

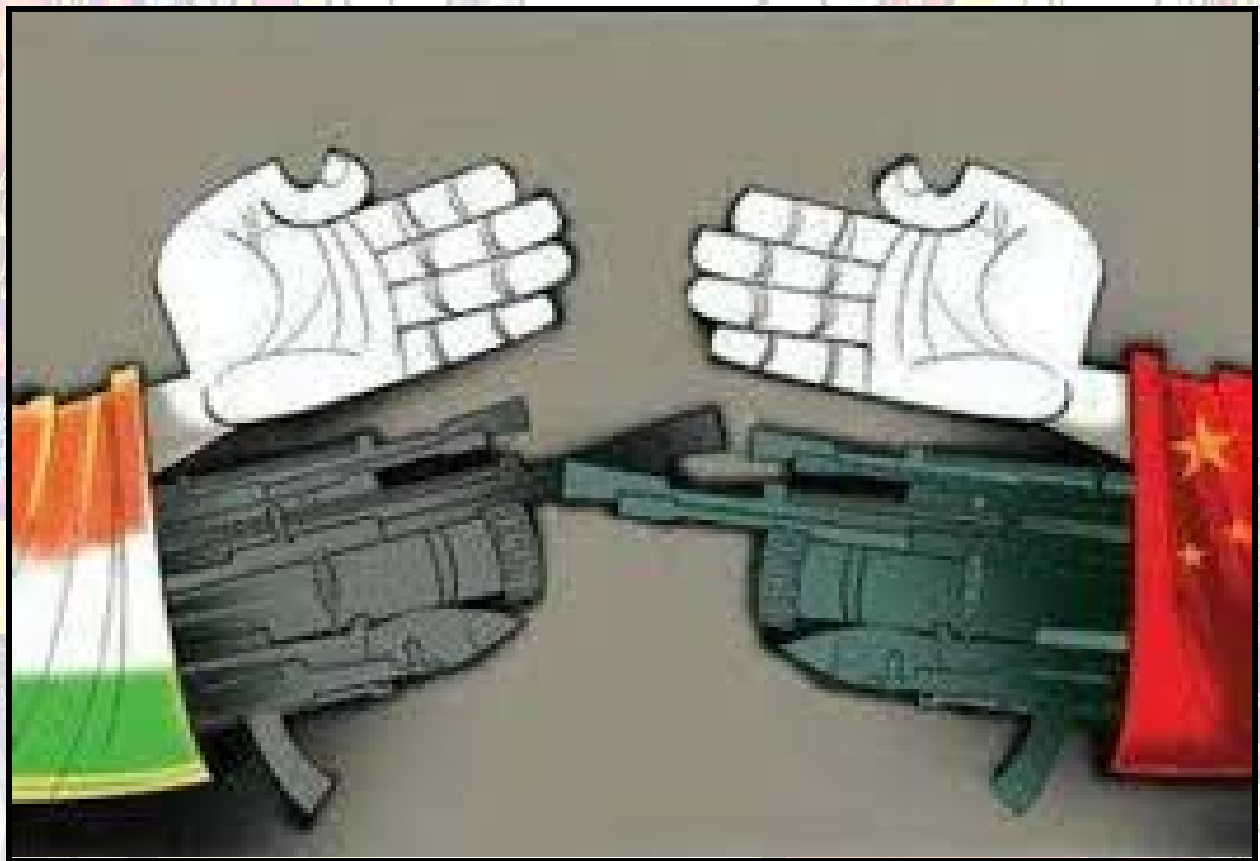
INDIA'S FOREIGN RELATIONS

INDO-CHINA RELATIONS

INTRODUCTION

India and China have been 2 Giant Superpowers throughout the history of the world. Their impact on the world as we know it has been immense, whether it be in the field of Science, Literature, the Arts or Philosophy. Moreover, it is important to note that they together dominated the world's economic growth and prosperity from the 1st century to the 18th century.

And while their impact on the world is quite interesting to learn about, there is even more to be unpacked when we discuss the impact these 2 countries have had on each other since time immemorial. In this paper, we will be discussing the relations between the 2 Countries, including the impact they have had on each other historically, politically, economically, culturally and otherwise, the conflicts which have taken place between them and a whole lot more.



RELATIONS IN THE ANCIENT ERA

Historically, India and China have had relations sustained for more than 2,000 years (the era of modern relationship began only in 1950). The first records of contact between China and India were written during the 2nd century BCE. China and India have also had some contact before the transmission of Buddhism from India to China in the 1st century CE. References to a people called the Chinas, now believed to be the Chinese, are found in ancient Indian literature. The Indian epic Mahabharata (c. 5th century BCE) contains references to "China", which may have been referring to the Qin state which later became the Qin Dynasty. Chanakya (c. 350-283 BCE), the prime minister of the Maurya Empire and a professor at Takshashila University, referred to Chinese silk as "cinamsuka" (Chinese silk dress) and "cinapatta" (Chinese silk bundle) in his Arthashastra. Vijay Gokhale, Indian Ambassador to China, also observed that "even before the transmission of Buddhism, the Shang-Zhou civilization and the ancient Vedic civilization in 1500-1000 B.C. showed some evidence of conceptual and linguistic exchanges." For instance, "wumingzhi" (nameless finger) in Chinese is called "anamika" (nameless) in Sanskrit and Pali.

In the Records of the Grand Historian, Zhang Qian (d. 113 BCE) and Sima Qian (145-90 BCE) made references to the "Shendu", which might have referred to the Indus Valley (the Sindh province in modern Pakistan), originally known as the "Sindhu" in Sanskrit. When Yunnan was annexed by the Han Dynasty in the 1st century, Chinese authorities reported an Indian "Shendu" community living there. Therefore, China and India are two of the world's oldest civilisations and have co-existed in peace for millennia. Trade relations via the Silk Road operated as economic contact between the two countries. The Silk Road not only served as a major trade route between India and China, but is also credited with facilitating the spread of Buddhism from India to East Asia. That India and China are not mere societies/countries, rather they are civilizations is testified by sufficient evidences as to when and how they started exchanging their cultural elements, but from the practices in both countries that existed and grew in parallel and shared their cultural traits since the beginning of human history, a tradition that has ever since continued.

Furthermore, it is important to understand that there are two dominant narratives of India-China Relations which need to be considered.

The first one is seeped into civilization, history and culture and speaks of harmonies and creativity (as discussed above).

The second one, however, is seeped into violence and bloodshed, wars and exoduses, grief and death.

While the former narrative begins from the very first interactions between India and China, up until the 19th century, the latter finds its roots in the turbulent world of the 20th century.

As much as I would love to elaborate on and discuss the former, it is the latter narrative which we will be focussing upon in the following sections of this paper.

THE 19TH CENTURY AND THE ADVENT OF THE 20TH CENTURY

In this particular section, we will be covering the interactions which took place between both countries in the 19th century and in the first half of the 20th century. Again, while there is a lot to unpack about the events which took place during this particular time frame, we will just be focussing on the interactions which took place between the Indians and the Chinese (and that also in a very brief manner), which at this point in time, were facilitated largely in part due to the British and other colonial powers.

Case in point, The Opium Wars.

The Opium Wars were two armed conflicts in China in the mid-19th century between the forces of Western countries and those of the Qing Dynasty, which ruled China from 1644 to 1911/12. The first Opium War (1839–42) was fought between China and Britain, and the second Opium War (1856–60), also known as the Arrow War or the Anglo-French War in China, was fought by Britain and France against China. In each case the foreign powers were victorious and gained commercial privileges and legal and territorial concessions in China. The conflicts marked the start of the era of unequal treaties and other inroads on Qing sovereignty that helped weaken and ultimately topple the dynasty in favour of republican China in the early 20th century. Now, the reason why this ties in with Indo-China Relations is because of the following fact. The British East India Company used opium grown in India as an export to China. The British used their Indian sepoy and the British Indian Army in the Opium Wars and Boxer Rebellion against China. They also used Indian soldiers to guard the Foreign concessions in areas like Shanghai. The Chinese slur "Yindu A San" (Indian number three) was used to describe Indian soldiers in British service.

Now, when discussing the same, it is important to note how Colonialism impacted Indo-China Relations (which had been relatively peaceful till the 18th century) in the 19th century, providing a tense build up to the upcoming 20th century and subsequent Indo-China Relations.

FUN FACT:

The Sino-Sikh War

In the 18th to 19th centuries, the Sikh Empire expanded into neighboring lands. It had annexed Ladakh into the state of Jammu in 1834. In 1841, they invaded Tibet and overran parts of western Tibet. Chinese forces defeated the Sikh army in December 1841, forcing the Sikh army to withdraw, and in turn entered Ladakh and besieged Leh, where they were in turn defeated by the Sikh Army. The Sikhs claimed victory. At this point, neither side wished to continue the conflict as the Sikhs were embroiled in tensions with the British that would lead up to the First Anglo-Sikh War, while the Chinese were in the midst of the First Opium War. The two parties signed a treaty in September 1842, which stipulated no transgressions or interference in the other country's frontiers.

This is an interesting piece of information because other than the engagement of the Indians and the Chinese due to the Opium War, this was the only other major engagement which took place between Indian Troops and Chinese Troops. It is also an interesting piece of information because of the fact that till this date, the areas of Ladakh and Tibet remain to be disputed areas between

India and China. One is only tempted to speculate whether the foundations of this dispute were in fact not laid down in the era of Mao but in the 19th century itself.

When the 20th century began, both nations were going through a tough period of time in their respective histories. While India was under British Rule and busy fighting for independence, China was facing great internal turmoil. While this time was extremely eventful for both Nations, there was no major interaction which took place between them. As a result, we will now be moving on to the latter half of the 20th century, around the time both nations officially came into being (as we know them today).

INDEPENDENCE AND ONWARDS

On 15 August 1947, India became an Independent Nation. The Constitution was adopted by the Indian Constituent Assembly on 26 November 1949 and came into effect on 26 January 1950 with a democratic government system, completing the country's transition towards becoming an independent republic. 26 January was chosen as the date for the Republic Day because it was on this day, in 1929, when the Declaration of Indian Independence (Purna Swaraj) was proclaimed by the Indian National Congress (INC) as opposed to the Dominion status offered by the British Regime.

Following the Chinese Civil War and the victory of Mao Zedong's Communist forces over the Kuomintang forces of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, who fled to Taiwan, Mao proclaimed the founding of the PRC (PRC) on October 1, 1949.

Jawaharlal Nehru based his vision of "Resurgent Asia" on friendship between the two largest states of Asia; his vision of an internationalist foreign policy governed by the ethics of the Panchsheel (Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence), which he initially believed was shared by China. Nehru was disappointed when it became clear that the two countries had a conflict of interest in Tibet, which had traditionally served as a buffer zone, and where India believed it had inherited special privileges from the British Raj.

We will learn about the same in greater detail in the upcoming Sections.

DIPLOMATIC TIES, THE PANCHSHEEL, THE TIBET PROBLEM AND THE BEGINNING OF BORDER DISPUTES (A.K.A. INDIA-CHINA RELATIONS IN THE 1950s)

India established diplomatic relations with the PRC (PRC) on 1 April 1950, becoming the first non-communist/socialist nation in Asia to do so.

The Chairman of the Chinese Communist Party, Mao Zedong, viewed Tibet as an integral part of the PRC. The preceding government of the Republic of China, under Chiang Kai-Shek, also claimed Tibet as Chinese territory, however, was unable to reassert control.

Chairman Mao saw Indian concern over Tibet as a manifestation of interference in the internal affairs of the PRC (PRC). Therefore, the PRC (PRC) reasserted control over Tibet and swore to end Lamaism (Tibetan Buddhism) and Feudalism, which it did by force of arms in 1950. To avoid antagonizing the PRC (PRC), Nehru informed Chinese leaders that India had no political ambitions or territorial ambitions and did not seek special privileges in Tibet but only wanted traditional trading rights to continue. With Indian support, Tibetan delegates signed an agreement in May 1951 recognizing the sovereignty of the PRC (PRC) but guaranteeing that the existing political and social system of Tibet would continue.

In April 1954, India and the PRC (PRC) signed an eight-year agreement on Tibet that became the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence (or Panchsheel). Although critics called the Panchsheel naive, Nehru calculated that India's best guarantee of security was to establish a psychological buffer zone in place of the lost physical buffer zone of Tibet.

It is the popular perception that the catchphrase of India's diplomacy with China in the 1950s was Hindi-Chini Bhai-Bhai, which means, in Hindi, "Indians and Chinese are Brothers". While VK Krishna Menon was the Defence Minister in 1958, Nehru had privately told G. Parthasarathi, the Indian envoy to China, to send all communications directly to him, bypassing Menon (because of his communist background and sympathy towards China).

Nehru sought to initiate a more direct dialogue between the peoples of China and India in culture and literature. Around then, the famous Indian artist (painter) Beohar Rammanohar Sinha, who had earlier decorated the pages of the original Constitution of India, was sent to China in 1957 on a Government of India fellowship to establish a direct cross-cultural and inter-civilization bridge. Noted Indian scholar Rahul Sankrityayan and diplomat Natwar Singh were also there. Around this time, Dr. Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan also paid a visit to the PRC (PRC). Between 1957 and 1959, Beohar Rammanohar Sinha not only disseminated Indian art in the PRC (PRC) but also became skilled in Chinese painting and lacquer-work. He also spent time with great masters Qi Baishi, Li Keran, Li Kuchan as well as some moments with CCP chairman Mao Zedong and Premier Zhou Enlai.

Consequently, up until 1959, despite border skirmishes, Chinese leaders had amicably assured India that there was no territorial controversy. In 1954, China published new maps that included the Aksai Chin region within the boundaries of India. When India discovered that China built a road through the region, border clashes and Indian protests became more frequent. In January 1959, the premier of the PRC (PRC), Zhou Enlai wrote to Nehru, pointing out that no government in China had accepted as legal the McMahon Line, which the 1914 Simla Convention defined as the eastern section of the border between India and Tibet.

In March 1959, the Dalai Lama, the spiritual and temporal head of Tibet, sought sanctuary in Dharamsala, Himachal Pradesh, where he established the Tibetan government-in-exile. Thousands of Tibetan refugees settled in northwestern India. The PRC (PRC) accused India of

expansionism and imperialism in Tibet and throughout the Himalayan region. China claimed 104,000 km² of territory over which India's maps showed clear sovereignty, and demanded "rectification" of the entire border.

TAKING A CLOSER LOOK:

The Panchsheel Pact (A link between the Past and the Present)

The Panchsheel Pact, also known as the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, was in news in the months of June-August, 2017. This was because China had accused India of trampling on the Panchsheel Principles by allegedly entering Chinese territory. This was the time when both the nations were engaged in a Diplomatic Standoff in the Doklam (or Donglang) area near the Sikkim-Tibet-Bhutan Tri-Junction. The Standoff began after a Construction Party of the Chinese Army came to build a road in the region.

India blamed China's aggressive road building for the crisis. The Indian Side argued that the construction of the road in Donglang would affect the status-quo of the country. On the other hand, China criticised India for misleading the public by alleging that a road being constructed near the Sikkim border could endanger Delhi's access to the region.

China also stated that the region where the road was being built was a part of its territory according to the 1890 Sino-British Convention, a treaty signed with Britain when it was a colonial power. As per the Treaty, the Sikkim section of the boundary commences from the East Mountain, while the road building was taking place about 2000 meters away from Mount Gipmochi. Bhutan also engaged in talks with China over the resolution of the area. However, Bhutan had no diplomatic ties with China and it was (and is) supported militarily and diplomatically by India. This ongoing border dispute had also affected the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra after China closed the Nathu La pass in Sikkim for 50 pilgrims.

Eventually, on 18th June, 2017, as part of Operation Juniper, about 270 Indian troops, armed with weapons and two bulldozers, crossed the Sikkim border into Doklam to stop the Chinese troops from constructing the road. On 28th August, 2017, both India and China announced that they had withdrawn all their troops from the face-off site in Doklam.

I believe that this piece of information is particularly interesting because of 2 Reasons. They are as follows:

1. It is another example of confusion, turmoil and enmity between the two nations of India and China as a result of Colonialism and the actions taken by Colonial Powers like Britain (i.e., The United Kingdom).
2. Moreover, it also shows how a Pact signed in the past (or any Document, Agreement or Treaty between 2 or more countries) can not only be acted upon as a Safeguard or a Path to Diplomacy but also as a means of Psychological Warfare to pressurise the fellow nation (or nations). It is a brilliant example of China's Hypocrisy and its excellent strategy of Psychological Warfare. I say this because it was not only able to pressurise the Government in power by accusing them of a false action but was also able to sway the opinion of the Indian Public and Opposition (not that the Opposition needed such an event to occur in order to criticise the Government in power).

Now that we have talked about India-China Relations in the 1950s (A Decade of India-China Relations of which The Panchsheel Pact was an integral part) and also discussed and analysed a more recent event which took place (concerning both India and China), we must now take a look at what the Panchsheel was in a bit more detail.

The Panchsheel Pact- What is it?
And My Take on it

The 14th of November is a truly special date for all Indians, for it marks Children's Day- the birth anniversary of our first Prime Minister, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

If anyone were to ask any Indian child for their perspective on him, they would all give you a "Textbook" account (quite literally) of his glorious deeds, because as crude as this may sound, that is what we are fed from a very young age.

Now, Pt. Nehru, or as many children fondly called him, Chacha Nehru, was a great man, there is no doubt. He had his vices but he also had his virtues, and let me make it very clear that the aim of this article is not to defame him but just analyse one of his blunders which cost his Motherland heavily.

With that out of the way, let us remember and try to deconstruct the Panchsheel Pact of 1954.

Panchsheel, or the "**Five Principles of Peaceful Co-Existence**", were first formally expounded in the **Agreement on Trade and Intercourse between the Tibet region of China and India***, signed on April 29, 1954, which stated, in its preamble, that the two Governments "*have resolved to enter into the present Agreement based on the following principles:-*

- i. Mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty,**
- ii. Mutual non-aggression,**
- iii. Mutual non-interference,**
- iv. Equality and mutual benefit, and**
- v. Peaceful co-existence."****

(Later, the Panchsheel Pact was also incorporated into the Ten Principles of International Peace and Cooperation pronounced in the Declaration issued by the 1955 Bandung Conference. The universal relevance of the Panchsheel Pact was emphasised when the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) incorporated its principles in a resolution on peaceful co-existence, which was unanimously adopted on 11th December, 1957.)

Now, on first glance, this looks, for lack of a better word, quite ordinary.

The first (*), looks like any regular title that would be given to any Agreement, and the second (**), has the bearing of just a regular statement in a mutually endorsed Agreement.

Sadly, the reality is far from that.

Let's understand why.

Notice the phrasing "*the Tibet region of China*".

Why is this Important?

Because of the simple reason that it was a clear indication of India's recognition, quite directly, of China's sovereignty over Tibet.

This was a major victory for China in and of itself, for a once independent nation had now been recognized as an integral part of China- The country which had wrongly invaded and annexed it.

And why was this all the more important at the given time?

Because China had just received foreign approval, and that also from India- The now immediate neighbor of China and the largest stakeholder in this particular Chinese game of expansion, of its wrongful invasion and annexation of Tibet.

And to top it all off, China was cognizant of this blunder and this show of gratuitous compromise by India, and reveled in it.

This is showcased quite clearly in the following statement made by Chinese historian Tieh-Tseng Li:

"Indeed, the status of Tibet was clearly defined in the 'Peking Agreement on Measures for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet'; but the external aspect of the issue remained to be settled. India [gave] a tacit consent to the situation created by this agreement. ...India accepted the principle that Tibet constitutes an integral part of China."

Now, with that complete, we can finally come to the Agreement and its repercussions itself; Don't worry, we'll be covering the irony of the 5 principles simultaneously.

Now, I won't bore you with information regarding which clause stated what; No, I'll be focussing on what were the repercussions of this Agreement and how they effectively destroyed each and every one of the 5 Principles.

Well, first and foremost, we had the exclusion of the Demchok Pass from the Treaty, which effectively led to the question regarding Aksai-Chin to be left unanswered, setting the stage for its annexation in the future.

Then of course, there was the removal of the last Indian Troops stationed in Tibet, which led to the crude materialisation of China's absolute control over Tibet, and more importantly, further intrusions into India, beginning with the incursion into Barahoti, in June 1954. Most importantly, however, it set the stage for the Sino-Indian War of 1962.

And did anyone pay heed to the "Panchsheel"?

Well...

1. *Mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty* was thrown out of the window when it was discovered that China had printed new maps which showed Nepal, Sikkim, etc. as part of China.
2. *Mutual non-aggression* seemed to have been forgotten as the first Chinese incursion in the Barahoti area of Uttar Pradesh occurred in June 1954, serving as the first in a series of hundreds of incursions which finally culminated in the attack of October 1962.
3. *Mutual non-interference* was further demolished as China seemed to be hell bent on imposing its authority over Indian Border Territories, as seen through their various incursions into the country.
4. *Equality and mutual benefit* seemed to have been deemed concepts of the past, as Indian politicians bent backwards in order to accommodate the needs of their Chinese counterparts and the last shred of sense in Indian diplomacy disappeared with the disapproval of Kripalani's emphatic speech and Nehru's approval of this union.
5. And finally, *Peaceful co-existence* served as the final nail in the Chinese manufactured and indigenously endorsed coffin of our great nation in the dynamic era for the 50s and 60s, as India was left as nothing more than a mute spectator- A burial from which we had great difficulty recovering.

When I look back at this instance in our nation's history, I find myself gazing at a glorious blunder which was covered-up to look like the pinnacle of Indian diplomatic success.

While I am sure that the politicians of that time would have had the best of intentions for our nation, the fact is that in their rush to establish a global presence and taut ties with the leaders of the time, they forgot to take care of the greatest power which was right there in their neighbourhood.

In their attempt to prevent bloodshed and violence, and approach diplomacy in the essence of Gandhi Ji's teachings, they tried to deal with a murderer as they would with a saint, playing a dangerous game of black and white and leaving no room for the grey.

However, times have changed and India must prepare to face it's greatest foe- Not Pakistan but China.

Let us look to the past and learn from it, and not repeat the mistakes we once made.

Let us focus on the present and prepare for the future, and begin establishing The Indian Century- The Era of India!

CONFLICT AFTER CONFLICT AND THE SINO-INDIAN WAR (A.K.A. INDIA-CHINA RELATIONS IN THE 1960s)

The Border Disputes between India and the PRC resulted in a short Border War between both the Nations on 20th October, 1962. The border clash resulted in a defeat for India as the PRC pushed the Indian Forces to within 48 km of the Assam Plains in the northeast. It also occupied strategic points in the Aksai Chin and Demchok regions of Ladakh, before declaring a unilateral ceasefire on 21st November, 1962. It claimed that it withdrew to 20 km behind its contended line of control. India disagreed with the claim.

During the Sino-Indian border conflict, India's Communist Party was accused by the Indian government of being pro-PRC, and many of its political leaders were jailed. Subsequently, the Communist Party of India (CPI) split with the leftist section, forming the Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI(M)) in 1964. The CPI(M) held some contacts with the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) for some time after the split but did not fully embrace the political line of Mao Zedong.

Relations between the PRC and India deteriorated during the rest of the 1960s and the early 1970s while China-Pakistan relations improved and Sino-Soviet relations worsened. The PRC backed Pakistan in its 1965 war with India.

The PRC continued an active propaganda campaign against India and supplied ideological, financial and other assistance to dissident groups, especially to tribes in northeastern India. The PRC accused India of assisting the Khampa rebels in Tibet.

Sri Lanka played the role of chief negotiator in the withdrawal of Chinese troops from Indian territory. Both countries agreed to Colombo's proposals.

In late 1967, there were two more conflicts between Indian and Chinese forces at their contested border in Sikkim. The first conflict was dubbed the "Nathu La Incident", and the other the "Cho La Incident".

In September 1967, Chinese and Indian forces clashed at Nathu La. Soon afterwards (In October of the same year), Indian and Chinese forces clashed again in the Cho La incident. While Indian

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forces would sustain eighty-eight troops killed in action with another 163 troops wounded, China would suffer more casualties, with 300 killed and more than 200 wounded in Nathu La, as well as forty in Cho La.

THE SOVIET UNION, REBUILDING DIPLOMATIC TIES, CONGRESS RULE AND THE WARMING OF TIES (A.K.A. INDIA-CHINA RELATIONS IN THE 1970s-1980s)

1970s

In August 1971, India signed its Treaty of Peace, Friendship, and Co-operation with the Soviet Union. The PRC sided with Pakistan in its December 1971 War with India. Although China strongly condemned India, it did not carry out its veiled threat to intervene on Pakistan's behalf. By this time, the PRC had replaced the Republic of China in the UN, where its representatives denounced India as being a "Tool of Soviet Expansionism."

India and the PRC renewed efforts to improve relations, after Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's Congress party lost the 1977 elections to Morarji Desai's Janata Party. In 1978, the Indian Minister of External Affairs, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, made a landmark visit to Beijing, and both countries officially re-established diplomatic relations in 1979. The PRC modified its pro-Pakistan stand on Kashmir and appeared willing to remain silent on India's absorption of Sikkim and its special advisory relationship with Bhutan. The PRC's leaders agreed to discuss the boundary issue, India's priority, as the first step to a broadening of relations. The two countries hosted each other's news agencies, and Mount Kailash and Mansarovar Lake in Tibet were opened to annual pilgrimages.

1980s

In 1984, squads of Indian soldiers began actively patrolling the Sumdorong Chu Valley in Arunachal Pradesh. In the winter of 1986, the Chinese deployed their troops in the Sumdorong Chu Valley. By 1987, Beijing's reaction was similar to that in 1962 and this prompted many Western diplomats to predict war. However, Indian foreign minister N.D. Tiwari and Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi travelled to Beijing to negotiate a mutual de-escalation.

India and the PRC held eight rounds of border negotiations between December 1981 and November 1987. By the summer of 1987 both sides had backed away from conflict and denied military clashes had taken place.

A warming trend in relations was facilitated by Rajiv Gandhi's visit to China in December 1988. The two sides issued a joint communiqué that stressed the need to restore friendly relations on the basis of the Panchsheel. India and the PRC agreed to achieve a "fair and reasonable settlement while seeking a mutually acceptable solution" to the border dispute. The communiqué also expressed China's concern about agitation by Tibetan separatists in India and reiterated that anti-China political activities by expatriate Tibetans would not be tolerated. Rajiv Gandhi signed bilateral agreements on science and technology co-operation, established direct air links, and on cultural exchanges. The two sides also agreed to hold annual diplomatic consultations between foreign ministers, set up a joint committee on economic and scientific cooperation, and a joint working group on the boundary issue.

INDIA-CHINA RELATIONS IN THE 1990s-2000s

1990s

Six rounds of talks of the Indian-Chinese Joint Working Group on the Border Issue were held between December 1988 and June 1993. Progress was also made in reducing tensions on the border via mutual troop reductions, regular meetings of local military commanders, and

advance notification about military exercises. In July 1992, Sharad Pawar visited Beijing, the first Indian Minister of Defence to do so. Consulates reopened in Mumbai and Shanghai in December 1992.

In January 1994, Beijing announced that it not only favored a negotiated solution on Kashmir, but also opposed any form of independence for the region.

In 1995, talks by the India-China Expert Group led to an agreement to set up two additional points of contact along the 4,000 kilometer border to facilitate meetings between military personnel.

There was little notice taken in Beijing of the April 1995 announcement of the opening of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Centre in New Delhi. The Centre serves as the representative office of the Republic of China (ROC) and is the counterpart of the India-Taipei Association located in Taiwan. Both institutions share the goal of improving India-ROC relations, which have been strained since New Delhi's recognition of Beijing in 1950.

Sino-Indian relations hit a low point in 1998 following India's nuclear tests. Indian Defence Minister George Fernandes declared that "*in my perception of national security, China is enemy No 1... and any person who is concerned about India's security must agree with that fact*", hinting that India developed nuclear weapons in defence against China's nuclear arsenal. In 1998, China was one of the strongest international critics of India's nuclear tests and entry into the nuclear club. During the 1999 Kargil War China voiced support for Pakistan, but also counseled Pakistan to withdraw its forces.

2000s

In 2003, China officially recognised Indian sovereignty over Sikkim. 2004 was a milestone in Sino-Indian bilateral trade, surpassing the US\$10 billion mark for the first time.

In the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Summit in 2005, China was granted observer status. While other countries in the region were ready to consider China for permanent membership in the SAARC, India seemed reluctant.

In 2006, China and India reopened Nathula pass for trading. Re-opening of border trade helped ease the economic isolation of the region. In November 2006, China and India had a verbal spat over the claim of the north-east Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh. India claimed that China was occupying 38,000 square kilometers of its territory in Kashmir, while China claimed the whole of Arunachal Pradesh as its own.

Until 2008 the British Government's position remained the same as had been since the Simla Accord of 1913: that China held suzerainty over Tibet but not sovereignty. Britain revised this view on 29 October 2008, when it recognized Chinese sovereignty over Tibet through its website. This change in Britain's position affects India's claim to its North Eastern territories which rely on the same Simla Accord that Britain's prior position on Tibet's sovereignty was based upon.

In October 2009, the Asian Development Bank formally acknowledging Arunachal Pradesh as part of India, approved a loan to India for a development project there. Earlier China had exercised pressure on the bank to cease the loan, however India succeeded in securing the loan with the help of the United States and Japan.

THE 2010s-PRESENT DAY
USHERING IN THE AGE OF CHINA AND REVISITING THE DAYS OF YORE

BRICS:

The BRICS has served as the ultimate Talk-Shop for faking partnership and mutual interests for India and China, and serves no real purpose in today's geopolitics. While there have been a few developments, most of them have been shallow and led to no growth or evolution of any kind. Another factor responsible for this are the regime changes in both nations (The rise of Modi in India and advent of Xi in China). Furthermore, with growing Chinese aggression and Putin's War in Ukraine, the BRICS has certainly taken a backseat with respect to each country's foreign policy and geopolitical strategy.

AGNI-V:

In response to India's test of an Agni-V missile capable of carrying a nuclear warhead to Beijing, the PRC called for the two countries to "*cherish the hard-earned momentum of co-operation*".

And at this point in this paper, we reach a moment in Indo-China Relations which truly rivals the tensions of this fragile relationship in the late 1950s-early 1960s; the Period Post 2014 (A.ka. The Era of Modi-Shah).

Now, one key factor to notice here is also the change in leadership in the Indian context, with the BJP-led NDA (National Democratic Alliance) defeating the Congress-led UPA (United Progressive Alliance) and taking power in May of 2014, and the Chinese context, with the advent of Xi Jinping as President of China in March of 2013.

Since the developments in this period are too numerous to mention, I shall be proceeding by mentioning them (as briefly as possible) under broad headers.

BORDER SKIRMISHES

(And an Insight into China's Various Forms of Warfare)

In September 2014, the relationship took a sting as troops of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) reportedly entered two kilometres inside the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the Chumar sector. In September 2015, Chinese and Indian troops faced off in the Burtse region of northern Ladakh after Indian troops dismantled a disputed watchtower the Chinese were building close to the mutually agreed patrolling line.

As you all are aware, we also had the 2017 Doklam Military Standoff, but I won't be covering that in this section since it has already been covered previously.

On 10 May 2020, Chinese and Indian troops clashed in Nathu La, Sikkim, leaving 11 soldiers injured.

Following the skirmishes in Sikkim, tensions between the two countries grew in Ladakh with a buildup of troops at multiple locations. 20 Indian and 43 PLA soldiers were reportedly killed in action on the night of 15/16 June 2020. Bilateral agreements between India and China prevent the use of guns along the line of actual control.

Following the deaths, Prime Minister Modi addressed the nation about the incident, saying that "*the sacrifice made by our soldiers will not go in vain*", while the Indian foreign minister told the Chinese foreign minister that Chinese actions in Galwan were "*premeditated*". The Chinese foreign minister said that both sides were trying to de-escalate the situation.

China and Unconventional & Irregular Warfare

While China is most definitely an undisputed champion of conventional warfare, the field in which China truly reigns supreme is that of Unconventional & Irregular Warfare.

However, China has slowly moved away even from evident aggression in the form of irregular and unconventional warfare in larger conflicts which concern it; instead adopting a more subtle approach which is almost so diplomatic by nature that it becomes tough to identify it as "warfare" at all.

Case in point, *the Three Warfares*.

The Modern War Institute describes the Three Warfares as follows:

The three warfares are the coordinated use of public opinion, psychological, and legal warfare methods to "stifle criticism of the Chinese Communist Party, spread positive views of China," and influence foreign governments "in ways favorable to China," according to the US-China Economic and Security Review Commission.

The three warfares shape the battlespace by creating a favorable strategic and operational environment prior to hostilities. One PLA researcher described the interactive nature of the three warfares: legal warfare to provide the basis for launching an attack, public opinion warfare to delegitimize the adversary, and psychological warfare to demoralize the adversary.

Interesting, right?

So let's break this down and simplify it.

So the Chinese Communist Party, which directly controls the People's Liberation Army, selects an adversary which opposes China on the International Level.

The PLA, in tandem with the CCP's Administration and its own branches, then launch two simultaneous operations employing the three warfares.

However, China doesn't stop there.

In addition to utilizing these 3 Warfares, China's entire economic outlook and political diplomacy also has inherently aggressive and expansionist tendencies. Case in point, the BRI (The Belt and Road Initiative) and China's infamous Debt-Trap Diplomacy.

THE OBORI

While the BRI seems like a faithful infrastructure development project at first glance, in reality, it is nothing but China moving forward in establishing its hegemony over the world, starting with taking the entirety of the Eastern Hemisphere away from the United States of America and asserting its dominance over the Continents of Asia, Africa, Europe and Oceania.

The key takeaways from the OBORI in this respect are as follows:

1. A Modern Day Silk Route:

China hopes to establish a global trade network which shall be controlled by itself, much like the United States of America did following the conclusion of World War 2.

The only difference is that it wishes to secure it by creating concrete physical linkages (Having invested in the creation of numerous roadways and ports), and having a direct stake in the very infrastructure which shall facilitate all trade.

2. A Tool for Territorial Expansion:

Indo-China Relations

The primary catch to this, however, is the fact that China also wishes to secure its expansionist ambitions by going ahead with the BRI. Operating in tandem with the BRI, is China's infamous Debt-Trap Diplomacy, which has helped it secure land holdings in various countries for the establishment of its very own (military) bases.

3. A Tool for Stifling any other Nation's Regional Aspirations:

Lastly, as is quite visible from the Map provided, it almost entirely surrounds India from all sides; while this may look like a trivial matter at first glance, once again, it is not. For having utilized the power of trade, economics and politics, it would have effectively taken out it's only fellow Asian Nation which could serve as a rival Hegemon.

It is important to note that in 2019, India reiterated that it would not join China's Belt and Road Initiative, stating that it cannot accept a project that ignores concerns about its territorial integrity.

DEBT-TRAP DIPLOMACY

I would like to briefly cover this vast topic in a very specific instance- China's String of Pearls Strategy in the Indian Ocean.

Using a combination of this very Debt-Trap Diplomacy and strategic investment, China has successfully been able to acquire land on various islands in the Indian Ocean and facilitate the process of the creation of ports and bases.

This has essentially created a "string" of Islands which surround the Indian Mainland from all sides; all of them either having existing Chinese bases of operation or seeing the construction of such bases underway.

The doctrine has been discussed and debated for years and India's 'Look East Policy' was always seen as an answer to Chinese 'String of Pearls'

Though similar military and commercial facilities have been developed by China to encircle Japan and other American allies as well, since our concern is India, we are discussing the Chinese presence in IOR which might prove costly for India at the time of conflict with China.

1. Strait of Malacca

80 percent of China's oil imports pass through the Strait of Malacca. Therefore, the Strait of Malacca is indispensable for China until it develops alternative routes.

Therefore China is keen to develop friendly relations with countries like Malaysia and Singapore which surround the Malacca Strait.

India has a strategic hold on Malacca Strait and has also threatened to block it in the past when China was mulling to help Pakistan in 1971 war.

China is said to have developed a naval base near Strait of Malacca on Cocos Keeling Island, which is a distant part of Australia.

2. Myanmar

China has invested a lot in this project; the 2400 km gas pipeline connecting Kyaukyu and Kunming being an example of the same.

Another major Chinese presence in close vicinity to Indian shores are the Coco Islands, situated north of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

3. Bangladesh

China has developed the Chittagong Port, providing it with a station to be used in the heart of the Bay of Bengal. China has invested a lot in Bangladesh and both Bangladesh and Myanmar are important points of OBOR's sub-project, Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar (BCIM). China has been pushing Bangladesh to allow the construction of a naval base near Chittagong.

4. Sri Lanka

Though India has had robust relations with Sri Lanka for centuries, China has found its feet in Sri Lankan soil as well. They have developed a port at Hambantota, in the Southern-eastern side of Sri Lanka.

5. Pakistan

Pakistan-India relations require no introduction and China is Pakistan's all weather ally. Therefore, Pakistan has always been China's tool to keep India in check. The Gwadar Port developed by China is just the tip of the iceberg as political pundits believe that China will not only assist the Pakistani Navy through Gwadar port but would also launch an offensive using this port in the scenario of a Sino-Indian conflict.

The Pentagon has come up with a report that China may come up with a full-fledged naval base in Pakistan.

6. Chinese presence in the Greater IOR

China hasn't limited itself to luring the countries encircling India, but it has also made its presence felt on the African coast and the Middle East. China is said to have a powerful presence on the African coast of the Indian Ocean in Sudan and Kenya, while it's also building a military base in Djibouti to counter the increased American footprint in the Middle-East and IOR.

How India has planned to counter China:

Apart from the Look East policy through which India has been trying to improve relations with China's Southern-Eastern neighbours like Taiwan, South Korea, Philippines and Japan, India has been trying to improve its relationship with its neighbours.

To counter Chinese influence in Myanmar, India has recently extended over USD 1.75 billion in grants and credit to Myanmar. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has recently visited Bangladesh. All these moves are seen as key to countering China.

In order to counter China's Gwadar move, India has made a deal with Iran and is now developing Chabahar Port in Iran which is even more crucial than Gwadar as it's located on the mouth of the Hormuz Strait from where all the Middle-Eastern oil trade takes place.

India has also invested a lot diplomatically in the Central Asian Republics and Mongolia- all of which surround China. Besides, India has good old friends in Japan, South Korea and Russia.

The push for Nuclear Submarines on part of India (A phenomenon which has recently been making headlines worldwide) is a clear indication to China that India is ready to fight and prevent China's ambitions of conquering the Indian Ocean.

THE GREAT BAN ON APPS

Indo-China Relations

On 29 June 2020, the Indian government banned 59 widely-used Chinese mobile phone and desktop applications in response to rising tensions and escalating diplomatic dispute between the two nations.

CONCLUSION

The India-China Relationship is without a doubt one of the most important geopolitical relationships of the 21st century. It won't only determine the future of Asia, but the entire world as we know it.

With Putin's War in Ukraine, the steady decline in the power of the EU and that of the hegemony of the USA, the reinvigoration of the QUAD and the formation of the Sino-Russian-Pakistani Axis (An Anti-QUAD if you will), one can only wonder what the future of this relationship and that of this world would look like.

The Dragon And Tiger, Engage In A Fierce Dance,
Breathing Fire, And Bearing Fangs And Claws.
All The While, The Others Watch,
For The Winner Shall Soon Come To Rule Them All.

THE END