

INDIA – CHINA RELATIONS: AN OVERVIEW

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Abstract

Following its independence, India sought amicable relations with China and made various efforts to strengthen bilateral relations in the 1950s; nonetheless, a conflict arose in 1962 as a result of border disputes. During the Rajiv Ghandi administration, efforts were made to enhance trade between China and India. Later, China became uneasy as a result of India's infrastructural expansion along the Line of Actual Control (LAC), and both nations experienced numerous conflicts up until 2020. There was a significant trade gap between India and China on an economic level, which is truly cause for concern. China uses the Brahmaputra dam as a front to agitate India through the usage of rivers. Both India and China should try to maintain Peace and tranquillity on the border areas because it is clearly remaining the basis for normal relations. Along with it, India should raise issue of the human rights violations on Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang, China and take a strong stand against BRI.

Introduction

The Indo-China relations are a mixture of cooperation, competition, and rivalry. But the complexity of the engagement and interaction between the two countries and considering the divergent political systems, the unresolved territorial issues, compulsions of geo-politics, the quest for resources and markets, and aspirations of the two countries for global influence and power, the relations between the two countries are certainly a matter of reassurance and optimism. Although both China and India are powerful civilizations, they did not become modern states until the late 1940s. China adopted communism in the early 1950s, motivated by Russian ideology, whereas India promoted the Non-Aligned Movement for a post-colonized world. It makes the ideological difference between both the countries due to which there are many territorial disputes.

Though the border conflict in 1962 was a setback to ties, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's landmark visit in 1988 marked the beginning of improvement in bilateral relations. Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited China in May 2015 and held meetings with President Xi

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Jinping 24 agreements were signed on the government-to-government side, 26 MoUs on the business-to-business side and two joint statements, including one on climate change. In addition to state visits, the leaders of the two nations also have meetings off stage at numerous organisations, such as the G20, BRICS, and SCO Both nations made an effort to strengthen their trade ties and anticipated involvement in other areas as well.

Relationship through the prism of Ramayana: -

The demon king Ravana of Lanka was an exceptional figure performed the most exacting penance that could be rewarded by their wishes being granted by the Gods. In this case, Ravana was given the boon of invincibility by the creator Brahma. But in his arrogance, he invoked It only against what he saw as likely threats, devas and gandharvas, asuras and kinnaras, nagas and rakshasas, all creatures other than men. He left out humankind because he could not even envisage that such puny beings could be threatening. And it was for that reason that Lord Vishnu took a human form, that of Lord Rama, to kill Ravana.

China started indicating that McMahon line will not be the formal border between India and China. In this particular situation, Patel advocated for a military build-up for India and creation of roads near the China border but Nehru felt that Patel is overly suspicious and said that it was inconceivable that China would 'undertake a wild adventure across the Himalayas'.

In 1954, Nehru signed Panchsheel agreement with China to improve the bilateral relation and mutual respect for each other's territory due to which India believed that there is no territorial threat from Chinese front However, China began to escalate its military aggression in the 1960s, and as a result, there was a conflict between India and China in 1962.

Territorial Dispute



Due to their territorial disputes, India and China have fought numerous times. These confrontations occurred in 1962, 1967 in Sikkim, 2012 in Dault Bay, 2017 in the Doklam, and 2020 in Galwan. Along with it, China started the practice of issuing stable visas for residents of Jammu and Kashmir and Arunachal Pradesh.

The 1962 Conflict

After Panchsheel in 1954 Nehru ordered the Survey of India to publish new maps and show the boundary demarcated clearly. India showed Aksai Chin as part of Indian Kashmir later China published their maps, showed Aksai Chin and NEFA region, including Twang as part of China. Nehru took up this issue, China responded by saying that the Chinese maps are old maps and government needs time to revise those maps.

In accordance with updated maps, India began building checkpoints. till 1957 China completed a road in Aksai Chin. In 1959 China declared McMahon line as an illegal line and In 1960 China issued new maps which claimed additional 5000sq km Indian territory of Sirijap and Spanggur lake. With these differences there was a conflict in 1962.

In 2012 The DBO Conflict

The 220-km long section between Shyok and DBO was constructed between 2000 and 2019 by India's Border Roads Organisation (BRO). It is a strategic all-weather road in eastern Ladakh in India, close to the Line of Actual Control with China. It connects Ladakh's capital city Leh, via the villages of Darbuk and Shyok at southern Shyok River Valley, with the Daulat Beg Oldi (DBO) post near the northern border. From this road India can keep a check on China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) , it cause insecurity in China and there was a clash between India and China in 2012

In 2017 The Doklam Standoff

The 2017 Doklam standoff was a tense border confrontation between Indian and Chinese troops in the Doklam region, located at the tri-junction of India, China, and Bhutan. The standoff began when India objected to China's construction of a road in the area, which it believed violated a border agreement and posed a security threat to its ally, Bhutan. Indian troops intervened to stop the construction, leading to a standoff that lasted for over two months. Both sides eventually agreed to disengage, withdrawing their troops from the site, averting a potential escalation and resuming diplomatic talks to resolve the border disputes.

In 2020 The Galwan Clash

The Galwan Valley clash in 2020 was a deadly border confrontation between Indian and Chinese troops along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the Galwan Valley region of Ladakh.

The clash resulted in casualties on both sides, marking the first deadly clash between the two countries in decades. It occurred during a time of heightened tensions over border disputes and differing perceptions of the LAC. The incident led to widespread condemnation, intensified military deployments in the region, and diplomatic efforts to de-escalate tensions between India and China.

Trade Diplomacy

The relationship between the two giants of Asia, and the world, has been progressing at a tremendous pace. From 2015 to 2022, India-China bilateral trade grew by 90.14%, an average yearly growth of 12.87%. Bilateral trade between India and China in FY23 stood at US\$ 113.83 billion, there is a huge trade deficit. Chinese FDI to India is very less, and is surprisingly lower than the FDI India receives from Poland and Canada. India primarily imports electrical and electronic goods, organic chemicals including pharmaceuticals, and plastic items from China. The major items that India exports to China include organic chemicals, cotton yarn, copper, and ores. In sectors like power and telecommunications, Chinese companies successfully obtained access to India and build impressive market shares

Water Diplomacy

Despite signing many Memorandums of Understanding on improving communication and strategic trust, China's dam-building and water-division plans along the Brahmaputra (known as the Yarlung Zangbo in China) are a source of conflict between the two neighbours. China has often played against India's best interests. India seeks hydrological information from China. In basic terms, it refers to water movement/flow, distribution, and quality. India requires hydrological data to develop its diverse infrastructure, including dams, bridges, lakes. China indirectly controls water flow. Consequently, India and Bangladesh experience droughts during the summer due to a shortage of water flow in the Brahmaputra and its tributaries, but they experience major flooding when China releases water during the rainy season.

Conclusion and suggestion

The world order has now entered a very different phase from how it was envisaged after 1945. the rise of China is the most profound change in global politics after the second World War. For the last two decades, China is also rapidly growing as a maritime power, and India will also have to anticipate activities in the south.

China consistently opposes India's participation in the NSG and UN reforms. India opposes China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), calling it a debt-driven project and a domestic instrument for dumping. This competition will go on in the future because accommodating the

rise of others while in the midst of your own cannot be easy. So, peace and tranquillity on the border areas clearly remain the basis for normal relations.

India till now has refrained from commenting upon the human rights violations in Xinjiang regionally and internationally, despite the Chinese supporting the Pakistanis on human right violations in Kashmir. India can always leverage its deep relations, economic and strategic, with the Gulf to isolate China on blatant human rights violations on Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang

As part of a global campaign to tackle an expansionist China, India should expand Malabar and add Australia, join the Five Eyes network and ban Huawei to access Indian market and 5G services

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