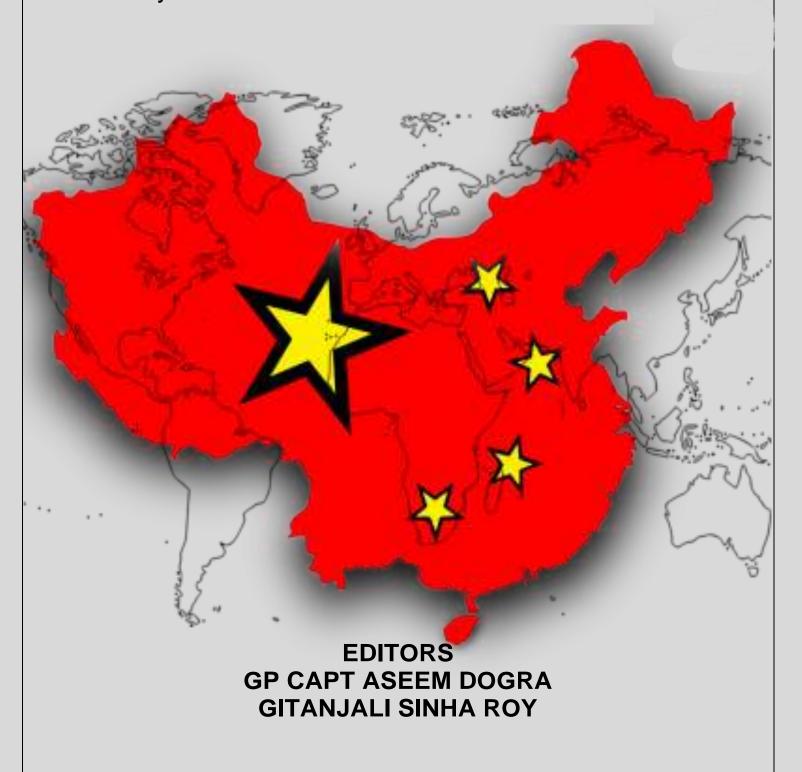
# Sinometer TheChinaStrategicMonitor

VOL. 6 JAN 2022

By United Service Institution of India



# **Note from Head CS3**

# Dear All,

We are happy to publish the sixth issue of the *Sinometer: The China Strategic Monitor*, a monthly magazine by the Centre for Strategic Studies and Simulation (CS3), USI.

Today, as the world reels under the Coronavirus Pandemic, China has been expanding and extending its paws and claws to all directions in the world whether land or water and have been trying to create situations where they would like to dominate the world and create a shift in the US hegemonic power and supremacy.

The first section of this issue includes an analysis on the 18<sup>th</sup> Meeting between the Foreign Ministers of India, Russia and China. This article covers wide range of topics which were discussed in the meeting like health and vaccine diplomacy, economic growth and trade, global and regional organisations, ICT and its military use, sustainable development, climate change, terrorism and drugs. The article also discusses about how India, Russia and China could work to develop stronger relations.

The purpose of this issue is to give a holistic perspective of China from a world view and analyse the China related issues especially with regard to the Ukraine issue and the US and China's stance on it. The Sinometer also covers topics on China supplying mounted Howitzers to Pakistan along with discussing the various military exercises and cooperation between China and other countries like Saudi Arabia, Russia and Iran.

We hope that the Sinometer inspires more students and researchers to look at China with a closer eye.

Maj Gen RPS Bhadauria, VSM(Retd) Head, Centre for Strategic Studies and Simulation (CS3), USI

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#### **Analysis**

#### Understanding Relations between India, Russia and China

#### -Gitanjali Sinha Roy

On 26 November 2021, the 18<sup>th</sup> Meeting between the Indian, Russian and Chinese Foreign Ministers was held virtually. These three ministers discussed a wide range of topics which mainly focused on the impact that the world has been facing due to the Coronavirus. They aimed to cooperate with one another in various domains like health and vaccine diplomacy, economic growth and trade, global and regional organisations, ICT and its military use, sustainable development, climate change, terrorism and drugs.



Figure 1:India-Russia-China Cooperation. Source: Author's Annotated.

#### Cooperation between India, Russia and China

The Coronavirus Pandemic has taken the world by shock and most countries are still reeling under the impact of the virus. Also, most of the countries are yet again facing an upward surge in cases and the same is the case for India, Russia and China. Thereby, keeping the Pandemic in mind, the first domain that the Ministers discussed was the health sector, where they focused on the timely and transparent effectiveness and non-discriminatory international response for global health challenges. Further, with regard to the global health challenges that the countries are facing currently, the three countries aimed at equitable and affordable access to medicines, vaccines and critical health supplies. These countries realised that there was an urgent need to work on sharing vaccine doses along with working on transferring technology which would help internationally and regionally specially to support the local production capacities and the medical

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Ministry of External Affairs.2021. "Joint Communique of the 18th Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the Russian Federation, the Republic of India and the People's Republic of China", November 26, 2021. https://www.mea.gov.in/bilateral-

documents.htm?dtl/34540/Joint Communique of the 18th Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the Russian Federation the Republic of India and the Peoples Republic of China Ibid.

products supply chain management.<sup>3</sup> They aimed for collective cooperation in the fight against the Pandemic along with adhering to measures given by the World Health Organisation (WHO), the various global governments, the non-profit organisations, academia, business groups and industries that are combating the Coronavirus. Finally, they called for "making Covid-19 vaccination a global public good".<sup>4</sup>

Further, the Foreign Ministers of all the three countries aimed to commit and broaden their participation in emerging markets and developing countries (EMDCs) and work in sync with the international economic decision making especially after the pandemic is over.<sup>5</sup> The three countries also aimed to voice their concern for the emerging markets and developing countries (EMDCs).<sup>6</sup> India, Russia and China reaffirmed their support for a "transparent, open, inclusive and non-discriminatory multilateral trading system with the World Trade Organisation" in the centre of it all.<sup>7</sup>

Technologically, the three countries aimed for a holistic approach to development and security of the ICT's and focus on technical progress, business development, safeguarding the security of the States and public interests along with respecting others privacy. The Foreign Ministers aimed to develop ICT capabilities for military purposes and deal with malicious use of the ICTs by the various states and non-state actors like terrorists and criminals. These three countries welcomed the UN-mandated groups namely Open-Ended Working Group on the developments in the fields of information and telecommunications.

In the domain of sustainable development, the Foreign Ministers reaffirmed their commitments towards the implementation of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with focus on economic, social and environmental along with being balanced and integrated. The leaders of the three countries aimed to foster for a more equitable and balanced global development partnership to deal with the negative impact of the Coronavirus and accelerate the 2030 Agenda. Climate Change was another domain that the Foreign Ministers of India, Russia and China discussed and they reaffirmed their stance on Climate change by implementing the Kyoto Protocol and Paris Agreement. They recognised the rise in the greenhouse gas emissions and stressed upon the Post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.

Today, the world is divided into a multipolar world and most countries are part of multiple global and regional organisations. India, Russia and China are members of most of these organisations and with the constant twists and turns in the global scenario, makes these global and regional organisations of utmost importance. Thereby, the next domain that the three countries discussed was the global domain. India, Russia and China focused on how they could cooperate among themselves with the regard to global peace, prosperity, security and development. In order to achieve a global perspective, India, Russia and China agreed to be strengthen their relations by

2021.https://www.mea.gov.in/bilateral-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Ministry of External Affairs.2021. "Joint Communique of the 18th Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the Russian Federation, the Republic of India and the People's Republic of China", November 26,

documents.htm?dtl/34540/Joint\_Communique\_of\_the\_18th\_Meeting\_of\_the\_Foreign\_Ministers\_of\_the\_Russian\_Fed eration\_the\_Republic\_of\_India\_and\_the\_Peoples\_Republic\_of\_China

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Ministry of External Affairs.2021. "Joint Communique of the 18th Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the Russian Federation, the Republic of India and the People's Republic of China", November 26, 2021.https://www.mea.gov.in/bilateral-

documents.htm?dtl/34540/Joint\_Communique\_of\_the\_18th\_Meeting\_of\_the\_Foreign\_Ministers\_of\_the\_Russian\_Fed eration\_the\_Republic\_of\_India\_and\_the\_Peoples\_Republic\_of\_China 
9 lbid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Ibid.

focusing on being "open, transparent, just, inclusive, equitable and aim for a representative multipolar international system which works on respect for international laws, rules and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, its sub systems and other multilateral institutions like the International Monetary Fund(IMF), World Bank (WB), World Trade Organisation (WTO) and World Health Organisation (WHO)." 12

Another domain of mutual interest and cooperation between the three countries are the regional organisations. India, Russia and China aimed to work on greater significance of the intra-BRICS cooperation based on strategic partnership, economic and political cooperation along with interactions between people-to-people and applauded India being the Chair for the 13<sup>th</sup> BRICS Summit held on 9 September 2021. In 2022, China would be the Chair of BRICS for the 14<sup>th</sup> BRICS Summit and India and Russia has shown complete support to China for the same. Apart from BRICS, the countries also discussed about Shanghai Cooperation Organisation's (SCO) 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary where they are aiming to create a modern system of international relations working on constructive role of securing peace and sustainable development. The countries recognised new domains of cooperation in the SCO like SCO Space, jointly countering terrorism, illicit drug trafficking and trans-border organised crise under the greater framework of SCO-Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure.<sup>13</sup>

Further, the three countries also spoke about the G-20 where they discussed about the leading role of the global economic governance and international economic cooperation and wanted to enhance communication and cooperation along with adhering to mutual support and interest. Another regional grouping that the three countries were interested in was the ASEAN and all the three countries focused on how there was a need to work on the centrality of ASEAN and how the evolving regional architecture would help ASEAN build better relations with regional organisations like SCO, IORA, BIMSTEC, EAS, ARF, ADMM-Plus, ASEM, CICA and ACD. The Foreign Ministers of India, Russia and China also highlighted the idea of establishing a Greater Eurasian Partnership which would involve SCO countries, the Eurasian Economic Union, ASEAN and other states and multilateral organisations.

The world has witnessed several acts of terrorism over the years and continuously the norms and modes of terrorism is evolving, thereby, countries like India, Russia and China have condemned terrorism and its multiple forms and manifestations. Further, these countries aim for to achieve a world free of terrorism. They called for the global community to strengthen the UN-led global counter-terrorism cooperation and further, stressed upon dealing with terrorism with regard to committing, orchestrating, inciting or supporting and financial terrorist acts. With regard to drugs, these three countries reaffirmed their resolve the drug problem with a basic of common and shared responsibility.

All in all, the 18<sup>th</sup> Foreign Ministers meeting was a grand success as all the three countries, i.e., India, Russia and China were able discuss contemporary issues and agreed for joint cooperation. These countries also discussed extremely important topics like the aftermath of the Coronavirus

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Ministry of External Affairs.2021. "Joint Communique of the 18th Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the Russian Federation, the Republic of India and the People's Republic of China", November 26, 2021.https://www.mea.gov.in/bilateral-

documents.htm?dtl/34540/Joint\_Communique\_of\_the\_18th\_Meeting\_of\_the\_Foreign\_Ministers\_of\_the\_Russian\_Fed eration\_the\_Republic\_of\_India\_and\_the\_Peoples\_Republic\_of\_China lbid.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Ministry of External Affairs.2021. "Joint Communique of the 18th Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the Russian Federation, the Republic of India and the People's Republic of China", November 26, 2021.https://www.mea.gov.in/bilateral-

documents.htm?dtl/34540/Joint\_Communique\_of\_the\_18th\_Meeting\_of\_the\_Foreign\_Ministers\_of\_the\_Russian\_Fed eration\_the\_Republic\_of\_India\_and\_the\_Peoples\_Republic\_of\_China lbid.

especially the economic issues and how the health sector needed to be handled in complete support and cooperation.

#### Conclusion

The relations between India, Russia and China are an excellent blend of cooperation and conflict. India is central to both the countries as in 1971, India and Russia had signed the Friendship Treaty and since, then Russia has been extremely instrumental in India's Foreign Policy. Over the years, the relations between Russia and India have grown but it has been noticed that India's Non-Aligned stance has been gradually moving towards a US titled Foreign Policy since 2009. The fortunate part is that India has been able to manage both Russia and the US. One of the classic wins is the S-400 air defence system which India got from Russia and the US hasn't imposed any sanctions on India. One can say that this can be the way forward as India can continue to benefit from Russia and the US and yet, maintain good and cooperative relations with both, the US and Russia.

On the contrary, India's relations with China are a combination of cooperation and conflict. In the 1960s, the relations between India and China were based on the famous quote "Hindi-Chini Bhai Bhai" but with the coming in of the 1962 war, things took a different turn. In the recent times, whether its Doklam or Galwan Incidents, India has been able to fight back, China's arm twisting and bullying. And that is preciously the reason, China has been extensively investing in mountainous region battle warfare equipment. Another issue is that India and China's trade is growing in leaps and bounds and that is in a way interesting because cooperation in the trade domain means greater economic growth and development for both the countries. India has to find a way to tackle China in a more amicable manner and China should also understand if it wants to increase its economic growth, it must adhere to the international laws and rules based on sovereignty and territorial integrity of other countries.

Finally, the relations between Russia and China are not only ideologically based but they are also neighbours. Both the countries find it difficult to co-exist with the US and find the US rivalry, a common point of convergence. Also, Russia and China aren't a part of the Indo-Pacific strategy and have constantly shown their discernment towards the same. India, despite having good relations with the US has been able to maintain cooperative relations with Russia and China.

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#### **NEWS DEVELOPMENTS**

#### **Biden Administration Presses Israel on Chinese Investments**

While former Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu tried to enhance ties with China and solicit Chinese investment in Israel's infrastructure and technology industries, Axios reported, that on 14 December, the present administrations of the US under President Joe Biden and Israel held wide-range talks on China. The meeting was led by deputy national security advisers from both sides, was the first wide-ranging consultation between the two countries on China since Biden took office.<sup>17</sup>

Notably, fearing "backlash" from Beijing, the Israeli side attempted to keep the consultations as low-key as possible. As per the Axios report, the meeting which was held last month included representatives from various government agencies that deal with areas such as economy, foreign policy and national security. 18

The American media house quoted a senior Israeli official as saying that both sides presented the general policy lines and even exchanged notes as they conducted their respective policy reviews. However, the report stated that no decisions were reached. It should be mentioned that following the low-key meet, US National security adviser Jake Sullivan had raised some similar issues with Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett and Foreign Minister Yair Lapid when the US official visited Israel later.<sup>19</sup>

According to the report, a senior Israeli official said that the Israeli government is presently facing a major dilemma if it should maintain a balancing act in order to preserve trade relations with China or to more actively side with the United States. A senior Israeli official was quoted by Axios as saying, "We have no dilemma about who is our most important ally and we are more mindful about US concerns and more transparent than we were in the past. But we are not going to avoid doing things with China that the US is not avoiding." <sup>20</sup>

#### US, China Confer on Ukraine, Urge De-Escalation and Calm

The United States on Thursday called on China to use its influence with Russia to urge a diplomatic solution to the Ukraine crisis, but policy experts doubted Beijing would back Washington in the standoff. China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi spoke by phone with U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Beijing said it wanted all sides to remain calm and "refrain from doing things that agitate tensions and hype up the crisis."<sup>21</sup>

Russia, which has been building up its forces on Ukraine's borders for months, has demanded NATO pull back troops and weapons from eastern Europe and bar Ukraine, a former Soviet state, from ever joining the alliance. The US and its NATO allies reject that position, but say they are ready to discuss other topics such as arms control and confidence-building measures.

The United States has warned Russia not to invade Ukraine and urged both countries to return to a set of pacts known as Minsk I and Minsk II signed in 2014 and 2015, respectively, to end a separatist war by Russian-speakers in eastern Ukraine. But a series of military and political steps set out by the later Minsk II agreement remain unimplemented, with Russia's insistence that it is not a party to the conflict and therefore is not bound by its terms being a major blockage.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> https://tfiglobalnews.com/2022/01/07/israel-puts-chinese-investments-on-notice/

https://www.republicworld.com/world-news/us-news/us-israel-discussed-chinese-investments-in-low-profile-meeting-in-december-report-articleshow.html

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Ibid.

https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/uss-blinken-holds-talks-with-chinas-wang-ukraine-situation-2022-01-27/ lbid.

Blinken stressed that tensions should be reduced and warned of the security and economic risks from any Russian aggression, the State Department said. U.S. Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Victoria Nuland said U.S. messages to Beijing had been very clear.

"We are calling on Beijing to use its influence with Moscow to urge diplomacy, because if there is a conflict in the Ukraine it is not going to be good for China either," Nuland said at a regular State Department news conference. "There will be a significant impact on the global economy. There will be a significant impact in the energy sphere."<sup>23</sup>

#### China Supplies Mounted Howitzers to Pakistan

In a move that ensures that Pakistan continues to remain locked up in confrontation with India, Islamabad has received first batch of Chinese manufactured vehicle mounted howitzers to counter the Indian K-9 Vajra howitzers. Beijing is also supplying NORINCO AR-1 300 mm multi barrel rocket launchers to Rawalpindi so that the Pakistan Army has a reply to Indian rocket launchers. The total contract worth is around USD 512 million.<sup>24</sup>

The supply of conventional weapon systems, fighter aircraft, destroyers and even the inclination to give DF-17 hypersonic missile to counter India's latest acquisition, the S-400 air defence system, are all part of Beijing long strategy to keep Pakistan in a state of permanent confrontation with India. This strategy has paid dividends to Beijing regime in the past as it forces India to remain alert on its western border.

According to reports, Pakistan in 2019 signed a contract with Chinese arms major NORINCO to supply 236 SH-15 155 mm vehicle mounted howitzers apart from AR-1 heavy rocket launchers. In addition to artillery, the contract also includes supply and technology transfer for various ammunition including extended range artillery shells and guided artillery shells with the range of 53 km. Clearly, this supply is to boost the firepower of Pakistan army all along the western border, specially to heat up the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir in case the existing ceasefire breaks down or to send a message on Kashmir.<sup>25</sup>

SH-15 is an ideal 'shoot and scoot' artillery weapon for the use of nuclear shells. Pakistan has been working on the miniaturization of nuclear weapons since 1984. The US nuclear artillery shell W-48 uses 10 kg high-density alpha-plutonium with a sphere of barely 54mm. Former Pakistani president Pervez Musharraf had reportedly disclosed to a top US diplomat that Islamabad had created a minuscule nuclear warhead in the latter half of 2011. Such a warhead, if fitted in a 155 mm shell with a stated range of 53 km, could be devastating for cities close to the Pakistan border.<sup>26</sup>

#### China, Saudi Arabia to Boost Military Cooperation

With the United States appearing to have begun a political withdrawal from the Middle East, Saudi Arabia has expanded its search for other potential security partners. Chief among these potential partners is China, which has also displayed a growing interest in forming ties in the Arab world.<sup>27</sup>

In a recent meeting, Chinese defence minister Wei Fenghe and Saudi deputy defence minister Khalid bin Salman pledged to expand their "practical cooperation" and continue "strengthening solidarity," according to the South China Morning Post.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Ibid.

https://www.hindustantimes.com/world-news/china-supplies-mounted-howitzers-to-pak-to-maintain-arms-parity-with-india-101643261396285.html

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Ibid.

https://eurasiantimes.com/china-to-arm-pakistani-military-mounted-howitzers-india-sh-15/

https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/china-and-saudi-arabia-hint-expanded-military-ties-200119

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Ibid.

The two officials also indicated that they would "strengthen coordination and jointly oppose hegemonic and bullying practices, to safeguard ... the interests of developing countries together." This comment appears to have been a reproach of the Biden administration, which has directed criticism at both Beijing and Riyadh for their repressive practices.

Both leaders agreed that they should "enhance military ties to a higher level," according to the readout. Wei also praised Saudi Arabia's adherence to Beijing's line on several controversial issues, including the status of Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Xinjiang. "China appreciates the strong support given by the Saudi side on issues related to Xinjiang, Hong Kong, and Taiwan, and fully respects Saudi sovereignty and firmly supports [its] development path," the Chinese defence minister said.<sup>29</sup>

The Sino-Saudi connection has expanded considerably over the past decade. Although Saudi Arabia remains a valuable U.S. ally, its top trading partner is now China. And while the kingdom continues to buy most of its military from the United States, it has increasingly turned to Beijing in some areas. For example, Saudi Arabia recently purchased Chinese drones for use in its military intervention in Yemen.

China has also played a key role in the regional "cold war" between Saudi Arabia and Iran through its participation in the "P5+1" negotiations over Iran's nuclear program.

#### J-20 Fighter could get Directed Energy Weapon, Drone Control Capability

China's domestically developed J-20 stealth fighter jet could in the future be equipped with directed-energy weapons, and it can also spawn variants for early warning, unmanned flight and drone control, military experts predicted after the aircraft received concentrated media coverage in January 2022.

"I believe our industrial departments can turn some of our ideas into reality, including those from the current trend of aviation main battle equipment," Wang Mingliang, a Chinese military expert, was quoted as saying in a China Central Television (CCTV) program.<sup>30</sup> The J-20 could be equipped with directed-energy weapons, or it could be fitted with more powerful radar and fire control systems and become a small early warning aircraft, Wang predicted.

It is also possible that the J-20 could become capable of unmanned flight, Wang said, noting that the J-20 could also conduct coordinated operation with drones by leading them, or commanding a drone swarm in combat.

Wang made the remarks when asked about his expectations on the future development of the J-20, after the program rounded-up the recent concentrated media coverage of the J-20, including intense nocturnal combat drills and interviews with pilots. <sup>31</sup>

These are in line with general trends of warplane development worldwide, as countries like the US are also exploring some of the related technologies, another Beijing-based military expert told the Global Times, requesting anonymity.<sup>32</sup>

#### China, Russia, Iran to Hold Joint Maritime Exercise

China, Russia and Iran will hold a maritime joint exercise, media reported on 18 January 2022, citing the Russian navy's Pacific Fleet, without releasing a specific time for the drill.<sup>33</sup>

https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202201/1246676

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202201/1246333.shtml

It is not the first time for the three countries to hold similar joint exercises. In 2019, the Chinese Navy, together with its Russian and Iranian counterparts, conducted a four-day military drill on the Gulf of Oman to deepen cooperation between the navies of the three countries. The drill also conveys a goodwill gesture and exhibits China's ability to maintain world peace and maritime security, according to Chinese military officials.<sup>34</sup>

"The three sides need to enhance cooperation in non-traditional security areas, especially in maritime security, as currently some countries continue to cause trouble in the sea, which is apparently a violation of international law," Song Zhongping, a Chinese military commentator, told the Global Times on Tuesday. 35

It is vital for China, Russia and Iran to ensure the safety of international shipping. Most of Russia's international trade is carried by ship. Iran also relies on shipping for its oil exports. China's imports of oil, gas and foreign trade depend on shipping as well, Song explained. To ensure the safety of shipping is to safeguard the economic security of the three countries. Therefore, it is normal to see China, Russia and Iran cooperate with their navies, and especially in their joint efforts against regional hegemony and sea pirates. Song noted.

When reporting the joint drill by the three countries in 2019, some US media said it was conducted by "three of America's biggest adversaries." Others speculated that the exercise indicated that Beijing was roping in Tehran and Moscow to form a threesome of "autocracies" and "rally against democracy."36

Cooperation among China, Russia and Iran is centred on mutual benefits and win-win relations, rather than forming an alliance and engaging in confrontation. For example, Iran can provide China with much-needed oil, and hopes to increase its economic strength by expanding its energy exports, experts noted.

## China Steps Up Construction Along Disputed Bhutan Border, Satellite Images Show

China has accelerated settlement-building along its disputed border with Bhutan, with more than 200 structures, including two-storey buildings, under construction in six locations, according to satellite image analysis conducted for Reuters.

The images and analysis supplied to Reuters by U.S. data analytics firm HawkEye 360, which uses satellites to gather intelligence on ground-level activities, and vetted by two other experts, provide a detailed look into China's recent construction along its frontier with Bhutan.<sup>37</sup>

Construction-related activity in some of the locations along Bhutan's western border has been under way since early 2020, with China initially building tracks and clearing out areas, based on material provided by satellite imagery firms Capella Space and Planet Labs, said Chris Biggers, the mission applications director at HawkEye 360.<sup>38</sup>

Images show the work speeded up in 2021. Smaller structures were erected - possibly to house equipment and supplies - followed by the laying of foundations and then the construction of buildings, Biggers said.<sup>39</sup>

"It is Bhutan's policy not to talk about boundary issues in the public," Bhutan's foreign ministry

35 Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> https://www.reuters.com/world/china/china-steps-up-construction-along-disputed-bhutan-border-satellite-imagesshow-2022-01-12/ 38 lbid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> Ibid.

said in response to questions from Reuters. The ministry declined to comment further. 40

China's foreign ministry said the construction is "entirely for the improvement of the working and living conditions of the local people". "It is within China's sovereignty to carry out normal construction activities on its own territory," the ministry said. The ministry declined to comment further. 41

The villages also offer Beijing some strategic value, two of the experts say. The new construction is 9 to 27 km from the Doklam area at the junction of the borders of India, Bhutan and China, where Indian and Chinese troops were locked in standoff for more than two months in 2017.

The settlements would allow China to better control and monitor far-flung areas, and potentially use them to establish security-focused installations, according to one expert and the Indian defence source.

#### **Chinese New Large Scale Air Force Incursion in Taiwan**

Recently, Taiwan reported new large air force incursion in Taiwan and this increased the tension between Taiwan and China. Taiwan feels that China has been doing this continuously as it firstly tries to wear out Taiwan's forces and secondly, tries to understand Taiwan's responses.<sup>42</sup>

The Taiwan Ministry opined that 34 fighters plus four electronic warfare aircraft and a single bomber were a part of the latest incursion by China and this is definitely a major cause of worry for Taiwan.<sup>43</sup>

It has to be understood that Taiwan has been trying its level best to protect itself and look after its national interests and guard its territorial sovereignty but China's continuous efforts are rattling Taiwan. These incidents have become extremely frequent since last year. Further, these attempts are being made by China to also see the countries that Taiwan would get support from and what could be possible scenarios for the future.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/taiwan-reports-new-large-scale-chinese-air-force-incursion-2022-01-23/
43 lhid.

# **LINK FEST**

Label	Tags	Туре	Link	Author
Asia Communique	Political, Economic, Security, India	Newsletter	https://www.monitoringasia.com/	AadilBrar
Asia Times	Political, Economic, Technology, Security	Newspaper	https://asiatimes.com/	
Beijing Hour	Political	Podcast	http://chinaplus.cri.cn/podcast/list/17	Daily Podcast published by China Radio International
Caixin	Economic, Technology	Newspaper	https://www.caixinglobal.com/	
China Daily	Cultural	Newspaper	http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/	
China.mil	Security	Website	http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/	Website of the People's Liberation Army
ChinaBrief	Political, Economic, Security, India	Website	https://jamestown.org/programs/cb/	Published by the Jamestown Foundation
Global Times	Political, Economic, Security, India	Newspaper	https://www.globaltimes.cn/	
Eye on China	Political, Economic, Security, India	Newsletter	https://twitter.us18.list- manage.com/subscribe?	Manoj Kewalramani
India China Newsletter	India	Newsletter	https://indiachina.substack.com/	Ananth Krishnan
NYU Shanghai Centre's China India Biography	India	Website	https://cga.shanghai.nyu.edu/databas e/china-india/china-india- bibliography/	A reading list catered to Sino-Indian relations
People's daily	Political, Economic, Security	Newspaper	http://en.people.cn/	
South China Morning Post	Political, Economic, Technology, Security	Newspaper	https://www.scmp.com/	
Sup China	Cultural	Website, Newsletter, Podcast	https://supchina.com/	
White Papers published by the Chinese Government	Political	Website	http://english.www.gov.cn/archive/whitepaper	Contains English translations of all white papers published by the Chinese government
What's on Weibo	Cultural	Website	https://www.whatsonweibo.com/	Started by ManyaKoetse
Xinhua	Political, Economic, Security, India	Newspaper	http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/	



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