

International Relations Class 17

8th February, 2024 at 9:00 AM

INTRODUCTION (09:08 AM)

- A Brief Overview Of The Previous class.

TAIWAN ISSUE (09:20 AM)

Context:

- June 19th, 2023---U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken concluded a visit to China.
- China's foreign minister told the US Secretary of State, "The Taiwan issue is the core of China's core interests, the most important issue in China-US relations and the most prominent risk."
- Blinken repeated that the United States does not support the independence of Taiwan and stood by its stance of maintaining the status quo.
- At the same time, we and many others have deep concerns about some of the provocative actions that China has taken in recent years going back to 2016," he said.
- May 2023---Recently, the Chinese idea called 'silkworm eating' has been witnessed with regular incursions in Taiwan.
- 2 August 2022.----US speaker Nancy Pelosi visited Taiwan which was not well received by China.

Why Taiwan is important to China:



- Taiwan is China's biggest importer. (the second is the US)
- Taiwan is considered a breakaway province of mainland China and has therefore been clinched by China since 1950.
- The recent Russia-Ukraine war has also created a potential catalyst for China-Taiwan Conflict.
- Taiwan has thus again resumed importance in Chinese Policymaking.

Why the US is interested in Taiwan:

- US-China policy forms the basis of the relationship of the US with China.
- Under this policy, the US snapped diplomatic relations with Taiwan and established diplomatic relations with China in 1979.
- The US acknowledged the Chinese position over Taiwan and accepted that there is but one China and Taiwan is part of it.
- It can be said that in operational terms the One China Policy is a balancing Policy where in US maintains its official relations with China and unofficial relations with Taiwan.
- The US does not have official relations with Taiwan, however, it is bound by the US Taiwan Relations Act, of 1979 wherein the US would provide Taiwan aid to defend itself.

Importance of Taiwan:

- Taiwan has a huge economic advantage over the US being the world's global supply centre of semiconductors.
- At the same time, Taiwan is very crucial for US security architecture in IOR and INdopacific since it is part of the first Island chain within the US island chain strategy.
- the US is by far the largest arms dealer for Taiwan.

INDIA'S STAND ON TAIWAN (09:52 AM)

- Since 1949 India has accepted the One China policy thereby accepting Taiwan and Tibet as part of China.
- As part of India's Act Policy, India has always tried to improve ties with Taiwan in areas of trade investment technology development, environmental issues and P-to-P contact. (This led to the establishment of the India Taipei Association).
- India and Taiwan do not have any diplomatic relations, however, they have maintained representative offices in each other's capital since 1995.
- These ROs act as a defacto embassy.
- Even though India has stopped mentioning the One China policy in official statements, our engagement with Taiwan is still restricted due to the framework of ties with China.

Recent developments in Taiwan and India's stand on it:

- In January 2024, the DPP won the election with Lai Ching as the new president of Taiwan.
- It is noticeable India has not sent
- Since China has disregarded all agreements with India with borders and has even taken the Kashmir issue to the UN in 2019 and 2020, India is also sending signals of a change in its perception of the One China policy.
- India advocates restraint, avoidance of unilateral action to change the status quo, de-escalation of tensions, and efforts to maintain peace and stability in the region.
- Keeping into mind the crucial position of Taiwan in India's Act East policy and India's dependence on Maritime trade and investments flowing through the Taiwan Strait and the South China Sea, India feels restraint from both sides is very important.
- Any invasion of Taiwan is bound to destabilize the region thereby affecting India's rights.

INDIA'S SHIFT IN TIBET POLICY (10:16 AM)

- In the event of increasing tensions between India and China, there was a shift in India's Tibet policy.
- **This shift can be reflected in the following way:**
- Active engagement of the Indian Govt with Dalai lama in public forums.
- In 2014, the head of the Tibetan govt in exile was invited to the swearing-in ceremony of our PM.
- However, in 2019, the Tibetan govt leader was not invited keeping in mind the second informal summit between PM Modi and President Xi.
- Earlier in 2013 also we refrained from using Tibet in a statement showcasing our ambience on one China Principle.

Challenges associated with India's Tibet Policy:

- Changes in Tibet's demography due to attempted sinicization by China.
- As India-China tension grows China has also started creating a militia of Tibetan, which could lead to infighting between Chinese-trained militia and Indian Trained Tibetan special frontier force.
- There is also a challenge for India regarding the Tibetan youth since India does not give citizenship to Tibetans born in India after 1987.
- This has created dissatisfaction among Tibetan youths and there has been a migration of many Tibetan youths to other countries like the US creating a potential vacuum over the Tibetan population which was pro-Indian.
- There is also an issue regarding the immediate successor of the present Dalailama which could affect India's outlook towards Tibet and vice versa.

Question: China recently rejected the middle-way path propagated by Dalai lama for the resolution of the Tibet issue. Analyze the main ideas regarding the middle way and also India's approach regarding this path.

- Dalai lama has recently advocated the middle path for the resolution of the Tibet issue.
- The Tibetans do not accept the current status of Tibet under China.
- But at the same time, they do not even seek Independence from China.
- The middle path is the peaceful resolution of Tibetan issues providing Tibetans meaningful autonomy and bringing stability and coexistence based on equality and cooperation.
- However, China has rejected its middle path turning it as yet another propaganda to achieve independence.
- As far as India is concerned it considers the middle path to be a practical solution for all and the middle path could be win-win strategy for Tibetans China and even India since it will lead to stabilization in the region.
- Also, this path can lead to peace in our NE which is crucial for India's national security.

IOR (11:00 AM)

- The IOR consists of areas including littoral states of the Indian Ocean.
- It includes sub-regions, such as Australia, South East Asia, South Asia, the Horn of Africa, and Southern and Eastern Africa.

SHANGRILA DIALOGUE (11:09 AM)

- It is a track-one intergovernmental security conference held annually in Singapore by an independent think tank named the International Institute for Strategic Studies.
- Dialogue is mostly attended by defense ministers or military chiefs of Asia Pacific countries.
- It was first held in 2002.

Importance of IOR:

- Long Maritime boundary.
- Home to 51% of India's proven oil reserves and 66% of its natural gas reserves.
- Abundance of natural resources.
- Energy security: 80% of oil and natural gas that are imported to India follow the trade route in IOR.
- Trade security: 95% of trade by volume and 68% of trade by value is routed across IOR.
- Security of IOR is essential because of the presence and interception of 3 major sea lanes of communication.
- Security threats: Traditional and non-traditional/(natural and manmade).

India's key initiatives in IOR:

- India has propounded a 5-point framework for maritime security.
- In August 2021---Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired a debate on maritime security at UNSC.
- i) Removing barriers to maritime trade. (e.g. SAGAR initiative)
- ii) Maritime disputes "should be resolved peacefully and by international law," adding that this was "extremely important for promoting mutual trust and confidence, and ensuring global peace and stability." (e.g. India resolved its maritime boundary with Bangladesh).
- iii) Countries jointly tackle maritime threats from non-state actors and natural disasters. (India's role in the Indian Ocean has been that of a net security provider.)
- iv) Maritime environment and marine resources needed to be conserved, highlighting pollution from plastic waste and oil spills.
- v) For responsible maritime connectivity, saying a structure was required to boost maritime trade, with the development of global norms and standards.

KEY CHALLENGES OF IOR (11:44 AM)

- Silos approach in IOR: India's maritime doctrine has tried to divide IOR into different sections and compartments and has even given priority to one section as compared to another.
- In this regard, the western IOR is less prioritized i.e. region beyond Madagascar to the eastern coast of Africa.
- Lesser hold on strategic chokepoints:
- Continental Bias: More importance is given to land in our foreign policy traditionally.
- Increasing Chinese assertiveness:

Way forward:

- India should adopt the policy of strategic alignment and work with like-minded countries in IOR.
- For example QUAD and QUAD plus (QUAD + South Korea, the Philippines, Vietnam, Newzealand ASEAN)
- India in this regard can also have a trilateral partnership with France and Australia or with Australia and Japan.
- India has already been supplied with Zircon missile technology from Russia for the development of Brahmos which could be used to increase the offensive capabilities of the Indian navy in IOR.
- India should concentrate on increasing its blu water Naval capability.
- In this regard, sea denial capabilities need to be increased.
- India can establish the SAGAR panchayat by collaborating with IOR countries.
- India should develop sea denial capabilities mainly at the most vulnerable choke points regarding International trade i.e. strai of Malacca.
- Efforts should be made regarding sustainable economic options for example: sustainable blue economy initiatives.
- The maritime issues should be given priority and must be clubbed with foreign issues.
- In 2016, there was a separate Indian Ocean Division established under the Ministry of External Affairs.
- For any reasonable IOR strategy Indian core values of mutual respect peaceful coexistence and development of all could be the guiding force.
- However, this needs to be matched with suitable capabilities and strategic choices.

(TOPIC FOR THE NEXT CLASS: INDO PACIFIC)