TAKSHASHILA INSTITUTION

Takshashila Discussion Document

An Indian Approach to Navigate China's Rise

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Contents

I. Executive Summary

The rise of China as an emerging global power has significant implications for India's pursuit of its core interests. While old sources of friction between the two countries persist, shifting global power dynamics and technological advancements present new challenges and opportunities.

In this backdrop, this report argues that China's primary interest with regard to India pertains to the nature of the Indo-US relationship. Stability along China's periphery and, if not supportive, then at least a non-aligned India is what China desires in the near term. Meanwhile, India's national interest lies in ensuring that the relationship with China remains stable and deepens based on common interests, while India pursues the expansion of its own comprehensive national power.

Underscoring the above, this report provides a detailed assessment of China's foreign and defence policies and makes specific recommendations that India should pursue to shape the trajectory of the bilateral relationship.

We argue that India must:

- Approach the economic relationship with China from a strategic perspective. Invite investments but offer conditional market access.
- Adopt steps to stabilise the security relationship, while focussing on defence modernisation and cultivating asymmetric countermeasures.
- Pursue pragmatic self-interest-based cooperation on global issues while building the capacity to emerge as a swing power.
- Create enabling environments for subnational entities to drive people-to-people engagement.
- Pursue conditional collaboration with Chinese entities with the aim of nurturing domestic innovation ecosystem.

II. Recommendations

1. **The Economy**: Approach the economic relationship with China from a strategic perspective. Invite investments but offer conditional market access. This entails:
    - Leveraging market access for broader political objectives.
    - Ensuring there are purposeful steps towards a publicly stated target for the reduction of the trade deficit within a fixed timeframe.
    - Inviting Chinese investments to boost exports and infrastructure development.
    - Undertaking domestic economic reforms to enhance competitiveness of Indian manufacturing.

2. National Security: Adopt steps to stabilise the security relationship, while focussing on defence modernisation and cultivating asymmetric countermeasures. This entails:
    - Pressing China for clarity on its territorial claims along the LAC.
    - Establishing hotlines between regional commanders and at DGMO level.
    - Building linkages between defence academies in both countries.
    - Quickening the pace of the building of border infrastructure and investing in the development of border villages.
    - Streamlining defence acquisition procedures and enhancing joint operations capabilities.
    - Focussing on maritime power development with specific attention to strengthening the ability to control important chokepoints.

- Investing in cyber, information, and electronic warfare capabilities along with unmanned vehicles.

3. **Geopolitical Issues**: Pursue pragmatic self-interest-based cooperation on global issues while building the capacity to emerge as a swing power. This entails:

    - Deepening high-level engagement with the Chinese leadership in order to build trust.
    - Building mechanisms for structured, purposeful, and agenda-driven dialogue as opposed to convening informal summits.
    - Partnering with China where interests coincide, such as in pushing economic globalisation, international institutional reform, countering transnational terrorism and tackling climate change.
    - Deepen economic and security partnerships with like-minded states, such as the US, Japan, Australia, and ASEAN members to bridge power gap with China.
    - Defining and deepening India's development partnership with Taiwan.
    - Promoting values that are fundamental to the Indian Republic to shape global norms in areas like human rights, cyberspace governance and data governance.

4. **People-to-People Engagement**: Create enabling environments for subnational entities to drive people-to-people engagement. This entails:

    - Reconvening State/Provincial Leaders' Forum, with regular meetings held at stipulated intervals.
    - Establishing greater connectivity between major metropolises to work on common areas of interest.

- Encouraging Indian industry associations to set up representative offices across China.
- Encouraging roadshows by provincial and city governments to attract tourists and students.
- Facilitating university linkages for infrastructure building and development of educational programs.
- Pursuing policies that open up film, television, Internet and gaming sectors in both countries.

5. Science and Technology: Pursue conditional collaboration with Chinese entities with the aim of nurturing domestic innovation ecosystem. This entails:
    - Supporting indigenous development by nurturing a thriving research and innovation ecosystem.
    - Being open to foreign capital, talent and expertise, including Chinese, particularly in terms of consumer-facing markets.
    - Establishing a whitelist that sets standards and recognises trusted partners in critical domains like telecommunications, data security and cybersecurity.
    - Enacting policies in emerging areas of technology governance, such as data, role of intermediaries and AI, which reflect Indian interests and values.
    - Expanding existing dialogue with China on science and technology to newer areas of technology governance.

III. Strategic Interests & Priorities

The Kautilyan concept of *yogakshema*, implying the well-being, prosperity and happiness of all Indians, broadly defines India's national interests. *Yogakshema* must be the overarching objective guiding India's economic, foreign, and national security policies. In this context, the expansion of China's aggregate power and global interests has implications for India's pursuit of its core interests.

Historically, the relationship between the modern India and China has been characterised by strands of cooperation, competition, and even conflict[1]. However, China's rapid economic growth and enhancement of political, diplomatic, military and technological capabilities post the early 1980s have added new dimensions to the relationship. Structurally, there now exists a deep power asymmetry between the two countries. This coupled with President Xi Jinping's increasingly assertive foreign policy and shifts in the United States' global role necessitates a fundamental rethinking of the Sino-Indian relationship.

Today, while old sources of friction between India and China persist, there are also new challenges and opportunities. Competition between the two countries is increasingly likely to be a product of historical distrust, expanding and overlapping interests, and divergences over fundamental values. On the other hand, cooperation is likely to be transactional, driven by pragmatic self-interest.

For China, its most important foreign policy priority is to manage the deepening systemic competition with the United States. Its primary interest with regard to India, therefore, pertains to the deepening relationship between New Delhi and Washington. Beijing views India as a potential US ally in what it perceives as an emerging policy of containment.[2] Stability along the periphery and, if not supportive, then at least a non-aligned India is what China desires in the near term.

While China is likely to seek cooperation where interests coincide, it does not imply that China's foreign policy will be accommodating of core Indian concerns. Beijing is neither likely to pursue tangible steps to resolve the boundary dispute nor is it likely to limit its engagement with India's neighbours and in the broader Indian Ocean Region. Instead, it is likely to endeavour for a balance between pursuing its strategic interests while managing Indian antagonism.

India's national interest with China involves ensuring that the relationship remains stable and deepens based on common interests, while it pursues the expansion of its own comprehensive national power. There are commonalities in Sino-Indian views when it comes to the future of the international order. Both see opportunities to work together to manage and gain from the disruptions caused by shifting power dynamics, new technologies and transnational challenges like climate change. In doing so, each of them, however, is seeking to expand their decisional autonomy. Yet it is important to note that a state's ability to enjoy such autonomy is directly related to its comprehensive national power. It is in this context that New Delhi must endeavour to manage divergences and leverage convergences in Indian and Chinese interests. How this must be done is the subject of the next section.

IV. Impact of China's Rise on India

China's emergence as a major economic and military power has changed the global political economy and led to far-reaching changes in multilateral institutions, the security environment, and technological innovation. This section analyses India's national interest in various sectors and how these have been impacted by China's rise. Despite some issues of convergence between the two nation-states, we note that the trajectory of the Sino-Indian relationship is less than ideal and suggest a reorientation.

A. The Economy

India's national interest

Economic growth is a moral imperative as India has nearly a fifth of its population below the poverty line3. Economic growth will strengthen India's strategic importance and act as a source of power in international negotiations4. India must therefore ensure its citizens have access to gainful employment and the means to improve their quality of life - which means strong manufacturing industries, access to global markets, and capital flows. As a second-order effect, economic growth and the strategic leverage it provides should be used to further secure India's interests in other areas discussed below.

Issues of convergence and divergence

Despite China's rapid and persistent economic growth, it still remains a middle-income country dependent on export-driven manufacturing. Like India, it is invested in the existing global financial and market order - both countries seek to reform it, not remake it. However, China's economic trajectory has been markedly different - whereas India's growth post-1990 has been powered by the growth of the service sector, China's has been led by low-cost manufacturing[5]. Chinese goods thus have a dominant position in many sectors of the Indian economy. As it nears middle-income status today, China is attempting to move to high-end manufacturing value chains and is also emerging as a global leader in software and AI, competing with India's service sector. These high-end goods and services are often seen with mistrust in India.

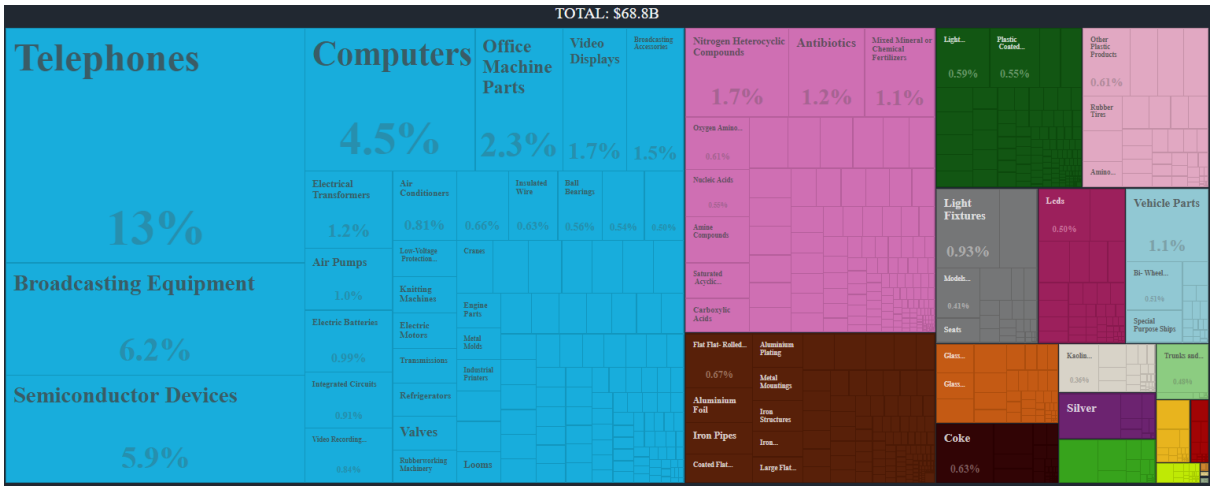


Fig 1. *Chinese exports to India, 2017. Note the proportion of high-end manufactures such as consumer electronics and semiconductors. Source: Observatory of Economic Complexity/WTO*

Current policy and trajectory

Despite the size of the Chinese market, state-imposed barriers - whether direct or indirect - lead to severe distortions, restricting access and hurting the competitiveness of Indian firms and goods. As a result, despite an increase in trade volumes, the trade balance remains skewed in China's favour.

Fig 2. *Chinese exports to India, 2017. Note the proportion of raw materials or primary manufactures. Source: Observatory of Economic Complexity/WTO*

Chinese investments also remain very limited compared to their engagement with other countries in the region. A major cause for this is the regulatory uncertainty and pervasive mistrust between both governments. Despite the formation of various working groups and the announcement of cooperation and research agreements[6], India's stance is that it still needs "meaningful market

access" from China in various sectors[7]. The structure of bilateral trade is heavily skewed - India's exports tend to be primary or low-tech goods such as minerals or generic medicines[8], while its imports tend to be "medium and high-technology products"[9] such as machinery and appliances[10]. This situation is not indefinitely sustainable and does not serve India's interests in the long term.

Recommended trajectory

The Indian government should approach its economic relationship with China from a strategic perspective.

First, market access should not be unconditional or absolute, but *strategic.* There is no obligation for India to play by market rules that China itself does not abide by. India must reserve the right to restrict access to sectors where it wishes to nurture indigenous and strategic industries and use market access as a diplomatic tool in its interactions with China (See Section VIII.A on how China does the same).

Second, India should pursue the declaration of a clear and stated target for the reduction of the trade deficit within a fixed timeframe. This should be among the key objectives of the new trade mechanism between the two countries. This was announced following the October 2019 informal summit in Chennai. At the same time, the mechanism should focus on identifying ways and means in which Chinese investment can be focussed on boosting export-oriented industries and infrastructure projects in India.

Third, Indian manufacturers need to be more globally competitive - which requires extensive domestic reforms. India's industries need to be capable of leveraging shifts in global trade and manufacturing environment and provide goods that Chinese consumers want.

Fourth, economic engagement cannot be driven top-down through diplomatic engagement. It must arise from an alignment of business interests, especially investments and joint ventures. Chinese investments could very well come with potential security implications, but this should be addressed via a systematic approach encouraging certain sectors and establishing scrutiny mechanisms for others. This does not mean that diplomatic engagement should not continue - rather, it be tuned to the interests and abilities of Indian firms and a long-term economic strategy.

B. National Security

India's national interest

India is the strongest military power in the subcontinent for now, but faces challenges from cross-border terrorism, border incursions from hostile actors, and internal insurgency. India needs the ability to respond to internal security issues while maintaining healthy relationships with its neighbours, and possess the ability to use force to respond to crises in the region if necessary. This necessitates secure borders, a favourable balance of power in strategic areas, and the ability to project its power into the neighbourhood - both the subcontinent and the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).

Issues of convergence and divergence

Insurgency and cross-border terrorism are challenges for both India and China, and there is (theoretically) room for cooperation in this matter. It is also in both countries' interests that the subcontinent and IOR remain stable and peaceful, due to the catastrophic potential effects of any spillover, such as climate change-induced mass immigration. However, as China's power grows, it has sought to increase its influence in the region, and this inevitably impacts India's interests[11] and raises security concerns.

One of the biggest sticking points in the India-China security relationship is the latter's close ties and extensive support for Pakistan[12] - and, by extension, the Pakistani military-jihadi complex[13]. This creates serious challenges for India along its borders and increases the risk of terrorist strikes and insurgent movements within its territory. This problem is also exacerbated by tensions along the long and highly disputed Sino-Indian border. Despite innovative but temporary solutions such as the Line of Actual Control[14], this remains China's only major unresolved boundary with any of its neighbours, with persistent incursions and standoffs.

Current policy and trajectory

The present situation has been succinctly summarised as driven by a "fundamental mismatch of threat perceptions between both states, rooted in the shifting balance of power and conflicting signals in the bilateral relationship"[15]. After the drastic escalation in tensions during the 2017 Doklam standoff[16] (see

IV.C, VIII.B, VIII.H) and the informal summits between PM Modi and President Xi in Wuhan and Chennai[17], there have been few signs of a fundamental realignment. While there have been no major incidents along the border and some new communication mechanisms have been formed, China has continued its military build-up[18]. India, meanwhile, has toed a careful diplomatic line[19] while attempting to build infrastructure and deploy additional troops and equipment. This has not served to correct the imbalance of threat perception and military force.

The maritime domain has fared relatively better, though this appears to be due more to India's reluctance to challenge China than anything else. China continues to expand its ability to project naval power into the Indian Ocean, building ports and infrastructure in India's neighbouring countries. These could potentially support PLAN expeditions in the future, while eroding the influence that India has in the region.

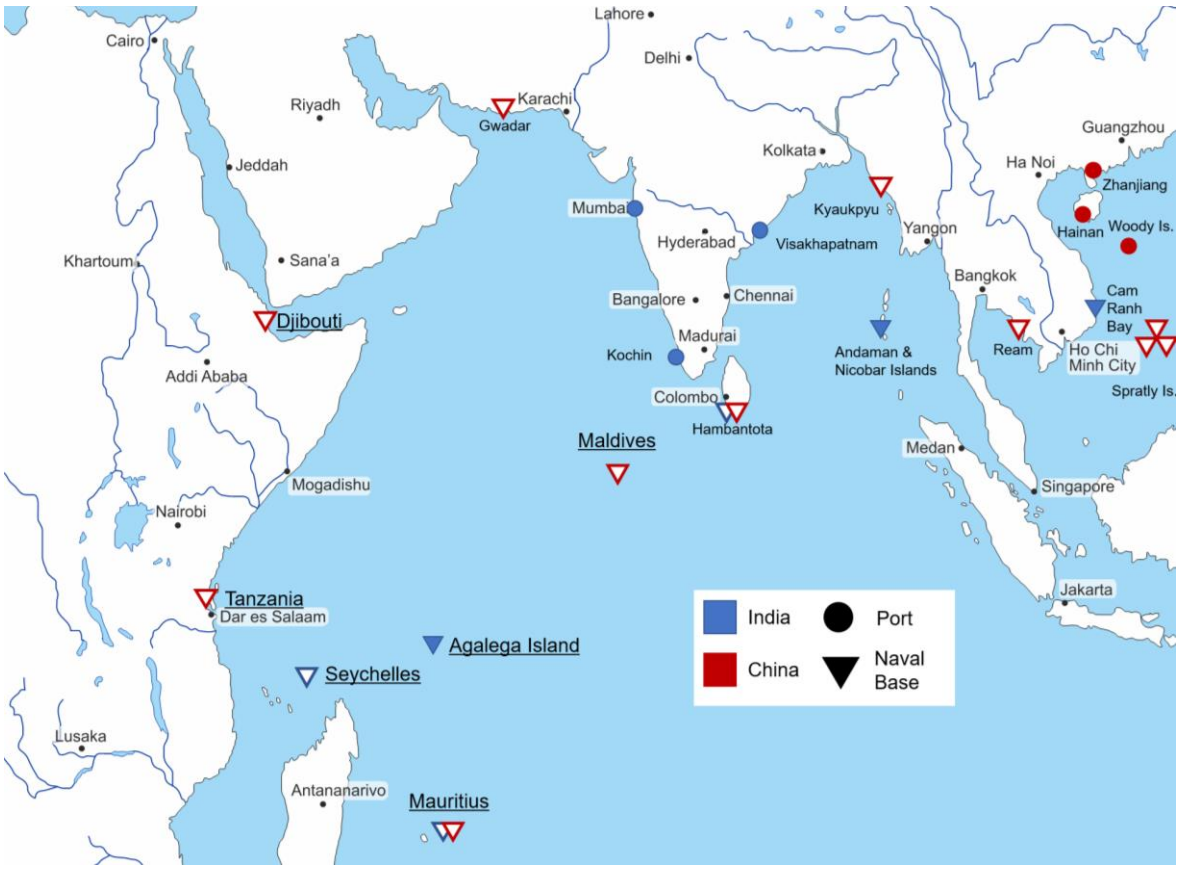


Fig 3. *Chinese and Indian Bases in the IOR. Hollow shapes represent potential facilities. Data Source: Bloomberg.*

Recommended trajectory

India must pursue stability in the bilateral relationship with China, while focussing on defence modernisation and cultivating asymmetric countermeasures. This requires action on a number of fronts.

First, considering the Sino-Indian power asymmetry, the Government of India must acknowledge that the PRC is unlikely to take substantive steps to resolve the boundary dispute in the near term. The dispute is a strategic stressor that Beijing can leverage to pressure New Delhi as and when it desires. Nevertheless, it is important for India to continue to call for clarity on Chinese territorial claims, including exchanges of maps delineating these claims, and stress that peace on the border is a prerequisite to deeper ties. At the same time, the Indian government should quicken the pace of building border infrastructure and invest in the development of border villages.

Second, there must be a purposeful effort to deepen military-to-military engagement between the two countries in order to reduce instability. Government of India should work with the PRC leadership to finalise, at the earliest, hotlines between regional commanders and at DGMO level. In addition to this, it is important to expand linkages between defence academies and research institutions in both countries with the objective of cultivating familiarity and deepening an understanding of evolving doctrinal thought, command structures, operational objectives and decision making processes in the PLA.

Third, there needs to be greater urgency in undertaking broader organisational and structural reforms to streamline defence allocation and enhance coordination and interoperability among the different branches of the Indian armed forces. This means streamlining defence acquisition, enhancing joint operations capability, and investing in training, equipment, and denial and deterrence capabilities post-haste.

Fourth, India needs to urgently counter China's rapid ramping up of its naval capacity, especially in the IOR. This entails the promotion of indigenous development and manufacturing and projecting power by working with new partners to conduct drills and build potential bases that strengthen the ability to control important chokepoints.

Finally, Indian defence planners need to carefully evaluate the PLA's investments and advancements in new domains such as Artificial Intelligence, unmanned weapons systems, space, cyber and electronic warfare. Accordingly, Indian investments should be focussed in the pursuit of developing asymmetric countermeasures. This entails investing in unmanned and autonomous vehicles, adversarial machine learning, electronic warfare along with offensive and defensive cyber capabilities.

C. Geopolitical Issues

India's national interest

The international order is currently in a period of flux. Shifts are underway in the global distribution of power, along with rapid changes in the flow of capital, resources and labour.[20] These are evident in the increasingly fractious relationship between China, the rising world power, and the United States, the incumbent superpower.

In this environment, India's strategic interest lies in emerging as a swing power. Achieving this status entails having better relations with the US and China than they have with each other. At the same time, it means that India should be selective in aligning with the US and China where its interests coincide, without joining any one camp. This is critical to expanding India's strategic and decisional autonomy.

Second, it is worth keeping in mind that India has been a net beneficiary of economic liberalisation and globalisation. Since the 1990s, it is only second to China in terms of the number of people lifted out of poverty.[21] Therefore, championing the cause of globalisation as movement of labour, goods, and services is of vital interest to India.[22]

Third, as India's comprehensive national power expands, it is in its interest to pursue the establishment of an open, multipolar and participatory global order, which accords with fundamental Indian values.

Areas of convergence and divergence

Both India and China are rising powers desiring greater role and influence at the global stage. They believe that "the international situation is currently witnessing significant readjustment,"[23] which is fundamentally challenging the stability of the post-War institutional order. However, at the same time, there are new opportunities for cooperation across several areas.

Rhetorically, both countries aspire a multilateral and multipolar rules-based international order, which is representative of changing geopolitical realities. Beyond this, there also exists a congruence of interests across a number of specific areas. Both countries have a stake in furthering economic globalisation, pursuing connectivity, combating transnational terrorism, ensuring energy

security, tackling climate change and pushing for a global policy of no first use of nuclear weapons.

However, the fact remains that Sino-Indian cooperation has yielded few, if any, tangible outcomes on issues of strategic importance. In fact, Beijing has little to gain from the expansion of New Delhi's global role. For instance, China continues to block India's entry into the Nuclear Suppliers Group. It is the only P5 member that hasn't supported India's bid for a permanent seat on a reformed UN Security Council. Despite a stated policy to encourage the development of alternative energy sources, Beijing remains ambivalent about partnering in the India-led International Solar Alliance. On the other hand, differences over the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor remain unresolved and India remains deeply sceptical of the Belt and Road Initiative.

Current policy & trajectory

The genesis of India's current approach to China can be traced back to the April 2018 informal summit in Wuhan. The meeting saw the leaderships of both countries attempt to define a new template for India-China relationship. What necessitated the meeting was a desire to stem the rapid deterioration of Sino-Indian ties, punctuated by the 2017 Doklam standoff. The broad framework that was agreed upon in Wuhan entailed three dimensions: First, both sides would deepen high-level engagement to advance the relationship keeping in mind the strategic and long-term perspectives, while respecting each other's sensitivities, concerns and aspirations. Second, the leadership in both countries committed to pursuing deeper and broad-based engagement in order to build trust. Third, maintaining peace and tranquillity along the disputed land boundary is fundamental to advancing on the above-mentioned agenda. The dictum underscoring this approach was that differences must not be allowed to turn into disputes. Since then, there have been signs of gradual, yet positive momentum. However, fundamental conflicts of interests persist. Consequently, the relationship is likely to remain difficult, with energies primarily spent on building trust and management of differences. Another component of the current Indian foreign policy that impacts its relationship with China is what has been described as the pursuit of multialignment.[24]

Recommended trajectory

Instead of pursuing multialignment as an objective, Indian foreign policy must be focused on building capacity to become a swing power that can inflict pain and give pleasure in pursuit of its interests. This entails a multi-pronged approach.

First, the policy of extensive high-level engagement with the Chinese leadership must continue in order to build trust. However, the informal summit mechanism should not become an end unto itself. Informality yields fine rhetoric but breeds ambiguity. Therefore, it is crucial for India to push for purposeful, agenda-driven conversations along with a broad overarching strategic dialogue. In doing so, there is some utility in adhering to the strategic consensus on international issues arrived at in Wuhan and reiterated in Chennai. But this should not be viewed as an article of faith.

Second, India should work with China to push the cause of greater economic globalisation, reform of the international order, countering transnational terrorism and tackling climate change. However, it is important to acknowledge that such cooperation will be transactional. Therefore, New Delhi must condition its efforts on Beijing's respect for its core interests and aspirations.

Third, India should quicken the pace of deepening its economic and security partnerships with countries like the United States, Japan, Australia and ASEAN states. This is vital if India is to bridge the power differential with China, which will bolster its bargaining power and consequently its ability to swing.

Fourth, India should be acting far more purposefully to define and deepen a development partnership with Taiwan. There have been some important changes in the past two years in the India-Taiwan economic relationship. For instance, the Taiwan External Trade Development Council set up new offices in Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai and Chennai in 2018 and investment by Taiwanese companies in the Indian market has increased.[25] But a systematic approach is needed to deepen cooperation across a range of areas, starting with more high-level leadership meetings and focussing on IT development, education and tourism.

Fifth, the Indian government must continue to support the development of the Tibetan community in the country. It must further emphasise to the Chinese leadership that India views the Dalai Lama's reincarnation as a religious and not

a political issue. It is important that in the pursuit of stability in its relationship with China, India does not compromise on values that are fundamental to the Indian Republic. Instead, it is important that the values of the Indian Republic are reflected in emerging international norms in areas like human rights, cyberspace governance and data governance.

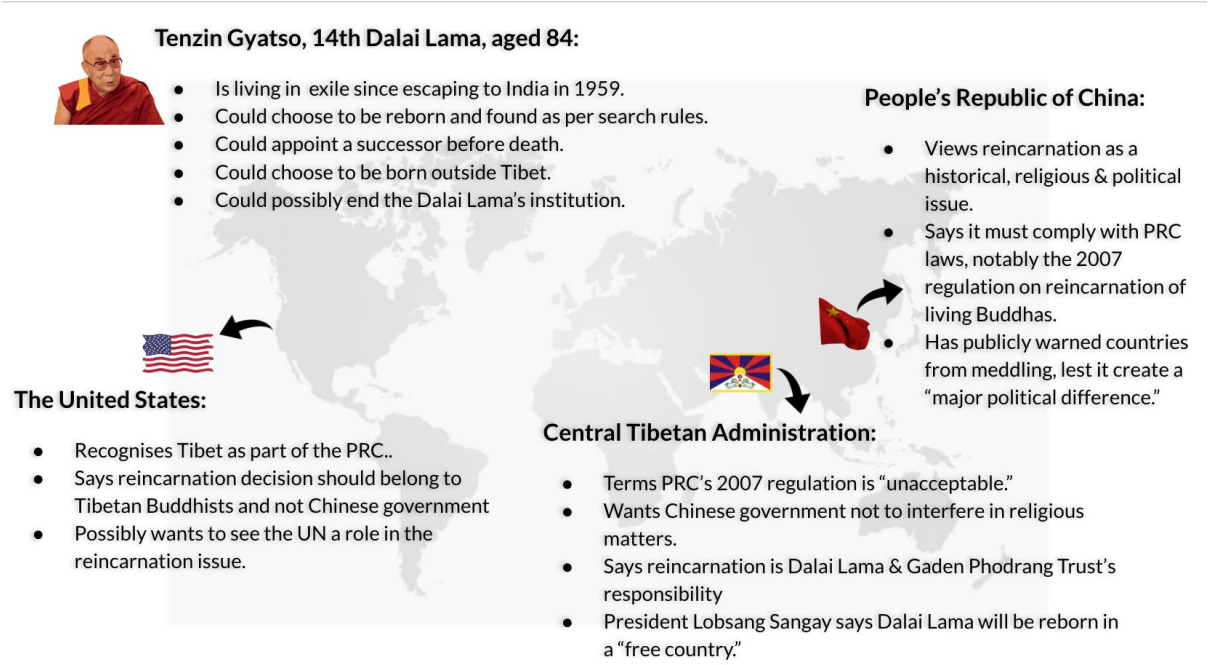


Fig 4. *A graphical representation of the public positions of key stakeholders with regard to the future of the institution of the Dalai Lama, drawn from multiple sources including CGTN, India Today, Reuters & Times of India.*

D. People-to-People Exchanges

India's national interest

Expanding people-to-people engagement via sports, educational, cultural, tourist and business linkages can play a crucial role in tackling the mutual mistrust that characterises the Sino-Indian relationship. At the very minimum, such exchanges can breed familiarity between the people of both countries, dispelling prejudices and building public support for deeper engagement. However, there are other tangible gains that can be made, such as the sharing of best practices, increased revenue from tourism and educational exchanges, the development of new interest groups to help stabilise the relationship.

Areas of convergence and divergence

The governments of both India and China have, over the years, explicitly stated their intent to deepen people-to-people and cultural exchanges. There is a broad convergence on the principle of the need to leverage such exchanges to stabilise the relationship. However, in practice, there are a number of factors that inhibit such exchanges. First, the mutual suspicion that plagues ties between Delhi and Beijing and periodic political tensions create a sense of uncertainty and unpredictability. Second, there exists a lack of understanding of business environments in each other's countries along with genuine concerns regarding IP protection and unfair competition, as noted in I.A and IV.E. Third, cumbersome visa processes and restrictive policies related to film and television products and online content hinder cultural exchanges. Finally, perhaps owing to a mixture of the above along with the language barrier, nature of media reportage and the poor quality of infrastructure in India, there exists a general lack of enthusiasm for engagement among the public in both countries.

Current policy & trajectory

The current policy for both sides draws from the outcomes of the two informal summits held in Wuhan and Chennai. The year 2020 has been designated as the Year of India-China Cultural and People to People Exchanges.[26] Both sides have also established a High-Level Mechanism on Cultural and People-to-People Exchanges. Under this mechanism, they have identified 10 areas of people-to-people cooperation for the future.[27] Agreements have been signed in areas like museum management, traditional medicine and sports management.[28] Both

governments are also towards holding marquee events to mark the 70th anniversary of bilateral ties next year, which will be leveraged to deepen exchanges between national legislatures, political parties, cultural and youth organisations and militaries.[29] These events are likely to generate a momentary positivity but will not lead to sustained, systematic engagement.

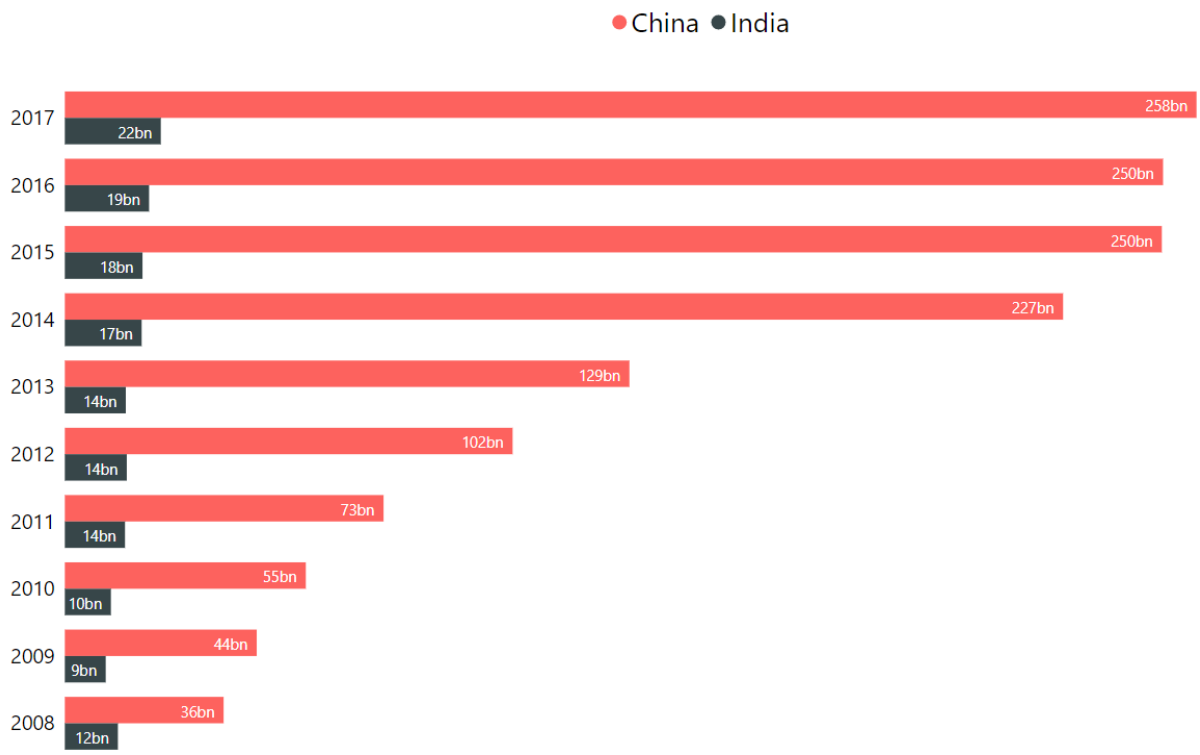


Fig 5. *Expenditures by outbound tourists, 2008-2017. Source: UN World Tourism Organisation/World Bank.*

Recommended trajectory

In order to expand people-to-people engagement, it is recommended that sub-national level actors are empowered to take the lead, while national governments build enabling environments.

First, the State/Provincial Leaders' Forum, which was set up in 2015, should be reconvened, with regular meetings held at stipulated time intervals.[30] It is important to give teeth to this platform with parties outlining objectives and outcome expectations. In addition, both sides should work towards a roadmap for establishing greater connectivity between major metropolises based on sectoral expertise. For instance, it is important to expand connectivity - physical

and business - among cities that are hubs for technological development on both sides.

Second, Government of India must encourage Indian industry associations to set up offices across China. This is critical for companies across sectors to identify specific opportunities, develop tailored strategies and build long-term relationships in order to leverage the growth of the Chinese market.

Third, both sides should encourage and facilitate roadshows by provincial and city governments to attract tourists and students. Some of the ways in which New Delhi and Beijing can support these efforts are by easing visa processes and working with local governments to launch online platforms in local languages to attract Chinese tourists, students and researchers. Another potential area for cooperation is facilitating university linkages through joint infrastructure building and development of educational programs. This requires New Delhi to approach the issue from beyond a narrow security prism.

Finally, it is important for the Indian government to impress upon the Chinese leadership to open its film, television, Internet and gaming sectors to Indian content and firms. There exists tremendous potential for joint action in these sectors, which is untapped due to the PRC's restrictive policies.

E. Science & Technology

India's national interest

China is home to over 850 million Internet users.[31] It is rapidly modernising and has risen to become the 14th most innovative economy in the world.[32] Chinese companies are also fast expanding their global footprint across domains like telecommunications, robotics, artificial intelligence and e-commerce. This growing clout is enabling Beijing's push to shape emerging governance norms around new technologies. All of this has a direct impact on Indian national interests, particularly since technological competition between China and the US underpins the emerging strategic contest.

From an Indian interest perspective, what is required is to leverage scientific and technological advancements to meet its development and security needs. This involves ensuring the continued access to and availability of cost-effective technology solutions and equipment to boost connectivity and industrial development. At the same time, rapid advances in technology also present certain challenges. Therefore, it is in India's national interest to invest in ensuring equipment, network, data and cyber security.

Areas of convergence and divergence

For both India and China, technological innovation is important to address real world problems. In this context, there are common areas, such as enhancing urban governance, combating air pollution and climate change and disaster prevention, where joint efforts are possible. There also exist convergences in terms of concerns with regard to cyber, network and data security, which can result in cooperation in setting norms. However, this is also where there are serious divergences. In addition to the overt competition noted in section IV.A, as per a 2018 National Security Council Secretariat report, Chinese entities were responsible for nearly 35% of all foreign-origin cyberattacks in India.[33] Such attacks deepen the strategic mistrust that permeates all aspects of the Sino-Indian relationship. In addition, fundamental differences in the values of a Leninist party-state and a multi-party constitutional democracy have a significant bearing on technology cooperation. Policies and regulatory frameworks are often struggling to adapt to the rapid pace of technological changes. Mutual trust, therefore, is critical in order to expand technological cooperation between states.

Current policy & trajectory

At present, there doesn't exist a clear or coherent Indian policy of dialogue with China on matters of high technology. The bilateral dialogue on science and technology is led by the Joint Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation. Since 1988, both sides have signed 24 major agreements on science-tech cooperation.[34] These cover a wide range of areas from academic exchanges to MoUs on cooperation in space, agricultural sciences, ocean science and technology, meteorological science, etc.[35] On the other hand, recent Indian tech investments in China are primarily driven by NASSCOM, which has launched three IT corridors in the cities of Dalian, Guiyang and Xuzhou.[36] In contrast, Chinese investors have pumped in an estimated $9 billion in the Indian start-up system over the past three years.[37] These investments are focussed on sectors ranging from digital payments, ride sharing, e-ecommerce, food technology, logistics, healthcare, education, etc. Despite this, there has, so far, been no meaningful policy discussion in India on the implications of such investments and the potential risks with respect to cyber and data security. Of late, the only area that has attracted some debate when it comes to Chinese tech investments in India is the participation of Chinese telecommunications firms in building India's 5G network infrastructure.

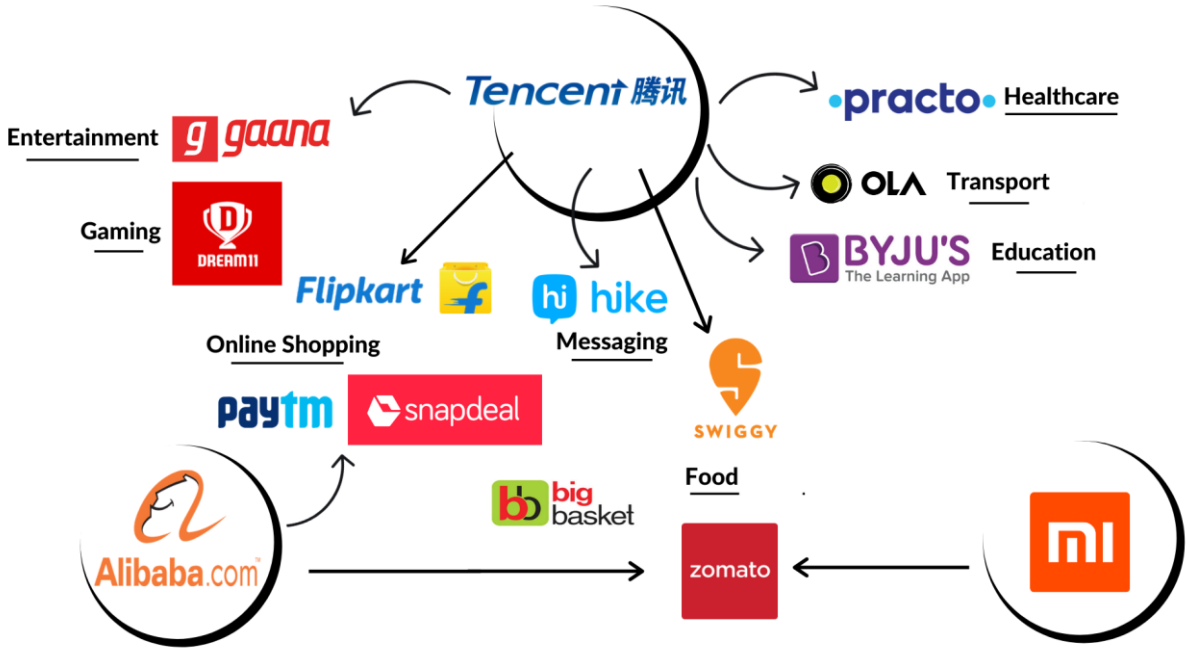


Fig 6. *Chinese investments in major Indian startups, grouped by sector. Source: Gateway House.*

Recommended trajectory

The Indian government must approach science and technology engagement with China from a strategic prism. This requires a number of critical steps to be taken.

First, it is important for the Indian government to enact policies that nurture a thriving research and innovation ecosystem at home. This entails expanded public investment in R&D, along with promoting scientific education, establishing and supporting innovation centres, building linkages between government, industry and academia and being open to foreign capital and manpower. Supporting indigenous innovation is critical to developmental and national security.

Second, India should be open to Chinese technology investments. These provide much needed capital and can potentially help upgrade Indian manufacturing and services sectors through diffusion of technology and best practices. In addition, the size of the Indian market makes it significant for Chinese technology firms and VCs looking for global expansion. This, in turn, provides leverage for the Indian government, particularly considering emerging Sino-US technology competition. Furthermore, increased Chinese investments in the Indian technology ecosystem can be an asset, with Chinese tech giants potentially acting as a constituency that can potentially influence the Communist Party's policies.

Third, while inviting Chinese investments, it is important for Indian regulators to take into account the very real security implications. When it comes to critical sectors like telecommunications and areas like data security and cyber security, India's approach should be much more circumspect. In such cases, the government should, in fact, establish a whitelist of countries and entities that it deems as trustworthy, setting standards and pursuing meaningful cooperation.

Fourth, the Indian government needs to quicken the process of framing policies with regard to data ownership, storage, access and use or say the role of intermediaries and ethical implications of AI. It is only when domestic policies provide a clear framework that India can leverage its vast market and participate more purposefully in shaping global standards.

At the same time, it is important to expand its existing dialogue with China on science and technology to newer and more pertinent domains. Both sides should, therefore, pursue dialogue on cyberspace governance, cyber security, data security and artificial intelligence.

V. Sources of the PRC's Power

Sustained economic growth of the past four decades lies at the heart of China's rise as a global power. However, discussing the PRC's role and standing in the international system, Chinese scholars tend to focus on the concept of Comprehensive National Power.[38] CNP is assessed by factoring a range of qualitative and quantitative measures of territory, natural resources, economic power, diplomatic influence, domestic government structure, stability and effectiveness, technological capacity, human capital, military capability and cultural influence.

Keeping that broad understanding into account, the following sections illustrate the bases of Chinese power and the role of the CCP in developing and instrumentalising them. It also highlights their integration and cross-fertilisation, contextualises new directions introduced by President Xi Jinping, and offers broad conclusions as to what the future might hold.

But while we discuss the sources of Chinese power, it is also important to note that there are certain fundamental challenges that the PRC continues to encounter. First and foremost is the challenge of political stability. Centralisation of power, a scathing anti-corruption campaign, which has entailed breaking entrenched networks of patronage and targeting political rivals, and the emergence of a cult of personality under Xi Jinping's rule have resulted in enhanced political risk. During his tenure, thus far, Xi has shown little regard for established party norms. The most glaring example of this was his decision to not elevate a potential successor to the Politburo Standing Committee during the 19th Party Congress in 2017. It remains unclear whether Xi will step down or seek a third term as the Communist Party's General Secretary during the 20th Party Congress in 2022. However, what is clear is that succession is likely to entail intense political bargaining, which could prove destabilising for the regime.

From an economic perspective, the World Bank classifies China as an "upper middle income" country,[39] with per capita GDP roughly at $9800.[40] Despite the phenomenal economic growth that China has experienced over the past four decades, which has led to near elimination of absolute poverty, it is today among the most unequal countries in the world.[41] In addition, demographics present a peculiar challenge, in that its rapidly aging population could mean that China

could get old before it gets rich.[42] This is expected to put tremendous pressure on state resources and the country's healthcare system.

Meanwhile, from a military perspective, while economic growth has aided military modernisation, the People's Liberation Army remains an untested force, having had little to no combat experience over the past four decades. This is reflected in the leadership's repeated refrain of being wary of the "peace disease" and the need to focus on fighting and winning wars.[43] Finally, it is important to keep in mind that China's rise to global pre-eminence isn't a foregone conclusion, particularly given the paradox of the logic of strategy.[44] In other words, a consequence of the expansion of Chinese power, irrespective of the PRC's behaviour, has meant that other powers - large and small - have sought to engage in a mix of engagement, deterrence and balancing.

How the Chinese leadership adapts to these challenges will be fundamental to the trajectory of its rise.

A. Party-state System Resilience

China's political economy is dominated by the Chinese Communist Party, whose functioning is closely intertwined with that of the Chinese state[45]. The modern shape of this entity can be ascribed to the reforms initiated under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping post-1978[46]. The Party-state is characterised by selective organisational and functional separation at various levels and sectors,[47] though critical state functions remain under the charge of members of Party Standing Committee, ensuring the Party's structural dominance.[48] Following Deng, the legitimacy of Party-state system today rests primarily on its ability to ensure 'harmony' and 'order' by providing public goods, delivering economic growth, and bringing prosperity to more and more Chinese citizens.[49] This is an 'output legitimacy' as compared to the 'input legitimacy' enjoyed by democratically-elected governments.[50] The Party-state's 'input legitimacy' instead stems from its ability to monitor, understand, and respond[51] to social trends and public demands,[52] often bolstered by its control over the Internet and micro-blogging sites.[53]

In addition, the conditional autonomy granted to regional and local governments insulates the top leadership from disaffection at the grassroots level while simultaneously assuring that the overall Party-State structure itself remains highly visible.[54] It is thus able to capitalise on positive outcomes, while keeping the backlash of negative outcomes at a distance.

Overall, the Chinese Party-state has proven to be a remarkably resilient power structure that is integral to the functioning of the modern People's Republic of China. This is unlikely to change substantially in the near term. The turbulence of the early years of Xi's anti-corruption campaign has abated, with new elites aligning closely with the Chinese leader.[55] What, however, remain as threats to political stability are the so-called "black swan" and "gray rhino" events, which pertain to economic, ideological and technological risks.[56]

B. Economic Growth & Political Economy

Over the last four decades, the Chinese Party-State has presided over one of the most extraordinary periods of economic growth in human history[57], as noted in section VI.B. This process has been two-sided - the economy has been shaped by the Party-state even as the Party-state has been shaped by the economy.[58]

Neither of these are monolithic entities, and their current form is the result of intense political negotiation and reform over decades. The success of economic reform alongside the continued relevance of the Party-State should be attributed to the political leadership "creating new patronage opportunities, tying newly autonomous groups to the existing regime, and increasing rewards for allegiance to the regime during the marketization process."[59]

These "newly autonomous groups" include officials at the sub-national level, think tanks, corporations, academia, and media.[60] Over the course of the last three decades, the Party-State has created networks of patronage within them through "selective opening", providing access to revenue streams, creating actors invested in the current shape of the political economy which also have considerable autonomy and influence over policy.[61] This has proceeded along political institutionalisation - the consolidation of a regular pattern of promotion and predictability in government and party appointments, "flowing down" from leaders headed to the top of the hierarchy.[62]

While Xi Jinping is a product of this system, he has recently undertaken wide-ranging reforms in order to consolidate power and break the autonomy of hostile rival groups, as exemplified by constitutional amendments removing his presidential term limits and his extended "anti-corruption" drive.[63] This is ostensibly meant to address the inertia of the system - increasingly powerful new lobbies have compromised its ability to deliver 'output legitimacy' - and should be seen as a result of his own vulnerabilities to powerful actors.

C. Whole-of-Nation Approach

A key feature of the Chinese Party-state model of governance is its ability to leverage a broad set of actors and institutions fashioning a whole-of-nation approach in pursuit of strategic objectives. The Party-state's hierarchical and unitary governance system shapes bureaucratic and commercial incentives, crafting a unique political economy.[64] An example of this is the implementation of the Belt and Road Initiative. BRI encompasses six broad areas from policy coordination, infrastructure connectivity, trade, financial integration, people-to-people ties and industrial cooperation.[65] This involves a large number of actors, whose interests need to be harmonised. But even in the PRC, fashioning such a whole-of-nation approach isn't without friction. The Chinese system comprises of four primary axes of power, i.e., the party, the state, the armed forces and broader civil society. One of the fundamental features of Xi's reign has been the

reorganisation of the power dynamics among these centers. The stated objective of this effort has been to reinforce the primacy of the Communist Party, with Xi at its core.[66]

Four recent changes underscore this trend. First, there has been a systematic move towards greater centralisation of fiscal control.[67] This structurally strengthens Beijing vis-a-vis local authorities. Second, Xi initially took control of key policy domains via his leadership of the party's issue-specific Leading Small Groups.[68] A set of these Leading Small Groups, focussing on priority areas such as overall reform, finance and foreign affairs, were in March 2018 renamed as commissions. In addition, in certain cases, ministerial responsibilities have been transferred to party organisations. For instance, the Publicity Department of the CPC Central Committee was given charge of the press, publications and film sectors.[69] These measures are aimed at deepening the Party's ability to guide and monitor the state actors in key policy areas.[70] Third, constitutional amendments adopting 'Xi Jinping Thought' and abolishing presidential term limits strengthen Xi's grip on power and imply a shift in governance norms in favour of norms governing the party.[71] This has been accompanied by a crushing anti-corruption campaign, which has been key to consolidating Xi's authority.[72] The establishment of the National Supervision Commission has further expanded the party's disciplinary jurisdiction in non-party domains.[73] Fourth and final is tightening control of the party over state-owned enterprises, public institutions and non-public enterprises.[74] This has been backed by key legislative changes such as the passage of the 2017 National Intelligence Law. Such changes enable the party to ensure alignment of Party-state interests with non-state entities.

D. Innovation Base

China's economic progress is tied to a consistent shift in its manufacturing from relatively low-value, low-tech products, such as clothing and steel, to high-value, high-tech products such as electronics and smartphones. This has been enabled by structural reforms that saw the state gradually receding from directly controlling R&D to the role of an enabler or direction setter. Most research is increasingly conducted by the private sector and a network of universities, labs, and think tanks,[75] which are more keyed in to the demands of the market. However, the state continues to play a critical role in supporting innovation through heavy public R&D spending.[76]

In fact, China's innovation base parallels that of other East Asian countries, involving active State intervention and encouragement.[77,78] In the reform era, it opened up to foreign capital and investment, often providing market access only on the condition of technology transfer, enabling it to 'piggyback' on investments in R&D elsewhere. This was followed by enabling the private sector[79] to "copy and incorporate" foreign technology in China's sheltered domestic market, until they eventually became capable of competing in global markets.[80]

China is now in the process of becoming - as Xi puts it - the "master of more core technologies,"[81] a process aided by long-term investment in education and human capital formation in addition to the protectionist measures described as "innovation mercantilism"[82] and a "State-private industrial innovation nexus"[83] exemplified by the Made in China 2025 initiative.[84]

Today, three of the five most valuable tech start-ups in the world are Chinese. China is one of the world's largest manufacturers of telecommunications equipment and consumer electronics. It is already capable of 'innovation' in the sense of capturing global market share,[85] and its human and technological resource base coupled with state support is likely to create the foundation for an increased presence in emerging technologies in the years to come. Yet, command innovation suffers from certain inherent limitations, with wasteful investment, overcapacity, market distortion resulting in suboptimal outcomes. Geopolitical changes in the form of deepening international competition, the rise of protectionist tendencies in the West and Xi's techno-nationalist drive could hinder international collaboration, which would hurt innovation in China.

E. Soft Power

Over the past few decades, Chinese leadership and scholars have increasingly focussed on soft power development. The concept, however, was explicitly mentioned as a national policy for the first time in 2007.[86] Since then, from the framing of China's development as "peaceful" to Xi's pledge to "contribute more Chinese wisdom, Chinese solutions and Chinese strength to the world," Beijing has sought to influence the global narrative on its rise and global governance issues.[87] Under Xi, China has pushed the "Chinese Dream," a corollary to the American Dream.[88] This was followed by the launch of the Belt and Road Initiative, which incorporates soft power components.

The sources of China's soft power today extend beyond traditional medicine, porcelain artefacts and tea.[89] As of January 2018, there were more than 500 Confucius Institutes scattered around the world. The government's primary news agency, Xinhua, currently at 170 foreign bureaus, has plans to reach 200 by 2020.[90] China ranked third among the world's most popular study destinations in 2017, according to the Institute of International Education. These initiatives are separate from the country's strong performance in technological innovation, financial diplomacy campaigns and an increased effort to strengthen bilateral ties through economic means, both of which contribute significantly to China's positive image in the international community.

Another metric to gauge China's growing soft power is a World Bank study which found an increase of 3.6 million foreign tourists visiting the country between the years 2010-16. The lesser-discussed measures include a significant improvement in the performance of Chinese athletes in international sporting events and ventures by Chinese firms to establish partnerships with movie companies in Hollywood. In 2017, President Xi Jinping put China in a more favourable global position following his speech at the World Economic Forum in Davos, and his pivot towards globalisation and environmental sustainability.

The projection of soft power, however, comes at a cost. While limited access to state records hinders accurate estimation, the most commonly cited estimate indicates that China spends approximately $10 billion every year on its soft power initiatives.[91] Despite its aggressive pursuit, China's soft power initiatives are undermined by its poor record when it comes to human rights and broader concerns with regard to Xi's assertive foreign policy. A snapshot of the results of PEW Surveys over the years shows that increasingly states around the world are viewing China unfavourably. The median of countries that expressed a favourable opinion of China in declined from 49% to 41% from 2014 to 2019.[92]

E. Military Advancement

Xi's restructuring and reorienting programme also extends to the military - which has been extensively reorganized and streamlined.[93] The survival of the Party-state system is predicated on the loyalty and strengthening of the People's Liberation Army, which should be capable of defending China's strategic interests and projecting power commensurate to Xi's vision of the country as a "great, global power."[94]

Much of China's military modernisation should thus be seen as directed towards potential threats, among which the US military is first and foremost. This can be summarised as a "systems confrontation."[95] The PLA's doctrine now involves two key prongs: the ability to win 'local, informatised wars' and 'active defence'. The first is almost exactly analogous to the US' "network-centric warfare"[96] and has necessitated a ramping up of China's cyber and electronic warfare capabilities (exemplified by the Strategic Support Force) as well as better integration with conventional land, air, and marine warfare systems. 'Active defence' calls for "offensive, regional force projection capabilities"[97] and has led to considerable expansions in China's domestic and international logistics systems and force composition, with the establishment of a Joint Logistics Force. Integrated theatre commands capable of joint "planning, training and operations" have also been established.[98]

Alongside structural reforms there have been many extensions in the PLA's combat capabilities. The PLA Navy, for example, has seen an unprecedented build-up in recent years, finalising and mass-producing cruisers and frigates[99] ostensibly aimed towards breaking free of US strategic control over its immediate maritime geography. This has been enabled by fostering indigenous innovation, mitigating dependence on foreign arms imports, and extensive integration of the civilian and defence economies[100] aiming to integrate the efficiency and cutting-edge innovation of the private sector with the vast resources available to the state. This is exemplified by the stock market listing of formerly state-owned defence research institutes.[101] All these enable innovation and scale in defence manufacturing within the broader doctrinal and organisational reorientation discussed. These reforms could indeed turn the PLA into the "world-class forces capable of winning wars by 2049" envisioned by Xi.[102]

F. Trade & Investment Networks

China surpassed the US to become the world's largest tradition nation in 2013.[103] Since then, it has continued to hold that position,[104] being among the leading trading partners for over 100 countries. The implementation of the Belt and Road Initiative has further deepened and diversified China's trade linkages with partner states. Official Chinese records show that from 2013 to 2018, trade between China and BRI countries surpassed $6 trillion and Chinese outbound investments have exceeded $100 billion.[105] These trade and investment linkages

create dependencies that can be leveraged for political purposes. In addition, with the launch of the China International Import Expo in 2018, the Chinese leadership is seeking to further expand its trading links with the world, promising a new round of opening-up and wider market access for foreign players.[106] The allure it offers is access to what is soon to become the world's largest consumer market.[107] However, Chinese economic policies have come under increasing criticism over the past few years. These include questions over subsidies enjoyed by Chinese firms and the lack of openness of the Chinese economy to concerns over environmental degradation and unsustainable debt.

G. Human Capital

Like its economy and polity, China's population has undergone major transformations in the last half century. This is due to three factors tied to changes in the political economy: a shift in the costs of childbearing from the state to families, family planning regimes such as the one-child policy, and changes in migration policy.[108] Today's China is rapidly ageing, with less young people available to care for a large older population, while incomes stagnate.[109] This is another driver of the state's increased attempts to move the economy up the value chain, and recent revisions to family planning rules.

Despite these broader demographic challenges, China's human capital has increased over the decades and has been a crucial driver of prosperity. The years 1997-2007 saw a fivefold increase in college enrolment[110] alongside massive investments in education and a reorientation of state policies towards market demands. This successful human capital formation accounted for nearly 40% of China's economic growth between 1978-2008.[111]

Today, Chinese higher education is on par with the best in the world. Its scholarly output is "tremendous," ranking on par or even better than the US in various measures, such as the number of engineering PhDs or journal articles on life sciences.[112] Talented students are incentivised to go abroad and return to lucrative careers, or at least to remain part of the Party-state's informal networks.[113] This provides a large pool for China's industries, state, and academia to draw on.

H. Diplomatic Capacity

Xi Jinping's Chinese Dream has also resulted in three significant changes in the country's diplomatic system – top-level design, strategic coordination and multi-dimensional diplomacy. These changes were driven by the idea that domestic issues and foreign affairs are not independent of each other. Summit diplomacy, economic initiatives, cultural ventures, environmental activity and society were identified as pieces of the puzzle of foreign affairs and, therefore, unified under a single framework at 18th CPC National Congress.[114]

Over the past two years, China's foreign affairs apparatus has undergone significant reform. A recent study estimated that China had surpassed the United States in terms of the size of its diplomatic network, taking the top spot globally.[115] The study estimated that China had 276 diplomatic posts, including embassies, consulates, and permanent missions to international organizations, as compared to the US' 273.[116] In addition, China's diplomatic corps is estimated at around 7,500.[117]

Xi has also taken the initiative to personally engage with Chinese envoys, ensuring that their efforts are in line with his broader vision.[118] The creation of the Central Foreign Affairs Commission in March 2018 also strengthens the Communist Party's central leadership's control over China's foreign policymaking.[119] Assessments of Chinese diplomats show that they tend to possess previous exposure to the region in which they serve and knowledge of the local languages.[120] The country's foreign affairs budget has more than doubled since Xi first assumed power.[121] A new international development cooperation agency has also been established.[122]

In addition to this, China is a permanent member of the UN Security Council and plays an increasingly prominent role at a number of established and emerging multilateral institutions.

VI. Chinese Foreign Policy: Interests and Drivers

Starting from 1949, the PRC's foreign policy approach can be divided into three distinct phases. Under Mao Zedong, the Chinese leadership blended nationalism with a desire to support global revolution.[123] The initiation of Reform and Opening Up under Deng Xiaoping saw economic development emerge as a foreign policy priority. *Tao Guang Yang Hui* (Keeping a Low Profile) became the maxim that came to define Chinese foreign policy during this era.[124]

The first decade of the new millennium, however, witnessed a vigorous debate among Chinese strategists and policymakers about the need to reimagine the country's foreign policy approach, given China's growing power and changes in the international environment. What was sought was a shift from Keeping a Low Profile towards a more active pursuit of Chinese interests. Xi announced this shift during a speech at the CCP foreign affairs conference in October 2013, terming the new approach as *Fen Fa You Wei* (Striving for Achievement).[125]

In order to understand what motivated this shift, this section outlines the key interests and drivers of Chinese foreign and defence policies in the Xi era.

A. Preserving Party Rule

The fundamental driver of PRC foreign and security policies is the desire to preserve the rule of the Communist Party of China. Speaking at the Central Conference on Work Relating to Foreign Affairs in June 2018, Xi outlined 10 major aspects of his Thought on Diplomacy. First among them was upholding the authority of the CCP Central Committee.[126] Writing for the Party's QiuShi Journal later in the year, China's top diplomat, Yang Jiechi, who heads the Central Foreign Affairs Commission, put it far more bluntly. "The country's success," he argued, "hinges on the CPC."[127] Yang's remarks reveal that that the Party leadership views its foreign and security policies from the prism of regime legitimacy. China's push for greater global influence, therefore, is not merely an outcome of shifts in geopolitics and leadership but also "a more fundamental external manifestation of China's more hardline authoritarianism at home, deemed necessary for the Party's continued survival."[128]

B. Maintaining Economic Development

The Chinese leadership views economic development as a core interest, underscoring its foreign policy significance. Sustained economic development is an important factor legitimising the rule of the Communist Party[129], as noted in V.B. Since the launch of Reform and Opening Up policy, China has enjoyed three decades of phenomenal growth. For the first two decades, China's GDP expanded at 9.6%.[130] That accelerated to 10.4% from 2003 to 2012, despite the global financial crisis of 2008.[131] The upturn was fuelled by a conducive climate of globalisation and strong government support. But this ecosystem is unlikely to sustain.[132] There is an upsurge in protectionist and populist sentiment around the world. In addition, structural changes in the Chinese economy are requiring strategic reorientation. These include rising labour costs, massive overcapacity in key sectors, uneven development across different regions, unproductive investments adding to the debt, environmental degradation and the need to diversify markets along with a desire to move up the industrial value chain. Consequently, the Chinese leadership believes that economic development has entered a 'new normal' phase, with high rates of growth becoming a thing of the past.[133]

BRI is part of the Chinese government's response to these trends. Through BRI, China is investing heavily in infrastructure and connectivity projects abroad. This, it hopes, will fuel its economic engines, which is critical to maintaining social stability.[134] Chinese growth over the past two decades was driven by government investments in the state-owned heavy industries like steel, aluminium and cement.[135] These investments have created overcapacities, artificial construction boom and stagnancy.[136] Under BRI, China is exporting its excess production to the near and far away countries. The infrastructure built as part of BRI would also help create new marketplaces for Chinese goods in the long run.

In addition, encouraging Chinese companies' global expansion deepens Beijing's strategic leverage with partner states and pushes the internationalisation of the RMB, which adds to its international influence.[137]

C. Limitations of Geography and Territorial Disputes

China exists in a challenging neighbourhood, which has implications for its foreign and security policies. In October 1949, the leadership of the newly-established PRC inherited 23 territorial disputes. Seventeen of these have so far been settled.[138] These include all land boundary disputes, except those with India and Bhutan. At its western edges lie the *stans* of Central Asia along with Afghanistan and Pakistan, with Beijing increasingly worried about threats posed by regional instability and terrorism.[139]

Some of the more complex of China's territorial disputes are along its eastern shores. The key among them, of course, is over Taiwan. Along with this, Japan and China both claim the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands in the East China Sea as their territory. China also claims roughly 80% of the South China Sea. The dispute in those waters involves a number of competing claims by countries in the region, including Vietnam, the Philippines, Indonesia, Brunei, Malaysia, Taiwan. In addition to this, China's access to the open seas is threatened by rings of island chains, which can act as natural barriers.[140] Also along the coast are key US treaty allies, Japan, South Korea and the Philippines.

Apart from territorial claims and issues of sovereignty and resource access, what underscores the significance of the South China Sea is that China's inland and territorial waters are shallow, which hinders naval development.[141] China's territorial claims and militarisation of islands in the South China Sea are in part a product of these insecurities and limitations.

D. Quest for Energy Security

In order to maintain economic growth, China needs to ensure reliable, cost-effective and diversified fuel supplies.[142] In 2018, China imported more than 71% of oil and 44% of its natural gas requirement.[143] These numbers are expected to rise to 80% and 46%, respectively, by 2035.[144] China is dependent on Russia, countries in the Persian Gulf, Africa and Central Asia for its energy needs.[145] Much of this energy supply transits through strategically important Sea Lanes of Communications (SLOCs). For instance, in 2018, 78% of China's oil and 16% of its natural gas imports transited through the Strait of Malacca and South China Sea.[146] This, along with Chinese foreign trade, underscores the strategic significance of protecting SLOCs. The PRC has, however, sought to diversify its

energy supplies by investing in land-based options.[147] But there remain serious doubts over the cost-effectiveness and security.[148]

F. Desire for National Rejuvenation

President Xi Jinping has described the objective of "national rejuvenation" as the "original aspiration" of the CPC leadership.[149] Implicit in this framework is the desire to right what are seen as historical wrongs. In the CCP's narrative of history, the founding of the PRC in 1949 marked the end of the Century of Humiliation, which began with the first Opium War in 1839. The original aspiration of the Party, therefore, has been to build a strong and prosperous China. This narrative has not merely been fundamental in driving nationalistic fervour, legitimising CCP rule at home, but also impinged on Chinese foreign policy.

Since the early 2000s, China has become more proactive, assertive and globally-driven.[150] Its position has changed from "almost no participation" in the west-dominated regional and multilateral institutions to active engagement in almost all major international organisations and regimes.[151] In the process, the PRC has sought to establish new security, trading and financial institutions and regimes.[152] Much of this is underpinned by the objective of national rejuvenation, which requires "moving closer to the center stage" of global affairs.[153]

Domestically, national rejuvenation has implications beyond "becoming strong" economically.[154] It also implies strengthening CCP control in Xinjiang, Tibet and Hong Kong.[155] Along with this, at the heart of the rejuvenation agenda is "reunification" with Taiwan and reclaiming lost territories, be those in the South China Sea or in the East China Sea.[156] This is underscored by Xi's appeal to CCP members to "staunchly oppose all attempts to split China or undermine its ethnic unity and social harmony and stability" during his address at the 19th Party Congress.[157]

The Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region (XUAR) is China's largest province by size. It is China's link to Central Asia's vast energy resources and is the heart of its BRI initiative. Beijing is also deeply concerned about the threats posed by extremism, separatism and terrorism in Xinjiang.[158] Separatism in Tibet also remains a key concern for China's policymakers.[159] Tibet, however, is crucial to China from a historical, geostrategic and geo-economic point of view. It is the PRC's anchor to the Himalayas and its link to South and West Asia.[160] The Tibetan

plateau is also rich with water and mineral resources and has a significant amount of oil and natural gas reserves.[161]

Meanwhile, with regard to Taiwan, the PRC's leadership believes that "reunification" is a core national interest at the heart of national rejuvenation. [162] Beyond this, Beijing also worries that Taiwan presents a potential choke point and basing opportunity for potential adversaries. Similarly, Hong Kong is of historic, strategic and economic interest to China. It is a critical economic link between the mainland and the wider world.[163] In addition, Hong Kong sets an example for the "one country two systems" framework that could be leveraged for future relations between the PRC and Taiwan.

VII. Actors in Chinese Foreign Policy Making

The nature of the Chinese Party-state is such that there exists a cross pollination of individuals and institutions. This section briefly introduces important actors that play a role in Chinese foreign policy making.

Under Xi, increasingly the party has expanded its grip on policy making, with state actors largely executing decisions. The Politburo Standing Committee (PSC), which is headed by the CCP's General Secretary, is the epicentre of political power in China.

The PSC effectively enjoys decision making authority on behalf of the larger Politburo, which is chosen from the members of the CCP Central Committee. Key CCP members also control ministerial portfolios, which establishes the party's grip on power. There are, however, other agencies that play an important role in the PRC's foreign policy architecture.

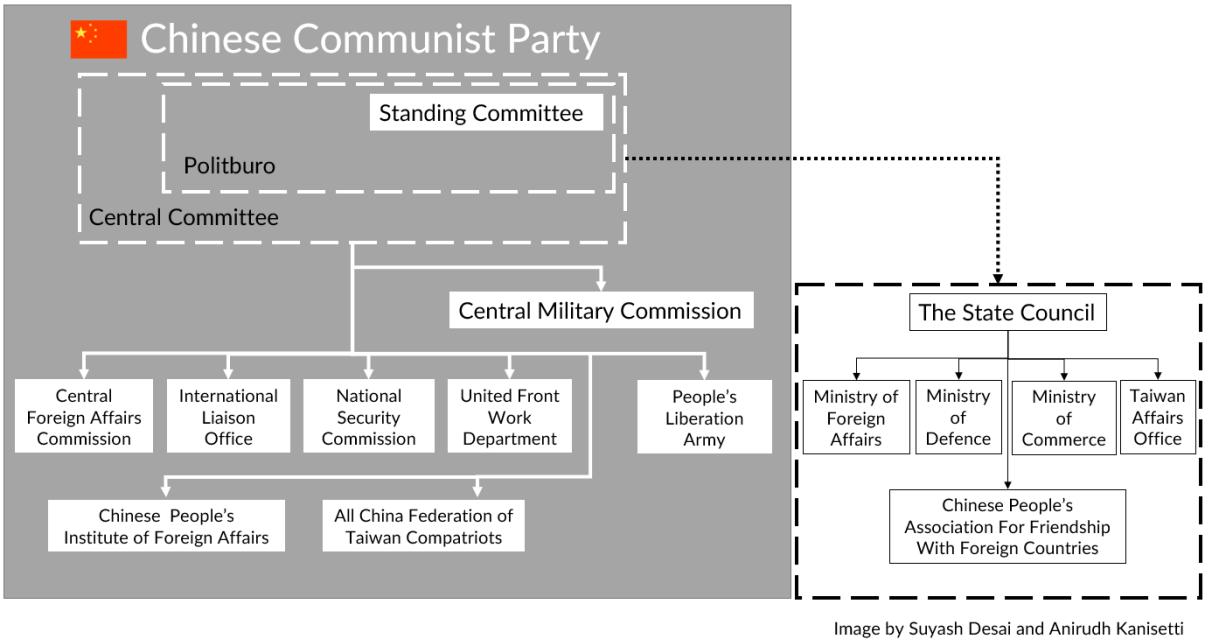


Fig 7. Key actors in Chinese foreign policymaking

The State Council: Chaired by the Premier, the State Council is the chief administrative authority of the PRC. The council includes heads of cabinet-level executive departments. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is the first-ranked executive department under the State Council. It is led by the Chinese Foreign Minister. The Ministry of National Defence is a second-ranked ministry under

the State Council. The ministry, however, doesn't exercise authority over the PLA. It only serves as a liaison body representing the CMC and PLA while dealing with foreign militaries. The Ministry of Commerce is responsible for formulating policies on foreign trade, commerce, export and import regulations and foreign direct investments, and negotiating China's bilateral and multilateral trade agreements. It is also in charge of the administration of China's foreign trade under the Foreign Trade Law.

Central Foreign Affairs Commission: The CFAC, which was formed by upgrading the Foreign Affairs Leading Small Group, has a coordinating role between the state institutions and the party.[164] The commission is also responsible for strengthening the CCP's hand in the decision-making process.[165]

International Liaison Department: The CCP's ILD is responsible for maintaining ties with world-wide political parties, facilitating contacts with think-tanks and NGOs, and conducting research on foreign political developments.[166] It also plays a crucial role in advancing efforts to strengthen China's position in the South China Sea, Taiwan and the Belt and Road Initiative.[167]

National Security Commission: The CNSC was established in 2013 to advise the politburo on matters of security and strategy and carry out coordination on security issues between different departments of the party, government and the PLA.[168]

The People's Liberation Army: The PLA, meanwhile, is the world's largest armed force, enjoying expanding budgetary allocations. It engages in military diplomacy, which is discussed in the subsequent section and also shapes decision-making on issues of national security. It is important to note that the PLA's allegiance is to the CCP and not the Chinese state.

United Front Work Department: The UFWD plays an important role in co-opting and neutralising potential opposition to CCP policies and rule domestically while expanding the Party's influence abroad among diaspora and ethnic Chinese populations along with potentially supporting foreign elites.[169]

Chinese People's Institute of Foreign Affairs: The CPIFA is responsible for promoting people-to-people contacts with other countries by carrying out academic exchanges of noted personalities and scholars.

All-China Federation of Taiwan Compatriots: The ACFTC consists mainly of native Taiwanese residing in the Chinese mainland. The ACFTC's objective is to win the support of Taiwanese to achieve national reunification and rejuvenation.[170]

Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries: This organization was founded in 1954 with the aim of promoting civic exchanges with countries that did not have diplomatic relations with the PRC.

VIII. Instruments of Chinese Statecraft

A. Economic Instruments

Rapid domestic economic development, China's rise as the world's leading trading nation and expanding capital base have allowed Beijing the opportunity to leverage economic instruments for political and strategic objectives. This section discusses how the PRC uses trade, investment, aid, tourism and education.

China is the world's largest consumer market. Chinese enterprises have also reportedly invested over $90 billion in BRI countries between 2013 and 2018.[171] Total trade between China and BRI partners has surpassed $6 trillion.[172] In addition, as part of a major state institutions reform in April 2018, the Chinese government established the China International Development Cooperation Agency. This was established in an attempt to ease the bureaucratic wrangling with regard to control over foreign aid policy.[173] China is also the world's biggest source of tourists since 2012. Last year, Chinese outbound tourists spent $277 billion, nearly double the scale of the next largest market.[174] Finally, the PRC remains the largest source of international students for universities. Official estimates inform that nearly 6,62,000 Chinese went abroad to study in 2018.

These transformations have been used to systematically further China's political and strategic interests, particularly with states that are eyeing development finance with fewer overt strings attached. For instance, the PRC's economic might has played a crucial role in states shifting recognition from Taiwan to the PRC.[175] Likewise, Nepal's increasing clampdown on public rallies by the Tibetan community there and reportage critical of China[176] come amid the deepening economic relationship between the Himalayan state and the PRC[177].

Alongside the "carrot" of development finance, Beijing has also developed economic "sticks" by permitting or restricting access to the Chinese market or flow of certain resources[178]. These include but are not limited to export restrictions, imposing discretionary fees, tightening customs hurdles, expanding scale and intensity of inspections, visa denials, triggering nationalistic boycotts, restricting the flow of Chinese students and tourists, etc.

In some cases, the objective of these policy measures has been to shape a state's behaviour; in others, the aim has been to ensure that corporations respect

Beijing's bottom line. Examples of the former include the 2010 export restrictions on rare earths,[179] targeting of Japanese business interests in 2012,[180] tensions with South Korea since 2017 over the deployment of the THAAD missile defence system[181] (which saw the PRC using the Approved Destination Status licensing system, which guides tour group travel[182], to ban Chinese package tours in 2017, costing South Korea nearly $7 billion[183]) and the recent restrictions on Canadian meat and canola seed imports following the detention of Huawei CFO Meng Wanzhou.[184]

Beijing also tends to view foreign corporations operating in China, or Chinese students and academics based abroad[185], as potential assets that can be offered carrots or sticks to motivate them to lobby their home governments.[186] Perhaps the most public example of the former was the 2018 campaign led by the Civil Aviation Authority of China demanding that airlines around the world respect the one-China principle. The move was backed by threats hinting at the possibility of restricting market access or imposing penalties on airlines that fail to comply. Air India was among some of the international airlines to eventually abide by the demand.[187]

More recently, political pressure on Cathay Pacific during the 2019 protests in Hong Kong forced resignations, including a change in the top leadership.[188] Likewise, fear of reprisals has led to major multinational corporations to distance themselves from statements supporting protesters.[189] Beyond such coercive measures, the PRC has also threatened formal sanctions against certain firms, such as US companies involved in arms sales to Taiwan.[190] However, such direct sanctions haven't been the preferred policy route. This, nevertheless, could change with the implementation of a new "unreliable entities" list.[191]

Though China's economic instruments have so far succeeded in achieving some foreign policy outcomes, the impact they have on its long-term diplomatic prospects merit consideration. Weaponisation of access to market and resources - leading to uncertainty, unpredictability, and mistrust - can only have short-term utility, if at all.

First, export restrictions can push states to invest in and cultivate alternatives[192]. Second, a heightened sense of political risk among foreign enterprises would make the Chinese market unattractive in the long run, which will likely have an adverse impact on the Chinese economy. Third, "patriotic protests" by Chinese students in Australia and Canada and increasing scrutiny over espionage[193] and

linkages with the United Front Works Department[194], impact long-term credibility and trust (see section VIII.E). Fourth, while group travel might be easy for the PRC to control, it's much more difficult to do so when it comes to individual tourism, which is on the rise[195].

B. Coercive Use of Military Force

China actively seeks to modify the status quo in disputed territories to advance its strategic interests. In these areas, its control is bolstered by coercive actions and the use of hybrid military methods[196]. In general, areas of particular strategic or symbolic significance are especially vulnerable to such behaviour[197].

The South China Sea, which is critical to altering China's near-seas maritime geography, is an example. Here, China has developed a potent methodology that relies on Coast Guard vessels as a "tip of the spear" in confrontations with rivals' maritime forces[198]. Once confrontations begin, China supports the coercive move with a wide array of actions including social media broadcasts, bad faith negotiations, diplomatic coalition building, and economic coercion[199], usually forcing the other side to back down. China also sometimes promises to de-escalate and then surreptitiously occupies the territory in question[200]. Physical occupation is generally a favoured strategy[201] in "resolving" these disputes.

China gradually alters the status quo in its favour whenever and wherever possible and presents other disputants with a *fait accompli.* Occupied territory usually features heavy Chinese military presence, and it builds area denial capabilities in air and sea that are used to further coerce other parties[202], allowing it to project military power while denying others the ability to do so[203].

These tactics are also apparent in China's engagement with India and Bhutan, which has arguably seen the application of these "salami-slicing" tactics even before the South China Sea. Under the fig-leaf of "historical claims" - often based on claims as tenuous as the exchange of tribute missions or limited military expeditions[204] - the PRC has continually disputed large sections of the border agreed upon in colonial times, and refused or delayed attempts to resolve them. With Bhutan, China has gone out of its way to side-line India's involvement in the resolution of the dispute, pushing for "package deals" while also employing coercive means such as military encroachment to change the status quo and pressure Bhutan[205].

In the 2017 Doklam crisis, when Indian troops attempted to prevent Chinese troops from constructing a permanent jeep track on disputed territory at a trijunction with Bhutan, China responded with an all-out diplomatic and social media offensive, even broadcasting live fire drills in Tibet to signal intent, and claiming that Doklam being a part of China was supported by "the situation on the ground". De-escalation was then agreed to - but satellite images from 2018 confirmed that China had only entrenched itself further[206] in this strategically crucial territory close to India's Siliguri Corridor.

Despite repeated successful use of this instrument, it also has its limitations. In the long run, it establishes China as an aggressive revisionist power and swings global public opinion against it, belying its narrative of a 'peaceful rise' and of being a responsible power. More determined opponents, willing to pay the cost in terms of public opinion, and able to match China's determination to surreptitiously change the status quo with the willpower to confront them, might find they have more international supporters than expected.

C. Arms Sales

China's emergence as a major global arms dealer - behind the US, Russia, France and Germany[207] - is driven by two strategic goals. The first is counterbalancing the influence of competitors such as the US in various markets, such as Latin America, West Asia, and Africa[208]. The second is the creation of "strategic dependencies" in geopolitically important countries, such as Pakistan (which has been the main recipient of Chinese arms exports since 1991)[209] and Thailand[210]. In addition, facilities meant to service Chinese-built submarines (for example) could also potentially service Chinese submarines given the necessary diplomatic agreements - thus extending the reach of PLA assets. This is especially significant given that Bangladesh and Myanmar are also major buyers of Chinese military equipment[211].

Chinese military equipment is not always cutting-edge. Its military innovation was given a great impetus through imports from Russia, with China accounting for "60% of all Russian deliveries of major weapons"[212] in 2005. Chinese SAMs, fighters, and submarines initially bore close resemblances to earlier Russian models, though it now fields advanced missile systems, aircraft, and warships in its own right[213]. Nevertheless, it still does not possess the technological ability to compete with cutting-edge Western defence systems, and relies on Russia for some components, such as engines for combat aircraft and large ships[214].

Today, Chinese exports are competitive owing to their pricing and flexibility in contract negotiation[215], essentially providing cost-effective routes to friendly countries that wish to modernise their military. China also dominates the niche market of unmanned combat aerial vehicles, which it exports in large numbers to West Asian states[216]. It also exports missile systems to Iran and Pakistan[217] and is a major source for light arms and weapons exports to African countries[218]. Despite its competitiveness, many of the world's biggest arms importers - India, Vietnam, Australia, South Korea - do not purchase from China owing to prevalent mistrust and strategic competition[219].

Currently, Chinese success in the global arms is partially a factor of its prices, enabled by state policy and its capable defence-industrial complex, and partially a factor of geopolitics. Aside from in Pakistan, it will take time for Chinese systems to become prevalent enough to give it serious strategic leverage in the rest of the world. Chinese arms sales are best considered an economic and diplomatic carrot, with some way to go before they can be used as a stick.

D. Military Diplomacy

The modernisation of the Chinese armed forces has coincided with increasing attention being paid to expand military diplomacy.[220] In fact, President Xi Jinping has identified military diplomacy as a significant aspect of China's foreign affairs work.[221] There are multiple objectives that Chinese military diplomacy aims to achieve. These range from enhancing operational capabilities, training in different conditions and with different partners, expanding Chinese soft power, cultivating favourable international discourse and normalising the presence of the PLA in contested regions.

Military diplomacy entails a host of different activities. These range from bilateral drills and multilateral drills, port calls by Chinese vessels, HADR exercises, anti-piracy missions to structured dialogues, hosting and participating in international forums, along with military-to-military educational exchanges and international competitions.[222]

The 2019 Defense White Paper outlines some of the key accomplishments, given the expanding scope of China's military diplomacy. It says that China has "set up 130 offices of military attachés and military representatives at Chinese diplomatic missions abroad, while 116 countries have established military attaché's offices in China. In addition, China has put in place 54 defense

consultation and dialogue mechanisms with 41 countries and international organizations. Since 2012, high level Chinese military delegations have visited over 60 countries, and defense ministers and commanders-in-chief from over 100 countries have visited China."[223]

Along with this, since 2012, China has held over 100 joint exercises and training with more than 30 countries.[224] During the same period, the "PLA has sent over 1,700 military personnel to study in more than 50 countries. Over 20 Chinese military educational institutions have established and maintained inter-collegiate exchanges with their counterparts from more than 40 countries. Meanwhile, more than 10,000 foreign military personnel from over 130 countries have studied in Chinese military universities and colleges."[225] The announcement of the China-Africa peace and security plan, and Beijing's role in operationalising the African Peace and Security Architecture are examples of the success of the PRC's military diplomacy.[226]

E. Influence Operations

Beijing has sought to leverage the allure of its developmental success, economic might, educational scholarships and training programs to lobby government officials, politicians and young leaders from developing countries. In July 2018, it was reported that the Baise Executive Leadership Academy in Guangxi has been training government officials from Vietnam, Laos and Myanmar.[227] China has also advanced a multi-tier cadre training program for young African officials, training over 1000 young African leaders since 2011.[228] In addition, in December 2017, the CPC launched a forum called Dialogue with World Political Parties. During the event, Xi announced that over a period of five years, the CPC would like to invite 15,000 members of foreign political parties to China.[229]

Beyond such exchanges, corruption cases and political funding scandals in countries like the Maldives, Sri Lanka and Australia inform of more insidious Chinese operations. The objective, as some analysts "political co-optation of local politicians, businesspeople and opinion leaders by giving various convenience irrespective of legal validity."[230] The latter, to foster Pro-Chinese lobby will reinforce China's foreign influence in the long run, and UFWD of CCCPC has spent more energy and time than the former In Sri Lanka, there are allegations that Chinese port construction funds were diverted to former president Mahinda Rajapaksa's campaign aides and activities in 2015.[231] In July 2018, Beijing offered Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena a grant of $295

million "to be utilized for any project of (his) wish."[232] Such largesse is characteristic of the PRC's approach to leaders facing democratic pressures in developing countries, i.e., promising developmental support that can potentially enhance their electoral fortunes. Another example is the deepening Chinese engagement with sub-national actors in Pakistan. China's Ambassador to the country, Yao Jing, has repeatedly engaged provincial leaders across Pakistan, promising Chinese government assistance as part of CPEC.

Finally, in this context, there is an increasing body of work by scholars around the world, shedding light on the Communist Party's use of the UFWD to ensure "co-optation of local politicians, businesspeople and opinion leaders...to foster Pro-Chinese lobby...(and) reinforce China's foreign influence in the long run."233 One example of this is the furore over Chinese Confucius Institutes, which backed by the country's Ministry of Education. As of last year, there were a total of 530 Confucius Institutes and 1,113 Confucius Classrooms in 149 countries.234 However, increasingly both Chinese students and Confucius Institutes have faced scrutiny over concerns of espionage and linkages with the UFWD.235

However, the limitations, and perhaps even pitfalls, of such influence efforts have been evident in countries like Australia and Canada. Patriotic protests by Chinese students at campuses in these countries, along with the public support offered by Chinese officials for such actions underscore this point.236 Another example Belgium's recent denial of visa for a former chief of the Confucius Institute at Vrije Universiteit Brussel owing to suspected links with Chinese intelligence agencies.237 In addition, linkages with political donors affiliated with the CCP led to the downfall of Labour MP Sam Dastyari in late 2016.238 The scandal led to significant changes to Australian laws related to national security, espionage and foreign interference.239

F. Cyberattacks & Espionage

China's 2019 Defense White Paper identifies cybersecurity as a "severe threat," calling on the armed forces to "accelerate the building of their cyberspace capabilities."[240] However, this capacity isn't simply defensive in nature. A 2016 NATO Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence study concluded that the "Chinese government, together with the Chinese military, private corporations, and unaffiliated citizens, conduct intrusions against major Western powers as well as in the neighbouring region every day, targeting

academia, industry and government facilities for the purpose of amassing technological secrets."[241]

One example of this is Operation Titan Rain, which involved a series of cyberattacks that compromised networks ranging from the Pentagon to private military contractors.[242] The PLA's Unit 61398 has been blamed by both the Pentagon and private cybersecurity firms for the theft of hundreds of terabytes of data of tremendous economic value.[243] Unit 61398 is likely to also include freelance hackers, who are involved in cybercrime as a "day job"[244] - the skills required for cybercrimes are very similar to those required for cyberespionage and cyberwarfare, as all of them require the ability to exploit vulnerabilities and penetrate defences. All this is enabled by the human resource pool discussed in section V.D.

Another case in point is the December 2018 indictment of Chinese nationals, believed to be members of the APT 10 hacking group, in the US on charges of industrial espionage. Over a number of years, the group has targeted companies in sectors as varied as banking and finance, biotech, consumer electronics, health care, manufacturing, oil and gas, telecommunications.[245] The case led to a strong reaction from the US and its allies Britain, Australia and New Zealand,[246] accelerating coordination in pushing back against Chinese tech firms.[247]

G. Authority within Multilateral Fora

Over the decades, the PRC has leveraged its position at multilateral institutions to pursue its interests. Under Xi Jinping's rule, global governance reform with the objective of building a community with a shared future for humanity has emerged as a key priority.[248] This entails more purposeful efforts to reform global institutions to support Chinese interests and values.[249] The PRC today follows a dual track policy of supporting the existing international order while seeking revisions. As one analyst put it, China is "a stakeholder in existing institutions and rules but a habitually reluctant, seldom satisfied, and frequently ambivalent one."[250] It is a revisionist power but not a revolutionary one.

These strands of Chinese policy are evident in its expanded support for the United Nations, the IMF and WTO. Beijing this year emerged as the second largest contributor to the UN's regular budget and its peacekeeping budget.[251] It is also enhancing its support in terms of troops for peacekeeping operations. At the IMF, it is among the leading states pushing for the timely completion of the

15th General Review of Quotas accurately reflecting members' representation.[252] These changes would significantly expand Chinese clout at the Fund. In terms of WTO reform, Beijing is acutely concerned about rising protectionism and unilateralism, along with the challenge to special and differential treatment provisions for developing members.[253] In this context, it has sought to work with BRICS countries for a common approach.

At the same time, under Xi, China has stepped up efforts to establish and support alternate institutions and dialogue platforms. The creation of the BRICS New Development Bank and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank along with the expanded role of the SCO, the Boao Forum for Asia, CICA and the new Conference on Dialogue of Asian Civilizations are examples of this trend.

Beijing, however, is not averse to using its authority at multilateral forums to pursue narrow national objectives. In India's case, the PRC used its position at the UN to block the listing of Jaish-e-Mohammad chief Masood Azhaar as a UN designated terrorist for over a decade, before relenting in early 2019. It is also the only P5 member of the UN Security Council to have not endorsed India's bid for a permanent seat on a reformed council. In addition, China continues to argue against India's inclusion to the Nuclear Suppliers Group. However, it should be noted that the PRC's behaviour in this context is often simply opportunistic. A case in point is its decision to let Pakistan get greylisted by the Financial Action Task Force in 2018,[254] in return for support for China to assume the FATF's vice-presidency.[255]

H. Discourse Power & Lawfare

Xi Jinping's tenure at the helm of the Communist Party has coincided with increasing attention being paid to expanding all round publicity work. In fact, very early on, Xi accorded public opinion work the highest priority, with specific focus on online media.[256] Subsequently, in March 2018, a major reform of state institutions expanded the Communist Party's control over the propaganda machinery.[257] In addition, an effort was made to consolidate the three major state-run television and radio broadcasters to establish a new globally-oriented platform called Voice of China.[258]

This is but one component of Xi's broader approach towards building what Chinese strategists term as *huayuquan* or "discourse power."[259] While this is often viewed as a Chinese interpretation of the concept of soft power,

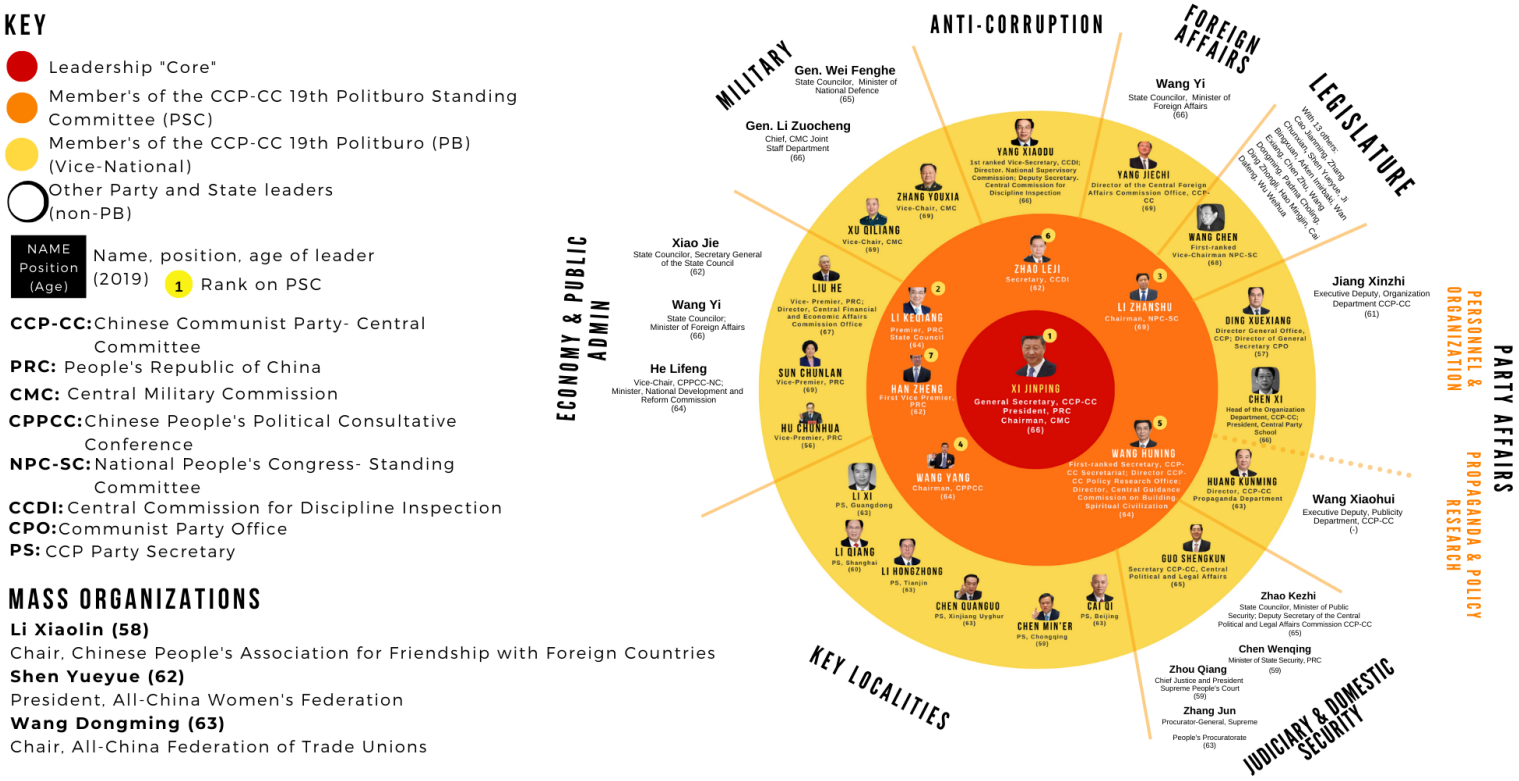
huayuquan is a much broader concept. As Elsa Kania argues, by expanding discourse power, "China is aiming to elevate its national capability to influence global values, governance, and even day-to-day discussions on the world stage, which Beijing believes should be commensurate with its economic and military might."[260] Xi's repeated calls for the media to "tell China stories well"[261] and boosting cultural confidence must be viewed in this context.[262]

In order to enhance discourse power, the Chinese leadership has rolled out a multi-pronged strategy to influence the global information environment and discourse on values. The strategy includes expanding investments, acquisition of media outlets, building strategic partnerships, inserts and advertorials in foreign outlets, coordinated social media operations and influencing diaspora through local Chinese media platforms.[263] An example of the massive effort in this direction is the new Belt and Road News Network, which brings together 182 media organizations from 86 countries around.[264]

Such an effort also supports and enhances the effectiveness of the strategy of legal warfare. At the most basic level, lawfare entails colouring one's own position as upholding law while the adversary's as violating it[265], which, as noted, China often resorts to during territorial disputes. It is an instrument that's leveraged as part of a broader campaign to undermine opposing narratives. For instance, Beijing has termed the December 2018 detention of Huawei CFO Meng Wanzhou in Canada as part of American "bullying" and "long-arm jurisdiction." Another example of this was the Chinese government's response to the 2017 Doklam standoff with India. On multiple occasions throughout the 70-odd-day standoff, Chinese officials used words like "trespass," "illegal entry" and violation of "international obligations" to describe Indian actions, while arguing that the PLA's activities were "justified" and "lawful" in safeguarding China's sovereignty and interests.[266]

Appendix I

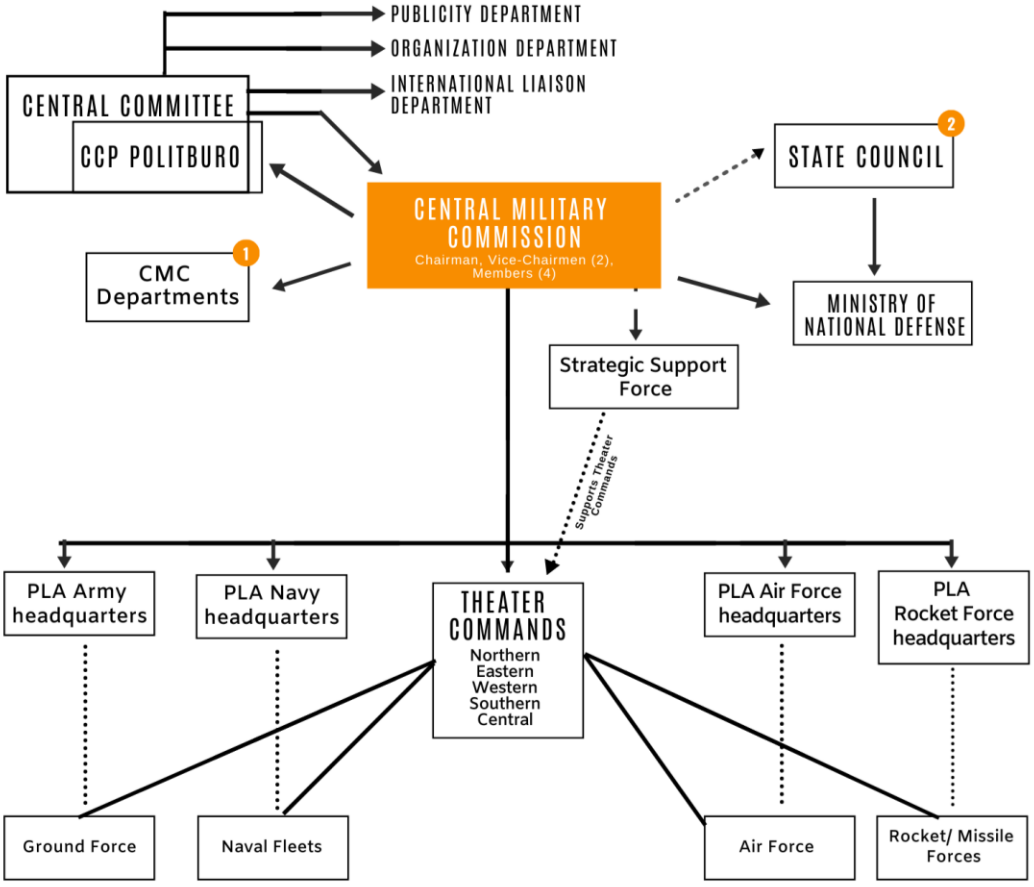
*Party-State Organisational Chart**

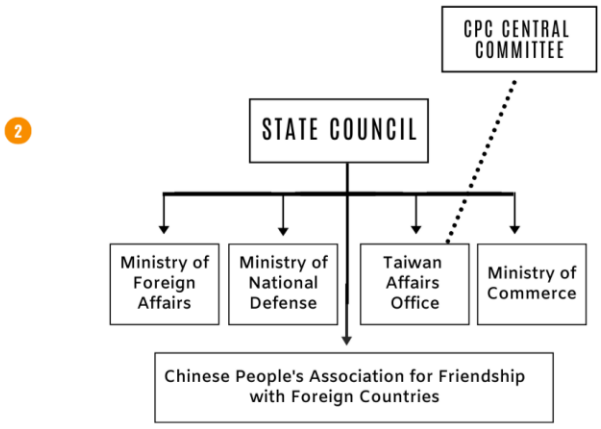


**Source: Adapted from [the graphic](#) by Yuan Wang and James Evans for the Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies. Designed by Pratikshya Mishra.*

Appendix II

*Chinese Armed Forces Organisational Chart**

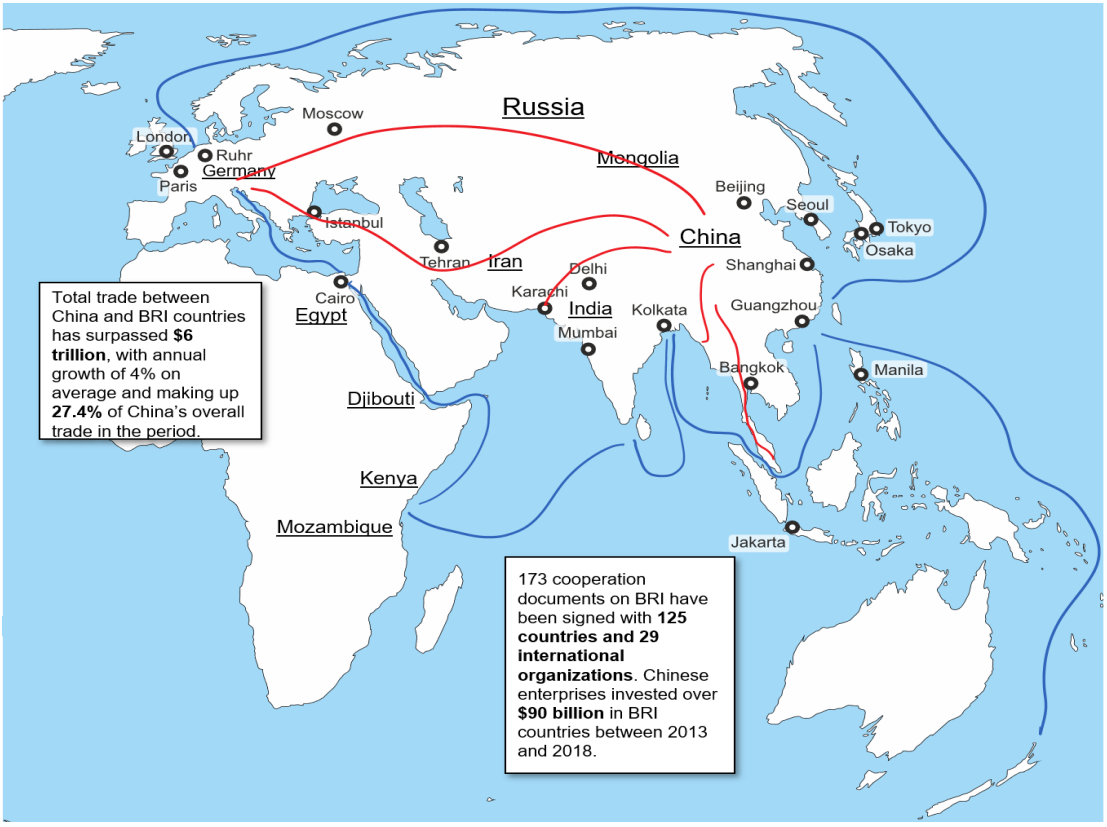


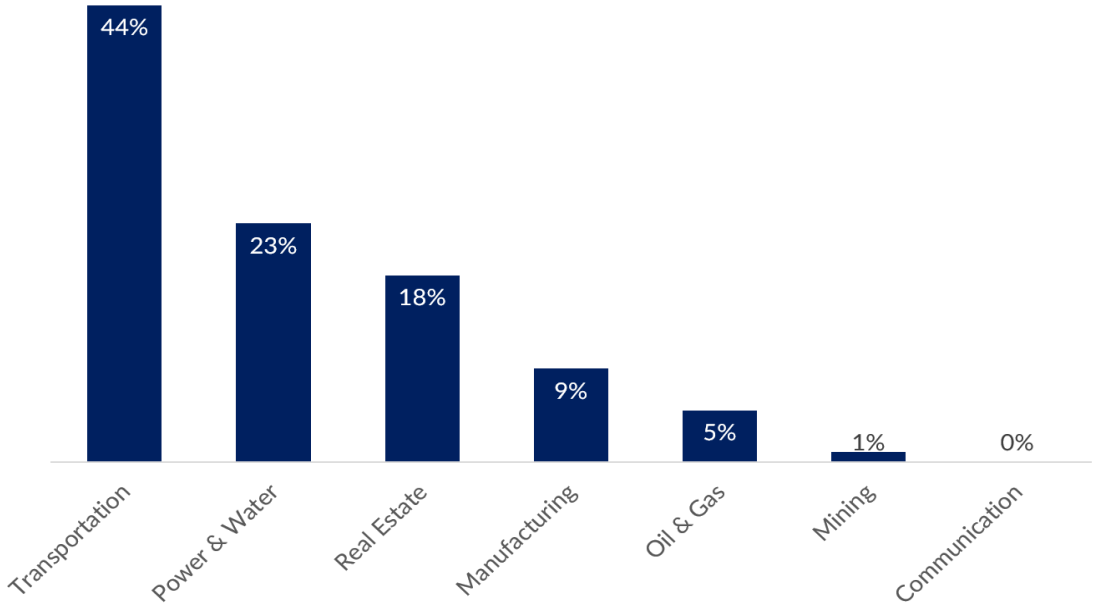


Source: Adapted from the graphic by By Phillip C. Saunders and Joel Wuthnow for Joint Force Quarterly. Designed by Pratikshya Mishra.

Appendix III

BRI Routes & Status





**Source: Refinitiv BRI Database.*

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