

Key theme Asked in Exam

- Border Disputes and National Security: Impact on Ties
- Water Disputes
- Economic Relations : Trade Deficit and Chinese Economic Initiatives : Impact on India
- Geopolitical Rivalry: Competition, Regional Influence (QUAD, BRI, String of Pearls Strategy)
- Multilateralism and Diplomacy: BRICS, SCO (Multilateralism is the practice of multiple countries working together to address a shared issue or achieve a common goal. This approach is based on principles of **inclusivity, equality, and cooperation.**)

Key Dimensions of the Relationship:

- mix of confrontation competition and cooperation
- Trust Deficit and Trade Deficit
- People-to-People Connections
- Geopolitical and Strategic Competition

Answer Writing Strategy for UPSC Mains

- exam requires a structured, multi-dimensional approach
- Instead of a linear narrative, the answer should be broken down into distinct sections
- clear structure is crucial to demonstrate a comprehensive understanding.

INTRODUCTION :

- India-China relations are a complex blend of cooperation and competition, shaped by a long history and contemporary geopolitical dynamics.
- The cooperative partnership will be underpinned by ABCD: A for Eurasia. B for Business. C for Culture and Connectivity . And D for Diplomacy and Development. India needs Skill, Speed and Scale to compete with China Innovation based Economy.
- The relationship is defined by three key pillars: border disputes, economic engagement, and strategic rivalry.

Body (Multi-Dimensional Analysis)

Break down the main body into sub-headings to address the different facets of the relationship.

1. Areas of Conflict & Challenges:

- **Border Dispute:** Discuss the unsettled LAC, recent clashes, and the militarization of the border. Mention key areas like Galwan, Depsang, and Doklam.
- **Economic Imbalance:** Highlight the massive trade deficit and India's dependency on Chinese imports. Mention initiatives like "Atmanirbhar Bharat" as a response.
- **Strategic Rivalry:** Analyze the "String of Pearls" vs. "Necklace of Diamonds" and the BRI's impact, particularly the CPEC passing through PoK.
- **Water Sharing:** Briefly mention the hydro-political issues related to transboundary rivers like the Brahmaputra.

2. Areas of Cooperation:

- **Economic:** Mention the high volume of bilateral trade and the potential for cooperation in sectors like renewable energy and technology.
- **Multilateral Forums:** Discuss the role of both countries in BRICS, SCO, and G20, where they often find common ground on issues like global governance reform and climate change.
- **Cultural & Historical:** Briefly touch upon the ancient ties and people-to-people exchanges as a potential foundation for building trust.

Way Forward / Conclusion

Conclude with a forward-looking perspective.

- **Strengthen Diplomatic Dialogue:** Emphasize the need for sustained talks to de-escalate border tensions and build confidence.
- **Enhance Economic Resilience:** Suggest diversifying supply chains and promoting domestic manufacturing through schemes like the PLI.
- **Strategic Balancing:** Highlight India's need to maintain "strategic autonomy" while engaging with groups like the QUAD to balance China's influence.
- **"Three Mutals":** End with a strong concluding statement, referencing the guiding principles of "mutual respect, mutual sensitivity, and mutual interest" for a stable relationship.

KEYWORDS FOR INDIA-CHINA RELATIONS

- **Political & Diplomatic:** "Panchsheel Agreement," "informal summits," "Track-II diplomacy," "strategic trust deficit," "Special Representative (SR) mechanism."
- **Border & Security:** "Line of Actual Control (LAC)," "Galwan Valley clash," "Doklam standoff," "buffer zones," "status quo ante," "Aksai Chin," "McMahon Line."
- **Economic:** "Trade deficit," "Atmanirbhar Bharat," "China+1 strategy," "supply chain diversification," "Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs)," "anti-dumping duties."
- **Geopolitical & Strategic:** "String of Pearls," "Necklace of Diamonds," "Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)," "China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)," "QUAD," "Indo-Pacific," "multipolar Asia," "regional hegemony."
- **Multilateralism:** "BRICS," "Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)," "New Development Bank (NDB)," "UNSC permanent seat," "NSG membership."
- **Issues :** "Water disputes," "cybersecurity threats,"
- **Way Forward:** "people-to-people exchanges," "strategic autonomy," "competitive coexistence," "mutual respect, mutual sensitivity, and mutual interest."

RECENT NEWS :

- Diplomatic Reset in 2025: India and China marked 75 years of diplomatic ties with events and bilateral dialogues.
- India and China should view each other as "partners" rather than "adversaries or threats", Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi (as he arrived for a two-day visit to Delhi.)
- Relations are now on a "positive trend" towards cooperation, after 2020 Galwan Valley, Ladakh dispute issue.

Jaishankar said

- that India and China were seeking to "move ahead from a difficult period in our ties".
- "We seek a fair, balanced and multi-polar world order, including a multipolar Asia,"
- "Reformed multilateralism is also the call of the day."

India Pm Views :

- Stable, predictable, constructive ties between India and China will contribute significantly to regional as well as global peace and prosperity,"
- It is also what the developing countries all wanted to see."

This Russia-India-China angle may find reflection in Moscow as Mr. Jaishankar is expected to reach Moscow later this week.

The two counterparts held discussions on a range of bilateral issues

- from trade to pilgrimages and river data sharing.
- India and China had agreed on patrolling arrangements to de-escalate tensions along the disputed Himalayan border in October last year.
- China allowing Indian pilgrims to visit key places in the Tibet autonomous region this year
- India has also restarted visa services to Chinese tourists and agreed to resume talks to open border trade through designated passes.
- direct flights between the two countries will resume this year.
- China will address India's needs for fertilisers, rare earth minerals and tunnel boring machines.
- The Indian side also expressed concern regarding the construction of a mega dam on the upper reaches of Yarlung Tsangpo (Brahmaputra) and sought "utmost transparency" regarding the project

What is Military Standoff :

- refers to situation where two opposing military forces are positioned in close proximity, facing each other, without engaging in active combat.
- it is a state of high tension and confrontation where neither side is willing to back down or retreat, creating a deadlock
- The military standoff between India and China along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) is a prime example. For years, particularly since the Galwan Valley clash in 2020, troops from both countries have been deployed in large numbers
- The "Moscow Plan" was an attempt to resolve one such standoff through diplomatic means.

What is the 'Moscow Plan'?

The "Moscow Plan," or the **Moscow Consensus**, was a five-point agreement reached in September 2020 by the foreign ministers of India and China, with Russia's mediation.

It was a diplomatic effort aimed at de-escalating the serious military standoff along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) that had led to the deadly Galwan Valley clash

The plan's key points were:

- **Disengagement:** Troops were to quickly disengage from all friction points.
- **Abiding by Agreements:** Both sides agreed to follow existing border protocols to maintain peace.
- **Dialogue:** The agreement called for continued talks through diplomatic and military channels. Dialogue **between the Special Representatives**,

- **Avoid Escalation:** Both sides were to avoid any actions that could worsen the situation.

Economic ties between India and China, while growing in recent years, are still far below their potential. Elucidate the policy constraints which are inhibiting this growth.

1. Geopolitical tensions along friction points, military standoffs, strategic competition
2. Trade imbalance: China Had Trade Surplus (Exports exceeding Imports) and India had Trade Deficit . This trade imbalance has been a cause of concern for India
3. Non-tariff barriers: Both India and China have imposed various non-tariff barriers on bilateral trade, including technical barriers, customs procedures, and licensing requirements. These barriers create additional costs and complexities for businesses, limiting the potential for trade growth
4. Market access restrictions; issues related to tax policies, bureaucratic procedures, and legal frameworks, which can deter trade and investment.
5. FDI Policy - India's policy is now much stricter for investment from China. After April 2020, any investment from a country sharing a land border with India (which includes China) can no longer come in automatically. It must first get **government approval**. (key goal to prevent Chinese companies from taking over Indian businesses). While China's policy looks open on paper, Indian companies often face **hidden challenges**. like approval process, delays and difficulties in getting licenses.
- 6 Domestic Political Pressure - significantly impacts their bilateral relations, on sensitive issues, particularly border disputes. This pressure shapes public opinion, influences policy decisions, and can escalate tensions.

Note



This border is Product of Manchu Policy, Chinese Republican Policy and the British Policy. it is difficult to demarcate due to topography, delimited on Maps, So China never accepted this boundary .



- During the time of British rule in India, two borders between India and China were proposed- **Johnson's Line and McDonald Line**.

Feature	Johnson Line (1865)	Macartney-MacDonald Line (1899)
Location	Western sector of the India-China border, specifically in the Aksai Chin region.	Also in the western sector, covering the Aksai Chin region.
Key Proponent	William Johnson, a British surveyor.	George Macartney, a British consul, based on a proposal by the British Foreign Office.
What it Represents	This line places Aksai Chin within India (then part of the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir). It was based on a survey that was not formally presented to China.	This line places most of Aksai Chin in China . It was a more conservative proposal, aimed at creating a buffer zone to prevent Russian expansion.
Current Stand	India considers the Johnson Line (or its modified version, the Johnson-Ardagh Line) to be the correct and rightful border.	China generally references a line similar to the Macartney-MacDonald line as its claim line in the region, even though it never formally accepted the original proposal.

Upon independence in 1947, the government of India used the Johnson Line as the basis for its official boundary in the west, which included the Aksai Chin

Feature	Johnson Line	McMahon Line
Location	Western sector of the India-China border.	Eastern sector of the India-China border.
Region	Separates India's Ladakh (formerly part of the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir) from China's Xinjiang.	Separates India's Arunachal Pradesh from China's Tibet.
Proposed Year	1865	1914
Proposed By	William Johnson, a British surveyor.	Sir Henry McMahon, foreign secretary of British India.

India China Border Overview...

- Total Length: 3,488 km
- Border States/UTs: Jammu & Kashmir/Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh
- Status: Not fully demarcated; Line of Actual Control (LAC) clarification ongoing
- Terrain: High-altitude, sparsely populated, infrastructure challenges
- Border Guarding Force: Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP)

state/UT-wise border length:

Ladakh: 1597 km

- Arunachal Pradesh: 1126 km
- Uttarakhand: 345 km
- Sikkim: 220 km
- Himachal Pradesh: 200 km

Total length: 3488 (second highest after Bangladesh 4096km)

Feature	Line of Control (LOC)	Line of Actual Control (LAC)
Formed	established as the "Cease-fire Line" after the 1948 Indo-Pakistani War. It was renamed the "Line of Control" under the Simla Agreement of 1972.	The term was first used by Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai in a 1959 letter to Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. It became the de facto border after the 1962 Sino-Indian War.
Length	Approximately 740-776 kilometers	Approximately 3,488 kilometers (as per India's claim) or 2,000 kilometers (as per China's claim).
Who operates in India	The Indian Army and the Border Security Force (BSF) are deployed along the LOC.	The Indian Army and the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP)
Key Issues	Heavy militarization A heavily militarized and fenced border with frequent ceasefire violations and cross-border firing. Infiltration: A major	Lack of a clear demarcation- LAC is not a clearly delineated or demarcated boundary on the ground, leading to differing perceptions of where

issue is the infiltration of militants into India.
Proxy war: Often the site of a proxy war waged by Pakistan.
Way forward : Ceasefire & Dialogue
Engaging in political dialogue to resolve the Kashmir issue, and implementing confidence-building measures to de-escalate tensions and curb cross-border terrorism.

the line runs. Transgressions and clashes:
Frequent patrols from both sides lead to face-offs and clashes, such as the 2020 Galwan Valley clash.
Infrastructure development: Both countries are rapidly building infrastructure, which is seen as a strategic move and a source of tension.
Way forward : Demarcation & Disengagement
Focuses on the demarcation of the line on the ground to end ambiguities. The immediate priority is disengagement of troops from all friction points and establishing a clear code of conduct

INDIA CHINA RELATIONS TIMELINE

1. The Early Years (1949-1959): From "Hindi-Chini Bhai-Bhai" to Growing Suspicion
 - 1950: Establishment of diplomatic relations between China and India.
 - 1954: Signing of the "Panchsheel" Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence
 - 1959 Tibet Uprising marked a turning point
2. The Period of Conflict (1959-1976): The 1962 War and Its Aftermath
 - 1962: Brief border war between India and China
 - It was fought over disputed territory in the Aksai Chin region and Arunachal Pradesh.
 - **The Diplomatic Freeze:** Following the war, diplomatic relations were suspended for a long period
3. Cautious Re-engagement (1976-1991)
 - slow and cautious process of **normalization**.
 - 1976: Restoration of full diplomatic ties after 15 years
 - 1984: Signing of the Most Favoured Nation trade agreement.
 - The landmark visit by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi to China in 1988 This marked a shift from an adversarial stance to one of pragmatic engagement
 - **Agreements on Peace and Tranquility:** The signing of the "Agreement on the Maintenance of Peace and Tranquility along the Line of Actual Control (LAC)" in 1993
4. The Post-Cold War Era: Cooperation, Competition, and Confrontation

1998: India conducts nuclear tests, which receive Chinese criticism.

2005: Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao's support for India's U.N. Security Council bid.

2006: Reopening of Nathu La pass for trade

2017 – 2022: Chinese incursions in Doklam (2017), Galwan Valley (2020), and Tawang (2022)

Que : "India-China relations are marked by cooperation, competition, and confrontation." Critically examine this trilateral dynamic in the current geopolitical context.

Ans The trilateral dynamic of cooperation, competition, and confrontation is a fitting framework for critically examining India-China relations in the current geopolitical context. The core issues of the border dispute, strategic rivalry, and the significant trade imbalance

1. Confrontation: The Enduring Challenge

- Most dominant feature of the India- China Relationship , which was unresolved border dispute and its Implications for security and Sovereignty .
- Key Flashpoints : LAC Dispute; the 1962 Sino-Indian War , 1967 Nathu Lahe 2017 Doklam standoff, and the deadly 2020 Galwan Valley
- **Strategic Rivalry and Geopolitical Positioning:** Confrontation extends beyond the border to a broader geopolitical rivalry. China's growing military and economic influence in the Indian Ocean Region and its "String of Pearls" strategy are seen by India as an attempt to encircle it. China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), particularly the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) that passes through Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), is a major security concern for India
- India Response - "Necklace of Diamonds" and enhanced engagement with forums like the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad)
- **The China-Pakistan Nexus:** China's close strategic and military ties with Pakistan are a constant source of concern for India. This includes Chinese diplomatic support for Pakistan on issues like Kashmir and its role in Pakistan's military modernization.

primary disputed regions between India and China are located along the **Line of Actual Control (LAC)**, which is divided into three sectors.

Western Sector (Ladakh) : **Aksai Chin** ; Galwan Valley; Pangong Tso, Demchok and Depsang Plains

Eastern Sector (Arunachal Pradesh) : China claims nearly all of this northeastern Indian state, referring to it as "**South Tibet.**" India administers the state and considers it an integral and inalienable part of its territory. The dispute is rooted in China's rejection of the **McMahon Line**, the boundary established in 1914 between British India and Tibet.

Doklam: This area is a key strategic point located near the tri-junction of India, China, and Bhutan. While Doklam is disputed between China and Bhutan, India sided with its ally Bhutan, leading to a 73-day military standoff in 2017 after Chinese troops attempted to build a road in the area.

2. Competition: The Geoeconomic Dimension

- competition for economic and technological leadership, and regional influence.
- Economic Imbalance-massive and widening trade deficit in China's favor, India's heavy reliance on Chinese imports for critical goods like electronic components, and solar equipment is a major point of vulnerability
- **Technological Race:** Both nations are competing for preeminence in emerging technologies like 5G, artificial intelligence, and semiconductors.
- Competition for leadership and Influence in the Global South:

3. Cooperation: The Diplomatic and Functional Aspect:

Despite the deep-seated confrontation and competition, an element of pragmatic cooperation persists

Multilateral Forums: India and China cooperate within international organizations and multilateral platforms such as BRICS, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), and the G20.

These forums provide a crucial avenue for dialogue and deep engagement and address address global issues like climate change and economic stability and local issues

High-level diplomatic and military dialogue, such as the Special Representatives' talks on the boundary question, continue to take place. The recent "rapprochement" in diplomatic engagement, including high-level visits and a shared understanding that competition should not turn into conflict, is a testament to this functional cooperation.

The "three mutuals" as articulated by India's External Affairs Minister—mutual respect, mutual sensitivity, and mutual interest—are seen as the foundation for any positive movement in the relationship

ABOUT CHINA :

- Located in East Asia
- world's [second-most-populous country](#)
- The country is divided into 22 [provinces](#)
- The PRC considers [Taiwan](#) (Republic of China (ROC)), to be [its 23rd province](#)
- national capital is [Beijing](#), and the [most populous](#) city and largest [financial center](#) is [Shanghai](#).
- 75 % No religion , 18 % Buddhism, 6 Christianity , 2 % Islam rest others
- one of the five [permanent members of the UN Security Council](#)
- China [ranks poorly](#) in measures of [democracy](#), [transparency](#), and [human rights](#), including for [press freedom](#), [religious freedom](#), and [ethnic equality](#)
- China is a [nuclear-weapon state](#) with the world's [largest standing army by military personnel](#) and the [second-largest defence budget](#)
- Shanghai - China's **most developed** and **richest** city and **most populous urban area** in China.
- Beijing - political and cultural **capital**

India and China:

Political Comparisons :

- India: A Federal Parliamentary Democracy (**Political Pluralism:** Multiple political parties); **Federal Structure** and Separation of Powers into Legislature, Executive and Judiciary
- China: **unitary one-party state** led by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP); Centralized Authority
- China's Administrative Hierarchy : **Provincial Level-** Prefecture Level- County Level- Township Level



Geographical Factors of China :

- China is bordered by 14 countries -- Korea, Vietnam, Laos, Burma, India, Bhutan, Nepal, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, and Russia. Marine-side neighbors include eight countries -- North Korea, Korea, Japan, Philippines, Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia and Vietnam.





Key Geographical Comparisons

1. Area and Topography:

- China (9.6 million sq km) is nearly three times the size of India (about 3.3 million sq km)
- In China - rugged, high-in-the-west (Tibet Region) and low-in-the-east geography makes internal connectivity challenging, but the vast eastern coastline provides a major advantage for global trade.
- In India - India geography dominated by three main physiographic divisions. The long coastline on the Indian Ocean gives India a strategic advantage in maritime trade and allows it to project power across the Indian Ocean Region

India follows a single time zone: **Indian Standard Time (IST)**, which is GMT+5:30.

China despite its vast size, also uses a single time zone: **China Standard Time (CST)**, which is GMT+8. This means China is **2 hours and 30 minutes ahead of India**.

2. Arable Land and Agriculture:

- China has less arable land per capita than India, and a significant portion of its land is mountainous or arid.
- In China Most of its agriculture is concentrated in the eastern plains and river basins which are highly productive but prone to flooding.
- India's agricultural base is more evenly distributed across the country compared to China.
- China has a **lower percentage of fertile land** it compensates with more intensive farming practices and higher agricultural productivity per hectare than India.

3. Climate: China has a more varied climate due to its vast size, ranging from tropical in the south to subarctic in the north. The climate is predominantly temperate

India's climate is dominated by the monsoon system, which brings seasonal rains and shapes its agricultural cycle. The climate is primarily tropical to subtropical, with significant regional variations, from the arid Thar Desert to the humid rainforests of the northeast.

4 Strategic and Geopolitical Implications:

China's geography has historically fostered a sense of self-sufficiency and inward focus, with natural barriers like the Himalayas, deserts, and oceans protecting it from easy invasion

The geography also influences its foreign policy, with a strong focus on securing access to resources and trade routes, as seen in the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the "String of Pearls" strategy in the Indian Ocean.

India's geography has a more open and central location in South Asia. The Himalayan mountain ranges provide a natural protective barrier in the north, but also a source of border disputes. Its peninsular shape and location at the head of the Indian Ocean give it a dominant position in the region. This maritime geography is a major strategic asset, allowing India to be a key player in the Indo-Pacific.

HISTORICAL RELATIONSHIP

- historical link is primarily defined by cultural and commercial exchanges
- which contrast sharply with the political and military conflicts of the post-colonial era.
- key connection -
- Spread of Buddhism from India to China. Beginning in the 1st century AD, Indian monks and scholars, such as **Bodhidharma**, traveled the **Silk Road**, bringing Buddhist scriptures and philosophy to China
- Chinese pilgrims journeys to India to study at centers of learning like **Nalanda University** and collect Buddhist texts
- **Trade:** The Silk Road was a crucial commercial artery that connected India and China. While the primary trade was in silk and other goods, the route also facilitated the exchange of ideas, technologies, and art

The Modern Era

- Before their independence and revolution, there was a sense of Asian solidarity between the two nations, both of which had suffered from Western imperialism. Leaders like **Jawaharlal Nehru** and figures like **Rabindranath Tagore** championed a vision of an Asian resurgence led by India and China
- **Post-Independence and the "Hindi-Chini Bhai Bhai" Era:** Following the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949 and India's independence in 1947
- India was one of the first non-communist countries to recognize the PRC, and the two nations signed the **Panchsheel Agreement** (Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence) in 1954, which was seen as a cornerstone of non-alignment and Afro-Asian solidarity.
- The 1962 Sino-Indian War: onflict was a major turning point. Triggered by a border dispute over Aksai Chin and the McMahon Line, and exacerbated by China's annexation of Tibet and India's grant of asylum to the Dalai Lama, the war shattered the trust between the two countries. It marked the end of the "Hindi-Chini Bhai Bhai" era and established the foundation for the current geopolitical rivalry.

why china is more developed than India?

- China's economic reforms began much earlier and followed a different path than India's.
- **When it started:** China began its process of "reform and opening up" in **1978** under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping
- **Initial focus:** China's initial reforms focused on agriculture and establishing **Special Economic Zones** to attract foreign investment. This strategy aimed to make China a manufacturing and export powerhouse.
- **State control:** While opening up, the Chinese government maintained strong control over the economy, guiding development through industrial policies and long-term strategic plans

India's Economic Opening

- **When it started:** India's significant economic reforms, often referred to as liberalization, were initiated in **1991** in response to a severe balance of payments crisis.

- **Initial focus:** India's reforms focused on dismantling the "License Raj," reducing government control, and encouraging private enterprise.
- **Sectoral focus:** While China's growth was driven by manufacturing and exports, India's economic growth was primarily led by the **services sector**, particularly IT and software

India's Imports from China:

- Electrical & Electronic Equipment
- Machinery, Nuclear Reactors, Boilers
- Organic and InOrganic Chemicals
- Plastics
- Iron and Steel
- Fertilizers

India's Exports to China

- Ores, Slag and Ash (primarily iron ore)
- Organic Chemicals
- Mineral Fuels, Oils, Distillation Products
- Cotton, Copper, Salt, Fish, Oils

ECONOMIC RELATIONS :

- Not about Trade but a It's a strategic tool.
- Most Critical Issue - Trade Deficit (It's when a country's imports are greater than its exports)
- India's trade deficit with China has been widening, meaning India buys far more from China than it sells.
- This leads to an outflow of money from India and hurts domestic industries
- For example, in 2024-25, the deficit was close to \$100 billion.
- **Import Dependence:** India is heavily reliant on China for essential goods, including **Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs)** (raw materials for medicines) and electronics like smartphones and components. This reliance makes India's supply chains vulnerable, especially during geopolitical tensions
- China uses its economic power to build influence, while India's response (e.g., banning Chinese apps, promoting domestic production) is part of its broader geopolitical strategy to counter China's rise
- **Foreign Direct Investment (FDI):** While trade is huge, Chinese FDI into India has been relatively low and has faced increased scrutiny, particularly after the 2020 border standoff. India has tightened its FDI policy for countries sharing a land border, which mainly affects China

Economic Structure :

Feature	India	China
Formal/Organized Sector	Less than 10% of the workforce	The majority of the workforce is in the formal sector
Informal/Unorganized Sector	Around 90% of the workforce	Less than 30% of the workforce

Feature	India	China
Urban Population	37% of the total population	Over 64% of the total population
Rural Population	63% of the total population	Under 36% of the total population

Currency Name and Codes

- **India:** The currency is the **Indian Rupee**, with the symbol ₹ and the ISO currency code **INR**.
- **China:** The official currency is the **Renminbi (RMB)**, with the symbol ¥. The basic unit of the Renminbi is the **Yuan**. The ISO currency code for China is **CNY**. This code stands for the **Chinese Yuan Renminbi**,
- **Chinese Yuan is stronger than the Indian Rupee.** (Reason : China's immense manufacturing and export capacity)
- China has a central bank similar to the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). It is called the **People's Bank of China (PBOC)**.

People-to-people contact:

- People-to-people contact between India and China is **limited**, largely due to a history of political tensions and a lack of open exchange, often overshadowed by border disputes and geopolitical rivalry.
- **Academic and Cultural Exchange:** While there have been agreements to boost cultural and academic cooperation, the actual level of exchange remains modest.

- **Limited Tourism and Travel:** The number of tourists and travelers between the two countries is low compared to their immense populations.
- The Indian diaspora in mainland China is small but growing
- The Chinese diaspora in India is notably smaller. The largest concentration was in **Kolkata**, which had a thriving Chinatown.

Military Compare :

- China's military is numerically larger with a much higher defense budget
- China has a larger standing army.
- China has a quantitative edge in tanks and is more mechanized.
- China has a larger artillery force
- India's troops are better acclimatized and more experienced for combat in the Himalayas. (High-altitude warfare)
- China has more aircrafts
- China 5 generation fighter : **J-20** (operational), J-35 (testing)
- People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) the largest navy in the world by number of vessels.
- China has a growing carrier fleet, while India operates two. Aircraft carriers -3 (Liaoning, Shandong, Fujian) and 2 (INS Vikramaditya, INS Vikrant)
- China has a significantly larger submarine fleet. total 61 and India 18
- China holds a significantly larger nuclear arsenal than India
- Both countries have a no-first-use policy, which aims to prevent nuclear escalation

India and China have conducted a total of three and 46 nuclear tests, respectively.

India's Nuclear Tests

Date	Year	Location	Codename
May 18	1974	Pokhran, Rajasthan	Smiling Buddha (officially a "Peaceful Nuclear Explosion")
May 11	1998	Pokhran, Rajasthan	Operation Shakti
May 13	1998	Pokhran, Rajasthan	Operation Shakti

China's Nuclear Tests

Year	Region	Test Type
1964-1996	Lop Nur, Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region	A mix of atmospheric and underground tests. China conducted its first test on October 16, 1964 .

China's tests are not widely known by individual code names. The last nuclear test conducted by China was on July 29, 1996, at the Lop Nur site. After this, China signed the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and declared a moratorium on nuclear testing.

Key Minerals Comparison

China holds monopoly on rare earth elements. India has about 6% of global REE deposits which makes India highly dependent on China for these crucial minerals which are essential for electronics, electric vehicles, and defense technology.

Coal: China is the **world's largest producer and consumer of coal**, mining almost half of the global supply. India is the **second-largest producer and consumer**,

Electricity Production: Fossil vs. Non-Fossil Based

Country	Fossil-Based (Coal, Oil, Gas)	Non-Fossil-Based (Renewables, Nuclear)
India	Approximately 50% of total installed capacity.	Approximately 50% of total installed capacity.
China	Approximately 59% of total electricity generation.	Approximately 41% of total electricity generation.

China is the world's largest producer of electricity from renewable sources (Decreasing Order : China, US, Brazil, Canada, India)

Iron Ore: India is a significant producer and **exporter of iron ore**, producing enough to meet its own needs and export a surplus. China, while being the world's largest steel producer, is a massive **net importer of iron ore**. This is a major area of dependency for China on other countries.

Chinese multinational companies have a significant presence in India, primarily in the **consumer electronics and technology sectors**

Direct Operations in India:

- **Mobile Phone Companies:** Brands like **Xiaomi, Oppo, Vivo, and OnePlus** have captured a majority of the Indian smartphone market.
- **Home Appliances:** **Haier** - refrigerators, air conditioners, and washing machines.
- **Lenovo:** A global leader in personal computers and laptops
- **Huawei:** A major player in telecommunications equipment and consumer electronics.
- **TCL:** A multinational electronics company known for televisions.

Prominent Indian Companies in China:

Information Technology (IT) and IT-Enabled Services: Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) ; Infosys; Wipro; HCL Technologies

Pharmaceuticals: Dr. Reddy's Laboratories; Aurobindo Pharma and Lupin

Manufacturing and Engineering: Bharat Forge, Mahindra & Mahindra, Suzlon Energy, Adani Group

Banking:: While many Indian banks had previously established a presence in China, the number has decreased. Currently, the **State Bank of India (SBI)** and **ICICI Bank** maintain branches in Shanghai

29 August 2025

The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, or **Quad:**

- is an informal strategic forum comprising four countries: **India, Australia, Japan, and the United States.**
- The Quad was first established in **2007** by then-Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in response to the **2004 Indian Ocean tsunami** to coordinate humanitarian and disaster relief efforts
- It was formally resurrected in **2017** with a focus on a "free and open Indo-Pacific," a phrase widely understood to counter China's growing military and economic assertiveness in the region.

The primary objectives of the Quad include:

- **Promoting a free, open, and rules-based Indo-Pacific.**
- **Enhancing maritime security and freedom of navigation** in key waterways.
- **Cooperating on non-traditional security challenges** such as climate change, cyber security, counter-terrorism, and public health, as seen during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Developing robust supply chains and infrastructure** to offer an alternative to China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

Impact on India-China Relations:

- China views the Quad with suspicion, labeling it an **"Asian NATO"** aimed at containing its rise.
- It sees the grouping as a direct threat to its national security and economic interests

For India:

- the Quad provides a strategic platform to balance China's growing power
- Enhance its strategic options and leverage in its border dispute with China.
- Receive crucial support in maritime domain awareness to counter China's increasing naval presence in the Indian Ocean.
- Diversify its supply chains and reduce its economic dependency on China.
- While India maintains its policy of strategic autonomy and avoids a formal military alliance,

The Quad holds both ministerial and leader-level summits. Here are the locations and dates of the major summits:

Summit	Location	Date
First (Virtual)	Virtual Summit	March 12, 2021
Second (In-person)	Washington, D.C., USA	September 24, 2021
Third (In-person)	Tokyo, Japan	May 24, 2022
Fourth (In-person)	Hiroshima, Japan	May 20, 2023
Fifth (In-person)	Wilmington, Delaware, USA	September 21, 2024

India is set to host the next Quad Leaders' Summit in 2025 in New Delhi

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI):

- is a massive, long-term global infrastructure development strategy launched by China in 2013 under President Xi Jinping.
- Often referred to as the "New Silk Road," its goal is to improve connectivity, trade, and economic cooperation across Asia, Europe, and Africa.
- **No. of Participating Countries:** Over 150 countries and international organizations have signed on to BRI projects.

Key Components and Features:

The BRI is composed of two main parts:

- **The Silk Road Economic Belt:** This refers to the land-based routes, which include a network of highways, railways, and pipelines to connect China with Central Asia, West Asia, and Europe.
- **The 21st Century Maritime Silk Road:** This component focuses on sea routes, involving the development of ports and maritime infrastructure to connect China's coastal cities with Southeast Asia, South Asia, Africa, and the Mediterranean.

The initiative has five primary objectives: policy coordination, infrastructure connectivity, increase trade, financial integration, and people-to-people ties.

Strategic Objectives :

- **Economic:** It aims to find new markets for China's massive industrial overcapacity in various sectors and secure supply chains for energy and raw materials.
- **Geopolitical:** project China's power and influence globally, build diplomatic leverage with participating nations, and create a Chinese-led economic and political order to rival that of the U.S. and its allies.

India's Stance and Concerns

- India has consistently opposed the BRI and boycotted its forums. India's opposition is based on several key concerns:
- **Sovereignty:** The flagship project of the BRI, the **China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)**, violates India's sovereignty as it passes through Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), which India claims.
- **Debt-Trap Diplomacy:** India is concerned that China is using unsustainable loans to burden developing countries, which then fall into a "debt trap" and are forced to cede control of strategic assets to China. The case of the Hambantota Port in Sri Lanka is a frequently cited example.
- **Strategic Encirclement:** India is concerned that China's growing presence in its neighborhood, particularly through the development of ports and other strategic infrastructure, is an attempt to encircle India and undermine its influence in the Indian Ocean Region.
- China's "String of Pearls" Strategy: A network of ports and military bases in the Indian Ocean region that India views as an attempt to encircle it.
- India's "Necklace of Diamonds" Counter-Strategy: India's efforts to develop strategic partnerships and access to ports in countries like Oman, Seychelles, and Vietnam to counter China's influence.
- **Transparency:** India has criticized the lack of transparency, fair bidding processes, and environmental and social standards in many BRI projects.

Alternatives:

In response to the BRI, other countries have launched their own connectivity initiatives, such as the **Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment (PGII)** by the G7, the **Blue Dot Network** by the U.S., Japan, and Australia, and the **India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC)**.

India China Relations UPSC PYQs

"What do you understand by 'The String of Pearls'? How does it impact India? Briefly outline the steps taken by India to counter this." (2013)

The 'String of Pearls' is a geopolitical concept that describes China's strategic network of naval and commercial facilities and relationships along its sea lines of communication. This "string" of influence extends from the Chinese mainland to the Horn of Africa, passing through major maritime choke points in the Indian Ocean.

Each "pearl" is a port, military base, or other infrastructure project, such as Gwadar in Pakistan, Hambantota in Sri Lanka, and Djibouti in the Horn of Africa.



Port Name	Country	Location
Gwadar	Pakistan	Arabian Sea, near the Strait of Hormuz
Hambantota	Sri Lanka	Southern coast of Sri Lanka
Chittagong	Bangladesh	Bay of Bengal
Kyaukpadaung	Myanmar	Western coast of Myanmar in Rakhine State
Djibouti	Djibouti	Horn of Africa, at the entrance to the Red Sea
Coco Islands	Myanmar	Bay of Bengal
Woody Island	China	Paracel Islands in the South China Sea
Hainan Island	China	South China Sea
Maldives	Maldives	Indian Ocean

The strategy's primary goal is to secure China's energy and trade routes while expanding its regional and global influence

Impact on India:

- **Strategic Encirclement:** The development of Chinese-controlled ports and facilities in India's neighbourhood is seen as a deliberate attempt to encircle India. This raises concerns about the potential for dual-use ports to be converted into naval bases in a time of conflict, giving China a strategic advantage.
- **Maritime Security Threat:** China's growing naval presence in the IOR, including the deployment of warships and submarines, poses a direct threat to India's maritime security. This could endanger Indian trade and energy routes and challenge the Indian Navy's dominance in its own backyard.
- **Economic Strain:** To counter this perceived threat, India must allocate more resources to its defence and security, which could divert funds from crucial social and economic development projects.
- **Reduced Regional Influence:** China's expanding economic and diplomatic ties with countries in the IOR, which have traditionally been in India's sphere of influence, could diminish India's strategic clout and lead to a reconfiguration of regional alliances.



Image: Necklace of Diamonds Strategy

India's Counter-Strategy

The "Necklace of Diamonds" is a geopolitical and strategic concept used to describe India's response to China's "String of Pearls" strategy. While it is not a formal or official government doctrine, the term is widely used by analysts and commentators to explain India's efforts to counter China's growing influence in the Indian Ocean and beyond. This counter-strategy involves developing a network of ports and strategic partnerships to secure its maritime interests and project power in the Indian Ocean Region and strategy involves a combination of naval modernization, diplomatic engagement, and infrastructure development.

- **Counter-encirclement:** The primary goal is to "garland" or "counter-encircle" China by developing strategic partnerships and infrastructure around its periphery.

- **Strategic partnerships and alliances:** This involves strengthening diplomatic, economic, and military ties with key countries to create a network of influence. Like Quad Quadrilateral Security Dialogue) with the US, Japan, and Australia, conducting joint naval exercises like the **Malabar exercise**
- **Maritime security:** Securing sea lanes of communication, particularly those vital to China's energy and trade, is a central tenet.

• **Port access and naval bases:** Gaining access to ports and developing naval cooperation agreements with partner nations is a crucial component.

Developing strategic ports to enhance its naval presence and project power

- **Chabahar Port (Iran):** Provides India with a direct sea-land trade route to Afghanistan and Central Asia, bypassing Pakistan.

This port is a vital component of the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC).

- **Duqm Port (Oman):** Offers India a strategic facility on the southeastern seaboard of Oman, located between China's "pearls" in Gwadar (Pakistan) and Djibouti.

- **Sabang Port (Indonesia):** Gives India a military access point near the crucial Malacca Strait, through which a large portion of China's oil and trade passes.

Sittwe Port Myanmar This port is part of the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project, which aims to connect India's landlocked northeastern states to the Bay of Bengal, providing a strategic economic corridor and reducing reliance on the Siliguri Corridor ("Chicken's Neck").

Strengthening ties with key partners

- **Singapore:** Gaining access to the Changi Naval Base.
- **Seychelles:** Developing a naval base on Assumption Island.
- **Vietnam and Japan:** Enhancing defense cooperation and joint exercises.

Regional cooperation and initiatives: India's maritime strategy is also supported by broader initiatives like the **SAGAR** (Security and Growth for All in the Region) and the **Act East Policy**, which aim to foster greater economic and security cooperation with nations in the Indian Ocean and Southeast Asia

- **Act East Policy:** India's Act East Policy is a crucial component of its counter-strategy. By strengthening economic and strategic ties with Southeast and East Asian countries, India seeks to counter China's influence and build a more stable and cooperative regional architecture

"Net security provider": India aims to be seen as a responsible and reliable partner that provides security and stability in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR)

Topic : CPEC

Q China and Pakistan have entered into an agreement for development of an economic corridor. What threat does it dispose for India's security? Critically examine. (UPSC Mains 2014).

Q.The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is viewed as a cardinal subset of China's larger 'One Belt One Road' initiative. Give a brief description of CPEC and enumerate the reasons why India has distanced itself from the same. (UPSC Mains 2018)



Rank	Name	Area (km ²)
1.	Balochistan	347,190
2.	Punjab	205,344
3.	Sindh	140,914
4.	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	101,741
5.	Gilgit-Baltistan	72,971

Country	Border Name	Length (km)
India	Radcliffe Line / International Border (IB)	2,912 - 3,323 km*
Afghanistan	Durand Line	2,430 - 2,670 km*
Iran	Iran-Pakistan Barrier	909 km
China	Sino-Pakistan Frontier	523 - 596 km*



THE CHINA-PAKISTAN ECONOMIC CORRIDOR (CPEC)

- It is infrastructure Project that is a flagship component of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) Launched in 2015
- **Length:** The main land route of CPEC is approximately **3,000 kilometers Long**
- The project is a network of roads, railways, and pipelines that connect Gwadar Port in Pakistan to Kashgar in China's Xinjiang province(Uyghur Autonomous Region)
- Creating Energy Plants (Coal, Hydro, Wind Power Plants) and development of various Special Economic Zones along the corridor to attract foreign investment, promote industrialization, and create jobs.
- **For China:** CPEC provides a shorter and more secure alternative to the traditional maritime route through the **Strait of Malacca**, a major chokepoint. This reduces China's vulnerability and ensures the uninterrupted flow of its energy imports from the Middle East.

BENEFITS FOR PAKISTAN

- **Economic Growth -Job Creation**
- **Infrastructure Development**
- **Energy Security** to alleviate Pakistan's power crisis and provide a more stable electricity supply.
- **Regional Connectivity:** The corridor is designed to transform Pakistan into a regional hub, providing a trade and transit route for Central Asian countries.

Criticisms and Challenges

- **Debt Burden:** The project is primarily financed by Chinese loans, leading to concerns that Pakistan could fall into a "debt trap," making it economically dependent on China
- **Lack of Transparency:** Critics point to a lack of transparency in the financing and contract terms of CPEC projects, raising questions about accountability and potential corruption.
- **Increase Geopolitical Implications and Security Concerns:** The corridor passes through volatile regions, including Balochistan, where separatist groups have targeted Chinese workers and projects, citing a lack of local benefits from the development.
- **Environmental and Social Impact:** Critics have raised concerns about the environmental impact of large-scale infrastructure and coal-fired power projects, as well as the displacement of local communities without adequate compensation

India has consistently distanced itself from CPEC for several key reasons, which are a combination of sovereignty, geopolitical, and security concerns.

1. Sovereignty and Territorial Integrity

- Primary Reason for India's opposition

- CPEC's main route passes through **Gilgit-Baltistan**, a part of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) that India claims as its own territory.
- By building infrastructure in a disputed area, China is seen as legitimizing Pakistan's control over the territory
- which goes against India's long-standing position that the Kashmir issue is a bilateral dispute between India and Pakistan.

2. Geopolitical and Strategic Concerns

- **Encircling India:** India views CPEC as a key component of China's "String of Pearls" strategy thereby encircling India and threatening its maritime security.
- **Debt Trap Diplomacy:** India has expressed concerns that the massive loans provided by China for CPEC projects could lead to a "debt trap" for Pakistan, similar to the one experienced by Sri Lanka with the Hambantota Port.
- **China-Pakistan Nexus:** CPEC further strengthens the strategic and military alliance between China and Pakistan, which India perceives as a direct threat to its national security. A militarily and economically stronger Pakistan, with Chinese backing, could exacerbate tensions in the region.

3. Lack of Transparency and Mutuality

India has also raised concerns about the lack of transparency in the CPEC project's financing and contracts. It argues that connectivity initiatives should adhere to principles of good governance, rule of law, and financial responsibility. India has stated that CPEC does not align with these principles and is primarily designed to serve China's strategic interests, with limited benefits for the host country.

Q.2 China is using its economic relations and positive trade surplus as tools to develop potential military power status in Asia', In the light of this statement, discuss its impact on India as her neighbour. (UPSC Mains 2017)

Ans :

China's massive trade surplus, fueled by its status as the world's manufacturing hub, provides it with the financial resources to modernize its military and fund large-scale infrastructure projects in other countries.

This dynamic has a profound and multi-faceted impact on India as its neighbour.

Strategic and Military Impact:

- **Encirclement of India:** China's "String of Pearls" strategy involves developing ports and naval facilities in countries surrounding India, Like CPEC . While these are economically framed projects, their potential military use allows China to project power into the Indian Ocean, This Impact India Maritime Interest and Perceive Threat to its National Security .
- **Military Modernization:** China's immense trade surplus allows it to sustain the **world's second-largest military budget**. This funding is used to acquire and develop cutting-edge military technologies, including aircraft carriers, stealth fighters, and advanced missile systems, creating a significant conventional military imbalance in the region

Economic and Diplomatic Impact

- **Trade Deficit and Economic Dependence:** India has a massive and growing **trade deficit** with China. India is heavily reliant on Chinese goods, including raw materials and intermediate products for its own manufacturing sector. This economic dependence provides China with considerable leverage and makes it difficult for India to take a strong stance on various political and security issues
- **Influence in India's Neighbourhood:** China's economic aid, investments, and loans to India's neighbours—such as Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka—have reduced these countries' economic dependence on India. This Undermining India's Regional Leadership

India's Response

In response to this multi-faceted challenge, India has adopted a strategy of "**proactive balancing**":

- **"Necklace of Diamonds":** India is developing its own network of strategic partnerships and port access in the Indian Ocean to counter the "String of Pearls." Examples include developing the **Chabahar Port** in Iran, securing access to the **Duqm Port** in Oman, and strengthening ties with countries like Vietnam, Japan, Australia, and the United States (via the Quad).
- **Military Modernization:** India is investing in modernizing its own armed forces, particularly its navy and air force, to counter the military capabilities of China.
- **Economic Counter-Measures:** India has implemented measures to reduce its trade deficit with China, including banning certain Chinese apps, restricting Chinese investments in some sectors, and promoting indigenous manufacturing under the "**Atmanirbhar Bharat**" (Self-Reliant India) initiative.

Q.3 With respect to the South China sea, maritime territorial disputes and rising tension affirm the need for safeguarding maritime security to ensure freedom of navigation and over flight throughout the region. In this context, discuss the bilateral issues between India and China. (UPSC Mains 2014)

The bilateral issues between India and China with respect to the South China Sea are a complex mix of economic interests, geopolitical competition, and security concerns. China's actions in the region have a significant impact on India's interests and broader security outlook.

India's position on the South China Sea dispute is primarily guided by its commitment to **freedom of navigation and adherence to international law**, particularly the **UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)**. India insists that disputes be resolved peacefully and that maritime boundaries be respected according to international norms

A significant portion of India's foreign trade passes through the South China Sea. Any disruption or militarization of these vital sea lanes of communication (SLOCs) would have severe economic consequences for India.

China's assertive actions, such as the construction of artificial islands, militarization of outposts, and harassment of vessels from other claimant states, have compelled India to adopt a more proactive and multifaceted approach.

India's **"Act East Policy"** is a crucial component of its response. It seeks to deepen economic, strategic, and cultural ties with countries in the Indo-Pacific region, thereby increasing India's influence and presence as a counterweight to China

Strategic Partnerships: India has been actively strengthening its strategic partnerships with key South-East Asian countries that are also concerned about China's assertiveness

Naval Presence: The Indian Navy has been increasing its presence in the South China Sea by conducting frequent naval exercises, including multilateral drills like the Malabar exercise with the United States, Japan, and Australia (the Quad).

India's strategy has been to vocally support international law and freedom of navigation without taking a direct side in the territorial disputes of other nations. This approach allows India to defend its own interests and principles while avoiding a direct military confrontation with China in a region where Chinese military power is overwhelming.

What is Strategic Partnership ?

- A strategic partnership in international relations is a long-term, comprehensive, and mutually beneficial relationship between two countries that goes beyond typical diplomatic ties
- These partnerships are less binding than a formal military alliance, allowing for greater flexibility and strategic autonomy.
- Includes wide range of issues, including politics, defence, economics, technology, and culture, to achieve shared strategic goals

India has elevated or established strategic partnerships with over **30 countries and regional blocs**.

Key facts: Strategic Partnership of India with East Asian and South East Asia Economies :

- ASEAN
- Singapore
- Vietnam
- Malaysia
- Philippines
- Brunei
- Japan
- South Korea
- Mongolia

Note: India does not have a strategic partnership with China or North Korea.

Reason : India China Not Signed SP:

- due to a deep-seated and persistent lack of strategic trust
- Their relationship is characterized by a complex mix of economic interdependence and geopolitical rivalry.
- Long-standing and unresolved border dispute along the **Line of Actual Control (LAC)** in the Himalayas
- This has led to frequent military standoffs like Doklam Standoff, Galwan Valley in 2020
- **Sovereignty Concerns:** India strongly objects to the **China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)**, a flagship project of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), because it passes through Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), which India claims as its own territory.
- **Geopolitical and Security Rivalry: "String of Pearls" vs. "Necklace of Diamonds":** Both countries are engaged in a strategic competition for influence in the Indian Ocean and the broader Indo-Pacific region
- **China-Pakistan Nexus:** The close and long-standing strategic, military, and economic alliance between China and Pakistan is a major source of concern for India. China's support for Pakistan, including military assistance and its role in CPEC, is viewed by India as an attempt to contain its regional power.
- **Naval Power Projection:** China's growing naval presence in the Indian Ocean, including the deployment of submarines and warships, is a significant security concern for India
- **Economic and Trade Imbalance-** India has a significant and growing trade deficit with China. This economic imbalance is a source of tension and has raised concerns about India's economic dependence on China
- Differences in Political Systems and Values-

- **Democratic vs. Authoritarian:** As the world's largest democracy, India's political system and values are fundamentally different from China's one-party authoritarian system. This ideological divergence makes a deep and trust-based strategic partnership difficult to achieve.
- **Strategic Autonomy:** India's foreign policy is rooted in the principle of **strategic autonomy**, where it seeks to maintain its independence and avoid formal alliances that could limit its foreign policy choices. This is in contrast to the more alliance-based approach seen in China's relationships

Country/Bloc	Year Signed/Upgraded	Nature of Partnership
Egypt	2023	Strategic Partnership
Italy	2023	Strategic Partnership
Greece	2023	Strategic Partnership
Tanzania	2023	Strategic Partnership
ASEAN	2022	Comprehensive Strategic Partnership
Malaysia	2024	Comprehensive Strategic Partnership
Poland	2024	Strategic Partnership
Kuwait	2024	Strategic Partnership
Qatar	2025	Strategic Partnership
Qatar	2025	Strategic Partnership
Philippines	2025	Strategic Partnership
Singapore	2024	Comprehensive Strategic Partnership
United States	2025	Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership
Japan	2025	Special Strategic and Global Partnership
Brunei	2024	Enhanced Partnership

Partnership Level	Key Focus Areas & Keywords
Strategic Partnership (foundational level of cooperation with a focus on shared political, security, and economic interests)	Diplomacy, Defense, Economy, Cooperation
Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (Upgrade partnership with broader scope and deeper integration)	Technology, Innovation, Dual-use technology, Deeper integration, All-weather
Special Strategic and Global Partnership (highest level of partnership, reserved for countries)	Indo-Pacific, Global governance, Multilateralism, Rule of law, Convergence

Points of Key Conflict Region : Impacting India China Relations

- **Border dispute** is centered on a 3,488 km-long Line of Actual Control (LAC), which is not clearly demarcated.
- Aksai Chin
- Galwan Valley
- Pangong Tso
- Depang Plains
- Demchok
- **Barahoti** in Uttarakhand, which have seen occasional transgressions
- Arunachal Pradesh
- The **Nathu La and Cho La clashes of 1967** resulted in heavy casualties and demonstrated the fragility of the peace in the region.
- **Doklam Tri-junction:** The 2017 standoff in Doklam was a major conflict- It is a disputed plateau near the India-China-Bhutan tri-junction.



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