

International Relations Class 16

6th February, 2024 at 9:00 AM

INDO-CHINA RELATION (09:14 AM):

- **China's Growing Assertiveness:**
- **a) What is China's Salami Slicing Strategy:**
- This is a divide-and-conquer strategy used to dominate the opposition territory piece by piece.
- Such military operations or advancements are too small to result in a war.
- But, they provide China with a strategic advantage.
- This strategy also helps to avoid international diplomatic attention and it could also be considered as "**Bridge Diplomacy**" that is linking China's soft power with its harder variant.
- **b) Means adopted in Salami Slicing Strategy:**
- i) Coercive Diplomacy - Through force or direct action.
- ii) Cartographic Aggression - Use of maps or graphs in order to project claim over disputed territories.
- Concerns associated with cartographic aggression:
- China wants to create a false narrative at the international level against India.
- iii) Saber-Rattling:
- It is a military exercise and resultant deterrence.
- iv) Gunboat Diplomacy:
- It means the use of naval forces to create a threat perception.
- v) Debt Trap Diplomacy:
- Project funding leads to a debt trap.
- For example, China's control over Gwadar Port (Pakistan), Hambantota Port (Sri Lanka), Mombasa Port (Kenya), and most of the economy of Djibouti is now Chinese-owned.
- vi) Educational programs and incentives:
- For example, Mandarin educational centers in Nepal, and the opening of Chinese think tanks in the West including the US.

- **c) Multiple Facets/Connotations of Salami Slicing:**
- **Note** - Kindly refer to the PPT provided for more details.
- i) Territorial claims:
 - Acquisition of Tibet and Xinjiang.
 - Capture of Aksai Chin.
 - Incursions across the Line of Actual Control (LAC) by Chinese forces.
 - The Nathu La episode of 1967.
 - Doklam standoff in 2017.
 - Salami slicing of the Rui village of Nepalese Gorkha District.
 - Seizure of the:
 - Paracel Islands in 1974.
 - Johnson Reef in 1988.
 - Mischief Reef in 1995.
- ii) Debt Trap Diplomacy.
- iii) Cultural inroads:
 - Mushrooming of China-based think tanks in the US and European Union.
 - The teaching of Mandarin.
- iv) Technology:
 - Stealing of cutting-edge technology by China's global leaders.
- v) Demographic change, diluting traditions.
- **Conclusion (10:00 AM):**
- China has always been famous for exhibiting patience and this is the reason this strategy is also called the silkworm-eating strategy.
- However, the aggressive posture China has shown in the recent past is somehow carrying away this narrative of slow and steady actions by China.
- China's over-reliance on coercive diplomacy and muscle power however won't be sustained keeping in mind the immense international global pressure.
- Therefore, salami slicing strategy and its softer variants could be the most viable option left for China and the most evident challenge for India and the world.
- However, the COVID-19 pandemic has created a great dent in China's image as a dominant actor in the global supply chain.
- Also, the world has understood the deep linkages between string of pearl diplomacy, debt-trap diplomacy, and the larger idea of salami-slicing strategy.

- **Three forward-looking initiatives by China:**
- i) Global Civilization Initiative (GCI) - Launched in March 2023.
- Implication:
 - A peace deal between arch-rivals Iran and Saudi Arabia.
- ii) Global security initiative (GSI) - Launched in 2022.
- The initiative is based on **five pillars**:
 - Mutual respect.
 - Openness and inclusion.
 - Multilateralism.
 - Mutual benefit.
 - Holistic approach.
- iii) Global Development Initiative (GDI) - 2021.
- Aim:
 - To galvanize worldwide attention to development, strengthen global development partnerships, promote international development cooperation, and give a fresh impetus to the realization of the 2030 sustainable development goals (SDGs).
- **Question (10:43 AM):**
- Discuss the Global Development Initiative. Critically analyze how it is different from the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).
- Some experts have referred to GDI as the expansion of BRI while some have considered it as the booster dose to BRI which is facing backlash and challenges all across the globe.
- However, it is gradually becoming clear that just like BRI, the idea of GDI rather than serving a global public good might serve China's own economic and strategic interest.
- This idea of GDI got a push keeping in mind the current state of BRI characterized by renegotiations, downsizing, and even cancellation of BRI projects by recipient countries.
- For example, recently Italy has opted out of BRI.
- The issue of debt trap is also associated with many BRI projects and studies have identified that almost 53 fragile economies have been created due to BRI projects.
- However, keeping in mind the ideas that are propounded under GDI including initiatives in line with the SDG agenda, true multilateralism, and following international norms with regard to transparency, financial responsibility, and sustainability.
- The world expects GDI should not go the BRI way.

- **Wolf Warrior Diplomacy:**
- Some examples can be seen in the form of messaging on social media too, where Chinese officials are quick to counter any allegations by the West and proactively launch attacks.
- **Panda Diplomacy.**
- **China's String of Pearl Diplomacy:**
- China has already captured the strategic port location in the region through its debt-trap diplomacy.
- For example:
- Gwadar port in Pakistan.
- Hambantota in Sri Lanka.
- Kyaupyu port in Myanmar, etc.
- **Question:**
- a) What are the implications of the string of Pearl's diplomacy?
- b) Impact of string of pearls on India
- It is a strategy of China to create its presence in the Indian Ocean including the Bay of Bengal and Arabian Sea by building a network of commercial and military bases and ports in the surrounding countries.
- This is guided by China's apprehensions or insecurities regarding its inaccessibility in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) (The great Malacca dilemma) and the immense importance of IOR in terms of international trade and security.
- In this regard, China has captured strategic ports many times through debt traps, thereby building dual-use ports in India's neighbourhood.
- This strategy of the creation of pearls informs of strategic locations all across the maritime border of India would not only protect the trade interest of China but would also help in circumscribing India in IOR.
- China has already captured strategic port locations in the region of IOR through debt trap diplomacy.
- For example, Gwadar port in Pakistan, Hambantota in Sri Lanka, Kyaupyu port in Myanmar, Malay in Maldives, Chittagong in Bangladesh, and Doraleh in Djibouti.
- **Impact of this Strategy (11:12 AM):**
- It might affect India's presence and hegemony in IOR keeping in mind India's idea of being a net security provider in IOR.
- It would also affect India's forward-looking initiative in IOR in terms of the SAGAR initiative.
- The presence of pearls inform of Gwadar Port, Chittagong Port, Kyaupyu Port, or Hambantota Port might create a maritime security danger to India.
- Since it will offer greater security concerns for India it will lead to greater investment in defense and security, thereby reducing our expenditure on socio-economic development of the country.
- **How has India responded to the String of Pearl Diplomacy:**
- The offense is the best defense.
- India's Necklace of Diamonds Strategy illustrates this idea very well.
- After realizing China's aggressive activities, India started fortifying its presence on IOR and started making strong security ties with the countries in IOR and surrounding China.
- Concerning India's idea of being a net security provider in IOR and a strong power in Asia, India has come out with a counter strategy in the form of the Necklace of Diamond Strategy, thereby checking or countering China's string of pearl diplomacy.

- **Implications of India's Necklace of Diamond policy (11:30 AM):**
- **Note** - Kindly refer to the PPT for more details.
- The strategy involves:
 - Building ports.
 - Extensive Coastal Surveillance Radar (CSR) system.
 - Carrying out regular military exercises.
 - Deepening defense ties.
- **India's strategic base:**
 - Changi Naval Base - Singapore (2018).
 - Sabang port - Indonesia (2018).
 - Duqm port - Oman (2018).
- **Enhancing relations with other nations to garland China:**
 - India's Act East Policy.
 - Military and naval relationships.
 - Building Coastal Surveillance Radar (CSR) system.
 - Connecting diplomatically in countries like Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, etc.
 - Signing pact with France.
- **Concerns regarding India's Necklace of Diamond policy:**
 - The major challenge regarding this strategy is that can India seek the support of "**five eyes**" in the region.
 - The five eyes have also not expressed much willingness to support either India or China in the region.
 - The economic interdependence that these countries are having with China is making it difficult for them to take an entirely pro-Indian stand.
 - Another challenge could be regarding the diplomatic dilemma South East Asian countries are suffering with regard to India and China.
- **Conclusion/way forward:**
 - The best way to settle this complex relationship is through artfully created diplomacy or track 4 diplomacy.
 - Deeper engagements regarding border management, formulation of border treaties, and establishment of special representatives could be huge solutions for the border dispute.
 - As far as the border dispute is concerned, a mutually agreed water treaty over Brahmaputra needs to be formulated as soon as possible.
- **India and One China Policy:**
 - What is One China Policy? Differentiate it from the One China principle. What is India's position?
 - One China Principle insists that both Taiwan (Republic of China (ROC)) and mainland China are an inalienable part of a single China.
 - One China Policy refers to the view that there is only one State and therefore, countries seeking diplomatic relations with the PRC will break official diplomatic relations with ROC.

- **India's Stand:**

- In order to build peace and friendship with China, India embraced the One China Policy in 1950.
- India however argued that if it agrees to the One China Policy, China should also affirm to One India Policy that acknowledges Kashmir and Arunachal Pradesh as an integral part of India.
- India also argued about the acceptance of the Tibetan economy by China.
- Though India established relations with Taiwan in 1995, it restricted its political ties with Taiwan, however in late 2004 and thereafter we started witnessing Chinese aggression near our borders.
- Consequently, there was a shift in India's well-known position on the One China Policy.
- The last time India affirmed to One China Policy was in 2008.
- In 2014, India demanded that China should also reciprocate with the One India Policy.
- Earlier in 2014, India refrained from including Tibet in our joint statement showing our ambiguous position on the One China Policy.
- China later on even showed a very harsh response to India's Act of abrogation of Article 370 in 2019.
- It is argued that India's recognition of the One China Policy and recognizing Chinese sovereignty over Tibet was dependent on **two factors**:
- i) China accepting the One India Policy.
- ii) China granting autonomy to Tibet.
- Both these promises are not kept by China.
- This is the reason we have maintained **strategic ambiguity** in our One China Policy which means India has neither formally discarded the One China Policy nor is willing to affirm this in the context of territorial disputes.
- Defense strategist Harsh Pant argues that there is a growing need in India to relook at our One China Policy and accordingly recalibrate our position over Tibet and Taiwan.

THE TOPIC FOR THE NEXT CLASS - TAIWAN, TIBET, IOR, AND INDO-PACIFIC.