

ALL INDIA POLITICAL PARTIES MEET

Letter from the executive board

Dear Delegates,

As is pertinent, a great opportunity has knocked your doors where you get to take part in one of the country's most prestigious youth conferences, therefore, the excitement is genuine and expected. With the same excitement, we welcome you to a new year wherein we expect ourselves to be unleashed from horrors of the past and enter into a new era of maximizing hopes and happiness. This conference, if nothing else, is a documentation of 'hope', in a way that many of us would not be able to appreciate, but of course we need to. When I mention the word hope, we take it as our responsibility to ignite the same spark in you as the ones in us for the new opportunities that lie ahead.

We have personally seen the organizers hustle in order to present to you a nearly perfect conference so that you get to start your year with an intellectual meetup filled with lively people and their glories. That being said, we welcome you all to the All-India Political Parties Meet.

This guide is going to act as your best companion for the two days of the conference and if implemented effectively, we can assure you a positive impact in the coming years of your lives. This guide, however, is the beginning of your research and not the end; therefore, our words must act as your first milestone only to cover the next thousand kilometers alone. The executive board expects the delegates to be well-researched into the topic and also anything surrounding the topic that might be of concern in the two days discussing the agenda. In most of the conferences we act as mere Moderators, but in committees at JPHS we attempt to put in the best versions of ourselves to establish one of the heartiest and best learning experiences of your lives. Therefore, be ready with your research and rhetoric, and we shall assure you the same from our side.

Kindly make sure you are well versed with the guide and the issues mentioned in the guide, you might obviously take the level of the discussion over and above the expectations of the executive board, but then this is the bare minimum level we expect you all to adhere to.

You may contact us regarding queries and questions related to the issues in working hours of the day. With this we bid adieu to you all until we finally meet at the conclave all geared up to battle our ideologies and rhetoric, only to settle the issue at hand – for what are we if not problem solvers.

Regards,

Akshi Sharma

(Co-Moderator)

Mehul Agarwal

(Co-Moderator)

Anay Bhardwaj

(Deputy Speaker)

About the committee

The functioning of democracy in India occurs through the Parliamentary System of governance wherein we get to choose our representatives who act as our voices in the Lower House of the Parliament. India also happens to be a multi-party democracy wherein political parties contest elections through their individual candidates to get maximum shares of seats at the respective legislative assemblies to sustain a majority and form the government.

Formally the government is not formed by any political party but the representatives of the people who are members of political parties, however, in a country like India where political parties amass resources no less than multi-million dollar enterprises, the role of political parties turns out to be humongous. Furthermore, a political party also presents legitimacy to any candidate trusted by the populace launched by the parties. Indian Parliament functions in three sessions namely – the Budget Session, the Monsoon Session and the Winter Session.

For the remainder of time, the deliberations are at a halt and are conducted by either informal means or a select few formal means such as Parliamentary Committees and the Secretariat. Majorly the time is never enough for members to discuss the issues at length and the deliberations are therefore shortened by cut-short motions and other tools alike.

However, there happen to be certain issues wherein the cost of cutting short the discussion is fairly high and the time taken by members to attain a consensus is even higher. This is where meet-ups such as the AIPPM come into play, wherein different parties meet and discuss issues which include tussle between different sections of the political membership in order to lead to a possible workable solution. One thing which is comprehensible in this educational model is the paucity of time we face just like our political representatives, therefore, we must all understand the gravity of the issue and the auspice this meet acts as.

Generally, AIPPM is called under the hand and the seal of the Prime Minister, however, the authority arranging the meet may be varied. The Election Commission of India called out for

an AIPPM to discuss various reforms in the election machinery of the country in 2018, which can act as a model for us to function. At the end we must realize the functioning of the

committee differs from conventional Indian committees whose rules of procedures are fixed. We enjoy a certain scope of liberty in running the committee depending upon the status of the congeniality amidst the different members on different issues, just in order to arrive at a more soluble solution in the end. However, an RoP will still be followed, which would be explained to you in detail before the beginning of the deliberations. With that being said, we hope their around the proceedings and the functioning of the meet-up is cleared.

Introduction to the agenda

“Reviewing Indo-Chinese relations with special emphasis on Maldives”

India, a country at the intersection of two alliances, has a foreign policy that is both closely associated with the dynamics of its neighboring countries and broadening its scope with the West. India successfully and pragmatically navigates a complex geopolitical landscape by fostering close ties with Asian and South Asian nations with initiatives like the 'Neighbourhood First' policy and forming strategic partnerships with global powers. Although in the past few decades India has been soaring high with its developing strategic diplomatic relations, China is one of the few nations India shares a consequential relation with. With both countries facing the same problem of growing population and similarly a rapidly growing economy, they share an uncertain relationship.

Maldives on the other hand, was the first to recognise India after its independence and establish diplomatic relations. The recent outbreaks mark an exit of India from Maldives and China's entry into the island nation. Questions arise about the center's steps regarding the same and decisions facilitated by the new theory of hyper nationalism.

The principal objective of a discussion over India's global ties with nations as China and Maldives is to understand the breaking escalations, the global outlook and the Indian approach to such developments.

History of Indo - Chinese Relations

India and China have been the two Asian giants since the last decade. China is soaring high with its production and capital capabilities and India is strengthening its relations with not just the

West and Europe but also the South Chinese and other island nations. Although it won't be incorrect to say that bilateral relations between the two nations are more competitive than Cooperative, according to the Ministry of external affairs, on 1st April, 1950, India became the first non-socialist bloc country to establish diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China. And then begin the marches of state head visits and war. Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru visited China in 1954 marking the first visit by a non-communist head of state to the nation since its creation. His visit was also marked important because the Panchsheel agreement was signed among the nations to ease the tension on trade and Tibetan regions. This agreement also gave birth to one of the most prominent slogans of time - "Hindi Chini bhai bhai".

Indo Chinese Confrontations

India has had its share of land disputes with countries, but the most serious ones have always been with China. After the Panchsheel agreement, things started to go downhill. China claimed the Aksai Chin area in Ladakh and Tawang area in Arunachal Pradesh as its own. Things took a more serious turn when China announced its occupation of Tibet. There were uprisings in different areas and diabolical talks. The real havoc was caused when India gave shelter to the Dalai Lama in 1959 due to the occupation of Tibet. This medicine was not swallowed so smoothly by the Chinese government and they started to see India as a threat. Although the himalayan land dispute has always been considered a chief problem for the wars, the Tibetan occupation and India's support for the Dalai Lama is one of the main reasons of the escalating conflict.

There were bilateral talks which weren't so helpful. Suggestions were made that India should give up Aksai Chin and China would take a step back on this. This was clearly rejected by the then prime minister Mr Jawaharlal Nehru because he believed that both these areas were legally India's and China had no authority over them. This was the time when India had just become independent and didn't have, per say, a very strategic, planned and strong military.

India never looked out for a war with China and didn't expect it either. The Indo Seenu war of 1962 began with both the countries sending patrolling troops to the border for an outright military war that went on for a month. There is one question we would like the delegates to consider and research about to broaden their horizons- China was on the winning side of the game. Why did they throw down the flags and call for a ceasefire at the end of the war?

LAC and a new dispute

In the Himalayas there is a 2100 m long line of actual control that divides the two nations. However this has never been officially negotiated upon and as the New York Times states it

“holds an uneasy peace that has been maintained, so whenever something flares up, the world watches anxiously as a spectator”.

Both the nations have an unsaid competition near this line which is fulfilled by constructions along the line of actual control. This demarcation runs through the union territory of Ladakh which is home to unexpected and violent breakouts among the two standing armies.

Both sides agreed to abide by protocols in 2005 and 2013 that describe the rules of engagement to handle such situations, but as the recent stand-offs remind us, they haven't always been followed. In 1959 the counties planned to step back 20km from the so-called Mc Mohan line. Yet the main problem was the debate on where exactly each nation believed it exercised control. India and China signed the Border Peace and Tranquility Agreement (BPTA) in 1993, the first legal agreement that recognised the LAC. However, even after this formal initiative the recent escalations haven't been quite peaceful.

Current escalations

The current and the line of actual control are surprising because unlike the LoC, the LaC has been maintained quite peacefully with only slight escalation among the soldiers. The current skirmish according to India is because of China's non-compliance of existing pacts between the two countries – particularly, the pact not to amass forces on the border and not to try to change the Line of Actual Control (LAC) unilaterally. The recent escalations and brawl of 2020 and 2022 highlight the trend of one step forward and one step backward.

Although talks and dialogues are followed after these clashes, both the nations are very focused on militarizing the area and these developments will only be a fresh barrier in the way of resolving these perennial disputes.

Belt and Road Initiative

The border road index - an economic corridor between China and Pakistan worth 54 billion dollars remains a debated agenda. This initiative focuses on building a road from China's Xinjiang province to Pakistan's Gwadar port. Famously called China's Marshall plan, it plans to work on the ancient silk route to access trade routes across Asia and Europe and parts of Africa.

With more than 71 nations being called for involvement - the world foresees a threat of a loan repayment game by the Chinese government to access important ports and areas in such nations including Sri Lanka and others. The world is worried because it is a form of economic imperialism that gives China too much leverage over other countries, mainly those which are

weaker and smaller. Some worry that this Chinese trade expansion might lead to Chinese military occupation and escalation.

However, is BRI really an approach by China for global trade expansion or just a multifaceted approach to global dominance?

The India-China-Maldives Affair

With the recent developments of India and Maldives' standoff, open criticism questions have been arising about the Chinese involvement in the matter. It all starts with China's free military support to Maldives to increase its bilateral relations and Maldives as a vision of strengthening its self-sustaining sovereignty. Whether it's about drinking water or weaponry, a new sense of bond can be seen between the two nations amid India's exit.

Another theory or debate arises from this heated event which is about hyper nationalism. Is the diplomatic rift and the respected prime minister's visit to Lakshadweep which caused his supporters to compare all, just a result of hyper nationalism or a true problem which is worth losing a nation. Would the situation have been any different if there had been open dialogue between the ministries of the two nations with everyone aware about China's approach to Maldives?

Let's dive more into the Indo Maldives bilateral relations.

How did India and Maldives turn From Allies to Adversaries?

India and Maldives share ethnic, linguistic, cultural, religious, and commercial links steeped in antiquity and enjoy close, cordial, and multi-dimensional relations. India was among the first to recognize Maldives after its independence in 1965 and to establish diplomatic relations with the country. India established its mission at the level of CDA in 1972 and resident High Commissioner in 1980. Maldives opened a full-fledged High Commission in New Delhi in November 2004, at that time one of its only four diplomatic missions worldwide.

2013

Abdulla Yameen came to power in 2013. India-Maldives relations spiraled downward with his crackdown on democracy, proximity towards China, and anti-India rhetoric used to muster nationalist sentiments.

October, 2020

The "India Out" campaign was launched as a social media and physical demonstration against India's military presence in the Maldives. The term "India Out" and a corresponding hashtag were part of the movement. One of the key faces was Mohamed Muizzu.

September, 30, 2020

Muizzu came to power riding on the Opposition's 'India Out' campaign and defeated President Ibu Solih who was viewed as friendly to India. The newly-elected President is seen as a proxy of former President Abdulla Yameen, who had been pro-China during his stint between 2013 and 2018.

January, 4, 2024

Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Lakshadweep and posted pictures of the island. While PM Modi had not mentioned the Maldives anywhere in his posts, Malsha Shareef, Mariyam Shiuna, and Abdulla Mahzoom Majid, these government officials posted some tweets targeting India and mocking Prime Minister Narendra Modi's attempt to promote Lakshadweep as a tourist destination. This started a social media tsunami with the hashtag #boycottmaldives.

January, 7, 2024

The decision to suspend ministers Malsha Shareef, Mariyam Shiuna, and Abdulla Mahzoom Majid from their posts was declared. However, till then, many sanctions were already exercised on Maldives, and many travel companies denied bookings for Maldives.

Why Maldives is important for India?

Membership in the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) underscores Maldives' pivotal role in regional diplomacy and cooperation. In light of India's strategic objectives in the region, fostering a strong partnership with Maldives is imperative. This alliance

not only bolsters India's leadership stature but also enhances regional stability and economic prosperity. Therefore, cultivating and maintaining robust ties with Maldives remains a cornerstone of India's foreign policy agenda.

Maldives' strategic importance in the Indian Ocean has led to speculation about China's interest in establishing bases in the archipelago, posing concerns for India amidst evolving Sino-Indian relations. Additionally, the Maldives' utilization of the 'China card' in negotiations with India adds complexity to regional dynamics. Under Yameen, radicalization grew rapidly and it was often said that the archipelago accounted for one of the highest numbers of foreign fighters in Syria in terms of per capita. India cannot afford a neighbor which fails to check Islamic radicalization.

India-Maldives Bilateral Relations

India and Maldives signed a trade agreement in 1981, which provides for the export of essential commodities. Growing from modest beginnings, India-Maldives bilateral trade now stands at Rs.700 crores. Indian exports to the Maldives include agriculture and poultry produce, sugar, fruits, vegetables, spices, rice, wheat flour, textiles, drugs and medicines, a variety of engineering and industrial products, sand and aggregate, cement for building, etc. India imports primarily scrap metals from the Maldives. Under the bilateral agreement, India provides essential food items like rice, wheat flour, sugar, dal, onion, potato, and eggs and construction materials such as sand and stone aggregates to Maldives on favorable terms. India has provided and has been providing a lot of assistance to Maldives like:

1. Indira Gandhi Memorial Hospital
2. Faculty of Engineering Technology (FET)
3. Tsunami Related Assistance
4. Maldives Institute of Technical Education
5. India-Maldives Faculty of Hospitality & Tourism Studies
6. Technology Adoption Programme in the Education Sector in Maldives
7. National College for Police and Law Enforcement

Bilateral trade figures (Jan-Dec, in US\$ million)			
Year	Total Exports to Maldives	Total Imports from Maldives	Total Trade
2013	154.00	12.30	156.30
2014	170.60	2.90	173.50
2015	225.82	3.00	228.82
2016	274.55	1.55	276.10
2017	282.04	4.12	286.16
2018	286.13	3.01	288.14
2019	290.27	3.42	293.69
2020	241.90	3.33	245.23
2021	317.35	5.94	323.29
2022	495.40	6.42	501.82
2023 (as on May 2023)	178.17	1.98	180.15

(Source: Maldives Customs Service)

As India has imposed several sanctions, such as port restrictions, on the export of essential commodities to the Maldives, it is imperative for delegates to thoroughly research the limitations that had been previously imposed.

Ladakh's Statehood Saga: Did BJP break the trust of Ladakh?

Ladakh, which is located in the Himalayan mountain range and shares borders with both China and Pakistan, is currently experiencing a robust popular uprising against the development policies being implemented by the Union government in New Delhi, as well as a feeling of political marginalization. The BJP pledged in its 2019 electoral manifesto to institute autonomous political frameworks for Ladakh under the Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution. This commitment influenced voter support for the BJP in both the national parliamentary elections, specifically the Lok Sabha, and the elections for the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council of Leh. Nevertheless, the BJP later opted not to fulfill these assurances.

Climate activist Sonam Wangchuk ended his twenty-one-day hunger strike on March 26. However, he pledged to continue fighting for the rights of the people of Ladakh. The popular movement has now entered a second phase, with women from various socio-religious backgrounds going on hunger strikes for ten days.

But what about the demand for full statehood? Is this correct? Will it be the right decision? to provide statehood to a crucial area where things can go south at any time? Even if statehood is granted, can the rise of local politics make things worse?

Delegates must research all these questions and answer based on the ideology of their party, portfolio, or their personal perspective.

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The McMahon Line: A Century of Discord

