

Conflict between China and India: India's Options to Establish Multi-Polar World

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Introduction

India and China are considered the two most populated countries in the Globe, nearly 42 percent of the people living in the world belonging to these two countries.¹ It is fastest-growing economic and political power in the world. Two countries play the most important role in global politics as well as world economy. China's influence in recent negotiations related with climate change and global warming and in its response aftermath of the "Great Recession" has been prevalent it shows that its dominant role in global politics. To avoid a stagnating economy China spent Billions and billions of dollars into domestic projects and also invested in developing and developed countries. Particularly, The rapid economic and political growth of china in international sphere reduced the gap between US and China and have alarmed the Western countries as well as made Western countries fear over China. China wants to become a political hegemony.²

On the other side, India's Foreign policies changed in favour of liberal economic policies with high focus on foreign trade for both domestic and external spheres particularly in the post cold war period. This policy shift clearly indicated that India's desire to become a global power status as one pole in a multi-polar world.³ India and China are pacing a competitive role to become political hegemony in the Asia-Pacific region with the use of developmental strategies and peaceful relations. Both Countries shared a strong bondage of a long history in the growing interdependence and rare encounters. Especially in Asia, India's growth is seen as counterbalancing China's weight in global politics. The question of where India stands? Does India Collaborate more with China? or Is India used to counterbalance the weight of China in this region? This paper tries to explain the conflict between China and India as well as India's position to maintain power balance in this region.

Tendency in International Politics

China's international and regional power continues to growing, this growing gap between China and the United States is shrinking, and it is likely to narrow even further after the Covid-19 pandemic. China is not only the second-largest economy in the world but also a leader in high technologies such as artificial intelligence and 5-G telecommunications networks. Despite the outbreak of the corona virus in China, the most populous country in the world, China has demonstrated its administrative skills by control over the spread of the virus before it spread to other parts of the world. it has increased the self-confidence of China. This self-assurance is visible in its assertive and aggressive external behavior. This period of the pandemic is

provoking the Chinese leadership as an opportunity for China to develop itself in line with other powers, especially the United States.

Power game between US and China

The GDP of China intended to overhaul the US and this makes a prominent and powerful economy, meanwhile per capita terms still lags behind. The GDP of US is comparatively forms only a quarter of the China's per capita. US may surpass the China's GDP growth rate and China is certainly becoming the world's biggest trading power, the world's stock exchanges and currency markets are still have the power and influenced by the US and the US dollar. As long as China remains reluctant to make the Chinese currency, the Renminbi (RMB), fully convertible; it is unlikely to replace the dollar as an international currency.

In terms of military activities, China remains significantly behind the US which makes unable to compete the global reach of the US led alliance systems in Asia and Europe. In Djibouti base has been setup at the Horn of Africa and has obtain the use of ports in several parts of the world which could feasibly serve as military facilities in their due course of time. The Pakistani port of Gwadar and Sri Lankan port of Hambantota also belongs to this category.

The Belt and Road Initiative is putting a place in worldwide infrastructure and transportation platform which could also be transmuted over the time being in force over the military network. But there is of no competent match for the American network of naval base across the world including at the doorstep of China itself. In the past decade it increased dramatic China's military expenditure. Over US \$300 billion currently dwarfed by the US total US \$750 billion. It is rapidly developing scientific and technological capabilities and currently spends on Research and Development than the US certain areas like Artificial Intelligence a road way ahead. Many Analysts believed that the US giving tough to China over technologically, due to sudden shift will not be stable in the future.

The comprehensive assessment is that China has notably narrowed the power gap with the US but remains after the latter in several important indices of power. It declared victory too early while the US has woken up to the China challenges off late. It made prolonged phase of confrontation and tension between the world's largest economy and military power, the US second biggest and fast emerging power i.e. China. This impact could be strategic tactics made by other powers including medium and smaller powers. If same ways have continued until one power overcomes the other and emerges as hyper power like the US of the Post -1990 periods. Alternatively, in case of relative stable impasses between two powers, it may be decided to reach a mutual accommodation with respective spheres of influences. It could mean the China dominated Asia which would be unacceptable to India to determine its own strategy, India will need to keep in mind all these alternative scenarios.

China's Superpower Ambition

There are two ways to achieve China's desired ambition. The first way focuses on achieving its goal by building regional primacy in its home region as a springboard to global power. The second way focuses on "developing China's economic, diplomatic and political influence on a global scale".⁴The emerging issues explain that China concentrates to establish global influence through establishing political hegemony in the home region. Particularly, China focussed on making itself the influential power in the Western Pacific region, which falls from Japan to Taiwan and beyond the Philippines. The hegemonic role should provide a veto power over its neighbors and their matter related to security and economic concerns.

It is found in the ongoing aggressive activities of china like coercive actions in the South China Sea, the entry of National security law in Hong Kong, virtually abandoning the One Country Two System policy granting high degree of autonomy to the major international financial center in Asia. China involves more threatening rhetoric and military provocations against Taiwan and many contraventions on the India-China border, which recently resulted in casualties on both sides. Further, China Constructed Naval bases in Karachi, Colombo, and in the Indian Ocean. In particular, China dispatched additional submarines to Karachi, Colombo and to the region of Indian Ocean. Through Nepal and Sri Lanka, China established inroads into both the regions of Indian Ocean and its subcontinent.⁵ These activities clearly have shown in China's external behaviour.

China – India Conflicts

The major three wars between India and China, the Sino-Indian War of 1962, the Chola incident in 1967, and the 1987 Sino-Indian skirmish. have been classified under border wars. Especially in early 2017, China and India have clashed on the Doklam Plateau region which is disputed between China-Bhutanese.

There are two broad arguments relating causes behind the China and India dispute. One side argues that the main reason behind the recurring conflict is based on the security dilemma of this region and China's sensitivity over Tibet. In this conflict, the indivisible nature of claims of both countries which is the territorial claims of China and the Security conception of India in the Northeast region makes harder de-escalation from this issue.⁶

The counterbalancing near the India-China- Bhutan tri-junction area where both China and Bhutan hold competing territorial claims, thus related to China-Bhutan border dispute. India's involvement paved the way for cordial relationship with Bhutan and presence standoff at risk 'Chicken Neck' strategy around 21 kilometers limited in extent to silver territory connecting India mainland to northeastern regions.⁷

Is Thucydides Trap applicable in India China Dispute?

The Greek historian Thucydides theorised that "when an established power encountered a rising power, a conflict between them was inevitable". A dangerous dynamic that occurs when rising power threatens to displace a ruling power. At present China is considered as an established power of Asia and India is the rising power in the Asian region. One-third of Chinese naval power is sent to the Indian Ocean. With countries around India's neighborhood: From Myanmar to Pakistan, the Chinese form the ring of alliance under the "string of pearls" Doctrine. Chinese military operations to control India have become much stronger and more obvious in recent months. According to Thucydides Trap, there is a possibility of conflict between China and India. There are two ways to escape from this Trap; First one is through a legitimate approach, it means to accept the systemic reality it comes from common authority. The second is relating to diplomatic negotiations of both the countries in a joint venture.

Disputes in Post COVID-19 Period

The COVID-19 is a global pandemic caused by coronavirus. The entire world is struggling with Covid-19 pandemic.⁸ The government across the world are engaged to solve the health casualties

as well as an economic crisis engendered by covid-19. It has disrupted all over the world and particularly resulted in human casualties. The Coronavirus was first detected in Wuhan province in China,⁹ Therefore, many States in the World, especially the United States, have blamed China for its alleged role in the spread of the novel coronavirus.

In the midst of the pandemic covid-19, border clashes between the militaries of India and China in the 3,488-km-long region called “Line of Actual Control” (LAC).¹⁰ China enhanced its military troops near LAC in Ladakh and in the areas Galwan valley and Pangong Lake in the face of fierce resistance from India. China accuses the Indian Army of infiltrating its territory while the Indians on the other hand accuse the Chinese military of preventing it from carrying out its usual mission of the Indian military and interferes with normal patrols with its troops.¹¹

The Galwan event expects a mentality of China about stating its illegal regional claim in Ladakh territory. The continuous events lead to disputes explaining the place and nature of encroachment by People Liberation Army (PLA) of China. The growing and rapidly changing geopolitical events in the region is one of the driving factors to increase the Chinese military integration in the Galvan Valley. The incident on June 15, 2020 sparked controversy over whether Indian soldiers on border patrol were brutally attacked by the People Liberation Army (PLA). The regional and timing factors in the build-up of the Chinese military in Line of Active Control (LAC) justified a high level of political recommendations at an early stage of the meeting.¹²

India has significantly improved its border infrastructure over the past few years, which is considered to be the main reason for China's militancy near the border. Further enhanced system in Indian military is very effective in easily monitoring the activities of the Chinese Army which has given new impetus to the Indian Army. Indian Army patrols near LAC are very effective in monitoring the activities of the Chinese Army and bringing them under surveillance. The present conflict situation consists of actions such as building fortifications, clashes between patrolling parties, lying of mines, air intrusions alongside certain provocation of political actions.

India's right to stand that the Chinese had violated existing protocols on the border. Firstly, an issue of trust setback between both countries by decades, now it is time to break the so called trust as well as shift in ground realities. An infrastructure thick environment will require permanent presence and closer deployments. Now time to think about self-reinforcing logic of perceptions not based upon moral claims. Like how China signaled that would like infrastructural, territorial and cultural consolidation on our periphery. Therefore, India may paint a picture of diplomatic maturity, domestic ideological articulation of India ranging from reclaiming PoK to Aksai Chin. India's claim was not to be impugned rather than thinking of who had more responsible power. Mutual reinforcing cycle of mutual antagonism now deeper psychological and political deadlock much needed.¹³

Emerging grounds for the New World Order

India and China have agreed to resolve border issues through bilateral treaties, friendship and the cooperation of 70 years of diplomatic relations have now begun to shake. Both countries under the current leadership regime collaborated on many issues and development based on regional and global level under ‘hometown diplomacy’. India has efforts to reduce its economic and technological dependency upon China. Its standby was banning 59 Chinese applications as a mode to data theft use in India evident of deteriorating relations. The Indian diplomacy has taken

necessary ability and adaptability to effectively respond to the emerging challenges in this speedy emerging environment, also cementing the India's credentials as a responsible and constructive member of the global community.

Indian Government allowed the Dalai Lama and the U.S ambassador to enter Arunachal Pradesh. In the month of May 2020, India shunned the OBOR summit (Bhutan also followed India), and India supported an arbitration which condemned China's claims in the South -China sea. From the beginning of this dispute, ONGC, an Indian corporation renewed its Oil exploration agreement with Vietnam in the South- China Sea an area disputed by China.

Further, the Indian government permitted the Tibetan Government-in-Exile. In Pangong Lake of Ladakh India Performed a ceremony for the birthday of Dalai Lama. India has taken a sharper and confident policy against China. It identifies the path to proceed in only one direction. This policy shift of India to be considered with the geo-political dynamics and aspirations of India. India-US ties related to Afghanistan and Indo-Pacific, India, US, and Japanese navies joint exercises in the Malabar at the Indian Ocean this moves further clarified India's strategic choices.

Is India used as Counterweight to China

The world community also has raised many questions against China's actions that did not handle the COVID-19 pandemic properly in the early days. Not only in the spread of pandemic covid-19 but also many activities of china in global politics such as deems itself to have arrived as the next global superpower with replacing the US, multiple disputes with India, Hong Kong and Xinjiang to Taiwan, Controlling the South China Maritime Boundary, desire to become political hegemony, have turned many countries in the world into anti-China attitudes. Especially, India and the US consider China as a common Threat. China's presence and influence in the Indian Ocean Region and South Asia represent a significant threat around the world. China Build a secret and mysterious naval base in Indian Ocean Region and are preparing to build another noval base in a joint venture with Pakistan in the quarter.To Counter China's domination, the Western Countries is trying to utilize India as a balancer for China in her region. It is evident from approach of the United Nations initiating dialogue with India to find ways to manage economic and commercial revival not depending upon china. India and US are entered into a cooperation based pragmatism to establish a firm position around global politics.

Balancing Strategies of India

The Nation of India is on the move towards the evolving and progressing along with multiple axes at a very prompt/ meteoric rate. For developing an international system like India takes constructive actor role i.e. human centric approach. Together work with partner countries those who have shared their developmental experience. Humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations undertakes over a geographical area from the Pacific to the Atlantic. Net security provider assisted number of friends and partners during the pandemic period. The emergence of the International Organisations catalyse with constructive, forward facing agenda like International Solar Alliance and the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure. During the current crisis India had been the forefront of the digital diplomacy. Besides the summits listed prior, India had virtual summits with Australian and European Union also participated at the Ministerial level meetings of BRICS, SCO and RIC.

India's most important foreign policy objectives captured in the form of 'Neighbourhood First'. It underlined the prolong primacy that attach to neighboring countries to far reaching upgrade and strengthen India's alliances. Ties/Bond/ Link with neighbours acquire the greatest attention as reflected in frequent high level exchanges of India; remarkable improvements in connectivity, economic integration and people-to-people contact and special focus on neighbouring countries in India's development partnership programs.

India have exemplified its fidelity in South Asia includes during the pandemic, and in the sub-regional BIMSTEC frameworks *interaliathrough* continuous high-level commitment and through economic and connectivity initiatives. Gaze at East upgraded to Act East under which tie up with ASEAN countries strengthened through improvements in road, maritime and airspace networks with a special focus on building our northeastern states to these countries. India have growing dialogues with ASEAN through multiple channels and rapidly emerging multi-sectoral linkages with ASEAN members. India have endure actively in other formats such as the East Asia Summit and ASEAN Defence Minister Meetings (ADMM) plus. Last, five years, Thin West- outreach to the Gulf and West Asian Countries become increasingly important pillar of India's foreign policy. India's engagement with Africa both in political and economic terms has intensified. There are 34 outgoing visits to African Countries at the level of the President, Vice President and Prime Minister. Over two-third majority of India's Lines of Credit (LOC) in the past decade have been offered to African Countries. India's commitment and engagement with the key bilateral partners continue space.

Indo-US bilateral Partnership

Indo-US relationship has been elevated to a Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership in the current years. India's deep rooted high level dialogue and cooperation in multilateral, plurilateral and global arena; diverse and substantial bilateral agenda. Defence, security and counter-terrorism are important pillars of the partnership. Growing trade and investment in both directions, collaboration in Research and Development, innovation, healthcare, and space are also crucial components of India's agenda. India's Strategic Energy Partnership with the US has emerged as an important contributor towards India's energy security.

India-EU Strategic Partnership

The European Union is an important friend with whom we have a many layered and vibrant relationship. The 15th India-EU Summit held in July 2020 showcased the firm resolve and vision of the two sides towards realizing a multifaceted partnership. The commitment is ingrained in the "India-EU Strategic Partnership: A Roadmap to 2025" issued after Summit.

India-Russia relationship

India's relationship with Russia has not only deepened in traditional areas of cooperation like defence, space, nuclear, science and technology etc., but has expanded to include non-traditional and new areas of cooperation like energy, investments and cooperation between states. 2020 marks the 20th year of Indo-Russian Strategic Partnership and 10th year of 'Special and Strategic Partnership'.

Conclusion

In the event of a conflict between two countries, the "chicken game" in international relations provides a useful framework for analyzing such positions and their consequences. one country must give up or veer off is predominant to avoid a conflict that is detrimental to both countries and avoid the greatest loss. If both players try to make the ultimate gain in this game the result may be similar to a loser in the chicken game.

Both China and India are well aware of the consequences of direct confrontation between themselves. China is moving forward with the goals to be achieved by 2035 and 2055. Similarly, India is also working towards achieving those goals by setting policies for the target to be achieved by 2030. So these two countries are well aware that if there is a direct war between them, these two countries may not achieve their goal. But in the present situation, these two countries are trying to make maximum gains on this border issue and this problem may be turned into a direct war and the resulting loss will have the worst possible consequences for both these countries. if direct war occurs, No one can predict when the war will end. direct war may be changed into a proxy war that may lead to third world war. So the best strategy for these two countries is to solve their problem in a smooth way.

India faced a number of challenging situations in its immediate neighbourhood and worked appropriately to resolve those problems. India's capacities and resources are growing and India concentrate to adopt the necessary strategies and tactics whenever problems arise. India committed multilateralists. India firmly believes that the path to achieve sustainable peace and prosperity is through multilateralism. India believed that all nations must join hands to address common challenges and achieve common goals. However, multilateralism needs to represent the reality of the contemporary world. India believed that only reformed multilateralism with a reformed United Nations at its centre can meet the aspirations of humanity.

India wants to establish a multi-polar world. Especially, it has been concentrating towards every aspects to become a one of the major pole in the multi polar world. It is clearly evidenced from multi-lateral treaties between India and the Western countries in this region. This policy shift of India is causing a rift in the relationship between China and India and it intensifies into conflict. The competition between China and US to become political hegemon and conflict between India and China in this region drives to establish New World Order.

Endnotes

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