



LOK SABHA

Agenda- Countering China's Influence in the Indo-Pacific
Region

Letter From the Executive Board

Greetings to the delegates of the Lok Sabha,

It is our privilege as eb members, to moderate this committee. We believe in the spirit of deliberation, teamwork and research. We hope to make the committee a fun and enriching experience for both first timers and for experienced delegates.

The Chinese are now being seen as one of the biggest competitors to the USA. This competitiveness has come at the cost of China's image, globally. **The aggressions on the spratly islands or the Doklam standoff show the length that China will go to assert its dominance in the Indo-Pacific region.** This has raised concerns among the countries in the region, mainly India.

The Prime Minister's vision of the 3 trillion-dollar economy, The Chinese come as an unwanted third party to heap more misery on the Indian economy. Apart from this the Chinese have military and naval bases in Mauritius and in the territory of Pakistan which is now considered an autonomous territory of China in the Indian peninsula.

The members of the Lok Sabha, it is now upon you to frame legislations to tackle the Chinese influence in the region and make India a superpower that it deserves to be. This comes amidst growing factionalism in the grand old party of India, the Indian National Congress, where the scion of the party, Mr. Gandhi, just can't seem to keep his house in order or the Shiv Sena who find themselves among unnatural allies. The BJP has clear majority, but the cabinet and the prime minister have shown the chink in the armour, while battling the covid-19 crisis.

We hope that committee is as exciting as the actual lok sabha and hopefully no shoe-flying or sleeping in this committee. Please do not restrict yourself to the topics mentioned below, these are just topics that we think are slightly important in terms of the chronology of the agenda at hand. Research on the agenda is a must and shall be appreciated highly by the executive board. Bonus points if you incorporate political humour and Arsenal jokes in the committee.

Delegates, THE POWER IS YOURS!

Chanakya Mahadev & Vedanth Bhargava



FORMING A MILITARY POLICY

The current Sino-Indian face-off in Ladakh involving thousands of troops from each side, some within handshaking distance, has made both nations take drastic decisions, such as banning of foreign direct investment by India from Chinese companies.

Talks to defuse the situation at the military, diplomatic and political levels have not succeeded. India wants a restoration of the status quo ante. China is unwilling to concede the territory that it claims, at finger 4 and finger 3 in the Ladakh region. Bombers and missiles have been deployed in these areas as a show of strength by both India and China. Commander level talks have taken place among the respective armies in the region, but these talks have borne no fruit with the foreign ministries of both countries trading barbs in the press, globally.

The region is being seen as highly volatile by political experts and the

heads of states of all those who have an interest, either vested or direct. China has also blocked the inclusion of India into the United Nations Security Council and also the Nuclear Suppliers Group.

The Chinese army is larger and more equipped compared to the Indian military, it is also supported by Pakistan in the west, to act in its interest, if there is an increase in conflict on the Indo-China border. India faces the very real possibility of a Two-Front war, on its borders. The threat of cyber-attacks and other malware attacks by the Chinese are also a huge possibility as pointed out by the ministry of home affairs.

The government of India is now considering to divide the country into theaters of operations so as to give more autonomy and operation control to the local commanding officers. It has also appointed as chief of General Staff, to bolster decision making and to make sure there is operational integrity and structure among the Indian military's structure and hierarchy.

Both India and China are nuclear states. It must not be forgotten that China was among the few powers who supported India becoming a nuclear state. The Chinese's ally, Pakistan is also a nuclear nation. Thus

making the only nuclear nations in the Indo-Pacific region at loggerheads with each other.

The Indian government is concluding a military logistics agreement with Japan. The Indian government has signed LEMOA, COMCASA & BECA, with the Government of the United States, further, it has also purchased Rafael battle aircrafts from the French republic, SPICE bombs and drones from the Israelis and the S-400 missile system from the Russian federation.

India imports around 9.5% of its arms from the USA, Russia, France and Israel, making it the world's second largest importer of arms.

FORMING AN ECONOMIC POLICY



India has stepped up efforts to mend strained ties with its South Asian neighbours as it seeks to wrest back its waning regional influence from China.

Various measures have been taken such as the then Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla and National Security Adviser Ajit Doval, visiting Nepal and Sri Lanka respectively to discuss economic and security ties. The Indian Foreign minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar was in the island nation of Seychelles, where China has deepened defence co-operation through the transfer of aircrafts and naval ships apart from helping build their parliament building.

India has found it hard to match Chinese investments in infrastructure and security in smaller South Asian nations over the last decade, but its own policies have also added to the frayed ties with its neighbours.

The military standoff started in May and since then both sides have moved

thousands of troops, tanks, and missiles to the frontier, while fighter jets are on stand-by. The then U.S. Secretary of State Michael Pompeo and Defense Secretary Mark Esper visited South Asia for meetings that were aimed at bolstering a wider Indo-Pacific strategy to counter Beijing. The Indian Ocean nations of Sri Lanka, Maldives and Seychelles are crucial for the informal Quad grouping -- made up of India, the U.S., Japan, and Australia -- as they seek to counter rising Chinese influence across Asia.

India has multiple options in the policy sphere to economically counter China's outlandish wealth and military might. These options though have only been implemented incrementally and in a fractured manner. This may be due to the headline chasing selfishness of past and present governments. Perhaps the only relevant and in-depth attempt has been the independent effort by a group of analysts that resulted in the much-discussed **Nonalignment 2.0** report in 2012.

It would be in India's best interests to stop responding in a piecemeal fashion to immediate events, but to doggedly pursue a deliberate plan of action. Examples to this would be the measures taken by the government to impose an economic cost on China if it continues its current approach, such

as the banning of 238 Chinese apps, imposition of higher import duties on products including chemicals, steel, electronics, heavy machinery, furniture, paper, industrial machinery, rubber articles, glass, metal articles, pharma, fertilizer and plastic toys. The government also barred the participation of Chinese vendors in the 5G spectrum auctions,, upgrading the level of participation in Quad and concluding a military logistics agreement with Japan.

With this in mind, the Indian government could choose to explore as it has done and implemented in the past, at least six choices for how to deal with the geopolitical conflict zone in Asia: nonalignment, hedging, internal balancing (that is, building indigenous defense capabilities), regional balancing, alignment with China, and closer alignment with the United States. All the above has its list of pros and cons.. No choice by itself will give India everything it wants. The goal should be to pick one of the these options and compliment it with with its and pieces of from the others to build the hope for a safe and sustainable relationship.



RESOURCE CONFLICT

The Himalayan region is an integral part of India which holds several benefits and is rich in resources and is also home to the Indian sister states of the north-east. We have seen the rate of development picking up pace in these areas from 2014.

The recent standoff on 15th June, 2020 in Galwan Valley between India and China shows that a battle for critical resources, namely the river Brahmaputra seems inevitable. Despite being aware of Chinese intrusions, the reluctance of the Indian government to display a desperately needed show of strength, and intent to defend the sovereignty of its North-Eastern states has been keenly observed and reported by the popular media.

During the COVID -19 pandemic, an opportunity has been presented for

India and the USA to pose a strong united position against..

As a common goal is shared i.e the protection of each of the following nation's naval and territorial interests, the possibility of stronger agreements and friendships with Japan, Australia and Pacific nations must be explored.

China is planning to build a huge dam on the river Brahmaputra. And it has raised concern in downstream countries – India and Bangladesh. The Chinese are building these dams very close by to the Indian border and some closer to the source of the Brahmaputra itself. The dams have capacity to stop the flow of water and also to change the course of water, which eventually, not even a single drop of water reaches Bangladesh, thus impacting both economy and livelihood of both Bangladesh and India.

The Brahmaputra (called Yarlung Tsangpo in China) is one of the longest rivers in the world. Starting in the Himalayas in Tibet, it enters India in Arunachal Pradesh, then passes through Assam, Bangladesh, and empties into the Bay of Bengal. The Brahmaputra, a perennial river, is the lifeline for communities living along its banks.

They use it for irrigation, fisheries and inland water transport. In its lower course, the river is both an advantage and a disadvantage. On the one hand, it deposits huge quantities of fertile alluvial soil suitable for agriculture, but on the other, due to geographical and climatic conditions, it causes periodical, disastrous floods in Assam and Bangladesh.

Being an upstream area, China has a clear advantage in building dams and other infrastructure to store or divert the flow of the river system. There is the potential to significantly change the flow rate during times of standoff between the countries. India has agreements with China that require the latter to share hydrological data of the river during monsoon season between May and October.

The data is mainly of the water level of the river to alert downstream areas in the event of floods. However, during the 2017 Doklam border standoff between India and China, China stopped communication of water flow levels from its dams. Though data sharing resumed in 2018, India has reasons to believe that China may withhold data.

The Himalayan region is vulnerable to earthquakes and other seismic activities. Several species of flora and

fauna are unique to this part of the world and some of them are critically endangered.



INTERNATIONAL TRADE :

In 2003, the Bangkok Agreement was signed by India and China. Under this agreement both India and China offered some trade preferences to each other. India provided preferences on tariff for 217 products exported from India and later that year, India and China entered into an agreement to initiate open border trade via the Silk Route. Later in 2013, The Belt and Road Initiative, known in Chinese and formerly in English as One Belt One Road or OBOR for short, is a global infrastructure development strategy adopted by the Chinese government to invest in nearly 70 countries and international organizations. Under Maritime Silk Route (MSR) China is developing ports in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Pakistan and is trying to enlarge its influence using its economic might in the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea.

India and the countries that make up the South Asian Association for

Regional Cooperation (SAARC) – Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka – benefit from several bilateral and multilateral free trade agreements. India fears that China is violating rules of origin norms and pumping goods into India through their common trading partners in Asia, by abusing the loopholes in existing trade agreements. Until 2005, India and China were close in their overall trade volume with South Asia. In the last two decades, China has established itself as a major trade partner of the South Asian nations. Beyond Pakistan, China has made inroads into South Asia by becoming Bangladesh's top trading partner in 2015, and bolstering trade and investment with Nepal, Afghanistan, the Maldives, and Sri Lanka. India has already refused to sign the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), fearing that it could pave the way to Chinese goods flooding the Indian market and overthrowing domestic manufacturers. However, if we are looking at backing out of other such regional and bilateral agreements as well.

More concerning is the possibility that China may decide to strike back by throwing Indian companies out of China. We are already seeing reports of customs authorities in Hong Kong and China, holding back some

consignments of Indian exports after Indian ports started inspecting Chinese imports. This could get worse if India implements a blanket ban on Chinese imports, which is unlikely to happen in the near future.

China accounted for 5% of India's exports and 14% of India's imports in 2019. This had led to a very high trade deficit of US\$ 56.77 billion in 2019. Attempts have been made to reduce the India-China trade deficit through bilateral talks.

The Rules of Procedure

The rules of procedure of this Lok Sabha will be similar to that of normal UNA-USA procedure of a MUN, so as to make the first-time delegates comfortable and preserve their interest in Model United Nations, but however some things we have chosen to take from the Lok Sabha procedure are-

- Private member Bill (if the eb deems it necessary during the conference)
- Anti-defection Policy shall be strictly followed
- Question hour (if the eb deems it necessary during the conference)
- Zero hour (if the eb deems it necessary during the conference)

The documentation shall be in the form of a working paper and if passed by the committee shall be accepted as a bill.