



CURRENT AFFAIRS



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The Taiwan Strait- A likely arena for clash of arms [GS II, International Relations]

CONTEXT:

If the rising confrontation between U.S.A. and China erupts into a clash of arms, the likely arena may well be **the Taiwan Strait**.

HISTORY/BACKGROUND:

- Issue of Taiwan is still unresolved. In the 1945-49 civil war, the CCP forces under Mao Zedong defeated the Kuomintang (KMT) forces led by Chiang Kai-shek .
- Chiang retreated to Taiwan and set up a govt. that claimed authority over the whole of China and decided to recover mainland China.

- The CCP committed to reclaim Taiwan to achieve the final reunification of China but failed, because during the Korean War of 1950-53, It became a military ally of the United States. China, though declares its commitment to pursue peaceful unification but reserves the right to use force also.

The PRC has promised a high degree of independence to Taiwan under the **“one country two systems” formula** first applied to Hong Kong after its reversion to Chinese sovereignty in 1997.

One country Two systems Formula :

To Hong Kong- It may retain its free market system with political and judicial Institutions and Processes, for a period of 50 years.

To Taiwan, it was promised that it could also retain its armed forces during the transition period, alongwith same scheme of Hong-Kong.

Economic links between China and Taiwan:

Since 1978, China has been rising economically and commercially (in power) globally. Taiwan business entities have invested heavily in mainland China and the two economies have become increasingly integrated while Chinese investments in Taiwan are very low in comparison i.e. barely U.S. \$2.4 billion, if Hong Kong is not considered.

- Taiwanese capital investment in China (b/w 1991 and 2020) → U.S. \$188.5 billion

- Bilateral trade in 2019 → U.S. \$150 billion

China hopes that the considerable economic benefits that Taiwan business and industry enjoy through a developing relationship with China would weaken opposition to its unification plan.

If Taiwan is seen drifting towards an independent status, China is capable of causing economic pain on Taiwan through repressive policies.

IN THE POLITICS OF TAIWAN:

Taiwan has two major political parties:

1. The **KMT**, who came to Taiwan along with Chiang Kai-shek in 1949, remains committed to one-China policy and **does not support Taiwanese independence**.
2. The Democratic Progressive Party (**DPP**), representative of the indigenous population of Taiwan, **favours independence**.

However, faced with Chinese aggression and lack of international support, the demand for independence has been muted.

STANCE OF MAINLAND CHINA AGAINST TAIWAN:

China feels comfortable with the KMT and is aggressive towards the DPP.

Ever since the DPP won the presidential elections in 2016 (under **Tsai Ing-wen**) , China has taken back to a series of actions like economic pressures and military threats, which re-escalated since the re-election of Tsai Ing-wen in the 2020 elections.

CHINESE ACTIONS AND THEIR RESULTS:

The increasing military threats against Taiwan, through daily violations of its air defence identification zone (ADIZ) and aggressive naval plans in the Taiwan Strait, are obstructive in nature.

With such Chinese actions, chances of peaceful unification have reduced. Sentiment in favour of Taiwanese independence have increased.

INDIA's STANCE: In pursuance of its Indo-Pacific strategy, India needs to be watchful of the China-U.S. equations in the region.

The U.S. stance:

The U.S. recognised the PRC as the legal government of China in 1979.

While the U.S. does not support a declaration of independence by Taiwan, it has gradually reversed the policy of avoiding official-level engagements with the Taiwan government.

In a recent incident, a U.S. nuclear-powered submarine ran into an “unidentified object” in the South China Sea. China has objected to these U.S. actions clearly.

In the latest telephone talk between President Joe Biden and Mr. Xi, Mr. Biden confirmed Mr. Xi that the U.S. will abide by the “Taiwan agreement”, i.e. the U.S. would not reverse its one China policy.

IS CHINA’S NEXT STEP TO INVADE TAIWAN MILITARILY ?

In March this year, the U.S. Pacific Commander, Philip Davidson, alerted that China could invade Taiwan within the next six years as part of its strategy to displace U.S. power in Asia.

While other analysts gives different opinions like-

- Cross-strait operations will be extremely complex
- Pacifying a hostile population may prove to be long drawn out and costly exercise.
- China may await a further decline of U.S. power and its will to intervene in the Taiwanese defence.

Deterrence against China :

- The recent crystallisation of the Quad (India a part of it)
- The announcement of the AUKUS alliance, with Australia promoted to a power with nuclear-powered submarines, may act as a check against Chinese moves on Taiwan.

TO CONCLUDE: For different reasons, Taiwan is emerging as a potential trigger point for a clash of arms between the U.S. and China. In pursuing its Indo-Pacific strategy, India has to keep these possible scenarios in mind.

Swarn Singh

**Kunming Declaration GS- 3
Environmental Pollution &
Degradation, Government Policies &
Interventions, International Treaties &
Agreements, Important International
Institutions**

CONTEXT

Recently, the Kunming Declaration was adopted by over 100 countries at the ongoing **15th Conference of the Parties** to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity in China. The adoption of the declaration will create momentum for a new global biodiversity pact. In a previous agreement, Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, signed in Aichi, Japan, in 2010, governments agreed on 20 targets to try to slow biodiversity loss and protect habitats by 2020.

KEY DISCUSSIONS

- It calls for **urgent and integrated action** to reflect **biodiversity considerations in all sectors of the global economy** but crucial issues – like funding conservation in poorer countries and committing to biodiversity-friendly supply chains have been left to discuss later.
- It is **not a binding international agreement**.
- It **calls upon the parties to mainstream biodiversity protection in decision-making** and recognise the importance of conservation in protecting human health.
- The theme of the declaration is **Ecological Civilization: Building a Shared Future for All Life on Earth**. By adopting this, the **nations have committed themselves to support the development, adoption and implementation** of an effective post-2020 implementation plan, a capacity building action plan for the **Cartagena Protocol on biosafety**.
- The Protocol seeks to protect biological diversity from the potential risks posed by **living modified organisms** resulting from modern biotechnology. As per the declaration the signatory nations will ensure that the **post-pandemic recovery policies, programmes and plans contribute to the conservation** and sustainable use of biodiversity, promoting sustainable and inclusive development.

- The declaration made a reference to the '30 by 30' target which is a **key proposal being debated at the COP15**, that would afford **30% of the Earth's land and oceans protected status by 2030**.
- Apart from this, the goal to halve the use of chemicals in agriculture and stop creating plastic waste is also being debated.

Kunming Biodiversity Fund

- China has also pledged to **inject USD 233 million into a new fund** to protect biodiversity in developing countries. The fund is being referred to by China as **Kunming Biodiversity Fund**.
- It is the right step in this direction. However, some countries have reservations regarding this fund. Some countries have called this fund as **"a drop in the bucket"** given that China is the world's biggest polluter.
- Further, some rich country donors say a new fund for conservation is unnecessary because the **United Nations' Global Environment Facility** already helps developing nations finance green projects.

Global Initiatives to Save Biodiversity

- **Convention on Biological Diversity**- It is a **legally binding treaty to conserve biodiversity** that has been in force since 1993. India is a party to the convention.
- **Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora**- It provides public, private and **non-governmental organisations** with the knowledge and **tools that enable human progress, economic development and nature conservation** to take place together. India is a member of the convention.

- **World Wide Fund for Nature-** It is an international non-governmental organisation for the conservation, research and restoration of the natural environment.
- **Global Biodiversity Assessment-** It is an independent, critical, peer reviewed scientific analysis of the current issues, theories and views regarding the main aspects of biodiversity.
- **Man and the Biosphere Program** –It was **launched in 1970** and has initiated **programmes and activities focusing on the diversity and the resources provided by nature, humans’ impacts on biodiversity**, as well as how biodiversity affects human activities.

BY ANSHUM VERMA

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Return of Comic con in India

Context

India has been facing the problem of coronavirus pandemic for almost 2 years . Indian artisans and artlover and the organisers are trying to come from such a pandemic. Despite there being many restrictions and protocols on the exhibitions , some art events are going to be held in the month of Dec 2021. Among these even Comic Con India is also going to organise these funny

shows although the New York comic con event has recently successfully ended by 8th Oct .

At New York Comic Con, which opened Thursday at the Javits Convention Center in Manhattan, attendees celebrated the return of face-to-face gatherings. But this year, masks at the pop culture event are not just for those in costume; they are required for everyone.

Comic Con India

- **Comic Con India (CCI)** is a annual series based on comic theme
- The conventions regarding comic themes are held every year in India.
- The first edition was held in New Delhi in 2011
- Gradually this is expanding towards other cities of India such as Mumbai, Bangalore, Pune, Hyderabad and Ahmedabad. Nowadays There are annual comic cons being organised in these cities.
- Cumulatively these five cities attract thousands of visitors and artisans and exhibitors in several exhibitions .
- It is founded by Jatin Varma and presently he is managing director of Comic Con India
- in 2011the first comic con had launched in India in Delhi
- It hosts the Indian Championship of Cosplay.
- Due to the corona pandemic , this year this fest could not be organised properly. This fest is celebrating its 10th anniversary of the Indian edition of the world's largest celebration
- The recently-concluded Comic Con was a week-long celebration to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the event in India
- The works of the artists like Abhijeet Kini, Saumin Patel, Savio Mascarenhas and Sumit Kumar were involved in this fest

The Revival of Indian stories through Comics

- This art is not new for India . For hundreds of years many shows were organised on comic based tale
- For our ancient time period , our ancestors have been telling us the stories of our past . Many times these stories are retold in various and in various forms. We played these shows through comic drama like Ram Leela or Kathakali
- Other tales have also been acted through comic dramas like Dahi Handi.
- Some figures related Modern history , maily the people who fought for the freedom of India such as Rani Lakshmi Bai, too, have become a part of our storytelling traditions. In fact , in these stories we generally include those stories which are moral and inspirational for our society

The comic world

- The history of the Comic books in India is a little newer to the West. In fact, in India , Printing Press had come late. The initial comics published in the country were the American ones.
- Indian comics had become popular after the publishing of Amar Chitra Katha . It was very interesting comic book of those days and during those days in almost every house of india this book was available
- The blend of art and story brought India's cultural history alive for the 20th century and it became a hit with both children, teachers and parents.
- Similarly the comic and classic magazine for children was Chandamama. It was also a very popular book of that time. This book was also based on the illustrations of mythological stories that ran for years.
- In this way, we say that, By god grace very soon our cultural festivals will be returning with full pace after this cora pandemic

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