

# **ALL INDIA POLITICAL PARTIES MEET**



## **BACKGROUND GUIDE**

### **AGENDA**

- 1. ANALYSING INDIAN FOREIGN POLICY WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON THE SINO-PAK-RUSSIA AXIS.**
- 2. DISCUSSING INDIAN COUNTER POLICY TO CHINA'S WIDELY ACCEPTED OBOR INITIATIVE.**

# LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Dear Members,

We extend a warm welcome to all of you and congratulate you on being a part of the DelTech Model United Nations 2018. The committee being simulated at this conference focuses on political intellect and analytical application of thoughts and strategic application of thoughts in resolving impending issues. This Introductory guide would be as abstract as possible, and would just give you a basic perspective on what you can expect from the committee and areas wherein which your research should be focused at this given point in time. Kindly do not limit your research to the areas highlighted further but ensure that you logically deduce and push your research to areas associated with the issues mentioned. Kindly note, that unlike most conventional /unconventional committees you have attended, this committee shall have “substantive” intervention by the Executive Board. The objective of this background guide is to provide you with a ‘background’ of the issue at hand and therefore it might seem to some as not being comprehensive enough. We feel that ‘study guides’ are detrimental to the individual growth of the delegate since they overlook a very important part of this activity, which is- Research. We are sure however that this background guide gives you a perfect launching pad to start with your research.

Wishing you all good luck.

## PAKISTAN- RUSSIA RELATIONSHIP

"The military relations between the countries are growing rapidly but we cannot be so forward as to call it an alliance yet," Pakistan's former military attaché to Afghanistan Brigadier (retd) Saad Muhammad said during a talk show on Dunya News.

Brigadier Saad reminded viewers about the proxy war the two nations were fighting in Afghanistan in the 1980's. He stated that the relationship only started to mend in 2014 when Russian Defence Minister Sergey Shoigu visited Pakistan in November 2014 "and signed a defence cooperation contract with us".

He elaborated on the growing military cooperation between the two countries, saying "Last year's military exercise is an example of the countries' conjoined interests, apart from the fact that the naval forces of both countries participated in 'Arabian Monsoon' exercises in 2014 and again in 2015."

Brig. Saad pointed out however, that an alliance between Pakistan and Russia would not be without China, a mutual friend. "The prospect of an alliance between Pakistan and Russia will not be possible without their mutual friend — China," he said and did not stop there but went on to say that Turkey too is interested in such an alliance.

"Turkey is also interested to be part of the group and I know for a fact that President Erdogan has shown his willingness in the matter," Brig. Saad added.

"So this will be a four-way alliance between China, Turkey, Russia and Pakistan and there is a lot of restlessness in the US regarding this prospective alliance and we cannot rule the US factor out as they are sitting in Afghanistan right now," Brig. Saad cautioned, but also said, "The game is on".

Hinting that the ongoing tug-of-war between the US and Russia in the region may be a reason for Russia's developing interest in Pakistan, Brig. Saad said, "We should not forget that there was a time when there was a Quadrilateral Coordination Group consisting of China, Pakistan, US and Afghanistan to discuss reconciliation in Afghanistan in 2016," Brig. Saad said and added, "This threatened Russia and it entered into separate talks with China and Pakistan regarding Afghanistan."

"So Russia wants to bring Afghanistan under its influence as much as the US does, and Pakistan has prior experience dealing with Afghan Taliban," Brig. Saad said. In conclusion, he reiterated his point and said, "Our history with Afghanistan and the Taliban and our friendship with China are the two reasons for this interest."

## CHINA- RUSSIA RELATIONSHIP

Ever since the demise of the Soviet Union in December 1991, the relationship between Moscow and Beijing has been eagerly watched by political, economic, military and strategic analysts and think-tanks worldwide. India is no exception to this as the country's security depends on the solid partnership with Moscow and anxiety over the growing Sino-Russian bonhomie is nothing but natural.

Indian apprehensions and fears about a nexus between Moscow and Beijing and lately a greater involvement of China's 'all weather' ally Pakistan in regional affairs in a trilateral format, especially in Afghanistan may not appear groundless.

New Delhi wonders about the extent to which Moscow is willing (or being forced to) accommodate Beijing's interests. Russian accommodation of Chinese interests has consequences for India's long-term security and strategic interests, including freedom of sailing in South China Sea - India's gateway to Russia, Japan, Korea and Pacific Ocean.

But the main point is how Moscow looks at this relationship with China marred by centuries of mistrust and conflicts, including the 1968 Damansky Island armed clashes.

However, by give and take Moscow and Beijing finalised their border dispute by demarcating their over 4000-kilometre long bilateral boundary in 2000. Incidentally, the Damansky Island, which witnessed fierce fighting in 1968, has been now ceded to

China under the border pact.

Diplomacy is an art of the possible and the prime task of any government is to ensure peace along national borders - a prerequisite for economic development. From this point the two bordering nuclear giants with a troubled history have managed to achieve this.

## AN ERA OF SINO-RUSSIAN PARTNERSHIP

Addressing the annual joint session of the Russian parliament in December 2016, President Vladimir Putin described Sino-Russian relations in the following words: “In today’s challenging environment, the comprehensive partnership and strategic cooperation between Russia and China has become one of the key factors in ensuring global and regional stability. This partnership can be regarded as a model for shaping a world order free from the domination of a single country, no matter how strong it is, and taking into account the interests of all countries in harmony.”

Although, many attribute the growing proximity between Moscow and Beijing to the anti-Russian Western sanctions over Ukraine crisis and return of Crimea into Russia's fold in 2014, the Sino-Russian entente began to form much earlier.

The formation of Shanghai Five in 1996 and its eventual transformation into Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) five years later in 2001 could become a reality just because Moscow and Beijing succeeded in resolving their outstanding historical differences.

This, however, does not mean that an economically weakened Russia has become or willing to become a ‘yes-man’ for China or that there is a complete trust or consensus among them on all issues.

At an international conference on Sino-Russian relations in Moscow last year, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov had said, “This relationship is built on an imperative to not turn a blind eye to various issues where consensus has yet to be reached.”

Speaking at the same conference, Li Fenling, Chinese Ambassador to Moscow in 1995-98, identified “lack of mutual trust” as the main problem in bilateral Sino-Russian relations. He described Russia as “unpredictable.”

## CONCEPT OF EURASIA

Beijing and Moscow do not see eye-to-eye even on the definition of Eurasia, the arena of China's One-Belt-One-Road (OBOR) initiative. For China, Eurasia is the territory of the former USSR. While, according to Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Igor Morgulov, Moscow sees Eurasia as the territory from British Isles in the west to the Japanese islands in the east, from Arctic in the north to India, Iran and the Indian Ocean in the south.

Although Russian President Vladimir Putin is expected to attend the OBOR summit convened by Chinese leader Xi Jinping in Beijing in May, Moscow is in favour of revival and development of scores of ancient routes that criss-cross the huge Asian heartland, including the North-South International Transport Corridor (NSITC) linking India with Russia and further north via Iran.

## TUSSLE FOR DOMINATION OF CENTRAL ASIA

Unfortunately, the Indian discourse on Russia-China relationship is based on the Western narrative and misses nuances of the Russian discourse on relationship with its neighbour.

Russia, which ruled Central Asia for 200 years is naturally feeling challenged by the Chinese economic expansion in the former Soviet republics. Due to its weakened post-Soviet economy Moscow is unable to match China's financial might, which has been providing hefty and cheap loans to the local governments in exchange for their natural wealth and other economic gains.

Greater involvement of the Central Asian republics in Chinese OBOR initiative is also seen as a challenge to established railway and road networks linking Far East and Europe through Russian territory. The West had always dreamt of transporting Caspian and Central Asian hydrocarbons and other resources bypassing Russia. Although the European Union's Nabucco pipeline project to ship Caspian natural gas to Europe was aborted in 2013, but the Chinese OBOR could revive it in another avatar.

Though in the Russian military there is a taboo on publicly commenting about the heavily armed Asian nuclear giant, media reports from time to time reflect such apprehensions and concerns.

Citing a Pentagon report about China's military preparations and

its "thousands" of intermediate range nuclear missiles tucked in long tunnels, Director of the Russian Science Academy's USA and Canada Studies Institute Sergey Rogov said, "We don't know their exact number and length of these tunnels, but under the Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF Treaty) like the U.S., we also do not have this class of missiles."

A number of Russian arms control experts in Moscow agree that any talks with the U.S. on a nuclear arms cut would have to keep in mind the Chinese nuclear stockpile.

Contrary to certain assertions, in its arms trade with Beijing, Moscow not only keeps its own strategic security interests, but also of its closest strategic partners, Russian defence experts claim. Moscow had refused to sell its MiG-31 Foxhound interceptor and state-of-the art Iskander missiles to China as it could jeopardise the security of India and Vietnam.

There is a clear understanding in the Kremlin about the risk of Russia sliding into becoming a Chinese 'protectorate' and raw material appendix if the economy, which is suffering from the U.S.-led Western sanctions, fails to undergo radical reformation.

"Unless Russia switches to a strategic planning of economic development on the basis of its own sources of credit, the real essence of strategic partnership with China will consist in the subordination of the Russian economy to the interests of China's growth," said Kremlin economic advisor Sergei Glaziyev at a recent brainstorming session.

Chinese activities in Central Asia and Afghanistan and Russia's engagement with Pakistan could separately cause concern in Moscow and New Delhi, but even pooling efforts they are unable to economically challenge Beijing.

And if the Donald Trump administration plays the Chinese card against Moscow, then both Russia and India will be challenged politically.

Most Russian experts do not see China as a substitute of the EU for Russia, as even Russians living in Far East of the country just across border with China view themselves as part of the European civilisation and hope sooner or later that Moscow's conflict with the West over Ukraine will be resolved. Secondly, they are well aware of China's global agenda and relationship with the United States. The spectre of G2 (U.S.-China) is haunting Russian minds and they do not trust China as an ally they can fall back on in case of an aggravation of conflict with the West.

While everybody talks about Beijing blocking India's Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) entry, nobody seems to be aware that it is only Russia, which is building nuclear power plants in India, that would stand to gain from India's entry into the group. After constructing at least eight reactors, Russia could set up a nuclear fuel fabrication facility in India for domestic consumption and export.

## PAKISTAN-CHINA RELATIONSHIP

The improved relationship between China and Pakistan has unveiled plans of a China-Pakistan economic corridor, worth \$46 billion, providing Beijing with access to the Arabian Sea, increasing its trade with Europe, the Middle East and Africa.

Of all China's neighboring countries, China-Pakistan relations are the closest and friendliest. The two countries established diplomatic relations in 1951, making Pakistan one of the first Islamic countries as well as the second country in South Asia after India to establish diplomatic relations with China. The two countries have remained strong allies ever since. The closeness of the relationship between the two countries can be seen from major bilateral interactions over the years. For instance, in the Indo-Pakistani wars of 1965 and 1971, China took the side of Pakistan against India. In addition, China supported the alliance between Pakistan and the United States against the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. China also provided assistance for Pakistan to become a nuclear power in 1998, and used its Security Council veto power for the first time in 1972 to block the entry of Bangladesh into the United Nations. Pakistan played a crucial role in the ice-breaking visit of U.S. National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger to China in 1971, and was one of only two United Nations member countries (along with Cuba) to support China following the Tiananmen Square incident of 1989.

The two countries enjoy close cooperation in areas such as trade, borders, and their militaries, meaning that Pakistan has a unique status among China's many diplomatic allies.

How can we understand the special relationship between China and Pakistan? Why have the two countries enjoyed such friendly and stable diplomatic relations across a whole range of areas over the past 65 years? If we can accurately answer these two questions, we can more fully understand the strategic importance of Pakistan both in the region and worldwide. As one of the world's major powers, China's development across a range of areas has been the subject of increasing international attention in recent years. China is widely considered to be an "emerging power" that may threaten the United States in the future.

Therefore, China's strategic relationship with Pakistan must be understood from an international strategic perspective, specifically the interlocking geopolitical relationships between China, the United States, India and Russia. In addition, the struggle between Western and Islamic civilisation in the context of developments in the Middle East following the 11 September attacks, in particular the global spread and diffusion of terrorism, are also crucial factors in China–Pakistan relations.

Although China-Pakistan relations have always been friendly, past cooperation between the two countries was mostly at the political and military level and had not extended to the comprehensive social, economic, and cultural exchange relations of today. This new phase in relations started in May 2013 with the visit of Chinese Premier Li Keqiang to Pakistan and the official proposal of the concept of the "China-Pakistan Economic Corridor." Subsequently, there was an exchange of visits between leaders and officials from both countries, including the visit of

Pakistani President Mamnoon Hussain to China in February 2014 and Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's subsequent visit in April 2014 which involved intensive consultations over the proposal. Finally, during Chinese President Xi Jinping's visit to Pakistan in April 2015, the proposal was officially finalised, including the signing of 51 Memorandums of Understanding between the two countries, the inauguration of eight projects, and the launching of five joint energy projects.

Aside from the familiar infrastructure and energy projects, this new phase of relations between the two countries also included social, economic, technological, and even cultural cooperation. For example, the two countries have organised bilateral exchanges in radio and television. The Industrial and Commercial Bank of China set up a branch in Lahore, Pakistan's second city; the ministries of science and technology in the two countries jointly established the China-Pakistan Joint Cotton Bio-Tech Laboratory; Pakistan's University of Modern Languages (NUML) and Xinjiang University jointly established the NUML International Center of Education, and the China Culture Center in Pakistan has been established. If these initiatives are successful, relations between the two countries will become more closely intertwined at all levels, from high-level political and military relations, extending to the full range of contacts and relations at each level of society.

## HOW INDIA CAN COUNTER CHINA'S OBOR INITIATIVE?

China is making strong efforts to persuade India to join its 'One Belt, One Road (OBOR) initiative. India has, however, not yet openly agreed to be a part of the project which aims to connect the Eurasian landmass and Indo-Pacific maritime routes through an overland 'belt' and a 'maritime' silk road. The project envisages the construction of a maze of road, rail and port projects through a number of countries to connect mainland China to markets in Asia and Europe.

The OBOR initiative includes a number of projects including the "flagship" China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar (BCIM), New Eurasian Land Bridge, China-Mongolia-Russia Economic Corridor, China-Indochina Peninsula Economic Corridor and 21st Century Maritime Silk Road.

Some experts have warned that India would end up isolating itself if it refuses to join the OBOR initiative, which has been apparently getting international support. Most of India's neighbours, including Nepal and Bangladesh, have already agreed to participate in the project.

Talking about the benefits India would get by joining OBOR, Chinese ambassador to New Delhi Luo Zhaohui said New Delhi should grab economic opportunity offered by OBOR initiative: "Now the GDP of India is roughly that of China in 2004, some 13

years ago. China leads India by 13 years mainly because we started reform and opening up 13 years earlier,” he was quoted as saying by PTI.

It has been widely projected that India’s reluctance to join OBOR is mainly because of the CPEC, which violates India’s sovereignty as the project covers the Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) region. It has been suggested that India may shed its reluctance to join OBOR if CPEC is renamed, or China declares CPEC is not the part of Belt and Road initiative.

China’s aggressive efforts to take India onboard OBOR may make one believe that India is deliberately losing out on a golden opportunity. However, this would be a very simplistic conclusion because OBOR would massively strengthen China’s economic, political and security influence in India’s neighbourhood. Strategic Affairs expert C Raja Mohan writes in The Indian Express that OBOR would involve “the export of Chinese capital, labour, technology, industrial standards, commercial benchmarks, use of the Yuan, development of new ports, industrial hubs, special economic zones and military facilities, under Beijing’s auspices.”

For India, it would be difficult to play number 2 to China in its own region of influence. Not just India, even Japan has refused to join the project and started its own Belt and Road initiative named as “Partnership for Quality Infrastructure” which would cover Indo-Pacific and Eurasian regions. Japan has also invested around \$150 billion for this project.

OBOR project is expected to give China an incomparable upper hand vis-a-vis India. New Delhi aspires for a friendly neighbourhood but considering the constant security threat it faces from Pakistan and often from China, even now India cannot afford to play second fiddle to Beijing. And even if it decides to join OBOR, it cannot afford to be a junior partner. India needs to speed up its own infrastructure projects and find ways to strengthen its sphere of influence.

### LINKS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH:

1. Sri Lanka signs deal on Hambantota port with China - <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-40761732>
2. Why Joining Quadrilateral with US, Japan & Australia to Counter China's OBOR Makes Sense For India: <http://www.news18.com/news/india/explained-the-emerging-new-quadrilateral-around-india-to-counter-chinas-obor-1565681.html>
3. India eyes Asean pivot to counterbalance China's One Belt One Road: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/india-eyes-asean-pivot-against-obor/articleshow/62003402.cms>