCREASING GEOSTRATEGIC VULNERABILITY

- The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) estimates that China’s expenditure on its military has increased from 2.5 times that of India’s in 2010, to 3.7 times India’s in 2019, and reaching over four times India’s military expenditure in 2015, while Indian military expenditure has reduced from 2.7 percent of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2010 to 2.4 percent in 2019.
- Beijing is merely attempting to ‘remind’ India of Asia’s geopolitical hierarchy—that failure to kow-tow to the Middle Kingdom carries consequences.
- More worryingly, Beijing may have concluded that heightened aggression along the LAC will invariably bring India to the negotiating table—that India will grant China greater political concessions, market access or economic bargains as the price for “peace and tranquillity”.
- China is also using this moment to send a message to its other neighbours in the East and South China Sea.
- China is demonstrating to the world the limitations of decaying American power without having to actually confront it.
- In its neo-Confucian assessment an Indian capitulation may signal the final rites of Pax Americana.
- For too long, Delhi has been hesitant to impose costs for China’s military adventurism, preferring instead to settle matters diplomatically. In doing so, India has failed to realise that while Xi’s China is irrational, it is not an entirely unpredictable actor. It sees capitulation and a preference for negotiation as a sign of weakness.

Emperor Xi reinvents Chinese Checkers: Only CPC Wins

INTRODUCTION

- The new version of Chinese exceptionalism shaped and directed under Xi’s tutelage is linked to China’s past identity, largely a product of myth-making.
- CHINA has willed itself into believing that it does not need to work within the matrix of international laws, rules and norms.
- It has decided that the time when China would “hide and bide” its motivations and capabilities is past.

TENURE OF XI JINPING

- Let us stop theorising and be bold enough to accept that China is just being itself. India has made decisions like independent nations do as an exercise of their sovereignty.
- **EXAMPLE** - sum total of Beijing’s behaviour during the ‘Made in China’ pandemic: The acceleration of territorial revisionism in the South China Sea; the subjugation of Hong Kong through the stoutly contested national security law; repeated violations of Taiwanese airspace; heightened naval aggression around Japan’s Senkaku Islands; and its most recent encroachment in Nepal.
- There is a pattern to this madness; a reason for this seemingly inexplicable restlessness. In 2002, the Communist Party of China (CPC) presciently foresaw a 20-year “period of strategic opportunity” for China – linked to its entry into the WTO and America’s misguided interventions in the Middle East that enabled Beijing to play a deft game of Chinese Checkers — and build national power
- The CPC is now externalising the authoritarian idiosyncrasies it wields at home.
- Medievalism is the hallmark of Chinese external assessments. This is evident from its insatiable urge to redraw boundaries as an adventure sport and from its estimation of its population (as well as others) as mere fodder. This behaviour is exemplified in China’s ‘hostage diplomacy’ with Canada.

- **In parallel, Xi has presided over China's long-term effort to securitise and weaponise global supply chains, flows of technology, finance and data, and institutions of global governance.**

The strategic context (BEFORE GALWAN CLASH)

China's dilemma with India originates from asymmetry between China and India in their security priorities. India sees China as its primary threat, while China sees India as a secondary challenge as its national security priorities unequivocally lie in the western Pacific.

- Because India is not China's primary threat and South Asia is not China's primary theater, China would prefer to save on costs and minimize military and strategic resources on India.
- The essence of a second mover strategy lies in China's confidence that it has the financial resources, military capacity and domestic political consensus to sustain and prevail in a protracted standoff (or war) of attrition vis-à-vis India.
- China's 1962 war with India and the 1979 war with Vietnam both demonstrates the central position and essence of "self-defense war" concept in China's playbook.
- In a long-term and strategic perspective, China's most desired option to settle the disputes and relations with India is winning without fighting. (BEFORE GALWAN CLASH)
- The logic of this option lies in the belief that the power gap between China and India will only grow with China's rise, and there will be a day that the power imbalance becomes so large that India will recognize the impracticality and impossibility of its desired endgame
- This diplomacy-based approach put a Band-Aid on the most dividing and disturbing issue between two great powers in the region. And its utility and effectiveness have come under more and more questioning as both sides try to defend their military positions on the frontline.
- China's state-run Global Times warned that Beijing "is ready for both peace and war."

GALWAN CLASH

INTRODUCTION

Mao Zedong, the founder of Communist China and legendary war planner, wrote during the Chinese resistance to Japanese occupation in the 1930s that "deliberately creating misconceptions for the enemy and then springing surprise attacks upon him are two ways — indeed two important means — of achieving superiority and seizing the initiative.

- Without preparedness superiority is not real superiority and there can be no initiative either

REASONS

- China remains a significantly more powerful entity and its infrastructure is still in much better shape. But Indian infrastructure development has reached a critical point, Chinese opposition to the 255 km-long strategic Darbuk-Shyok-Daulat Beg Oldie road has been so vehement.
- Connecting Leh to the Karakoram Pass, this all-weather road is India's frontal challenge to China's expansionist designs in the region. Despite Chinese objections, India has continued to pursue this project given its strategic importance. China raising the temperature on the border is a preemptive move to dissuade India from moving ahead.
- China's recent behaviour cannot be delinked from the global situation where Beijing has come under pressure and is facing a global backlash for its aggression.

M Taylor Fravel - the Sino-Indian border constituted a "secondary strategic direction" for China. Its principal interest lay in the direction of Taiwan and the western Pacific.

Kurt Campbell and Mira Rapp-Hooper argued that what the world was witnessing was changed Chinese behaviour. Where in the past, China sought to maintain a stable political environment, the world may be getting a first sense of what a truly assertive Chinese foreign policy like, one that reflects the country's growing strength and ambitions."

- **And that any solution “must be predicated on honouring all agreements and understandings. And not attempting to alter the status quo unilaterally.**

The domestic motivations of Beijing’s LAC aggression

- Covid-19 has generated a backlash against the Chinese regime led by Xi. This has rendered his hold on power under stress,
- **Having secured an indefinite extension of his reign following the 19th Party Congress by effectively shelving the term limits set by Deng Xiaoping, the denouement induced by the pandemic has in all likelihood compelled him to keep select internal constituencies sufficiently placated and mollified.**
- **Beijing’s outrage or pique over New Delhi assigning two Members of Parliament (MPs) to attend Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen’s virtual swearing-in ceremony**
- **Any appearance of weakness in Xi at home in the face of what China perceives to be a regional and global multi-directional assault on both its ambitions and rise as a great power could imperil his domestic grip on authority.**
- **In the ongoing round of tensions between New Delhi and Beijing, the latter has pretty much followed the Pakistani playbook—level a baseless charge against India, that it is trying to make territorial gains, in order to justify its own aggression**
- **Finally, the source of this Chinese aggression, can be attributed to nationalism. China is picking fights with multiple actors simultaneously amid an ongoing health pandemic precisely because of what it sees as a nationalist imperative.**
- **There is a certain perception that China is no Pakistan: they execute well-thought plans! If at all true, the obvious concern will arise with China’s rationale behind such a provocative move, which not only makes India react but also places the former in a very negative light in front of the global community.**
- **China’s new misadventure with unilaterally redefining a loosely delineated LAC, and then escalating this to a rustic, wild street fight with the clubs and stones can be interpreted as a panic reaction. The Indian reinforcements in the geo-strategic domains are possibly one of the reasons that are clearly cornering them.**

How the Galwan tragedy has clarified India’s vision?

INTRODUCTION

Emperor Qianlong had a simple yet instructive message - “The way of heaven is profound and mysterious. The way of mankind is difficult.” It would be safe to suggest the Xi regime is being difficult.

CHANGE IN OUTLOOK OF INDIA TOWARDS CHINA

- **Tragedies often lead to a clarity of vision, a vision that was clouded by the misplaced sense of our ability to manage China.**
- **New Delhi should also lose its innocence when it comes to China. Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi has underlined that India wants peace but “will give a befitting reply” if provoked**
- **The first Indian casualties on the disputed India-China boundary since 1975 should be occasion to reconsider several long-held beliefs and methods of dealing with the relationship that successive governments in New Delhi have adopted over the years.**
- **Foreign policymaking in India cannot be an open, public or democratic exercise and that ‘quiet diplomacy’ is the way to go in dealing with China.**
- **In its attempt to unilaterally define the Line of Actual Control (LAC), Beijing has disregarded the central tenets of all pacts it has signed with India since 1993 to keep the border peaceful.**
- **EARLIER New Delhi was the first country to warn the world of the dangers of BRI at a time when almost every other country was willing to buy into Beijing’s narrative. Today, India’s framing of the BRI problems is widely accepted by most major global powers.**

- ***India has also managed to shape the global discourse on the Indo-Pacific and is now working closely with like-minded regional players*** into giving it operational heft. Despite China's continued objections to the term, Indo-Pacific maritime geography is now widely accepted.

- **And so in its wisdom, China decided to wield the blunt instrumentality of force, hoping that this would “teach India a lesson”. The reality is Chinese actions will produce exactly the opposite effect of what they probably intended to do. Indian public opinion, which was already negative about China, will now become even more strongly anti-Chinese.**
- **The challenge in Sino-Indian ties is fundamentally structural. China is interested in shaping an alternative global order commensurate to its growing economic and military power. And India is a nation on China’s periphery whose rise it seeks to scuttle to secure its interests.**
- **In New Delhi, there is now a more realistic appraisal of China. Indian foreign policy has evolved in directions that demands reciprocity from Beijing.**
- **China is both India’s most important neighbour, and its most significant foreign policy challenge. India cannot ignore China, and it needs to be cognisant of the growing power differential between the two.**
- **The events of June 15 should set alarm bells ringing in New Delhi. India’s approach, since the 1962 War, of hedging and buck-passing can be ill afforded against Xi Jinping’s China and its “wolf-warrior diplomacy”. India must “punish” rather than “deny” Chinese adventurism—a significant revision of the rules of engagement**

WHY China is foolish to make an enemy of India?

- **With a spiral of escalation building, a conflict so far limited to the Line of Actual Control with China could see other theatres open up, including one in the Indian Ocean.**
 - **Unlike on the land border, where China has a relative advantage of terrain, military infrastructure and troop strength, India is better placed at sea.**
- **In the Eastern Indian Ocean through which most of China’s cargo and energy shipments pass, the Indian Navy is the dominant force.**
- **From India’s point of view, China has been nothing but trouble. It remains the main international backer of the Pakistani military establishment, a perpetual threat to regional stability.**
- **Years of such behavior have worn down India’s cherished commitment to non-alignment— or “strategic autonomy,” as we are supposed to call it in the post-Cold War era.**
- **One would think the Chinese leadership, which has made such a fetish of their nation’s supposed “century of humiliation,” China’s leaders may feel that that the U.S. has mismanaged their nation’s emergence on the global stage. But they have no one else to blame for their inept handling of India’s rise.**

Strengths of India and its preparedness

- **Since the mid 2000s, for instance, India has added to its Mountain Strike Corps (MSC) for rapid counter-offensive operations in Tibet (“Him Vijay” exercises are already being held by them in Arunachal Pradesh—the Western sector of the LAC), improved its roads and logistical infrastructure, augmented its firepower with the acquisition of the 145 M-777 ultra-light Howitzers from the US in 2016, deployed the Brahmos cruise missile system.**
- **India can also exploit China’s frailties in the Indian Ocean Region and seek to interdict vital Sea Lines of Communication (SLOC), particularly those passing through the strait of Malacca. To bolster its counter-offensive capacity, the Indian Navy has already taken on lease a nuclear-powered attack submarine (SSN) from Russia—the INS Chakra and recruited the aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya in 2012.**
- **India must take a more vocal stand on freedom of navigation in the South China Sea to ensure that China’s military resources are over-extended, and cannot be concentrated in its Western theatre.**
- **India’s commitment to the Quad and a deepening of its strategic partnership with the US, should either be leveraged to exact concessions on the border, or used to rapidly upgrade domestic military capacity.**
- **Tsinghua University professor Xu Zhangrun laments the consequences of Beijing’s global assertiveness: “Instead of embracing a [global] community,” he writes, “China is increasingly isolating itself from it.”**

- **The adage 'it is the economy stupid' has never been more relevant. Obsession with building India's economic heft must override all other considerations. China's rise was underwritten by its strategic co-option of globalisation.**
- **In an era where global flows of data are outstripping trade in goods, and where technology supply chains are being jealously guarded, India's goal should be to emerge as one of the centres of the topography of digital globalisation.**
- **India did well to reject the BRI; it must now ensure that it rejects BRI's digital avatar as well.**
- **But one thing is certain: The few inches or feet Chinamay gain in each such incident is n't worth the ground it's losing in the larger Sino-Indian relationship.**

SINO- INDIA RELATIONS (OVERVIEW)

OLDER TIES

INTRODUCTION

- **As two ancient civilizations, India and China have had cultural and trade ties since at least the first century. The famous Silk Road allowed for economic and trade ties to develop between the two, **with the transmission of Buddhism from India to China giving a further cultural dimension to the relationship.** The advent of western colonialism broke this engagement which took some time to get steady.**
- **The rise of post-colonial India and China - Jawaharlal Nehru's vision of Asian solidarity was premised on strong ties between China and India.**
- **India and China signed the famed Panchsheel agreement in 1954 that underlined the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence as forming the basis of their bilateral relationship. These were the hey-days of Sino-Indian ties, **with the Hindi-Chinabhai-bhaiphrase a favourite slogan for these seeming camaraderie between the two states.** But that was not to last long.**
- **In 2005, both nations agreed on Political Parameters and Guiding Principles for the Settlement of the India-China Boundary Question, broad principles to govern the parameters of any dispute settlement.**
- **Though both China and India continued to emphasize that neither side should let differences act as an impediment to the growth of functional cooperation elsewhere between the two states, the relationship could only move in fits and starts**
- **At the global level, their rhetoric has been all about cooperation and indeed the two sides have worked together on climate change, global trade negotiations, and in demanding that global financial institutions be restructured in light of the global economy's shifting centre of gravity.**
- **The case for Sino-Indian cooperation has been built by various constituencies to offer a counterweight to US global and regional hegemony. Concerns that the US had become too powerful and unilateral, and that a unipolar US-dominated world would not be in the best interests of weaker states like India, has made the idea of Sino-Indian partnership attractive to certain sections of the Indian strategic elite.**
- **EXAMPLE- India and China took strong exception to the US-led air campaign against Yugoslavia in 1999, the campaign against Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq in 2003, Both also favour more democratic international economic regimes. They have strongly resisted efforts by the US and other developed nations to link global trade to labour and environmental standards,**

CHINA'S RISING INFLUENCE A CAUSE FOR CONCERN IN INDIA

- The suggestion by the Chinese to the US Pacific Fleet Commander in 2009 that the Indian Ocean should be recognized as a Chinese sphere of influence has raised hackles in New Delhi.
- China's lack of support for the US—India civilian nuclear energy cooperation pact, which it tried to block at the Nuclear Suppliers Group, **and its obstructionist stance in bringing the terror masterminds of the November 2008 attack in Mumbai to justice** have further strained ties.

- China's rapid economic growth in the past decade has given it the capability to transform itself into a military power.

- Consistent increases in defence budgets over the last several years have put China on track to become the power most capable of challenging US predominance in the Indo-Pacific.
- China's nuclear force modernization, its growing arsenal of advanced missiles, and its development of space and cyberspace technologies are changing the military balance in Asia and beyond.
- As China becomes more reliant on imported oil for its rapidly growing industrial economy, it will develop and exercise military power projection capabilities to protect the shipping lanes that transport oil from the Persian Gulf to China.
- The capability to project power would require access to advanced naval bases along the sea lanes of communication and force capable of gaining and sustaining naval and air superiority. In this context, China's so-called "string of pearls" strategy of expanding its naval presence and building diplomatic ties in and around the Indian Ocean littoral is generating concern in Indian strategic circles.

COMPONENTS IN INDIA CHINA RELATIONSHIP

- **The India-China relationship can be considered to have four main components.**
- The boundary dispute and bilateral security competition is one.
- **But regional security competition in India's neighbourhood was always a second factor.**
- **Two other elements were previously considered dampeners of India-China competition. Economic relations grew after 2003 but Indian enthusiasm waned as Chinese market access proved limited and the trade deficit widened. The fourth aspect was global governance cooperation. While China and India found common cause at BRICS, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, Beijing's emphasis on international coalition-building was eventually surpassed by its own superpower ambitions**
- India continued to reject both the BRI and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). The boundary question remained unanswered. Even on economic relations, China made only minor concessions on agricultural and pharmaceutical imports.
- China's stubborn efforts to nibble away Indian land through armed incursions, its claim over the entire Arunachal Pradesh, unsustainable trade deficit, "all-weather" friendship with Pakistan, attempts to encourage India's neighbours to turn hostile against it, and its rising global ambitions to establish China-centric world order through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) were mostly confined to academic or strategic affairs community. But now these issues will be watched and debated in political circles.
- With growing power, China wants to reshape the global order to suit its revisionist interests. India has been tentative at best in coming to terms with the fact that a revisionist great power has risen on its borders.
- It is a message from Beijing to New Delhi: Step back and lay off, do not try to step into the breach created by the pandemic and posit India as a potential supply lines hub in the post-COVID19 world;
- **The calls for destroying the omnipresence of Chinese goods in India may be rooted in ignorance of economic realities but they reflect the emerging mood about China. And this mood will dictate India's domestic politics and foreign policy. The evolution of public opinion will have an impact on political discourse.**

VULNERABILITIES OF CHINA

1. Unemployment in China is currently estimated to be at 10 per cent, which is four percentage points more than what is admitted officially. Just as they did not expect the 'Wuhan Virus' would shrink the Chinese economy by 6.8 per cent in the first quarter of the year compared to the first quarter of 2019.
 2. Their promotion and projection of Xi Jinping as a strong and resolute leader above criticism at home and beyond reproach abroad has not quite turned out the way it was supposed to be. The handling of the 'Wuhan Virus' outbreak, the making of a pandemic and the absence of concern, compassion or contrition on the part of the Xi regime has had the opposite effect
 3. From abusing and threatening Australia (recently it was called a "dog of America" in a replay of Chairman Mao's description of Jawaharlal Nehru as a "running dog of American imperialism")
 4. As Quad Plus rallies together and an alliance of democracies takes shape, as countries call for new supply chains and restructure their economies, disentangling them from the pre-COVID19 global mesh, as manufacturers relocate from China and look for new hubs, as big ticket investors look at India despite the current setback to the economy
 5. as America continues to harden its position, imposing penalties and disincentivising American firms doing business in China, and as Huawei fails to fly as the global flagbearer of Chinese technology,
 6. It has been said that the Chinese action has been prompted by India scrapping Article 370 and reorganising the erstwhile State of Jammu & Kashmir into two separate Union Territories, carving out Ladakh as a separate entity, directly administered by the Union Government.
 7. It is laughable to suggest that Indian Meteorological Department issuing weather reports on Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, including Gilgit-Baltistan, has ruffled Chinese feathers
 8. The narrative that China will give space to India in Asia is extinct. We will have to revisit our quaint narratives of following a principled foreign policy and our desire for strategic autonomy. The only principle is national interest and the narrative will have to revolve around this without any sentimentality.
 9. The underlying reason is the Chinese attitude towards India has remained unchanged since 1949 and our hope that they will change their postures has also not diminished for some unknown reason. .
- The CPC commissars and their bosses are sufficiently worried about anti-regime sentiments at home to create distractions from piling woes and drum up populist support.
 - The Xi regime does not want to be seen as shaken, if not weakened, by the cost China is having to pay for the 'Wuhan Virus'. The CPC draws its power and authority from a strong leader at the helm; whatever it takes, Xi must be propped up as unassailable and unwavering in leading China to its goal of dominating the world politically, financially, technologically and culturally.

HOW TO CONTAIN CHINA

INTRODUCTION

- As former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee sagely observed, "You can change friends but not neighbours." That observation still holds true.
- However, the twin pillars of India's China policy, cooperation and competition, need to be repositioned to competition and cooperation.

STRATEGY

- India should stick to doing those things and building a Great Wall of Democracies. India must not only embrace but incubate a rainbow coalition of democracies that believe in, and subscribe to, a rules-based world order.
- In the coming days, as Hong Kong becomes a hot item on the global political agenda,
- India must actively seek to keep China and its feckless proxies out of leadership positions in global



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organisations.

- There is no percentage in sticking to bogus 'anti-West' ideological positions of the past or seek South-South cooperation in a world where North and South, East and West are fluidgeographies.
- Meanwhile, it would be astute to remember what |Ching says. "No matter how smooth it is, there are always slopes." Bullies blunder their way into slopes regardless of consequences. Responsible powers skirt the slopes.
- The Ministry of External Affairs would do well to discard its crusty old 'Karo Na' principle of not doing anything that would disrupt South Block's settled policy of playing a safe game of dribbling the ball without shooting at the goalpost lest the stands get excited.
- Sophistry as diplomacy has run its course and is of little value in this day and age of fluid alliances and alignments.
- Tyrants and tyrannies are not without the proverbial Achilles' heel. In China's case, it is the fear of democracy.
- India has to get smarter in order to game the system through which control is seized and exercised over international organisations. China has mastered the art of manoeuvring itself into positions of control, influence and power.
- Yet, there is a strange, inexplicable reluctance to confront and stand up to the bully on the block. At a time when the world is vociferous in its criticism of China, India maintains a coy silence. This flies in the face of India's unbridled aspiration to be recognised as a rising power on its way to becoming a big power.
- Big powers, as has been wisely said, not only have the capacity to absorb punishment, they also have the ability to inflict punishment. The first without the latter is the hallmark of a failed power.

MIX OF THREE APPROACHES

- In India's China policy, a mix of three approaches- The first is internal balancing, strengthening themselves and developing capabilities in response to China's growing power.
- The second is engagement, working with China to reach understandings, although this requires some give and take by both sides.
- The third is external balancing, cooperating with others to gain more leverage and security vis-à-vis Beijing.
- External balancing involved a series of arrangements with partners the intention of improving interoperability, facilitating intelligence and assessments, and boosting each other's economic and defence capabilities .example - logistics support, increasing maritime awareness, upgrading military exercises, and regularising strategic dialogues with the US, Japan, Australia, Russia, France, South Korea, Southeast Asia, and others.



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- **The recent border standoff between China and India at Ladakh confirms two political realities that must not be ignored. First, India must not allow the intrusion of Chinese firms into its telecommunications network. If**

- societies will be digital. China should not be permitted to encode India's public sphere. New Delhi must not license Huawei or ZTE to provide equipment for its 5G rollout.
- **And second, India must not allow any Chinese-origin firm into its critical infrastructure in much the same manner that it was kept away from certain industrial projects in the past.**
 - **For India's national interest, the choice is clear. There is no more room to accommodate China's economic affections while being scorched by the Dragon's fire**

 - **The risk China Tech poses to Indian interests is real. Considering they are backed by an authoritarian regime that's weaponising everything in its armoury, from trade and technology to medical equipment and humanitarian aid, the provisions by state-controlled Chinese firms are a global concern.**
 - **Australia and the US have discovered it, Europe is in the process of finding out, and smaller nations will awaken to the consequences too late.**

 - **National security is not a choice. It is a primary assumption and the first responsibility of statecraft. "A country that uses its military power to threaten other nations and its economic power to pervert free trade and steal technologies, will not think twice before using its technological influence to advance its strategic ambitions and lust for territory."**

 - **Beijing cannot expect economic returns from India without making commensurate investments in building strategic trust. To rephrase, China has to climb its way up the trust vanguards of India before it enters the trust vaults of India.**

 - **Until then, Made in China firms must be treated with as much caution and precaution as the nation is treating the Made in China pandemic.**

 - **Galwan may not be the last foray by the Chinese. Smarting under the setback, they will try to strike back somewhere else because 2020 is not 1967 when not many got to know that the Chinese had suffered a defeat at Nathu La. Today the entire world knows what happened in Ladakh, and China will want to save face.**

 - **In the long term, we need to accept that Pakistan and China will not change. Assess your choices and capabilities for the long haul, not base the entire judgment on one or two military battles. The confrontation is far more long term and we must prepare for the future bearing this in mind. None of the honey and sugar Track-2 dialogues will yield any results**

 - **With established global supply chains fraying, we must first decide whether we'll be "atmanirbhar" or an alternative workshop of the world. Either way, industrial ecosystems cannot be created by magic. example- Pimpri-Chinchwad, Madurai-Coimbatore, Faridabad-Gurgaon regions did not come up overnight, but over several decades.**

 - **The US alliance appears to be the most seductive option. Without putting down serious money we can get a free ride on Uncle Sam's back. But that's provided you are willing to trust his current avatar – Donald J Trump.**
 - **Remember, though, that when you sign up with the greatest power on earth, orbited by economic giants like the UK, Germany and Japan, you do not have the vanity of deciding your role. Ask the South Koreans or the**



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Afghans

TUSSLE IN NEIGHBOURHOOD

What China Wants in South Asia

introduction

- **Chinese President Xi Jinping stated that “China will deepen relations with its neighbors in accordance with the principle of amity, sincerity, mutual benefits, and inclusiveness, and the policy of forging friendship and partnership with its neighbors.**
- **China is not simply appealing to the better angels of South Asian neighbours. Rather, Beijing has crafted a geostrategic approach to the region that assiduously seeks to secure its own national interests.**

STRATEGY AND APPROACH

- **Deep suspicions rightfully persist over this economic component of Chinese strategy in South Asia as it could support Beijing’s broader geopolitical goals—namely the potential geostrategic encirclement of India.**
- **Beijing wields a finely tailored approach towards each country to achieve its national interests, whether counterterrorism in Pakistan and Afghanistan, port access in Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, or sowing distraction and confusion in its chief regional rival, India.**
- **Third, India should expect China to use its Belt and Road Initiative in South Asia to reduce its tactical deficit in the Indian Ocean. In Hambantota in Sri Lanka, Chittagong in Bangladesh and Sittwe in Myanmar, Already China is constructing a naval base for Bangladesh in Cox’s Bazar that could be used to position naval ships and store military supplies.**
- **The third possibility remains India’s strategic proximity with the USA, Australia and Japan due to its large market.**
- **There is hardly any other market in the world that can boast of having more than 50 per cent of its population below the age of 25 and more than 65 per cent below the age of 35, and whose incomes have increased annually in the range five to 8.5 per cent between 2009 and 2018.**

Chinese warfare strategy

- **First, physical intrusions and coercion around its borders through military means. These include but are not restricted to Bhutan, Japan, nations in the South China Sea and India.**
- **Second, psychological intrusions through information warfare in democracies, using the tools that serve communications, transparency and accountability in democracies. Their public sphere and institutions are seen as handy sharp instruments serving China’s designs**
- **Third, technological intrusion through its corporate arms such as Huawei and ZTE, which by the virtue of being incorporated, designed and operating under the National Intelligence Law collect intelligence and information for the benefit of the Communist Party of China from the countries in which they operate**
- **And fourth, controlling multilateral arenas through capture of international institutions such as WHO as the Made in China pandemic so clearly brought out.**

- **In other words, the new risk in boardrooms is a five-letter word called China. Democracies are willing to let go of Chinese value chains and nudging their corporations and consumers to pay more rather than succumb to Chinese threats.**
- **After successfully weaponising trade in WTO, health in WHO, investments along the Belt and Road Initiative, debt through its debt trap diplomacy, narratives through information intrusions, China is now on way towards**

weaponising data, using companies like Huawei and ZTE as the tip of its digital spear.

- As global wealth shifts from oil to data, the latter's protection becomes a national security issue, just as the protection of oil pipelines and storage is part of every nation's energy security.

- That the US, in its own interest, has decided to ban Huawei and is now pushing Europe to do the same has more to do with a technological decoupling from China than Huawei itself.
- Complicating the political and boardroom manoeuvres, is the fact that consumers are rejecting the Made in China label, initially in countries facing direct assault of China – an expanding list that includes but is not restricted to India, Bhutan, Vietnam, Indonesia, Australia and Japan – which will slowly permeate towards those countries that do not share borders or are a brunt of direct aggression.

TRADE WAR

INTRODUCTION

- At the Wuhan summit, the Chinese President argued: “As the two largest developing countries and emerging-market economies with a population level of more than one billion, China and India are the backbone of the world’s multipolarization and economic globalization

REPERCUSSIONS

- As trade war escalates between the US and China, Beijing is reaching out to India in a major way by underscoring the need for the two nations to deepen cooperation to fight trade protectionism in the wake of the unilateral approach being adopted by the US on trade-related disputes.
- China and India are both in the vital stage of deepening reform and developing economy, and both need stable external environment.” Using comments by Chinese President Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Narendra Modi to safeguard the multilateral trading system and free trade at the World Economic Forum in Davos
- He underscored the importance of building an open and pluralist global economic order in which all countries can freely participate to pursue their development.

GALWAN CLASH OVERSHADOWED TRADE WAR

- The crisis has impacted the broader Sino-Indian relationship. Several Indian infrastructure projects in which China won the contract have been revoked or cancelled. Examples include the Shanghai Tunnel Engineering Company of China which received a contract to build the underground portion of the rapid rail project between New Delhi and Meerut,
- “For minor tactical gains on the ground, China has strategically lost India.”
- A clear call for “India as a country, as a people, including, of course, the government in the lead” to do “a fundamental reassessment of its China policy, make changes in it, and then implement it at the earliest.”
- Demands for a complete boycott of Chinese products that have risen in India from time to time in the past have only become stronger in recent months.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi was suggesting that the biggest lesson from the Covid-19 pandemic was the need to become self-reliant though New Delhi had been underlining that this call for Atmanirbhar Bharat was in no way a call for protectionism and was certainly not directed towards any other country including China.
- Indian railways has terminated a Rs 470 crore contract to a Chinese firm for signaling works in UP that had been given to a Chinese firm and Bharat Sanchar Nigam (BSNL) and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam (MTNL) have been asked by the government not to use Chinese equipment for the upgradation of their 4G facilities.
- India has also gone ahead and banned 59 Chinese apps, including the popular TikTok, ShareIt and UC Browser, terming them “prejudicial to sovereignty, integrity and national security.”

EMERGING ISSUES

- India is trying its best to emerge as a global investment destination and global supply chains gets re-jigged
- There is also the issue of India as a responsible global player. As a nation that has often argued that playing by the rules of the WTO is essential of global economic stability, any arbitrary trade behaviour on its part will jeopardise its diplomatic campaign to target China as the great disrupter.
- New Delhi, of course, can't be prevented from cutting off economic ties with China if and when hostilities between the two escalate but that is likely to be a measure of last resort.
- In the short to medium term, a complete economic break with China is neither desirable nor necessary. Instead, New Delhi should use the threat of an escalated trade and economic conflict as a lever to continue to keep China on tenterhooks.
- Ravi Shankar Prasad, tweeted that "For safety, security, defence, sovereignty & integrity of India and to protect data & privacy of people of India the government has banned 59 mobile apps.s.
- The presence of China's hardware and platforms in India's digital ecosystem constitutes a long-term security threat.
- During the Doklam stand-off, the security establishment discovered that the Chinese-owned UC Browser was filtering certain news on Android handsets in India to shape perceptions and outcomes — classic information warfare in the digital age. Recently, we have seen content critical of China being taken down on one of the banned apps and moderation of other incidents and images as well.
- Similarly, India must bar China's telecommunications infrastructure from its 5G networks. It is time to say "No way Huawei".
- Bilateral trade is healthy when there is a balance. With China, it is a doubled-barrelled shotgun trained between India's eyes. It is important that we fix this now as a three trillion dollar economy.

- India is reportedly thinking of a trade deal with Taiwan to give ballast to a relationship which has a lot of potential. And India's two-plus-two ministerial dialogue with the US saw the two nations signing the long-pending Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA), which allows for the sharing of high-end military technology, logistics and geospatial maps.
- To acknowledge the need for a radical shift in thinking about internal capability enhancement by leveraging external partnerships. But one aspect which remains unchanged is the Indian strategic establishment's aversion to the term alliance.
- A fluid global environment has opened up possibilities for India to enter into 'issue based coalitions'. But when confronted with serious national security threats, such coalitions of the willing are inherently constrained

BOUNDARY DISPUTE

PAST EVENTS

- In 2013, the first major standoff between India and China in 26 years occurred on the remote Depsang Plains when China attempted to establish a permanent presence in disputed territory just as India prepared to open a high-altitude airfield at nearby Daulat Beg Oldi.
- A more significant standoff occurred in 2017, involving China's territorial dispute with Bhutan, an Indian ally. Indian forces intervened to stop Chinese road-building in disputed territory, resulting in a brief spike in tensions. (DOKLAM CONFLICT)
- Earlier this year, as a critical Indian road to Daulat Beg Oldi came closer to completion, Chinese forces deployed in larger numbers at the LAC, and as Indian troops matched them, standoffs occurred at four points.
- One was the Galwan River Valley, an area that had witnessed fighting in 1962 but had not been a major source of friction since. To the south, by a picturesque lake called Pangong Tso, Chinese and Indian forces entered into a tussle in May. In between, near an area known as Hot Springs, two smaller buildups took place.

DISPUTED AREAS

- **The term “border dispute” tends to evoke images of a limited standoff, but the India-China row is over territory larger than the state of Pennsylvania. It consists of three distinct sectors.**

- Disputes in the middle sector are relatively small and include grazing grounds and passes that link India with Tibet. The eastern sector includes China's claim to almost the entire Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh, home to more people than Montana, which China calls "South Tibet." That section includes the town of Tawang, birthplace of the sixth Dalai Lama, and thus has particular significance for Tibetans, and by extension, for Chinese claims to Tibet.
- The western sector is in the Indian union territory of Ladakh. Here, the borders with Tibet were never clearly demarcated. This land resembles a high-altitude desert: impossibly rough terrain with steep ravines, glaciers, and peaks rising to over 20,000 feet.
- Ladakh is important for India not only for its own sake, but for supplying Indian forces along the disputed Line of Control with Pakistan, meaning this area is considered crucial to Indian security and to the geopolitical balance of power across a large part of Asia.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi while addressing Indian troops in Leh - age of expansionism is over and that this is the age of development.
- He added for good measure that such expansionist forces are either destroyed or forced into retreat. Modi didn't name the great bully of Asia. He didn't need to.

There are five major takeaways from the ongoing crisis in Ladakh that will inevitably shape India's China policy significantly.

- **The first is that Xi Jinping's China is at a stage—and in a year—where it has simply ceased to care about global public opinion or parameters of reasonable conduct. It has little interest in healthy relations with India and considers the diminishing of India's role, growth, weight and presence as a key foreign policy objective. Its message is clear—the "Hu & Wen" days of "partnership", of an "Asian Century for all", of "BRICS for a better world" are passé. This is Imperialism with Chinese Characteristics.**
- **The second takeaway is that China is perfectly at ease with the coexistence of commerce and conflict, trade and war. It has perfected the ability of sleeping with its enemies and selling to them as well. Beijing has successfully done so with the Americans for decades.**
- **The third takeaway points to the Chinese strategic ability to manipulate and game democratic societies. China creates dissent and discord through misinformation and propaganda. This summer, it has weaponised the openness of the Indian public sphere. And it will continue to do so.**
- Delegitimising the government and political system of the enemy is a central objective of long wars, and there should be no doubt that this is an epic struggle, which may have started in the Himalayas but will travel to maritime Asia and the Pacific
- The fourth takeaway is simply: "No way, Huawei". India must attach costs to Chinese ambitions. Even though there is stark asymmetry between the economic and military capabilities of the two countries, the defender has the advantage of being able to deploy specific tools that even unequal realities
- Battlefield grit and determination will be of utmost importance in the dark days that may define the



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Himalayan relationship. Similarly, interdiction and disruption capability in the oceans will be crucial.

Kashmir issue

- China resurrected the Jammu and Kashmir issue in the Security Council in August 2019 following the Indian decision to nullify Article 370, the special status given to the state of Jammu and Kashmir under the Indian Constitution. China said the Indian decision was “unacceptable.” India rejected China’s criticisms, saying the decision was an internal matter with no impact on its external borders. China has persisted.
- Chinese Foreign Ministry stated that Beijing pays close attention to the Kashmir issue and that “any unilateral change to the status quo in the Kashmir region is illegal and invalid.” The spokesperson added that the issue has to be “and peacefully resolved through dialogue and consultation between the parties concerned.”
- India responded harshly, stating that “The Chinese side has no locus standi whatsoever on this matter and is advised not to comment on the internal affairs of other nations.
- Indian Foreign Minister S. Jaishankar pointedly stated that “the state of the border and the future of our ties... cannot be separated.” in essence suggesting that the standoff at the border will affect the bilateral relationship.

Should India play tibet card?

INTRODUCTION

- About 10 days after the Galwan clash, Pema Khandu, chief minister of Arunachal Pradesh, referred to the Line of Actual Control dividing India and China as the India-Tibet border.

ANALYSIS

- An attempt at rekindling the Tibet issue, which India has done every now and then when there is a conflict with China. This was of course music to the ears of Tibet activists, who have been seeking active Indian support for a long time.
- Tenzin Tsundue, a Tibetan writer said that the border must be called “the Tibet border and not the China border.”
- Prominent BJP ideologues have supported reopening the Tibet issue, even supporting the right of Tibetans to live “as a free nation.”
- Such voices have become louder. A retired senior Army officer wrote about the strategic importance of Tibet, and argued that time has come “to challenge the very legitimacy of the Chinese claim over Tibet.
- He argued that a new Indian policy approach on Tibet “has the real potential of causing major turbulence in China’s underbelly.” He added that India might do well to “align its policy on the issue with the U.S. and support the ‘Tibet Policy and Support Act (2019)’ that has been passed by the U.S. Congress
- India has had an inconsistent approach to Tibet, it said, “Delhi now needs to shed its hesitation, not just because Tibet is a ‘card’, but is intertwined with the values of freedom and peace central to the vision to resist China.”
- ARGUING for honoring the Dalai Lama with the Bharat Ratna, India’s highest civilian honor, and for India to take up the rights of Tibetans in international platforms and build deeper links with the younger generation of Tibetan activists who are the face of the new resistance.

CRITICS



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Suhasini Haidar. - the idea of the Tibet card is “out of step” with shifting ground realities in Tibet and cautioned the Indian establishment against using “the Tibetan population in India as a strategic tool.”

•

Sudha Ramachandran, - India never did have a Tibet card, considering that India and the even the Tibetans have accepted the One China formulation and India's efforts to keep the Tibet card has only angered China, "without yielding tangible dividends."

- P.Stobdan, a China analyst who had previously argued that the *idea of a Tibet card is a folly, declares in a recent book that China's slow invasion tactic has been successful in dealing with India whereas New Delhi, even after 60 years, has made no significant gains in its China policy*

India rolls the dice on Hong Kong

INTRODUCTION

- Chinese President Xi Jinping signed a controversial national security law that gave Beijing unprecedented powers to shape the future of Hong Kong.
- It dramatically reduced Hong Kong's autonomy and gives Beijing the ability to crackdown against dissent under the garb of tackling crimes of secession, subversion, terrorism and collusion with foreign forces.

ISSUE

- For most Hong Kongers, it is clear that it cuts at the very heart of their freedom of expression and organisation, effectively repudiating the so-called "one country, two systems" principle on which the relationship between Hong Kong and mainland China has been premised since 1997.
- Hong Kong has been rocked by anti-Beijing protests since June 2019 and the new law is effectively Xi Jinping's revenge on Hong Kongers for making him withdraw the controversial extradition bill of last year. Since then a broader anti-China and pro-democracy movement has been gathering momentum in Hong Kong which Beijing is now determined to demolish with this new law.

INDIA'S APPROACH

- New Delhi chose the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) in Geneva to react where it argued last week that India has been keeping "a close watch on recent developments" in Hong Kong given the presence of a large Indian community there.
- New Delhi had in the past been reluctant to talk about the Hong Kong issue but recent violent clashes in the Galwan Valley of Ladakh last month, perhaps, made it imperative for India to change its approach
- In the past India has been reluctant to even give visas to pro-democracy activists of Hong Kong and along with Indonesia was the only other member state of the G-20 last year which refused to even meet pro-democracy activists. India also maintained a studied silence over China's ill-treatment of its Muslim minority in Xinjiang.
- The border crisis this year has challenged the very foundations of India's China policy and all aspects are being recalibrated by New Delhi – from trade and technological engagement to China's domestic political imperatives. Major powers like the US, the UK, Canada, Australia and Japan have all spoken out against the new Chinese law.
- Hong Kong is also important for India for economic reasons. For global investors, it has always been an attractive destination, leading to its emergence as one of Asia's most powerful financial centres.

WAY AHEAD

- As a mature democracy, we should be able to articulate and defend our positions to our global stakeholders. It



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is what makes India different from China and a more reassuring global presence

- China has never hesitated to meddle in Indian domestic matters in the past. India's past diffidence in challenging China on its 'internal' matters has not really paid New Delhi any significant dividends. India's Hong Kong move has been noticed the world over

Calls for India to play the Taiwan card grow louder

- Possible asymmetric diplomatic strategies to challenge China, such as altering India's "one China policy" to enhance India's relations with Taiwan.
- **Indian Express, editorialized in May that India should be pragmatic in considering the question of Taiwan's observer status in the World Health Assembly:**
- **The decision "should not be made either out of peevishness or fear." The editorial argued that New Delhi should judge the issue on "apolitical appreciation of the specific technical issues involved.**
- **The Times of India, asked the government to "not shy away from supporting Taiwan." that this should remain an important aspect of the reform of the World Health Organization (WHO). It also argued that India should stop being "overly deferential to Beijing" when China has routinely worked against Indian interests in the UN and other multilateral organizations.**
- **India should step up its cooperation with Taiwan. it was strange that India has shied away from cooperating with Taiwan, whereas Taipei and Beijing had active trade and investment ties despite their political disagreements.**

Namrata Hasija, a research associate at the Delhi-based Centre for China Analysis and Strategy, asserts that *India must stop seeing Taiwan through the China lens that gets activated every time there is tension in Sino-Indian ties.*

- * **Highlighting that Taiwan was one of the first countries to send medical equipment to India, former diplomat G. Parthasarathy also made the case for India to strengthen its relations with Taiwan.**
- **He added that Taiwan offers opportunities for cooperation in several key sectors, especially in India's semiconductor industry, which could also possibly reduce India's reliance on China in the electronics and communication industries.**
- **Taipei Times called on Taiwan to "deepen ties with India, in particular economic, military and intelligence ties, to contain Chinese expansionism and put Xi back into his box."**
- **This also fits well with President Tsai Ing-wen's New Southbound policy which has a particular focus on India.**

China, India and their Contending Visions of Global Order:

INTRODUCTION

- India has also become a victim of China's ambitions. Xi has been conducting an increasingly reckless and expansionist foreign policy, drawing on the enormous resources of a country at the height of its power.
- The cocktail of aggressive nationalism and Han exceptionalism is rendered more potent by the rise of India that Communist elites in Beijing have long perceived as their country's inferior.

HEGEMONIC ROLE OF CHINA

- The foundations of the Communist Party of China are inherently authoritarian. The Chinese expressions of civilisational pride go hand in hand with unchecked territorial revisionism, as an increasingly vocal Xi is trying to "recapture" imperial China's possessions harking back to the ever changing past.
- A unilateral, hubristic China, in its bid for great power status, is constantly probing India's weaknesses, and



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**working to dilute its ability to maintain strategic maneuverability and project power across the Asian theatre..
A strategy of protraction thus is not only required to muster material strength, but also to forge the necessary
domestic political consensus.**

- *China has pursued a lopsided policy that is consistently and aggressively hostile to India's core interests. Beijing's overarching goal is to keep India in a state of disequilibrium that could be used to further erode its internal cohesion. Weakening the Indian state provides China with greater latitude to exert control over its periphery.*
- *China, with its heady ambitions, litany of historical grievances and overall ferocity, is the most dangerous revisionist power and great disruptor of the status quo.*
- *China's conflict with India is not merely a struggle over territory and resources, but rather a paradigm-defining battle for shaping the international order*
- *New Delhi playing a leading role in an Indo-Pacific landscape of democratic nation-states whose relations are defined by rules-based international order — is one that endures Xi's world of raw power politics.*
- *External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar in a virtual Russia-India-China (RIC) Foreign Ministerial Meeting - to reiterate India's belief in the "time-tested principles of international relations" but argued that "the challenge today is not just one of concepts and norms, but equally of their practice."*
- *Jaishankar made it clear that "respecting international law, recognising the legitimate interests of partners, supporting multilateralism and promoting common good are the only way of building a durable world order."*
- *As the power differential grew between China and India, New Delhi's foreign policy turned out to be neither strategic nor very autonomous From RIC India moved into BRICS where China's dominance was even more palpable and the limitations of other states even more pronounced.*
- *A lack of clarity on Indian moves was as less a function of Indian attempt to manage China's rise but more of creating a false equivalence between the US and China in Indian foreign policy calculus.*
- *The challenge for India became even more acute as Russia shifted its loyalties to China, a Sino-Russian strategic axis is now more pronounced than ever. It is not a natural partnership but stranger things have happened in the history of global politics.*
- *As Russia reassessed its foreign policy priorities through the prism of its growing antagonism with the West, Indian defence and strategic ties with Russia came under a cloud*
- ***Arguing that** "the RIC countries have been active participants in shaping the global agenda," Jaishankar expressed his hope that the three nations would "also now converge on the value of reformed multilateralism.*

- *As China has been tearing off one international treaty after another, it has been making clear its contempt for those who find in these norms a certain sanctity essential to preserve global peace and stability. But China's revisionism is too stark to be managed by the liberal idealism of norms, values and institutions.*

- instead of maintaining a low profile and act as a partner trying to promote global peace. China has acted in a way that can be best be described as “opposite of the optimum”. China is not just emerging as a “global bully”, a deeper insight may reveal that its policy and governance brings it very close to North Korea.
- China is indulging in what are more knee-jerk reactions than well-thought plans.

- Clearly, the old policy of ‘hide your strength, bide your time’ has given way to what is now called ‘Wolf Warrior’ diplomacy – an in-your-face, aggressive, abrasive, and arrogant style of dealing with other countries.

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

- The institutional collapse was reflected in the way World Health Organisation was manipulated by China during the initial phase of the covid-19 crisis.
- Growing divide between China and the rest of the world was reflected in the inability of institutions like the United Nations Security Council and the G-20 to come up with a coherent response to one of the most significant human security issues of our times.
- **Even as the world was trying to come to grips with Covid-19, China found in the crisis an opportunity to enhance its geopolitical interests by targeting countries it thought were too vulnerable to respond. From the maritime frontiers of the South China Sea to the Himalayan frontiers, from the internal vicissitudes of the European Union to the legal framework of Hong Kong, everything has been fair game for the Chinese Communist Party’s desire to strengthen its hold on a domestic population that was weathering a downturn in economy and a mismanaged health crisis.**
- **Australia has unveiled a new more aggressive defence strategy which squarely targets the threat from China, warning that “coercion, competition and grey-zone activities directly or indirectly targeting Australian interests are occurring now.”**
- **Even as China has been intruding into Japan’s territorial waters more regularly in recent days, Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force training ships conducted exercises with Indian naval vessels in the Indian Ocean**
- **Japanese Defense Minister Taro Kono made it clear that China was “trying to change the status quo at the India border, in Hong Kong and in the East China Sea, South China sea.”**
- **ASEAN too underlined for China the limits of Beijing’s assertiveness by reaffirming much more robustly than in the past “that the 1982 UNCLOS is the basis for determining maritime entitlements, sovereign rights, jurisdiction and legitimate interests over maritime zones,**
- **The US, of course, has continued to pile up pressure on China both with diplomatic engagements as well as with an unprecedented show of force. For the first time since 2014, two US aircraft carrier groups are in the South China Sea soon after the People Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) concluded its five days of drills around the contested Paracel Islands.**
- **It is this self-confidence – some would call it over-confidence – that has made China open multiple fronts against other countries. There is already an on-going trade war with the US which is now looking like the start of Cold War 2.0. But alongside, the Chinese have opened up fronts against Australia, Japan, India, Vietnam, Myanmar, Bhutan, Taiwan, Philippines. China’s strong-arm tactics in Hong Kong have meant that countries like the UK, Canada and others are also pushing back**

India fires a salvo at China

- **New Delhi took a significant decision when it amended its extant FDI policy to make prior governmental approval mandatory for foreign investments from countries that share land border with India to curb “opportunistic takeovers” of domestic firms at a time when global coronavirus pandemic is upending the rules of the economic game worldwide.**
- **Beijing’s reaction, stating that “the additional barriers set by Indian side for investors from specific countries violate WTO’s principle of non-discrimination, and go against the general trend of liberalization and facilitation of trade and investment**

- China's cumulative investment in India has been rising, exceeding \$8 billion till December 2019. In particular, Chinese investors have been investing in Indian start-up sector aggressively.
- India emerged as an attractive destination for the Chinese firms ever since the US-China trade war began to restructure the global supply chains
- Post Doklam, the Wuhan 'reset' with China was premised largely on India and China working towards a more robust economic relationship. Yet, China's reluctance to adequately address Indian concerns and the challenges posed by sectors like trade and health also emerging as traditional national security threats in the Sino-Indian matrix meant that New Delhi had had to finally bite the bullet
- The subsequent informal summit at Wuhan was however nothing more than a craven attempt to get in the good books of President Xi.
- What seems more realistic is an interdiction strategy aimed at choking Chinese trade passing through the Indian Ocean sea lines of communication. A vast majority of China's oil shipments, container vessels and bulk cargo traffic approaches the Malacca Strait through the 10 degree channel between Andaman and Nicobar. Observers say the Indian Navy could stifle the flow of Chinese traffic, while aggressively patrolling the Indian Ocean chokepoints, keeping an eye on Chinese naval reinforcements.

The new phase of Sino-Indian cooperation under the " security dilemma "

- The Indian navy recently commissioned to open a third naval base (INS Kohassa) in the Andaman and Nicobar island to counter the Chinese expansion into the Indian ocean region which is a manifestation of the security dilemma, which has been at play in Sino-Indian relations since the middle of the last century
- The border disputes, Sino-Pakistani cooperation, including its possible assistance to Pakistan's nuclear program and delivery systems and China's broader influence in South Asia have perpetuated a situation similar to that theorized by Robert Jervis as the "security dilemma. "
- Security Dilemma arises out of the anarchic nature of the international system, where states take actions to make themselves secure but end up making other states insecure.
- The growing alliance between China and Pakistan has generated deep anxieties in New Delhi. EXAMPLE- CPEC , GWADAR PORT
- On the other hand, the sources of Chinese insecurity vis-a-vis India are the latter's border infrastructure developments, increase in the border security on the India-China border, and the testing of the long-range ballistic missile like the Agni V that threaten Beijing. India's plan to set up 35 new posts on the India-China border and dispatch more border police on the India-China border has been claimed to be provocative by Chinese media outlets such as the Global Times
- Despite domestic and external challenges, there is now growing evidence that the People's Republic of China (PRC) continues to expand its nuclear arsenal, which is worrisome but at the same time, not be surprising. China is pursuing a planned modernisation of its nuclear arsenal because it fears the multi-layered missile defence capabilities of the United States.
- China's expansion is cause for concern because even as the U.S. and Russia are attempting to reduce the size of their respective arsenals, the PRC is on an expansionist mode
- New Delhi has rejected the idea of initiating the use of such weapons in any conflict scenario. Nukes, in Indian strategy, are purely retaliatory. And that stance has made good military and diplomatic sense