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## Checkmating China: India's Strategic Moves in the Indo-Pacific

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### ABSTRACT :

Indo-Pacific has emerged as a major region of geopolitical rivalry, in which China's expansion effect increases concerns between regional powers. This research examines India's infection for strategic association with a non-composed stance in response to China's increasing dominance. India's strategy includes military modernization, defence cooperation, diplomatic efforts and economic options to combat China's vocal tricks, including belts and road initiatives and regional claims. Its goal is to open an independent and Indo-Pacific, strengthen regional stability and promote peace and development. By deepening relations with allies such as the U.S., Japan and Australia through major projects such as the Asia-Africa Growth Corridor, India aims to build an alliance supporting a rule-based order. In addition, China is diversifying its economy to reduce dependence on China. However, challenges such as border tension, economic intelligence and increasing impact of Beijing in India's neighbourhood complicate this strategy. This letter evaluates whether India's measures will effectively combat China's rise or contribute to more complex and competitive regional power dynamic.

**Keywords:** Indo-Pacific, India, China, strategic moves, maritime security, economic diplomacy, soft power, Quad, Asia-Africa Growth Corridor

### Introduction :

India has followed a more assertive stance in the Indo-Pacific as the place becomes a focal point of world geopolitical opposition. Concerns over China's increasing financial, army, and political affect—specially within the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean—have pushed India to take a proactive technique in safeguarding nearby stability and its strategic hobbies. A key pillar of India's strategy is its participation within the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) alongside America, Japan, and Australia. This alliance seeks to uphold a policies-based worldwide order and make sure a free and open Indo-Pacific, countering China's assertive actions, which includes its militarization of the South China Sea and territorial expansion. The Quad has prioritized maritime protection, infrastructure development, and technological cooperation to offset China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which India perspectives as a method for Beijing to benefit strategic dominance through monetary leverage. Additionally, India has reinforced its defence partnerships through joint military sports along with Malabar with the U.S., Japan, and Australia, whilst also deepening bilateral defence ties with nations like Vietnam, Indonesia, and the Philippines. These efforts decorate India's navy abilities and reinforce its presence alongside key maritime alternate routes. To counter China's developing have an impact on inside the Indian Ocean, India has invested in critical infrastructure initiatives, along with the Chabahar Port in Iran and its involvement in the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC), providing alternative alternate routes to reduce dependence on Chinese-controlled pathways. The "Act East" policy further bolsters India's engagement with Southeast Asian countries through monetary cooperation and navy collaboration. Diplomatic tasks with ASEAN, participation in regional boards inclusive of the East Asia Summit and Shangri-La Dialogue, and increased defence exports strengthen India's strategic outreach. Moreover, India's growing engagement with South Asian neighbours like Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Myanmar serves as a counterweight to China's increasing regional presence. By leveraging army alliances, financial investments, and diplomatic partnerships, India is positioning itself as a key nearby power able to tough China's impact while selling a strong, stable, and multipolar Indo-Pacific.

### Strategic Context and Challenges :

India's strategic engagement inside the Indo-Pacific is driven by using its geopolitical priorities, monetary aims, and protection issues. As a key maritime energy, India considers the Indo-Pacific central to its foreign policy, especially amid intensifying super-energy opposition and shifting regional safety dynamics. Spanning from Africa's Japanese coast to the western Pacific, the vicinity is critical for global trade and power deliver chains, making India's energetic involvement important in upholding balance and a regulation-primarily based order. At the core of India's Indo-Pacific strategy is its Act East Policy, which has developed into a complete vision encompassing economic, protection, and diplomatic tasks. India's collaboration with ASEAN, the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), and strategic alliances just like the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) highlights its commitment to a unfastened, open, and inclusive Indo-Pacific. The Quad—comprising India, the U.S., Japan, and Australia—performs a pivotal role in nearby protection cooperation, in particular in countering China's growing assertiveness. China's increasing has an effect on within the Indo-Pacific poses one of India's maximum pressing strategic challenges. Through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the "String of Pearls" strategy, China has accelerated its economic and navy presence across the Indian Ocean, raising concerns about strategic encirclement. The development of Chinese-subsidized ports in Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Myanmar, and different neighbouring international locations has altered nearby dynamics, prompting India to decorate its maritime surveillance

and naval abilities. Additionally, the Chinese Navy's increasing presence inside the Indian Ocean, coupled with border tensions alongside the Line of Actual Control (LAC), complicates India's safety landscape. To counterbalance China's impact, India has reinforced its naval posture through the SAGAR (Security and Growth for All within the Region) initiative, reinforcing maritime partnerships with nations which includes the Maldives, Seychelles, and Mauritius. India's emphasis on blue economic system cooperation, sustainable development, and regional capability-constructing aligns with its broader goal of preserving balance inside the Indo-Pacific. Joint naval physical activities like Malabar, performed with Quad companions, in addition fortify India's dedication to safeguarding freedom of navigation and maritime security. Beyond protection, monetary engagement is a cornerstone of India's Indo-Pacific method. Initiatives consisting of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) and efforts to enhance supply chain resilience mirror India's power to bolster nearby exchange and connectivity. However, India's decision to opt out of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) due to issues over exchange imbalances and China's financial dominance remains a venture. To mitigate these gaps, India has pursued alternative connectivity tasks just like the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) and the Chabahar port initiative, offering strategic alternate routes that skip China's sphere of have an impact on. Despite its proactive technique, India faces multiple demanding situations within the Indo-Pacific. Striking a stability among strategic autonomy and deepening ties with the U.S. And Quad companions is a key consideration, especially as India continues longstanding defence and electricity members of the family with Russia. Additionally, non-traditional safety threats along with piracy, terrorism, unlawful fishing, and climate exchange upload further complexity to India's nearby engagement. Rising sea ranges pose an existential danger to island international locations, necessitating collaborative efforts in environmental sustainability and catastrophe resilience. To navigate these demanding situations, India has to preserve improving its naval capabilities, increasing defence and economic partnerships, and making an investment in regional infrastructure tasks that fortify its strategic effect. As the Indo-Pacific remains a contested geopolitical area, India's potential to balance safety, financial, and diplomatic priorities can be vital in shaping the regional order to its benefit.

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## **India's Evolving Foreign Policy :**

### ***3.1 From Non-Alignment to Strategic Engagement***

India's overseas policy has gone through a good-sized transformation from its traditional ideas of non-alignment to a greater dynamic method of multi-alignment, reflecting the converting geopolitical panorama. Historically, India's non-alignment doctrine, championed through Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, emphasised strategic autonomy, non-violent coexistence, and monetary self-reliance at the same time as advocating for decolonization and international justice thru multilateral platforms consisting of the United Nations and the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). This technique allowed India to position itself as a pacesetter of the Global South, resisting alignment with either bloc throughout the Cold War. However, the put up-Cold War unipolar international, ruled via the US, alongside the upward thrust of China as a monetary and navy energy, necessitated a strategic recalibration. The 1998 nuclear tests marked a pivotal second, maintaining India's nearby electricity repete and reinforcing its dedication to strategic autonomy. Over time, India moved towards a pragmatic, engagement-driven overseas coverage, especially in response to evolving protection dynamics in the Indo-Pacific. Under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India's technique has evolved from non-alignment to multi-alignment, fostering closer ties with like-minded democracies at the same time as preserving its strategic independence. This shift is maximum evident inside the transition from the "Look East Policy" to the "Act East Policy," emphasizing stronger political, monetary, and safety engagements with ASEAN, Japan, Australia, and the wider Indo-Pacific vicinity. India's participation within the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad), along the United States, Japan, and Australia, highlights its proactive stance in countering China's assertiveness inside the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean. Unlike the rigid non-alignment of the Cold War technology, India's modern method embraces problem-based coalitions, allowing cooperation with fundamental powers whilst safeguarding country wide hobbies. This balanced approach permits India to navigate its relationships with the U.S., Russia, and regional gamers without compromising its strategic autonomy. As a end result, the Indo-Pacific has grown to be the point of interest of India's geopolitical and geoeconomic approach, requiring a nicely-described policy that guarantees national security, monetary connectivity, and regional balance in an an increasing number of contested international order.

### ***3.2 Pillars of India's Indo-Pacific Strategy***

India's method to the Indo-Pacific is primarily based on key strategic pillars that emphasize nearby balance, financial development, and strategic collaboration. These pillars form India's engagement within the region, aligning with its vision of a free, open, inclusive, and regulations-primarily based Indo-Pacific. An essential factor of this approach is India's unwavering support for freedom of navigation, unhindered exchange, and adherence to global maritime laws, particularly the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). India's stance aligns with the worries of numerous countries regarding China's militarization of the South China Sea and its territorial assertions. Consistently advocating for diplomatic dialogue over coercion, India positions itself as a stabilizing pressure in the region. A key measurement of India's Indo-Pacific coverage is the strengthening of nearby alliances to stability China's growing impact. Active participation in the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) indicates a shift in India's safety posture, that specialize in army coordination, intelligence-sharing, and joint sporting events which includes the Malabar naval drills. In addition to the Quad, India has bolstered ties with ASEAN, Japan, Australia, France, and Indian Ocean Island countries, improving its strategic footprint thru initiatives like the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI) and participation in the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA). These collaborations enhance maritime safety and increase defence cooperation via agreements such as logistics guide pacts, enabling higher get right of entry to to naval facilities throughout the location. Economic connectivity and infrastructure development also are imperative to India's Indo-Pacific strategy. As an alternative to China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), India, in partnership with Japan, has promoted the Asia-Africa Growth Corridor (AAGC) to expand transparent and sustainable infrastructure throughout the Indo-Pacific and Africa. India has additionally spearheaded key connectivity initiatives, which include the Chabahar port in Iran, the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway, and the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC). These tasks replicate India's commitment to fostering inclusive economic growth even as mitigating the risks related to China's debt-driven funding approach.

In the domain of maritime safety and defence, India has extensively better its naval talents to shield its hobbies inside the Indo-Pacific. The Indian Navy's expanded nearby deployment, awareness on Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA), and security collaborations with nations like the United States, Australia, and France spotlight its proactive technique to local safety. Participation in multinational physical games along with RIMPAC, La Pérouse, and Malabar underscores India's dedication to naval cooperation and deterrence strategies. Additionally, India has reinforced protection ties with island countries, consisting of the Maldives, Seychelles, and Mauritius, by means of imparting patrol vessels, surveillance aircraft, and maritime training to strengthen their defence capacities. A defining principle of India's Indo-Pacific approach is its adherence to a guidelines-based totally international order. India advocates for dispute decision via diplomacy, talk, and international legal frameworks as opposed to through unilateral movements or navy aggression. This is evident in its active participation in forums together with the United Nations, the East Asia Summit (EAS), and ASEAN-led discussions, wherein it keeps to push for a solid and balanced regional protection framework. India's Indo-Pacific approach, therefore, revolves round a cautious equilibrium between strategic partnerships, financial linkages, and defence preparedness. While upholding its strategic autonomy, India recognizes the need of deeper engagement with nearby and worldwide actors to make sure a strong, wealthy, and multipolar Indo-Pacific. The assignment beforehand lies in maintaining this equilibrium at the same time as successfully responding to evolving geopolitical tensions, economic shifts, and safety challenges inside the vicinity.

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## **Diplomatic and Military Responses :**

### ***4.1 Multilateral Diplomacy***

India's strategic engagement in the Indo-Pacific is strongly meditated in its active participation in multilateral boards, which function crucial platforms for diplomatic speak, economic collaboration, and regional protection coordination. India's involvement in agencies along with the East Asia Summit (EAS), the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), and ASEAN-led mechanisms highlights its determination to upholding a regulation-primarily based regional order. These boards permit India to bolster its relationships with like-minded international locations at the same time as together addressing key demanding situations, together with maritime security, infrastructure development, weather exchange, and counterterrorism. Through the East Asia Summit, India takes element in excessive-stage discussions on political and security troubles within the Indo-Pacific, running alongside ASEAN members, the US, Japan, Australia, and other companions. The Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), meanwhile, gives a local framework to bolster maritime safety, trade, and financial cooperation, making sure an open and inclusive Indo-Pacific. India's engagement with ASEAN-centric platforms, inclusive of the ASEAN-India Summit and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), reinforces its "Act East Policy" and helps counterbalance China's growing economic and navy have an effect on within the region. A key element of India's multilateral approach is its active position inside the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad), comprising India, America, Japan, and Australia. The Quad has advanced into a strategic mechanism targeted on strengthening regional protection, fostering infrastructure improvement, and enhancing financial resilience. Although now not a proper military alliance, it helps deeper policy coordination, intelligence sharing, and joint navy sporting activities to enhance interoperability among member states. The Malabar naval exercises, for instance, had been instrumental in enhancing maritime cooperation and projecting collective deterrence against unilateral actions inside the Indo-Pacific. By correctly leveraging its participation in those multilateral boards, India has navigated complex geopolitical dynamics, strengthened its strategic alliances, and contributed to retaining nearby balance.

### ***4.2 Bilateral Engagements with China***

India's dating with China is marked by means of a dynamic interplay of strategic competition, financial interdependence, and diplomatic engagement. While India actively seeks to counterbalance China's growing affect in the Indo-Pacific, it additionally recognizes the significance of preserving open communication channels to manage tensions and prevent conflicts from escalating. Their bilateral interactions generally consciousness on two key factors: border dispute decision and economic cooperation. One of the most contentious factors in Indo-China members of the family is the ongoing territorial dispute along the Line of Actual Control (LAC), especially in regions including Ladakh, Arunachal Pradesh, and Sikkim. Over the years, each nation has engaged in numerous diplomatic negotiations to deal with these border disagreements. Established in 2003, the Special Representatives Dialogue on Border Issues has furnished a platform for high-degree discussions aimed at resolving territorial conflicts. Furthermore, agreements just like the 2013 Border Defence Cooperation Agreement (BDCA) had been designed to prevent navy escalations and promote self-assurance-building measures along disputed regions. However, notwithstanding these diplomatic efforts, tensions have often risen, as visible at some stage in the Doklam standoff in 2017 and the Galwan Valley conflict in 2020, highlighting the volatility of their military engagements. Beyond territorial disputes, financial interactions play a extensive function in shaping bilateral ties. China remains one of India's largest buying and selling companions, with annual change exceeding \$a hundred billion. However, India has repeatedly raised issues over the trade imbalance, which closely Favors China. In response, New Delhi has taken steps to lessen its monetary reliance on Beijing through selling domestic production through the "Make in India" initiative and increasing change relationships with other countries. Additionally, India has imposed regulations on Chinese investments in key sectors along with infrastructure and technology, mentioning country wide safety dangers, specifically in mild of ongoing border tensions.

Despite strategic competition, diplomatic engagement remains a critical device in managing Indo-China members of the family. Both international locations keep to conduct high-stage army dialogues and diplomatic negotiations to ease tensions, rebuild consider, and explore areas of cooperation in multilateral forums like BRICS, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), and the Russia-India-China (RIC) trilateral communicate. However, given China's growing assertiveness in South Asia, its deepening strategic ties with Pakistan, and its developing have an impact on within the Indian Ocean Region (IOR), India stays careful. It maintains to undertake a twin strategy of diplomatic engagement and strategic deterrence to safeguard its countrywide pursuits in dealings with Beijing.

### 4.3 Defence Modernization and Maritime Security

India's defence modernization has accelerated in reaction to China's increasing army talents, mainly its growing naval presence in the Indian Ocean. As Beijing continues to broaden its blue-water army, establish navy bases in the location, and toughen it have an effect on thru tasks such as the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), New Delhi has intensified efforts to improve its military infrastructure, expand its naval fleet, and enhance defence partnerships. A key issue of India's defence strategy is the enhancement of its naval forces, geared toward securing essential maritime trade routes, safeguarding Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs), and countering rising safety threats inside the Indo-Pacific. The Indian Navy has notably extended its fleet with new warships, aircraft carriers, and submarines, along with the commissioning of indigenous systems inclusive of INS Vikrant—India's first locally built aircraft service—and the Arihant-elegance nuclear submarines. Additionally, the improvement of superior stealth destroyers, frigates, and maritime reconnaissance aircraft strengthens India's capability to task strength and keep maritime superiority. India's maritime security framework is further bolstered thru joint navy sports and defence collaborations with key strategic partners. The Malabar naval sporting events (with the U.S., Japan, and Australia), the Varuna exercise (with France), and the SIMBEX workout (with Singapore) replicate India's cognizance on enhancing naval interoperability and deterrence within the Indo-Pacific. Furthermore, New Delhi has signed logistics guide agreements with nations including the U.S., Japan, Australia, and France, permitting get right of entry to to strategic naval bases and enhancing operational attain inside the location. In response to China's growing presence within the Indian Ocean—marked by using army installations in Djibouti, Hambantota (Sri Lanka), and Gwadar (Pakistan)—India has increased its own strategic footprint. Initiatives inclusive of Mission SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region), protection agreements with Mauritius, Seychelles, and the Maldives, and multiplied naval deployments inside the Andaman and Nicobar Islands underscore India's proactive maritime method. The establishment of the Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR) in Gurugram further bolsters maritime area focus and intelligence sharing with associate nations. Additionally, India has prioritized defence indigenization through the “Atmanirbhar Bharat” (Self-Reliant India) initiative, fostering domestic manufacturing of superior defence structures, inclusive of fighter jets, missile technologies, and naval warships. Advancements in hypersonic missile generation, space-based totally surveillance, and cyber battle capabilities further give a boost to India's deterrence posture against nearby threats. Overall, India's defence modernization and maritime security tasks are pushed by the need to counter China's growing strategic assertiveness, protect national protection hobbies, and enhance its role as a regional safety issuer in the Indo-Pacific. By integrating technological advancements, forging strategic partnerships, and keeping strong military preparedness, India ambitions to solidify its function as a key participant in the evolving Indo-Pacific protection landscape.

## Economic Initiatives and Alternatives to China :

### 5.1 Asia-Africa Growth Corridor (AAGC)

The Asia-Africa Growth Corridor (AAGC) is a joint initiative between India and Japan, aimed at boosting economic connectivity and development between Asia and Africa. It serves as a strategic opportunity to China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) through selling sustainable and transparent development practices. In comparison to the BRI, which has faced criticism for developing debt dependency and strategic dangers, the AAGC focuses on inclusive increase, neighbourhood capability-building, and infrastructure development without imposing financial burdens at the concerned international locations. Officially released in 2017, the AAGC emerged from a joint vision of India and Japan, with lively participation from African nations and multilateral groups. It is constructed round four core pillars:

1. **Quality Infrastructure Development** – The initiative prioritizes constructing efficient transportation networks, port connectivity, industrial corridors, and energy grids that decorate trade and investment. Unlike China's debt-laden infrastructure initiatives, the AAGC specializes in sustainable, value-effective improvement with local community involvement to make sure long-term advantages.
2. **Institutional and Human Resource Development** – Capacity building and talent improvement play a valuable position within the initiative, with India and Japan running collectively to educate professionals, decorate education, and provide technological aid to foster self-maintaining financial growth in African international locations.
3. **People-to-People Partnerships** – The AAGC encourages cultural exchanges, instructional collaborations, and expertise-sharing between Asia and Africa to reinforce socio-monetary connections. It targets to construct networks connecting companies, policymakers, and civil society corporations to pressure financial and social development.
4. **Development Cooperation for Sustainable Growth** – The corridor emphasizes environmentally responsible initiatives, assisting renewable power, green infrastructure, and climate-resilient agriculture to ensure that growth is sustainable.

By combining India's information in digital infrastructure, healthcare, and training with Japan's superior technological abilities and investment energy, the AAGC seeks to reshape Africa's financial destiny even as additionally securing India's strategic interests across the Indo-Pacific and past. This initiative supports India's broader “Act East” and “Act Africa” strategies, underscoring its dedication to a loose, open, and inclusive Indo-Pacific.

### 5.2 Diversification of Trade and Investment

India's monetary diplomacy has evolved to respond to the changing panorama of global trade, investment, and geopolitical competition. Aware of the risks tied to over-dependence on any single monetary accomplice, India has actively sought to develop its alternate and funding networks by forming new financial alliances, negotiating bilateral change agreements, and improving regional economic engagement. A pivotal detail of India's diversification strategy is its cautious approach to local alternate agreements. While several Indo-Pacific countries have joined the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)—the largest loose change settlement globally—India chose to stay outside due to concerns over marketplace get admission to, defensive home industries, and capacity trade imbalances, especially with China. Nonetheless, India keeps to engage with RCEP member states via bilateral free exchange agreements (FTAs), ensuring that its financial interests align with global trends.

India has signed and negotiated FTAs with several key Indo-Pacific economies, inclusive of Japan, South Korea, Australia, the United Arab Emirates, and the European Union. These agreements recognition on lowering change obstacles, growing marketplace get entry to, and fostering cooperation in rising fields including digital alternate, fintech, and artificial intelligence. Beyond conventional change, India has capitalized on its strengths in high-boom sectors like data generation (IT), prescription drugs, biotechnology, and renewable power, positioning itself as a worldwide economic hub. The IT and digital offerings zone had been a primary motive force of India's financial increase, with Indian organizations leading in software program improvement, cybersecurity, and cloud computing across the Indo-Pacific. India's pharmaceutical industry, frequently called the "pharmacy of the world," has been essential in offering less costly medicines and vaccines to developing countries, strengthening India's soft electricity.

India has additionally made strategic investments in renewable strength, electric powered mobility, and inexperienced technology, aligning its alternate and investment policies with the worldwide push in the direction of sustainability. With tasks just like the International Solar Alliance (ISA) and bold carbon reduction targets, India is positioning itself as a preferred associate for international locations transitioning to clean electricity solutions. Furthermore, India has increased its overseas direct investment (FDI) rules to draw international capital through imparting incentives for investments in sectors like defence manufacturing, virtual infrastructure, and clever towns. Through projects along with "Make in India" and "Aatmanirbhar Bharat" (Self-Reliant India), India aims to boost home manufacturing while maintaining robust alternate ties with key international partners. By diversifying its alternate agreements, investing in emerging sectors, and strengthening bilateral partnerships, India isn't handiest securing its monetary destiny but also improving its strategic have an effect on within the Indo-Pacific and beyond. This multi-dimensional financial approach guarantees India remains resilient to external shocks, reduces dependency on any unmarried marketplace, and strengthens its role as a key participant within the evolving global economic machine.

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## **Soft Power and Global Engagement :**

### ***6.1 Cultural Diplomacy and Diaspora***

India's cultural international relations play a essential function in enhancing its gentle power throughout the Indo-Pacific and past. With its diverse heritage in artwork, tune, dance, literature, delicacies, philosophy, and spirituality, India has strategically used cultural diplomacy to build stronger relationships, foster goodwill, and venture itself as a pluralistic and inclusive democracy. A key issue of India's cultural international relations is the promoting of Indian traditions, languages, and practices through institutions like the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR). The ICCR supports instructional exchanges, scholarships, and cultural fairs, showcasing Indian classical and folk traditions throughout Indo-Pacific international locations. Events just like the International Day of Yoga (June 21), now celebrated worldwide, spotlight India's ability to shape international cultural narratives and foster humans-to-human beings' engagement. The Indian diaspora has a massive role in India's diplomatic outreach, particularly in the Indo-Pacific, wherein thousands and thousands of human beings of Indian descent stay. Countries which include Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Fiji, Australia, and America host massive and politically influential Indian groups that act as cultural and economic bridges between India and their respective international locations. Indian-starting place leaders and marketers in those areas make contributions to shaping guidelines that align with India's strategic and economic goals.

Acknowledging the importance of the diaspora, the Indian authorities has engaged with foreign places Indians thru projects like the Pravasi Bhartiya Divas (PBD), which celebrates the contributions of non-resident Indians (NRIs) and persons of Indian starting place (PIOs). Moreover, the Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI) scheme has reinforced ties, permitting the diaspora to hold near financial and cultural connections with India. Beyond formal diplomatic efforts, Bollywood and Indian media have played a essential position in selling Indian lifestyle globally. Indian cinema, song, and tv enjoy huge popularity in Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and Africa, growing a cultural bond that enhances India's international status. Additionally, India's non secular heritage, which includes Buddhism and Hinduism, has deepened ties with countries such as Thailand, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and Japan, where Indian-origin non secular affects are deeply ingrained. Through cultural exchanges, engagement with the diaspora, and the global attain of its traditions, India has successfully built long-lasting alliances and cultivated goodwill in the Indo-Pacific and beyond. This tender power strategy complements India's broader diplomatic efforts, reinforcing its role as a accountable and inclusive worldwide chief.

### ***6.2 Role in International Organizations***

India's lively involvement in global agencies displays its commitment to a policy-primarily based global order and multilateral cooperation. As a growing global strength, India targets to boom its representation and impact in key international establishments, particularly in shaping choices affecting the Indo-Pacific and growing nations. A longstanding goal of India's international relations has been to reform the United Nations (UN), specifically the UN Security Council (UNSC). India contends that the United States's present day shape not mirrors cutting-edge geopolitical realities, last rooted inside the post-World War II power dynamics. Given its vast populace, growing financial system, and enormous contributions to UN peacekeeping missions, India has continually advocated for a permanent seat on the UNSC as part of the G4 grouping (India, Germany, Japan, and Brazil).

Outside the UN, India plays an energetic position in the World Trade Organization (WTO), representing the interests of growing nations. India has frequently taken a firm stance on troubles consisting of change justice, agricultural subsidies, and highbrow belongings rights, making sure that the rules of wealthier international locations do now not drawback developing economies. In nearby and multilateral forums such as BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa), G20, the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), and ASEAN-targeted systems, India has installed itself as a outstanding endorse for the Global South, pushing for inclusive economic boom, climate justice, and honest improvement rules. Its management inside the International Solar Alliance (ISA) underscores India's dedication to sustainable energy and climate movement, aligning with international priorities while strengthening its strategic partnerships. Moreover, India's participation within the Quad (India, the US, Japan, and Australia) highlights its function in improving local security and monetary collaboration. Though now not a proper alliance, the Quad has evolved into a platform for coordinated motion on local challenges, along with maritime protection, vital technologies, and supply chain resilience. Through its engagement in global establishments and advocacy for

governance reforms, India seeks to shape a more equitable global machine. Its efforts to reinforce multilateralism, collaborate with like-minded international locations, and champion the interests of the developing global mirror its strategic vision for a solid and rich Indo-Pacific.

### Analysis: Can India Checkmate China?

India's efforts to counterbalance China inside the Indo-Pacific constitute a nuanced and evolving strategic method. In assessment to its previous reactive stance, India these days should adopt a extra proactive and multifaceted response to the vicinity's transferring geopolitical dynamics. To attain this, India has hired a twin method, balancing difficult energy thru defence modernization with the usage of gentle power, diplomatic outreach, and monetary collaborations to counter China's growing have an impact on within the location. On the army the front, India has considerably upgraded its navy abilities, specifically inside its naval forces. The Indian Navy's enlargement into blue-water capabilities, its investments in advanced warships, submarines, and surveillance structures, and participation in joint military sporting events like Malabar (with the U.S., Japan, and Australia) are clear indicators of deterrence. Strengthening defence ties with Quad companions—in particular through stronger cooperation with the USA, Japan, and Australia—gives India with a strategic protection framework to protect in opposition to China's assertive behaviour within the Indo-Pacific. Alongside these efforts, India has additionally bolstered its defence relationships beyond the Quad, including with international locations like France, Vietnam, and Indonesia, that specialize in regions like maritime security, freedom of navigation, and countering coercive techniques in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). These efforts' purpose to counter China's growing naval presence, in particular in the South China Sea, and its growing effect in strategic ports like Hambantota in Sri Lanka and Gwadar in Pakistan. India's participation in local organizations, which include ASEAN-led mechanisms and the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), highlights its commitment to upholding a policy-primarily based regional order. However, India's technique to countering China isn't primarily based entirely on military electricity. Acknowledging that monetary leverage is also vital, India has sought to offer an opportunity improvement model to China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). The Asia-Africa Growth Corridor (AAGC), released in partnership with Japan, promotes transparent, sustainable, and inclusive infrastructure improvement as a counterpoint to the BRI's debt-lure worries. Furthermore, India is diversifying its monetary and exchange relations via strengthening partnerships with the U.S., the European Union, and other Indo-Pacific nations.

Despite those projects, India faces widespread challenges in its pursuit of countering China. One of the maximum urgent issues is the unresolved border disputes, especially in regions like Ladakh, Arunachal Pradesh, and the wider Himalayan region. The 2020 Galwan Valley clashes highlighted the volatility of India-China members of the family and the complexities of accomplishing a long-lasting decision. While mechanisms inclusive of the Special Representatives Dialogue and the Border Defence Cooperation Agreement (BDCA) exist to avoid escalation, China's persevered army buildup along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) stays a full-size problem. Additionally, India's monetary interdependence with China complicates its approach. Despite efforts to lessen reliance on Chinese imports, China stays one in all India's largest trading companions, mainly in sectors like electronics, prescribed drugs, and commercial additives. While India is pushing for extra domestic production through tasks like 'Make in India' and the Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme, distancing itself from China's supply chains stays a complex task. Moreover, China's increasing strategic have an impact on in South Asia and the Indian Ocean Region similarly tests India's capacity to guard its interests. With Chinese investments in infrastructure, ports, and strength tasks in nations like Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Bangladesh, China has extended its diplomatic and financial sway in India's immediate neighbourhood. As a result, India ought to deepen its regional engagement with the aid of improving financial cooperation, infrastructure improvement, and safety collaboration with its neighbours. Ultimately, India's capacity to counter China is based on a combination of sustained navy modernization, strengthened strategic partnerships, financial resilience, and diplomatic flexibility. Although India won't confront China on each front, its complete approach, which integrates deterrence and cooperation, seeks to establish an surroundings where China's unchecked dominance is challenged, and a multipolar balance of energy is maintained inside the Indo-Pacific.

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