



Strategic Continuum of China's Strategic Behaviour: Implications for India Post the 19th Congress of the CPC

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There exists hype, built up in the West and USA, on the assertiveness of President Xi Jinping, ever since his elevation as the General Secretary of the Communist Party of China. They seem to be fixated by him and appear to look upon him as the sole leader responsible for China's unprecedented rise. They fail to grasp the *strategic continuum* since Deng Xiao Ping, which created the structures for Xi Jinping to be able to take such an aggressive stance, thereby missing the wood for the trees. Unless this aspect is grasped and understood, the responses would largely fail to achieve their purpose.

The international backlash following the Tiananmen Square massacres in 1989 and the subsequent unravelling of the Communist World in Europe led to Deng Xiao Ping's famous 24 character foreign policy dictum of '*Tao Guang Yang Hui (TGYH)*' that the Communist Party of China (CCP) diligently followed for nearly two decades. TGYH – '*hide your ambitions and disguise your claws*'¹ or keeping a low profile, implied that China should develop its economic, commercial and financial strength, and not concern itself much with International affairs (*till it reached a certain level of Comprehensive National Power - CNP*). The CCP succeeded in this strategy, by gaining access to the global trade and commerce with the opening

up of China to the MNCs for establishing their manufacturing plants, thereby becoming the global manufacturing hub.

Till early 2000s, China had assiduously followed Deng's dictum, thereby, leading to an unprecedented economic growth and relative internal stability. It enabled it to improve its *CNP*, especially its geo-economic strength, leading to an assumption amongst its decision makers that the rising *CNP* would afford it a greater geo-political heft and leverage backed by a robust modern military. With USA in a strategic

retrenchment since Obama² and Europe in economic decline since the 2008 economic crash, the Chinese hard line decision makers now feel that the *Shi or Strategic Configuration of Power*, has shifted towards it and thus China could now assert itself at the International Stage.

Chinese hardliners had assessed that these initial decades of the 21st Century are a period of strategic opportunity that needed to be grasped resolutely to achieve greater influence and geo-economic and diplomatic leverages, thereby ensuring that China can achieve its Dream of surpassing USA and the West and establish its 'Middle Kingdom' - a World Order with Chinese characteristics.

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The forays into Africa, Australia, ASEAN, East China Sea, South China Sea and South America, and the modernization drive of the PLA under Jiang Zhemin and Hu Jintao were all part of this well planned strategy. Under President Xi Jinping China is adopting a much more aggressive foreign policy to defend China's expanded 'core interests'. He signalled a shift from Deng's policy of 'Keeping a Low Profile – TGYH', to 'Striving for Achievement – Fen Fa You Wei (FFYW)', in his speech at the foreign affairs conference of CCP on 24 Oct 2013³, thereby, indicating the overt acceptance of the Chinese hard-liners' assessments.

The Strategic Continuum of Chinese Behaviour

All Chinese leaders, since Dr Sun Yat Sen (the most revered leader both in PRC and Taiwan), are steeped in ancient history of China and often refer to ancient texts like ZizhiTongxian (Comprehensive Mirror to Aid in Governance)⁴, 36 Ancient Stratagems, Sun Tzu's Art of War, Seven Military Classics, etc., to resolve extant problems and achieve the rejuvenation of China. As early as 1923-24, Dr Sun Yat Sen had laid out the vision for China by giving the Three Principles of Nationalism, Democracy and Socialist Economy to be followed to eventually surpass USA⁵. His advice was to learn from the USA and the West to achieve the rejuvenation of the Chinese Nation.

Mao Zedong failed in his attempt to achieve the same through his programs of 'The Great Leap Forward', and 'The Cultural Revolution'. That was when the outreach to USA began in the late 60s, not just as a counter to the Soviet Union, with whom the relations had worsened, but also to obtain economic and technical assistance for the desired rejuvenation, in line with Dr Sun Yat Sen's vision. It was achieved finally in the 70s and gained traction under Deng Xiaoping.

The Tiananmen Incident of 1989 and the subsequent unravelling of the Communist Countries of East Europe and the Soviet Union led Deng Xiaoping to enunciate his 24 character foreign policy of 'TGYH' (hide your strengths and bide your time) – an extension of Dr Sun Yat Sen's vision. China wanted to gain from the USA and the West for its rejuvenation, and then compete with it for strategic space in the global order. While the West and the US concentrated on translating it as 'Keep a Low Profile', they missed the 'bide your time' caution that Deng Xiaoping had enunciated.

To enable innovation and technological excellence in future, Deng Xiaoping ensured that USA and the West opened the doors of their Universities to thousands of Chinese students. Jiang Zhemin and Hu Jintao continued the deception by their lexicon of 'Peaceful Rise of China' and 'Harmonious Rise', even as they proceeded with the rejuvenation of China. Jiang Zhemin ensured that the concerned Chinese State owned Enterprises (SOEs) reached out to secure the raw materials and resources needed for the economic growth of China. Hu Jintao pushed further by ensuring that the shipping and port SOEs invest to own/have control over stakes across nearly two-thirds of the International Maritime ports/transportation hubs for shipping containers⁶ and start the infrastructure projects in SE Asia, South Asia, Central Asia and Africa.

To Hu Jintao goes the crown for being the first Chinese leader to quietly bury the Deng's dictum of never assuming leadership. In November 2006 he invited the African Heads of State for the **Forum on China-Africa Cooperation** in Beijing and offered Chinese economic help as a counter to growing discontent with the US and the West. The Heads of State or Heads of Government from 41 African countries attended this Summit, where President Hu rolled out \$5 billion worth of concessionary loans to Africa. This was one of the "Eight Measures" for Sino-African relations. President Hu announced

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the creation of the China-Africa Development Fund to further Chinese investment in Africa with US\$1 billion of initial funding with its fund expected to grow to US\$5 billion in the future.⁷ Even at that stage, he attempted to soothe the nerves of USA and the West by stressing on 'Harmonious Rise', but the die was cast.

Considering President Xi's trajectory during his first tenure, a clear continuum of Chinese strategy can be established, starting from Mao Tse Tung to President Xi Jinping. While Mao failed in his efforts, Deng's grand strategy, of co-operating and learning from the West and USA for China's economic growth and biding time till the 'Shi' flows in its favour, succeeded. It can be stated that the foundation was laid by Deng Xiaoping, Jiang Zhemin and Hu Jintao with President Xi Jinping joining the dots and attempting to create the edifice for the Chinese domination in Asia and later the World, the 'Dream' as enunciated by the leader revered by both China and Taiwan – Dr Sun Yat Sen way back in 1923-24.

China's world view is steeped in antiquity and based on ancient classics, like Shujin's Classics

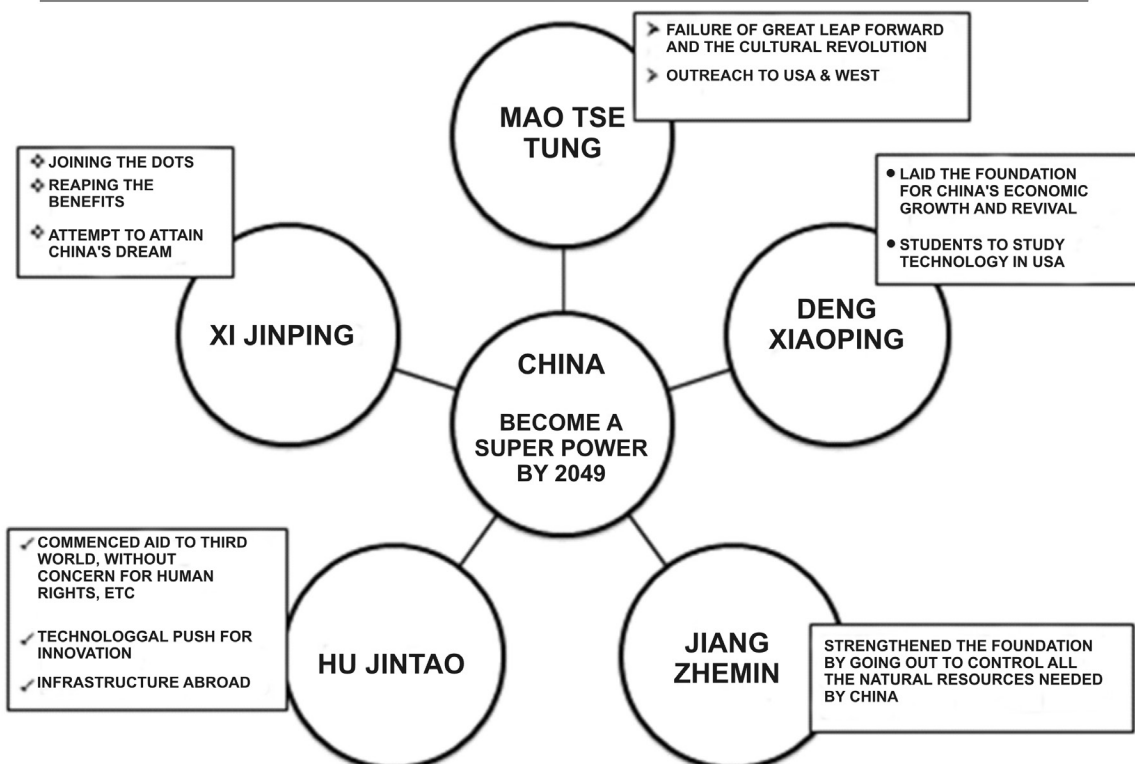
of History. It views that the ruling power has a 'mandate from heaven', which it loses when the heavens unleash a *natural calamity*. The other contenders of power can then make a push to claim suzerainty. The economic crash of 2008 that resulted in the weakened economies of USA and the West is seen by China as that *natural calamity* and seeks now for itself a major role at the World Stage to subsequently replace USA.

The worrisome aspect is that these classics define the Middle Kingdom in five major geographical zones emanating outwards from the seat of power –

- The Capital (Han Heartland?),
- The Royal Domains (Yunan and Manchuria?),
- A Pacification Zone (Sinkiang, Tibet and Inner Mongolia?),
- The Zone of Allied Tributaries (All Nations in East, SE, South and Central Asia? Africa?) and
- The Zone of Barbarians (Balance World?).

All other states are considered as supplicants to China and the relationship is maintained only for its benefits, the concept of *Tianxia*.

A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF CHINESE STRATEGIC CONTINUUM



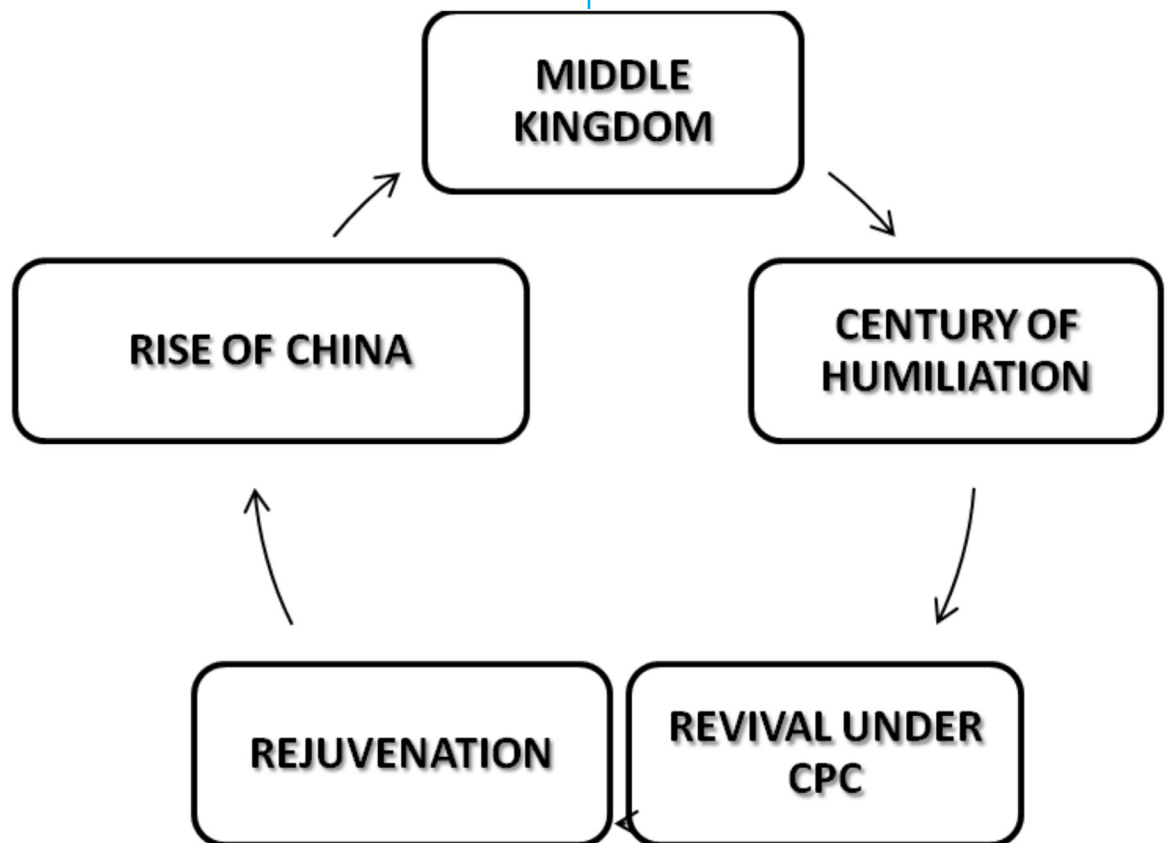
China seems to be assiduously following this concept of ‘Tianxia’, as articulated by the philosopher Zhao Tingyang in 2005⁸. The term ‘Tianxia’ opens itself to different interpretations since Mandarin has no alphabets but characters, and the meaning changes based on pronunciation and intonation. Thus the word could be interpreted as – ‘Under-Heaven’ or ‘Empire’ or ‘China’, thereby implying a ‘*Unified Global System with China’s superior characteristics on top*’.⁹

The Chinese scholars had long spoken of overcoming 100 years of humiliation and the great renewal of the nation, alluding to the 19th Century ‘Opium Wars’ with the West that greatly debilitated the nation and the subsequent subjugation during the Japanese War in the 20th Century. The cycle of rejuvenation is best ascribed by the figure below,

The crux of the Chinese Strategy appears to be to re-establish the *Middle Kingdom* – a world order based on Chinese characteristics for China’s sustained prosperity. Towards that end the current push seems to establish a *Unipolar Asia* under China, dealing

with the West and USA – its version of Great Power / Great Country relations. Michael Pillsbury, in his book ‘The Hundred Years Marathon’, has also similarly opined that the marathon strategy that China’s leaders are pursuing today- and have been pursuing for decades, is largely a product of lessons derived from the ‘Warring States’ period. These have never been translated in English and are very popular and extensively studied in China.¹⁰

Jiang Zheming and Hu Jintao worked systematically towards such a future realignment of the World Order by establishing parallel structures to a wide range of US led international institutions, to which President Xi Jinping has added to. China plays a key role in financing these alternative mechanisms that are designed to increase China’s autonomy vis-à-vis US dominated institutions and to expand its international sphere of influence. With a network of China-centred organizations and mechanisms, China has strategically targeted gaps within established intergovernmental structures. This network includes marginalised countries that



are seeking out new partners for international development assistance and their foreign relations (refer illustration below).¹¹

The China Dream and its Strategy to Achieve it

The China Dream was enunciated in a book by Col Liu Ming Fu *China Dream: The Great Power Thinking and Strategic Positioning of China in the Post-American Era*, where he argues that China should displace the United States as world leader¹³ and has listed nine steps to achieve the same. Just after becoming General Secretary of the Communist Party of China in late 2012, President Xi announced what would become the hallmark of his first term in office. *“The Chinese Dream,”*

- *the modernization goal of China becoming a fully developed nation by about 2049, the 100th anniversary of the founding of the People’s Republic*¹⁴

The recently concluded 19th Congress has seen President Xi Jinping appear to emerge stronger, with his thought – ‘Socialism with Chinese Characteristics in a New Era’, now part of the constitution as ‘Xi’s Thought’. His pet project the ‘Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) / One Belt One Road (OBOR)’, the broad umbrella under which he has grouped all the ongoing infrastructure projects in South East Asia, South Asia, Central Asia, Europe, India Ocean Region and Africa that he inherited, has also been enshrined in the Constitution.



he said, is “the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.” President Xi’s Chinese Dream was described as achieving the “Two 100s”;

- *the material goal of China becoming a “moderately well-off society” by 2021, the 100th anniversary of the Chinese Communist Party, and*

President Xi Jinping appears to view the coming decades as a ‘strategic opportunity’ for China to establish a ‘Pax Sinica’ in Asia – the fruition of phase one of *The China Dream* and the great rejuvenation of the nation. He has though given some new timelines during the 19th Congress on the route to his China Dream (at some variance to the previous), to become

- A “moderately prosperous society” by 2020,
- A “basically modernised socialist nation” by 2035 and
- A “rich and powerful socialist nation” by 2050.¹⁵

These new timelines do indicate some financial and economic stress within China, as many economists have opined. President Xi Jinping has again stressed on the BRI as the growth engine for China, within which the China-Pakistan-Economic-Corridor (CPEC) has been nominated as its flag ship. Significantly, BRI’s implementation schedule runs almost parallel to the Chinese politico-economic vision spelt out by Mr Xi,

- Phase I: Mobilisation 2013-16;
- Phase II: Planning 2016-21;
- Phase III: Implementation 2021-2049.

To achieve this Dream, The strategy is for gaining geopolitical space in Asia with ‘Neighbourhood Diplomacy’, which appears to be centred on commercial penetration through infrastructure projects and selling a short term ‘economic dream’ to the underprivileged nations on its periphery. Commercial penetration is the precursor to the ‘strategic equity’ squeezed out from these nations due to the debt trap caused by these unviable projects thereby gaining political, diplomatic and geopolitical space needed to achieve the China Dream of becoming a ‘Great Power’ now by 2050—a Unipolar Asia centred around China. Hambantotta in Sri Lanka and Jiwani in Pakistan seem to be an example of such geo-economic squeeze for geo-strategic gains.

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economic and security architecture with ‘Chinese Characteristics’. Towards that end it appears to be utilising its doctrine of *Unrestricted Warfare*, to denude the CNP of the developing nations of the region, thereby, making it easier to coerce and integrate them with China. Military strategists of China have elaborated a “unified field theory” of war – in which the kinetic dimension is no longer dominant. The most articulate example of such theory to date remains the manifesto published in

1999 by Colonels Qiao Liang and Wang Xiangsui and translated in English under the somewhat misleading title of *Unrestricted Warfare* (URW - Chao Xian Zhan, literally ‘War Beyond Rules’ or ‘Beyond-limits Combined War’) or warfare in all domains, be it Military, Trans-military, and Non-military.

Concurrently within the region it is also applying the concepts of its ancient game of ‘Wei Qi’ or ‘Go’ - an ‘encirclement game’. This game, along with the URW aptly sums up their strategy and operational art. The game entails ‘multiple battles’ over a wide front, while concurrently ‘balancing the need to expand’ with the need to ‘build protective clusters’.¹⁶

This strategy encompasses two ideas - ‘the Strategy of Common Imitation’ and ‘Confucian Improvement’. The strategy of common imitation is regarded in Game Theory as the key to the formation of a stable institution, since it is argued that a common imitation of the best strategy given by the leader and abided by the players will lead to a stable equilibrium¹⁷. It implies that these small under-developed nations in the neighbourhood would perforce abide by the ‘Strategy of Common Imitation’, i.e. follow China’s lead and abide by its decisions.

To foster understanding of Confucius, China has embarked on creating *Confucius Institutes (CI)* all over the world, since 2004, overseen by Hanban (officially the Office of Chinese Language Council International). As of 2014 it had 480 such institutes in dozens of countries in all continents¹⁸, with the stated aim of establishing 1,000 Confucius Institutes by 2020¹⁹.

While the West has been able to voice its concerns on this issue, the smaller nations on China's periphery do not have the same capacity. Funded and staffed entirely by China, these nations welcome the money and do not interfere in the alleged activities of these teachers. Many foreign scholars have characterized the CI program as an exercise in soft power, expanding China's economic, cultural, and diplomatic reach through the promotion of Chinese language and culture, while others have suggested a possible role in intelligence collection. The soft power goals also include assuaging concerns of a 'China threat' in the context of the country's increasingly powerful economy and military.

The BRI appears to be a part of this overall strategy, whereby, the accumulated gain would radically alter the geo-economic and geo-commerce balance in the Indo-Pacific in its favour. It would aim to restrict space for competing nations to isolate this region and continue with its *creeping assertiveness* on strategic territorial space based on *specious 'historical claims'*. Yet the challenges abound, as more and more countries are having second thoughts on trading their sovereignty for short term economic gains under the umbrella of BRI, a challenge for which President Xi does not seem to have any answers at the moment other than soft pedal the issue.

Concurrently, President Xi Jinping is pushing for a Regional Security Architecture in the Indo-Pacific (Asia-Pacific) region, without any external powers. In his keynote address to the 4th Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures

in Asia (CICA) Summit, held in Shanghai on 21 May 2014, President *Xi Jinping stressed that China will work along with other parties to advocate common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security concept in Asia, establish a new regional security cooperation architecture,*²⁰

Implications and Options for India, Post the 19th Congress of the CPC

'The sky cannot have two suns'

.....*Generalissimo Chiang Kai Shek*

China under President Xi is determined to show the developing and the under-developed nations that a contrarian model to the Western narrative exists for economic and overall growth, and that is socialism with Chinese characteristics. President Xi Jinping showcased the same during his speech to the 19th Congress in Oct 2017, and in his New Year speech to the nation, wherein, he stated that socialism with Chinese characteristics could be the path for developing nations to follow to achieve modernisation.

A rising, liberal and a democratic India poses a direct challenge to this narrative – proverbially the second sun in the Asian sky.

It sees a great opportunity in expanding its sphere of influence in Asia, Africa, and amongst the global South, where it could sell this narrative, and so realise its 'Dream'. In his New Year's speech President Xi said "China will resolutely uphold the authority and status of the United Nations, actively fulfil China's international obligations and duties, remain firmly committed to China's pledges to tackle climate change, actively push for the Belt and Road Initiative, and always be a builder of world peace, contributor of global development and keeper of international order."²¹ A strong message by China, under President Xi, of it being ready to assume leadership of the International Order, while on the other hand the USA and the West appear uncertain on their response to this aggressive push.

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China would continue to attempt to isolate India and the region and beyond. It would aim to undercut India's economic growth from within, using its 'deep connections' and create socio-political and socio-economic turmoil to subvert India's steady rise. It would strive to curtail India's outreach within the region and within ASEAN to enable it to secure its 'edge and sides', as part of its strategy based on the principles of *Wei Qi*. At an opportune moment, in the near to medium term, it would attempt to cause a politico-military embarrassment for India.

(a) Geo-Political.

(i) China would work to wean away both Bhutan and Nepal from Indian influence and bring it firmly under its own ambit. Further, it would use its geo-economic clout to gain strategic space/equity from Sri Lanka, Maldives, Myanmar, Afghanistan and Bangladesh. It would aim to show India as an undependable partner in region.

(ii) Even as India looks to 'Act East', China has been utilizing its geo-economic outreach bilaterally to undermine the cohesion of ASEAN and ensure its overarching influence to the detriment of both India and USA. Beijing seeks to achieve the following to be able to achieve its Dream,

- Replace the United States as the primary power in East, South East and South Asia;
- Weaken the U.S. alliance system in Indo-Pacific and create a new regional security architecture;
- Undermine the confidence of South East, South and Central Asian nations, in U.S. and India's credibility, reliability, and staying power;
- Use China's economic power to tie smaller South East, South and Central Asian nations, closer to its geopolitical policy preferences; and

- Increase PRC military capability to strengthen deterrence against U.S. military intervention, and any US led security architecture in the Indo-Pacific region.

(iii) China's efforts are to ensure a hold over the archipelagic states of this region, to enable unhindered outreach to its navy into the Pacific and the Indian Oceans, thereby, enabling its geo-political and geo-strategic hold on South and South East Asia.

(iv) Concurrently, it will deny India any enhanced space in the 'International Fora', especially where it can influence world view on critical issues, as is visible in its denial of entry for India into the NSG.

(b) Strategic. It would continue with its strategy of '*String of Pearls*' with a view to curtailing India's space within the Indo-Pacific. It thus needs

to prop up Pakistan to counter India and provide tacit support to its proxies to bleed India. The thwarting of India and USA's efforts to name Masood Azhar, the man behind the 2008 Mumbai attacks,

as a terrorist in the UN by China, and its continued support to it despite calls for it to be named as a state that sponsors terrorism, is a prime example of this strategy.

(c) Security.

(i) China's aim is to weaken India's CNP, thereby preventing its rise and ensuring that there is no threat to its narrative within South, Central and South East Asian Region. It would aim to curtail India's internal security and limit India's security outreach by presenting it with multi-dimensional asymmetric and hybrid threats, both internal and external.

(ii) China's view of CNP differs from the Western construct that had for long seen it as a sum of the economic, diplomatic and military strength of a nation. Deng Xiaoping had formulated China's concept of CNP by mid 1980s, that had four major index subsystems;

Provide an alternate geo-economic and geo-commerce model for the Indo-Pacific Region.

- **hard power index** (such as economic wealth, natural resources, science and technology, military might),
- **soft power index** (such as political power, foreign affairs, culture, education),
- **coordinated power index** (such as line of command, leadership in policy decision-making), and
- **environmental index** (such as international environment).²²

(iii) India has forgotten what Chanakya had stated more than 2 millennia ago in his work 'Artha Shashtra'. Enamoured by his 'Raj Mandala' concept of the 'Circle of Kings', his elaboration of the seven constituents of power (saptanga theory) has been forgotten, as has his concept of 'Tushnim warfare or Silent War', now conceptualised by China as URW and the USA as 'Full Spectrum Dominance'.

(iv) The hard, soft, co-ordinated and environmental power indices all fall within the purview of the seven constituents of power, as postulated by Chanakya, in various permutations and combinations.

(v) The figure overleaf gives the elements of CNP as postulated by Chanakya, and an extrapolation of the same for a democratic country in the present times.

India would need to carefully construct its geopolitical and geo-strategic framework within this region, utilising geo-economic outreach with likeminded middle powers. It should provide an alternate narrative for economic growth for these regions that does not place the smaller nations in a debt trap – something that Sri Lanka and Myanmar are facing in their geo-economic dealings with China. Mere blocking of economic projects by China in these developing countries would not suffice, but India with likeminded middle powers and USA needs to provide the alternate economic outreach.

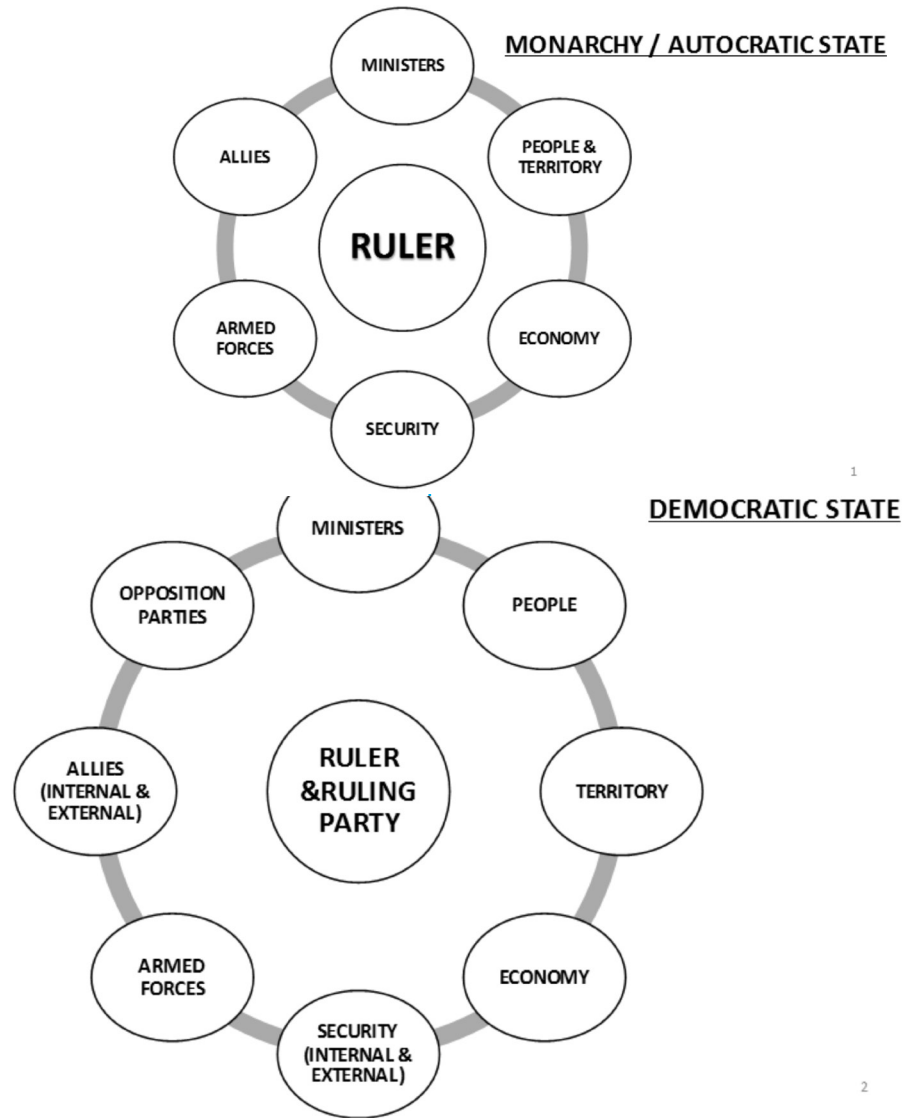
The vast geopolitical trust that India enjoys within these regions should be built upon to create an 'Indo-Pacific' regional geo-economic and geo-political forum to strengthen the geo-strategic clout of this grouping. Such a forum would provide an alternate geo-economic and geo-commerce model for the Indo-Pacific Region and facilitate economic activities, security, trade, intelligence exchanges, military capacity building, technology sharing, agenda setting for regional forums and coordinated diplomatic initiatives. It would be a truly 'win-win' situation for all countries of the region.

The overarching security architecture could be based on the emerging *Quad* or the same could be expanded to encompass some more likeminded nations of the region. This architecture could also serve as the net security provider within the Indo-Pacific region.

It would lead to multi-polarity within Asia, act as succour to the smaller nations and ensure that rule of international law, good governance, equality, transparency and economic prosperity for all is ensured within the region. Such an association would be able to ensure stability, peace and prosperity within the region. The foundation of the association or coalition would not be based just on countering any country's narrative of geo-economic squeeze, but for stability and prosperity of Indo-Pacific, thereby making it self-sustaining and long lasting. The extant Institutions also need to be strengthened, and be more responsive to the needs of the developing world, to ensure they are not subsumed by the Chinese led '*Shadow Institutions*'.

At the same time, India needs to ensure that it secures itself comprehensively from external threats and internal dissonance. Towards that end it needs to move fast on creating a modern integrated military, with a responsive, restructured 'Higher Defence Organisation', concurrently, with a restructured 'Comprehensive Internal Security Architecture'. It also needs a bipartisan approach towards socio-political, socio-economic and socio-religious security, to ensure there is no internal

CONSTITUENTS OF NATIONAL POWER
CHANAKYA NITI V/S PRESENT



dissonance that enemies could exploit to weaken India's CNP.

Conclusion

The rise of China can be viewed from different angles of perspectives, and is divided into three schools of thought. The 'Confident School' that asserts that China's rise is inevitable and its ascendancy will challenge the U.S. preponderance both regionally and globally. The 'Pessimist School' that argues China is facing both domestic challenges and external constraints which perhaps make it unlikely to compete with or replace the US, either in the region or the World. The 'Not-

Yet/Uncertain School', positing that although China has immense potential to be a great power or 'a challenger' to the US, its willingness to take the leadership role as a great power is uncertain or seemingly falls short of expectations.²³

President Xi Jinping sees the current geo-political flux as an opportunity for China to assert itself within Asia and occupy the vacuum due to USA's strategic retrenchment. Towards that end, he has clubbed the existing infrastructure projects, and added a few, under the much touted BRI, with the aim of gaining geopolitical space in Asia.

This is centred on a phased commercial penetration through infrastructure projects and selling a short term ‘economic dream’ to the underprivileged nations on its periphery. The penetration was supposed to be achieved by these infrastructure projects cobbled together – not considering economic viability but more to dump its own excess capacity and labour, backed by financial muscle. Commercial penetration would be the precursor to the ‘strategic equity’, squeezed out from these nations due to the debt trap caused by these unviable projects, thereby, gaining political, diplomatic and geopolitical space needed to achieve the ‘China Dream’ of becoming a ‘Great Power’ by 2050 – a *Unipolar Asia centred around China*.

However the past seems to have come to haunt the Chinese. Having given loans to these small nations at market rates for unviable projects, the countries are facing debt crises and are not amenable to China’s arm twisting as yet.

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The Middle Powers of Asia must utilise this opportunity to form a ‘Middle Power Coalition’, an Indo-Pacific Association, to assist these small nations and ensure peace and stability within this region.

Indo-Pacific Association, to assist these small nations and ensure peace and stability within this region, by providing an alternate infrastructure and economic narrative to that being given by China. It needs to be responsive to ensure economically viable projects are undertaken, in lieu of the unviable projects that China had been pushing within these countries to enable its geo-economic squeeze for strategic equity.

At the same time, India needs to revamp its internal and external security architectures and follow a bi-partisan approach to socio-political, socio-economic and socio-religious issues to curb internal dissonance.

The reset timelines, as given by President Xi Jinping during the 19th Congress of the CPC and the ongoing restructuring of the PLA, provides India and the other likeminded Middle

Powers of the region a window to seize the initiative. This strategic window is small post which it would find it increasingly difficult to attain a Multi-Polar Asia.

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