

NEWS FROM CHINA

CHINA-INDIA REVIEW

Upholding the Shanghai Spirit SCO on the Move



SCO 2025 host city Tianjin.



Upholding the Shanghai Spirit SCO on the Move

Amid multiple crises and conflicts in the world, China will host the SCO summit on August 31-September 1, which is set to inject vitality and stability in a shifting international landscape. With the guiding credo, "Upholding the Shanghai Spirit: SCO on the Move," the summit in Tianjin is set to galvanise regional solidarity and cooperation to address a host of cross-cutting problems and challenges.

Summing up the essence of the 10-nation grouping, Chinese President Xi Jinping has underlined that China has always prioritized the SCO in its neighbourhood diplomacy and is committed to making the organization more substantive and stronger, safeguarding regional security and stability. He also stressed on the role of the SCO in promoting the development and prosperity of member states and building "a closer community with a shared future."

The summit will be the culmination of year-long activities spanning diverse areas, including economy, culture, media and think tank exchanges and sports. Since assuming the rotating presidency, China has planned over 110 important events covering various fields, including dozens of ministerial-level meeting mechanisms. These activities have made SCO's security cooperation more productive, injected greater impetus into development, improved institutional building, and greatly enhanced physical connectivity, institutional connectivity and people-to-people connectivity among member states.

The Shanghai Spirit, the very root and soul of the SCO, was exhibited in all these activities. As the international situation becomes more turbulent, the Shanghai Spirit will play a critical role in strengthening solidarity and deepening mutual trust.

With the world facing the scourge of terrorism, the SCO should take the lead in enhancing security cooperation. The Tianjin summit is expected to unveil important steps to enhance the SCO's ability to respond to security threats and challenges, including combating the "three forces" of terrorism, separatism and extremism, transnational organized crime, drug trafficking, and safeguarding information security.

Looking ahead, the SCO will become a catalyst in enhancing development cooperation that will impact the lives of people in 10 member states. The SCO is set to play a bigger role in enhancing the resilience of industrial and supply chains, and fostering new growth drivers in diverse fields, including economy, trade, investment, energy, connectivity, scientific and technological innovation, green industries and the digital economy.

As this organisation takes next steps in its evolution, it should take people-centric steps and respond to people's aspirations. It's only by bringing the SCO closer to over 3 billion people of the member countries that the organisation will succeed in creating a web of win-win regional cooperation. The SCO's enduring vitality lies in understanding and affinity among the people of its member states, as Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said.

The world will be watching the SCO summit in Tianjin as the leaders gather to reaffirm the Shanghai Spirit, marked by mutual trust and mutual benefit, and shape a regional and global order that is conducive to interests and aspirations of the Global South.

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Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO): A Brief Overview

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) was established on June 15, 2001, with its founding members being China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. In 2017, India and Pakistan joined the SCO. In 2023, Iran became a member, followed by Belarus in 2024, bringing the total number of SCO member states to 10. The SCO has two observer states – Afghanistan and Mongolia – and 14 dialogue partners, including Azerbaijan, Armenia, Cambodia, Nepal, Türkiye, Sri Lanka, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Qatar, Bahrain, the Maldives,

Myanmar, the United Arab Emirates, and Kuwait.

Meeting Mechanisms

The supreme decision-making body of the SCO is the Council of Heads of States (CHS). It meets once a year and is hosted by the rotating presidency country. The Council of Heads of Government (Prime Ministers) (CHG) is an important meeting mechanism within the SCO. It meets once a year.

Additionally, the SCO framework includes various meeting mechanisms covering areas



such as foreign affairs, national defense, security, economy and trade, culture, health, education, transport, emergency prevention and relief, science and technology, agriculture, the judiciary, tourism, and national coordination.

Standing bodies

The SCO has two standing bodies: the Secretariat in Beijing, and the Executive Committee of the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. The SCO Secretary General and the Director of the RATS Executive Committee are appointed by the Council of Heads of State for a three-year term. On January 1, 2022, Zhang Ming (China) and R. E. Mirzaev (Uzbekistan) took office as the SCO Secretary General and Director of the RATS Executive Committee respectively.



Official and working languages

Chinese and Russian.



Tianjin: Crafting a New Chapter for SCO by Haihe River

As the 2025 SCO summit is approaching, Tianjin stands ready to facilitate new SCO chapters in building a community with a shared future.

During recent conversations with my friends from Tianjin, the word “SCO” always instantly comes up.

Yes, China’s northern city of Tianjin has been designated as the host for the 2025 Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit this autumn. This historical coastal city, with its inherent spirit of openness and

inclusiveness, naturally embodies the essence of the “Shanghai Spirit” through its character.

A City Of Openness

Tianjin’s geographical features have shaped its DNA of openness since its inception.

Known as “the convergence of nine rivers guarding the capital,” this unique port city sits



This photo shows sightseeing boats sailing on the Haihe River in Tianjin, north China.



at the confluence of the Haihe River and Bohai Sea, while serving as the northern terminus of the Grand Canal. Its waterways extend inland to North China provinces and beyond to the Yangtze River Delta, while its maritime routes connect coastal areas and reach across the Pacific and Indian Oceans. The locals proudly claim to have “seen and experienced everything,” a confidence stemming from 600 years of urban history. From its establishment as a military garrison in 1404 to its commercial zenith during the Qing Dynasty, Tianjin gradually evolved into a vibrant commercial hub.

The city’s openness further deepened after 1860, when nine foreign concessions emerged, which transformed it into North China’s crucial international trade gateway. During this era of cultural confluence, Tianjin witnessed numerous “firsts” in China’s modernization. As the saying goes, “A century’s history can be read through Tianjin” – its geographical advantages propelled it to become a pioneer in embracing the world.

Crucible of Cultures

Tianjin’s architectural landscape serves as a living documentation of its inclusive spirit. Strolling through the Five Great Avenues feels like wandering through a world architecture expo, where British, Italian, French and Japanese-styled villas stand as silent witnesses to modern history.

Tianjin witnessed numerous “firsts” in China’s modernization. As the saying goes, “A century’s history can be read through Tianjin” – its geographical advantages propelled it to become a pioneer in embracing the world.

Once housing consulates, banks and celebrity residences, these buildings now host museums, art galleries and cafes. Their varied facades -- solemn, elegant and romantic -- narrate stories of cultural convergence following the city’s commercial opening.



Guests attend a signing ceremony during the China-SCO Conference on Industrial Cooperation for Sustainable Development in north China’s Tianjin, April 10, 2025.

Across the Haihe River, the Ancient Cultural Street presents a contrasting Chinese tableau. The glazed tiles of Yuhuangge Pavilion shimmer under sunlight, while traditional shops display centuries-old crafts like Yangliuqing New Year paintings and Niren Zhang clay figurines.

This cultural diversity extends to Tianjin's urban fabric, where Buddhist temples coexist with Christian churches and Islamic mosques -- a harmonious coexistence through history.

"Never leave Tianjin without trying its halal cuisine," a friend insisted before my visit. The city's time-honored halal restaurants indeed offer an unexpected culinary synthesis, blending Western regional flavors with local and international elements. From traditional lamb hand-pulled noodles and braised beef knuckle to Western-style steaks and pasta, these establishments exemplify Tianjin's gastronomic inclusiveness.

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Connecting The World

Modern Tianjin carries on its legacy of global engagement with renewed vitality. During a recent academic exchange at Tianjin University, I met Natalia, a Kazakh student with fluent Chinese. "My father's trading business flourished through China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)," she shared. "Tianjin Port became our gateway to global markets, which inspired my decision to study here."

Her story reflects Tianjin's growing role as a crucial BRI node. In 2022, Tianjin Port launched a rail-sea intermodal route, connecting

"Never leave Tianjin without trying its halal cuisine," a friend insisted before my visit. The city's time-honored halal restaurants indeed offer an unexpected culinary synthesis, blending Western regional flavors with local and international elements. From traditional lamb hand-pulled noodles and braised beef knuckle to Western-style steaks and pasta, these establishments exemplify Tianjin's gastronomic inclusiveness.

Kazakhstan to Southeast Asian countries and providing inland Central Asian countries with efficient access to global shipping lanes. This corridor slashes logistics costs and transit times, exemplifying Tianjin's modern connectivity.

Having lived in the city for two years, Natalia finds Tianjin "warmly welcoming" with its cultural vibrancy. "From the Haihe River's nightscapes to traditional snacks, and especially the multicultural campus life with classmates from SCO countries, Tianjin makes me feel at home," she smiled.

SCO Moment

This city of East-West synthesis now prepares to host global leaders with characteristic grace. The convergence seems historically predestined: Tianjin's DNA of openness and inclusivity naturally aligns with the SCO's spirit of mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality, consultation, respect for diversity of civilizations and pursuit of common development.

From the bustling Tianjin Port to heritage buildings along the Haihe River and vibrant street life, every element tells a story of cultural confluence.

As the 2025 SCO summit is approaching, Tianjin stands ready to facilitate new SCO chapters in building a community with a shared future.



Shanghai Spirit Gains Broad Recognition, Regional Cooperation Backed by Strong Public Support

A new report highlights overwhelming public support across Shanghai Cooperation Organization member states for deeper regional collaboration, with over 80 percent of respondents affirming the group's positive role in global governance. The survey also underscores the enduring vitality of the "Shanghai Spirit" and reveals broad recognition of China's development model.

On May 23, 2025, at the opening ceremony of the 2025 Media Cooperation Forum of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Countries held in Urumqi, capital city of northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, the International News Department of People's Daily and the Global Times Institute jointly released a report titled "Common Home: Public Opinion on the Development Visions in SCO Member States."

The report highlights broad public recognition of the Shanghai Spirit among SCO member states and reveals strong expectations

for expanding cooperation in a range of sectors.

According to the findings, over 80 percent of respondents believe the SCO plays a positive role in global governance, while around 70 percent believe their countries have gained more opportunities to participate in global governance through the SCO framework. Over 60 percent agree that the SCO has contributed to their countries' sustainable development and modernization.

The survey also shows that over 90 percent of respondents believe that China's development experience provides insights for



their countries, and an equal percentage affirm that cooperation with China benefits their national development.

The results underscore the enduring vitality of the Shanghai Spirit and reflect the deep aspirations of people across SCO countries for stronger regional cooperation.

This year is SCO's "China Year." As a founding member, China has engaged in extensive and pragmatic cooperation with fellow SCO countries. With a consistently open approach, China has been sharing its development philosophy and governance experience, offering growth opportunities and practical achievements to foster shared development across the region.

The survey, conducted across all 10 full SCO member states from March 31 to May 8, gathered more than 5,700 valid questionnaires in 11 languages, including Chinese, English, Russian, Persian, Urdu, and Kazakh. The report provides a comprehensive reflection of public opinion across diverse cultural backgrounds, offering a robust gauge of sentiment for building a closer SCO community with a shared future.

In today's increasingly turbulent international environment, the strong public expectation for multilateral cooperation among SCO member states stands out as particularly valuable.

Elements of the Report

I. Shared Values: Widespread Recognition of SCO's Contribution to Global Governance

Guided by the Shanghai Spirit, namely mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality, consultation, respect for diversity of civilizations and pursuit of common development, the SCO has been contributing its strength to establishing a fair and equitable global governance system. Under the current international situation, the SCO's influence and appeal have continued to grow as it plays a vital role in maintaining regional security, promoting common development, and enhancing global governance.

The report shows that more than 80 percent of respondents affirmed the SCO's positive impact on global governance. Its role in maintaining global security was cited most frequently (52 percent), followed by promoting global development (49 percent) and advancing economic globalization (47 percent).

Over the past 24 years, the SCO has been deepening cooperation in politics, security, economy, and cultural and people-to-people exchanges. These efforts have created new development opportunities and tangible benefits for people in SCO member states. The organization has become a vital platform for member states to expand their international influence and achieve development and progress.

Nearly 70 percent of respondents believe their countries have gained more opportunities to participate in global governance through the SCO framework. Over 60 percent agree the SCO has contributed to their countries' sustainable development and modernization, while more than 70 percent expect the organization to make positive contributions to regional and even global development and cooperation.

II. China's Contributions: Valuable Insights for Development of Member States

As a founding member of the SCO, China has been providing momentum for the organization's development through institutional innovation and the sharing of its governance experience. Since its inception to the SCO, China has engaged in extensive and pragmatic cooperation with fellow countries across areas including economy and trade, infrastructure construction, modern agriculture, and energy. With a consistently open approach, China has worked to share its development philosophy and governance experience to promote common development across the region.

According to the survey, 95 percent of respondents believe that China's development experience provides insights for their countries. An equal percentage agree that cooperation



with China can contribute to their national development and modernization. Among specific areas of cooperation identified, trade and economic cooperation ranked highest, followed by agricultural technology, high-tech sectors, infrastructure development, and rural poverty alleviation and reduction.

China has also worked to align the high-quality Belt and Road cooperation with regional cooperation initiatives and the development strategies of fellow member states. The findings reveal that more than 70 percent of respondents support deeper engagement with the Belt and Road cooperation. Public support is particularly strong in Pakistan and Tajikistan, where approval rates exceed 80 percent. While India has not formally joined the cooperation platform, more than 70 percent of Indian respondents expressed support for expanding cooperation with China in areas such as industrial and supply chains, as well as connectivity.

Cultural cooperation is a key area of focus for SCO member states. In recent years, China has hosted a range of activities such as the Traditional Medicine Forum, the SCO non-governmental friendship forum, the Youth Campus, and the Youth Development Forum. These efforts have fostered dialogue and mutual learning among civilizations, strengthening people-to-people connectivity.

According to the report, 87 percent of respondents expressed positive views on youth exchange activities hosted by China. Additionally, 90 percent said they would be willing to visit China in the future, with over 70 percent citing tourism as their primary motivation.

These findings highlight the strong enthusiasm among people in SCO countries for enhancing mutual understanding and fostering closer ties.

III. Future Visions: Expanding Cooperation and Global Reach

The SCO has continued to expand its influence,

cohesion and appeal. It has grown from a regional organization composed of six member states into a large trans-regional “family” of 26 countries.

Within this framework, member states have steadily enhanced practical cooperation in areas such as political and security affairs, connectivity, trade and investment, green development, and cultural and people-to-people exchanges. At the same time, new areas of cooperation, such as the digital economy and artificial intelligence, are also gaining momentum.

Public sentiment regarding the SCO’s future trajectory remains optimistic. More than 90 percent of respondents expressed hope that member states will further strengthen cooperation on economy, science and technology, security, and cultural and people-to-people exchanges under the SCO framework.

To accelerate regional economic integration, SCO countries have been actively expanding local currency settlements and promoting the establishment of an SCO financing platform. Overall, 72 percent of respondents expressed support for expanding local currency payments and settlements, reflecting a shared aspiration among member states to enhance economic resilience and autonomy through deeper financial cooperation. These efforts will strengthen the SCO’s influence and standing on the global economic stage.

Following the Astana Summit in July 2024, China officially took over the rotating presidency of the SCO for 2024-2025. As an important multilateral cooperation mechanism spanning the Eurasian continent, the SCO is responding to the challenges of the times through pragmatic cooperation, providing new momentum for building a new type of international relations, and contributing its solutions and strength to enhancing global governance.

Xu Feihong

Leading the SCO to Open a New Cooperation Chapter



Since China took over the rotating presidency of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). The SCO has once again entered “Beijing time”. Against the background of a fast-evolving world

fraught with transformations unseen in a century, the international community is full of expectations for China to lead the SCO in opening up a new chapter of cooperation, promoting the developing countries’ self-improvement through unity, and consolidating the “SCO strength” for global governance.

Following the “Shanghai Spirit” of mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality, consultation, respect for diversity of civilizations and pursuit of common development, the SCO transcends the outdated idea of Cold War mentality, zero-sum mindset and clash of civilizations, turning over a new leaf on international relations. Over 24 years of development, the SCO has expanded from 6 members to a “big SCO family” of 26 countries, forming the largest regional cooperation organization in the world by area and population. This fully demonstrates that the establishment and development of the SCO reflects the trend of the times and people’s shared aspiration for peace, development and cooperation.

China, as a founding member, actively proposes solutions and leads actions to promote the SCO’s steady and sustained progress. President Xi Jinping attaches great importance to the development of the SCO and has attended all the summits since 2013. He put forward a series of important initiatives and proposals, including building a SCO community with a shared future and a common home of solidarity and mutual trust, peace and tranquility, prosperity and development, good-neighborliness and friendship, and fairness and justice, which have given a strong boost to the development of the organization. China stayed committed to providing public goods that benefit all parties in the security, economy, trade, and people-to-people and cultural domains, etc., contributing strength to further enhancing regional cooperation.

After taking over the SCO presidency, China acts on the slogan of “Upholding the Shanghai Spirit: SCO on the Move,” and promotes deeper SCO cooperation in politics, security, trade, cultural and people-to-people exchange, and mechanism building, among other fields.

Besides ministerial meetings in various fields, China hosted the meeting of the Council of the Regional Anti-terrorist Structure of the SCO, the meeting of the border defense leaders of the SCO, and the joint anti-terrorism drill to further promote security cooperation and



mutual trust among member states. We hosted China-SCO forum on artificial intelligence, the 2025 International Medical Innovation and Cooperation Forum, the SCO Countries Worker Skills Contest, the e-commerce live streaming event to deepen and solidify practical cooperation. We hosted the SCO political parties forum, the SCO Think Tank forum, the Youth Campus, the SCO Women's Forum, Media Cooperation Forum of SCO, the SCO Film Festival to strengthen understanding and friendship among our people all over the world. With a focus on the SCO Year of Sustainable Development, China hosted training programs in such fields as green development, poverty reduction, environmental information sharing, and green low-carbon technology. We stay focused on fostering new forces for growth and deliver tangibly for countries in the region and their people. Going forward, China will host a variety of colorful events.

The SCO Summit this autumn will be the culmination of the events this year. Leaders of SCO member states will gather in China again to discuss future development and cooperation. China is working intensively to fulfill its duty as the SCO chair to host a summit featuring friendship, solidarity and fruitful results. We

will work with all parties to lead the SCO into a new stage of high-quality development featuring greater solidarity, coordination, dynamism and productiveness.

Besides ministerial meetings in various fields, China hosted the meeting of the Council of the Regional Anti-terrorist Structure of the SCO, the meeting of the border defense leaders of the SCO, and the joint anti-terrorism drill to further promote security cooperation and mutual trust among member states.

This year marks the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and India. Both China and India are major developing countries, representatives of emerging economies, and important members of the Global South. We both adhere to a non-aligned foreign policy, uphold multilateralism, and support the democratization of international relations, and maintain good cooperation within the framework of the SCO. In October 2024, President Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Narendra Modi held a successful



meeting in Kazan, Russia. Both sides agreed to view and handle China-India relations from a strategic and long-term perspective, and strengthen communication and cooperation in multilateral fora to safeguard the common interests of developing countries. PM Modi noted that India will give every support for China's SCO presidency. China welcomes Prime Minister Modi's attendance of the SCO Tianjin Summit.

Since joining the SCO in 2017, India has made important contributions to the development of the organization. China has encouraged India to leverage its own strengths to promote new achievements in cooperation within the SCO in areas such as digitalization, innovation and entrepreneurship, and traditional medicine. Indian academics and youth representatives were invited to participate in the SCO's people-to-people and cultural exchange activities hosted by China, which strongly promoted people-to-people connectivity between member countries. The friendship and cooperation between China and India will

not only benefit over 2.8 billion people in both countries, but will also help to boost the SCO's greater achievement.

This year marks the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and India. Both China and India are major developing countries, representatives of emerging economies, and important members of the Global South.

A just cause finds great support, and a journey with many companions gets far. China looks forward to working with all SCO member states, including India, to uphold the "Shanghai Spirit", combine more forces for lasting peace, create favorable conditions for universal security, inject stronger confidence to common development, provide important impetus for mutual learning among civilizations, so as to contribute the SCO's strength to building a community with a shared future for mankind.

H.E. Xu Feihong is Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to India.



The Importance of China-India Relations and the Potential for Cooperation Under SCO



We are at an important juncture in the evolving global order, where regional cooperation and multilateral engagement play a pivotal role in fostering stability, security, and economic prosperity.

China and India are two of the world's oldest civilizations and most dynamic economies. With a shared history spanning millennia, our nations have witnessed cultural exchanges, trade interactions, and philosophical dialogues that have shaped not only our societies but also the world. Today, China and India stand as two of the largest economies in Asia and key drivers of global economic growth. Our relationship is complex, yet it holds immense potential for cooperation in multiple spheres, particularly within multilateral frameworks like the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).

Despite periodic challenges in bilateral relations, it is crucial to recognize that China and India share mutual interests in promoting regional stability, combating terrorism, enhancing trade connectivity, and addressing global challenges such as climate change and sustainable development.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) provides an important platform for China and India to engage constructively. Established in 2001, the SCO is the world's

largest regional organization, covering approximately 60% of Eurasia and nearly 40% of the world's population. India joined the SCO as a full member in 2017, marking a significant milestone in regional diplomacy.

The SCO's core principles—mutual trust, equality, consultation, and respect for diverse civilizations—align well with the shared aspirations of China and India.

Our cooperation within this organization can yield tangible benefits in multiple areas:

Strengthening Regional Security and Counterterrorism Efforts

Security remains a top priority for both India and China. The Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) under the SCO plays a crucial role in intelligence sharing and coordinated efforts to combat terrorism, extremism, and separatism.

Given the evolving security challenges in the region—especially in Afghanistan—China and India must work together to strengthen counterterrorism initiatives, curb illicit drug trafficking, and prevent radicalization.

Enhancing Trade and Economic Collaboration

The economic potential of China-India cooperation under the SCO is immense. As the two largest economies in the organization, China and India can leverage the SCO

to facilitate trade and investment, boost infrastructure projects, and enhance supply chain connectivity.

One of the key economic initiatives within the SCO is the proposal to develop an integrated SCO Free Trade Zone. By identifying synergies between these initiatives, China and India can work together to enhance regional trade networks and promote economic resilience.

Collaboration in Energy Security and Sustainable Development

As energy-intensive economies, both China and India face challenges in energy security, renewable energy expansion, and climate change mitigation. The SCO Energy Club provides an avenue for China and India to collaborate on clean energy initiatives, share best practices, and explore joint investments in solar, wind, and hydroelectric power.

In addition, India and China can work together to strengthen food security and water resource management within the SCO framework. Given the shared environmental concerns of both nations, cooperation on climate adaptation, disaster management, and sustainable development should be prioritized.

People-to-People and Cultural Exchanges

Diplomatic relations are strengthened not just through policies but also through people-to-people engagement. The SCO has made significant efforts in promoting cultural, educational, and tourism exchanges. India and China, as civilizational neighbors, can deepen their cooperation in academia, tourism, and student exchanges to foster greater understanding between our peoples.

India's designation of Varanasi as the SCO's first cultural and tourism capital has already opened new avenues for enhancing civilizational ties. Through joint film festivals,

language training programs, and cultural events, both countries can build stronger societal linkages under the SCO framework.

Addressing the Challenges in China-India Relations within the SCO

While the potential for cooperation is immense, it is equally important to address the challenges that have historically impacted China-India relations. Border tensions, trade imbalances, and differing geopolitical perspectives have at times strained our partnership. However, the SCO provides a diplomatic space where both nations can engage in dialogue, resolve differences peacefully, and build mutual trust.

A pragmatic and forward-looking approach should be adopted, ensuring that multilateral engagements within the SCO contribute to broader bilateral stability. By focusing on common goals—rather than differences—China and India can reaffirm their commitment to a stable, multipolar, and cooperative regional order.

To Sum up, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization serves as a crucial bridge between China and India, offering opportunities for constructive engagement in security, trade, sustainable development, and cultural cooperation. As two major powers with a shared destiny in Asia, it is in our best interest to strengthen our collaboration under the SCO framework. By prioritizing regional peace, economic connectivity, and people-to-people engagement, China and India can contribute to the prosperity and stability of not just the SCO region but the world at large.

Let us continue to work together in the spirit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, reinforcing our commitment to dialogue, mutual respect, and a shared future for humanity.

Aravind Balaji Yelery is Associate Professor of Centre for East Asian Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University. The views expressed are personal.



Cooperation Between China and India within the Framework of SCO



This year, China officially assumed the rotating presidency of the SCO for the period from 2024 to 2025. In October last year, President Xi Jinping met with Prime Minister Modi during his attendance at the BRICS Summit in Kazan, Russia. The two leaders agreed to view and handle China-India relations from a strategic height and a long-term perspective, and not to let specific differences affect the overall situation of our bilateral relations, so as to make positive contributions to world peace and prosperity and promote world multipolarization. Prime Minister Modi also

said that India is willing to fully support China's presidency of the SCO and strengthen communication and cooperation within this multilateral framework.

In 2017, the SCO admitted India as a full member, providing a new multilateral platform for China-India cooperation. As of July 2024, the SCO has 10 full member states, 2 observer states, and 14 dialogue partners, becoming the largest international organization in Eurasian continent with its international influence increasing day by day.

The cooperation between China and India within the framework of the SCO mainly focuses on the following five aspects:

Firstly, Security Cooperation: The SCO



provides a platform for China and India to communicate and collaborate on regional security issues. The two sides actively cooperate in maintaining the stability of Central Asia and resolving the Afghan issue, are committed to achieving peace and stability in Afghanistan, promoting long-term regional stability, thereby promoting the peaceful and stable surrounding environment and creating favorable conditions for their respective economic development.

Secondly, Economic and Trade Cooperation: China is India's largest trading partner, largest source of imports, and fourth largest export destination, while India is one of China's most important trading partners. The investment cooperation and protection mechanisms among SCO member states provide guarantees and conveniences for the mutual investment of Chinese and Indian enterprises. Chinese enterprises actively invest in India's infrastructure, manufacturing, pharmaceutical industry, and other fields, injecting vitality into India's economic development and industrialization.

Thirdly, Regional Integration: China and India jointly participate in economic cooperation projects within the framework of the SCO and work together to promote the process of regional economic integration in Central Asia and South Asia. The two countries actively explore cooperation opportunities in energy, transportation, infrastructure, and other fields, to strengthen regional connectivity and facilitate trade and investment within this region. With more and more cooperation between China and India, the connectivity within Central Asia and South Asia will be greatly improved in the foreseeable future.

Fourthly, People-to-people and Cultural Exchanges: Various cultural activities organized by the SCO provide opportunities for cultural exchanges between China and India, enhancing the mutual understanding

and friendship between the two peoples. Under the framework of the SCO, exchanges among non-governmental organizations, social groups, academic institutions of China and India have become increasingly frequent. A variety of exchange programs have been carried out, such as academic seminars, youth exchanges, and sports events. These People-to-people and cultural exchanges help to reduce misunderstandings and misperceptions, and lay a solid public environment for the long-term China-India bilateral ties.

Lastly, Multilateral coordination: As two important members of the SCO, China and India have been conducting consultations and communications on international issues and global challenges of common concern, coordinate their positions under the SCO.



SCO students experienced Chinese culture at spring camp in Xinjiang in April 2024.

In recent years, India has become increasingly active in participating in various activities and mechanism of the SCO and has made greater efforts to contribute to the decision-making efficiency and growth of the SCO. Together with other member states, China and India also cooperate with each other in Enhancing the international influence of the SCO.

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25th SCO Summit in Tianjin: India-China Ties Set the Tone For the Path Ahead



With weeks to go for the 25th meeting of the Heads of State Council of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) to be held in Tianjin, preparations are in full

swing. Apart from a series of meetings of ministers and officials of the SCO member-states in the months leading up to the 25th Summit, global attention is also focused on India-China exchanges that precede the summit. The two Asian powers along with Russia, because of the size of their economies, are the leading players in shaping the direction and agenda of the ten-member SCO as well as ensuring its cohesion. Equally important for the international attention it may attract is the role of Iran which joined the SCO in 2023 and was inducted when India was the chair.

Thus, the deliberations of the SCO, that for long remained a Eurasian economic, political and security organization, will be watched closely for its references to geopolitical conflicts, especially in the aftermath of the 12-day Iran-Israel war which involved the U.S. as well as its European allies. The SCO is not about bilateral relations between its member-nations nor is it about China, Russia and India. The role of each country and the bilateral dynamics within the group have a bearing on the SCO's agenda, outcomes and accomplishments.

To begin with, 2025 is SCO's "China Year". As CPC Central Committee Politburo Member and Foreign Minister Wang Yi observed a few months ago, "The SCO was born in China and named after Shanghai. This means something special to us. We are very pleased to welcome it home". As the president of SCO this year, China is organising more than 100 events in political, security, economic, and people-to-people fields under the theme of "Upholding the Shanghai Spirit: SCO on the Move". Wang said that, at the Tianjin summit, leaders will reflect on SCO's accomplishments, plan the future, and build consensus for cooperation. "It will help the SCO embark on a new journey from China and make the organization a more close-knit community with a shared future".

After China, it is India-China relations that influence the setting, tone and the mood of every SCO meeting. This time, the SCO summit would be taking place against the background of several high-level in-person meetings that have been held between the neighbours who have differences as well as disputes to resolve. All indications are that the two countries will have more intensive interactions in the time before the summit. The basis for this optimism is that the last week of June has been significant for bilateral relations since the border clashes between the armed forces of India and China along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the western sector of China India Boundary in June 2020.



India's Defence Minister Rajnath Singh attended the SCO defence ministers' conclave that was held in Qingdao from June 25-27. Besides speaking on the issue of terrorism at the SCO meeting, he also had a bilateral meeting with his Chinese counterpart, Admiral Dong Jun. Singh's visit to China was the first by a senior Indian leader after the June 2020 military standoff strained ties between the two countries. On the eve of the defence ministers' meeting, India's NSA attended a meeting of the SCO's security council secretaries. Doval also had a meeting with Wang Yi. Previously, in December last, Doval had travelled to Beijing for the 23rd meeting of the Special Representatives for the boundary question, China's envoy being Wang. The meetings of both Singh and Doval took place in the backdrop of the resumption of the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra.



There was another landmark development this June: talks between Indian Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri and Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Sun Weidong in Delhi. It was a rare bilateral visit and signified the two countries stepping up their relations. This high-level meeting was the second between the two dignitaries, the first having been held in Beijing in January when both sides had announced several steps to normalise relations. At the June 13 meeting Misri and Sun decided to work towards "functional dialogues" to resolve long-pending economic and trade issues. The two also agreed to hasten the resumption of direct air services. With traffic between India and China having resumed, not restoring flights means airlines of both the countries continue to lose earnings that could have come their way. The Chinese read-out of the meeting said that both sides pushed for resumption of direct flights, people-to-people exchanges and revival of dialogue mechanisms.

Prime Minister Modi's attendance at this year's SCO Summit is important because he could not only meet Chinese President Xi Jinping but also Russian President Vladimir Putin. The prospect of these three leaders meeting against the background of the recently ended war against Iran is of particular importance for easing geopolitical tensions.



The deliberations at the SCO Summit would have resonance not only in the Indo-Pacific but also West Asia.

Such a meeting would be useful not only for discussing the economic and emergent security issues that the recent war against Iran has underscored, but also set the tone for a sharper focus on the subject of energy, which along with infrastructure and transportation, is a core issue for SCO along with sustainable development and poverty alleviation.

The SCO summit is expected to intensify its efforts to strengthen trade and economic ties through energy and transportation, alongside initiatives related to investments, financial projects and plans to enhance electronic trade and e-commerce. The idea of a bank has also been floated. All these are expected to deepen multilateral cooperation in tangible ways.

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The SCO, like BRICS, is another example of a forum, where India and China are striving to cooperate in pursuit of common interests even as they seek to overcome unresolved bilateral issues. The SCO, an energy-rich group, is a space for bolstering India-China relations and synergy especially in view of the reality that both countries separately have excellent economic, political and diplomatic relations with all the other members and observers.



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The 2025 SCO Summit: A Strategic Opportunity for China-India Engagement and Regional Stability



This autumn, China will host the 2025 Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Summit, which, in the current global climate, is taking on far greater strategic significance.

The summit comes at a time when geopolitical tensions are simmering worldwide and economic uncertainty continues to mount. While much of the global discourse remains focused on the U.S.-China relations, the protracted conflict in Russia and Ukraine, and the escalating violence in the Middle East, Beijing sustains its strategic attention on South Asia, a region of renewed importance and complex opportunity.

A Strategic Window for China-India Engagement

In recent years, China-India relations have encountered considerable challenges. Nevertheless, China has demonstrated strategic composure and a pragmatic outlook in its continued efforts to guide the bilateral relationship back onto a stable and constructive track. In October 2024, President Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Narendra Modi held a successful meeting in Kazan, Russia. Both sides agreed to view and handle China-India relations from a strategic and

long-term perspective. The upcoming SCO Summit presents a crucial opportunity for re-engagement and forward-looking dialogue between the two countries. As one of the few inclusive multilateral mechanisms that brings together China, Russia, India, Pakistan, Iran, and the Central Asian states, the SCO provides a unique platform for fostering mutual understanding. It enables member states to explore shared interests and regional priorities without being constrained by zero-sum rivalries or ideological divisions.

South Asia's Reality: A Nexus of Conflict and Crisis

In April 2025, a terrorist attack in Pahalgam once again triggered military tensions between India and Pakistan. In response, India adopted a series of countermeasures, while Pakistan denied any involvement and called for an impartial international investigation. Although the immediate tensions have somewhat subsided, relations between India and Pakistan remain fragile and volatile. The recent flare-up reveals two underlying realities. First, South Asia remains one of the world's most geopolitically sensitive regions, where unresolved historical issues, terrorism, and rising nationalism continue to converge and generate serious security risks. Second, in a complex environment marked



by nuclear deterrence, deepening economic interdependence, and evolving security dynamics, unilateral military escalation is increasingly untenable.

The SCO has the potential to serve as a stabilizing platform by facilitating early-warning mechanisms and multilateral coordination channels. While such mechanisms alone may not resolve the deep-rooted disputes between India and Pakistan, they can help institutionalize dialogue, promote transparency, and gradually build mutual trust—foundational elements for sustainable peace and stability across South Asia.

The SCO Advantage: A Platform Without Preconditions

In contrast to Western-led alliances or ideologically driven blocs, the SCO is guided by the principles of non-alignment, non-confrontation, and non-interference in internal affairs. It upholds sovereign equality, mutual respect, and consensus through consultation, while embracing institutional openness and operational flexibility. These founding principles resonate deeply with India's long-standing policy of strategic autonomy.

Precisely because the SCO does not impose rigid conditions or demand uniform positions on all issues, it offers a modular and inclusive framework for multi-sectoral cooperation. Areas such as counterterrorism, regional security, infrastructure connectivity, public health, and cultural exchange can be advanced in parallel, allowing member states to engage constructively according to their respective priorities and capacities.

This institutional design is especially conducive to practical engagement between China and India. India's continued involvement in SCO mechanisms, such as the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS), digital connectivity initiatives, and people-to-people exchanges, etc., demonstrates that even amid political frictions, avenues for cooperation remain open. China views the forthcoming SCO Summit as

an opportunity to steer China-India relations toward enhanced stability, greater rationality, and more constructive interaction.

In contrast to Western-led alliances or ideologically driven blocs, the SCO is guided by the principles of non-alignment, non-confrontation, and non-interference in internal affairs. It upholds sovereign equality, mutual respect, and consensus through consultation, while embracing institutional openness and operational flexibility. These founding principles resonate deeply with India's long-standing policy of strategic autonomy.

Counterterrorism and Stability: Shared Threats, Shared Interests

China and India both face similar and pressing security challenges when it comes to counterterrorism and regional stability. India remains concerned about radicalization and terrorism in Indian-controlled Kashmir, while China contends with the threat of extremism in its Xinjiang region. These shared concerns create a natural basis for dialogue and cooperation.

Successful counterterrorism cannot rely solely on military measures. It requires robust frameworks for intelligence sharing, coordinated efforts to counter violent extremist narratives, and improved capabilities for governance and law enforcement. The SCO, with its well-established institutional platforms and accumulated experience, is uniquely positioned to facilitate such multidimensional cooperation.

By aligning efforts in these areas, China and India have an opportunity to move beyond short-term crisis management and toward

building a regional environment rooted in trust, stability, and shared security.

Don't Let Politics Drown Out Pragmatism

In recent years, nationalist narratives have increasingly shaped public discourse in India, with media sensationalism often constraining the space for diplomatic rationality. Against this backdrop, the upcoming SCO Summit offers a valuable opportunity to steer the China-India relationship away from emotion-driven confrontation and toward interest-based, pragmatic engagement.

China's approach to bilateral cooperation is clear. China advocates for advancing cooperation in areas of clear mutual interest, including counterterrorism, digital infrastructure, climate resilience, and public health. Where shared interests exist, institutionalized engagement should follow.

At a time of persistent global inflation, recurrent energy disruptions, and accelerating supply chain transformation, China and India – as two of Asia's largest economies – share a common responsibility to uphold regional economic stability. Rather than being drawn passively into the dynamics of great-power competition, both countries can and should contribute to a more balanced, inclusive, and cooperative regional order.

The U.S. Factor: Strategic Autonomy and Regional Maneuvering

China continues to closely observe the evolving strategic environment in South Asia and the Indian Ocean, particularly the growing presence and influence of the United States. In recent years, Washington has launched the Indo-Pacific Strategy. With its repeated designation of China as a "strategic

competitor," the United States has made clear its intent to reshape regional dynamics and constrain the space for emerging cooperative mechanisms.

In this context, the relevance of the SCO becomes increasingly evident. As a trans-Eurasian platform, the SCO not only facilitates dialogue and practical cooperation among its members, but also offers a stabilizing counterweight to the resurgence of bloc politics and the growing imprint of extra-regional powers.

For India, the key strategic task lies in maintaining equilibrium—strengthening its partnerships with Western countries while preserving and actively participating in inclusive regional mechanisms. To China, India's pursuit of global influence and its engagement in regional multilateralism need not be seen as contradictory. Through sustained institutional coordination and open communication under the SCO framework, both countries can contribute to a more stable and inclusive regional architecture—one that safeguards autonomy, promotes multipolarity, and mitigates the risks of systemic rivalry.

Conclusion: A Post-Crisis Opening?

In a world facing compounding crises and rising strategic uncertainty, it is time for India to make a thoughtful choice—whether to view China through the lens of competition, or to engage with the realities of coexistence and consider a shared responsibility for regional and global peace, development, and governance.

The SCO represents a platform—inclusive, flexible and functional. At a time when geopolitical volatility is becoming the norm, the very possibility of institutional dialogue and cooperative action is a strategic asset in itself—and one worth preserving.

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SCO: North Star in Geopolitics for Peace, Progress and Cooperation



We are living in complex times of great triumph and turbulence. On one hand, hundreds of millions of people in developing nations such as India and China

have been enjoying unprecedented prosperity, increasing life expectancy and decades of peace. On the other hand, dark clouds of geopolitical conflicts are threatening to derail the recent achievements of humanity – think of Russia-Ukraine, Pakistan-India, and Iran-Israel wars. The doomsday clock is closer to midnight – meaning, a nuclear catastrophe – than ever before. Thus, the world is in desperate need for a novel imagination of geopolitics, and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) not only provides a visionary and strategic framework for Asia but can be an inspiration for the emerging multipolar world.

What is SCO? It is the world's largest regional organization, accounting for more than 60% of Eurasia's land and 40% of the world population. The 10 members include India, China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Pakistan, Iran and Belarus. There are also fourteen dialogue partners and two observer nations.

The history of SCO is fascinating. It started with the "Shanghai Five," which was created in 1996 to resolve the border issues between China and its four former Soviet states. The China-Russia border alone is around 4000km

long; and China shares 3000km of borders with Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. The group's ambitions were initially modest -- confined to confidence-building tasks such as settling and demilitarizing the official borders. The geopolitical fact is that borders are often the most difficult problems to resolve.

However, within five years, the Shanghai Five had finalized their borders!

Encouraged by this impressive achievement, the group decided to expand their strategic goals and membership, and thus created the SCO in 2001 with specific focus on terrorism, separatism and extremism. Curiously, SCO was created just a few months before the 9/11 attacks, demonstrating that the members fully understood the geopolitical challenges.

As years passed by, SCO transformed from a narrow forum for security dialogue into a multilateral powerhouse that focuses on a plethora of vital issues such as economy, trade, energy, infrastructure, connectivity, technology, tourism, cultural exchanges and more.

Looking back, one of the most important accomplishments of SCO was to stabilize the countries in Central Asia -- Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. If you play chess, you would know that the most strategic area is the center of the chessboard. Similarly, if you look at the map of SCO, what do you find in the center? Central Asia.

What makes SCO unique and admirable is that it's not based on divisive geopolitics. It has a non-aligned status, meaning it's not anti-West or anti-anything. It adheres to the Shanghai Spirit, which includes universal principles such as mutual benefit, common development, and respect for cultural diversity.

Although SCO is based out of Shanghai, it operates on the principles of equality and consensus, unlike many other international organizations, which are clearly led by and dominated by the US.

Furthermore, despite the accusations by some Western media, SCO is not a military alliance. It's not an "Asian NATO" - although, hypocritically, NATO is trying to extend its tentacles into Asia. SCO does not have the concept of collective defense similar to NATO's Article 5. And while the US bullies NATO members into spending more on defense - especially on American weapons - SCO members are not subjected to any such coercion or pressure.

Finally, what makes SCO unique and admirable is that it's not based on divisive geopolitics or wars.

Consider NATO, which is really an extension of the American Empire. When NATO was founded, its General Secretary Lord Ismay famously said that NATO's purpose was to "keep the Russians out, the Americans in, and the Germans down."

That warmongering philosophy is still the bedrock principle of NATO. If Russia and Europe were to have win-win relations, NATO would become irrelevant.

In summary, the NATO model is neither desirable nor sustainable. We don't need endless wars. We need a new and holistic paradigm of cooperation, progress and development. Looking at the big picture, there are tectonic shifts underway in geopolitics and

geo-economics. Five hundred years of Western domination is coming to an end; and the center of gravity of the world's GDP has shifted significantly in the last 30 years.

In terms of GDP measured by purchasing power parity (PPP), SCO is already larger than G7, China is larger than the US, and developing nations are larger than developed nations. According to the IMF, China and India will account for 40% of the global economic growth over the next five years.

Asia is already the global leader in trade, manufacturing (including high-end sectors such as semiconductors), research, patents, IPO etc. Thus, it's no wonder that many experts predict that this will be an Asian Century. If Europe is smart, it would free itself from American domination and join in to create the Eurasian Century.

However, there is much more work to do in Asia in terms of poverty alleviation, education, healthcare, infrastructure, jobs, wages and much more. Thus, SCO members need to stay humble and focused.

Over the next couple of decades, we will witness an inexorable multipolarity in which Asia, Europe and North America will emerge as the three major poles of the world. In such an environment of distributed power, we need to rethink geopolitics.

Gone are the days of Darwinian and ruthless diktat that says, "If you are not at the table, you are on the menu."

The North Star for the new international order should be the foundational principles of SCO - equality, mutual and sustainable development, win-win cooperation, mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, non-aggression, non-interference, security, stability, just peace, and appreciation for true diversity in civilizations.

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SCO Events

Xi Meets Heads of Foreign Delegations Attending SCO Council of Foreign Ministers Meeting

Chinese President Xi Jinping on July 15, 2025 met in Beijing with foreign ministers and heads of standing bodies of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) who are in China to attend the Meeting of the Council of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of SCO Member States.

He noted that over the past 24 years since its founding, the SCO has always upheld the Shanghai Spirit, grown into a mature and robust organization, and demonstrated strong vitality.

China has always prioritized the SCO in its neighborhood diplomacy, and is committed to making the organization more substantive and stronger, safeguarding regional security and stability, promoting the development and prosperity of member states and building a closer community with a shared future, Xi said.

He added that since China assumed the rotating presidency last July, it has actively carried out activities and advanced cooperation, with all parties taking solid steps to jointly build a better home for the SCO.



Chinese President Xi Jinping meets with foreign ministers and heads of standing bodies of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) who are in China to attend the Meeting of the Council of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of SCO Member States at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, capital of China, July 15, 2025.

China has always prioritized the SCO in its neighborhood diplomacy, and is committed to making the organization more substantive and stronger, safeguarding regional security and stability, promoting the development and prosperity of member states and building a closer community with a shared future, Xi said.

With the SCO Summit set to take place this year in China's Tianjin, Xi expressed his hope to meet the leaders of other member states at the event to discuss the future development of the SCO.

He stressed that in the face of a turbulent and changing international landscape, the SCO must stay focused, remain confident, act efficiently and play a more proactive role in injecting greater stability and positive energy into the world.

Xi called on the SCO to take trust and mutual benefit as the foundation of cooperation, equality and consultation as the way of engagement, respect for diverse civilizations as a means to promote harmony and inclusiveness, and common development as a path toward shared prosperity, to ensure that the Shanghai Spirit continues to light the way in building an SCO community with a shared future.

The organization should respond to the people's aspirations and be doers in deepening cooperation, Xi said, calling for improving mechanisms to address security threats and challenges, better alignment of member states' development strategies with cooperation initiatives like the Belt and Road Initiative, and facilitating personnel exchanges and people-to-people ties.

Xi also called for joint efforts to firmly oppose hegemony, power politics, and bullying in order to promote a more equal and balanced multipolar world. He emphasized the need for extensive consultation, joint

contribution, and shared benefits to advance a more inclusive and universally beneficial economic globalization.

The SCO should unite and lead the Global South in building a more just and equitable global governance system, pooling immense strength for the building of a community with a shared future for humanity, he added.

Wang Yi, as the chair of the Council of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the SCO Member States, reported on the progress made in various aspects of work since China assumed the rotating presidency, as well as the preparations for the SCO Summit in Tianjin.

On behalf of the foreign delegations, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said that through its steadfast commitment to the Shanghai Spirit, the SCO has achieved notable cooperation outcomes and gained increasing international appeal.

The SCO should unite and lead the Global South in building a more just and equitable global governance system, pooling immense strength for the building of a community with a shared future for humanity, he added.

Practice has proven that the Shanghai Spirit, which is characterized by mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality, consultation, respect for diversity of civilizations, and pursuit of common development, aligns with member states' shared interests and demonstrates robust vitality, he added.

Lavrov said that since China assumed the SCO rotating presidency, it has hosted numerous events driving the organization's new progress.

Facing a complex global landscape, the SCO should uphold multilateralism and promote the international order toward greater justice and equity, said Lavrov, adding that all parties stand ready to support China's work as chair, forge greater consensus, and ensure the success of the upcoming SCO Summit in Tianjin.



China Calls on SCO Members to Deepen Cooperation on Law Enforcement, Security

Chinese State Councilor and Minister of Public Security Wang Xiaohong on June 24, 2025 called on Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) member states to deepen practical cooperation on law enforcement and security, and to promote the development of a closer SCO community with a shared future.

Wang made the remarks when attending the 20th Meeting of the Security Council Secretaries of the SCO Member States, where he delivered a keynote address. He noted that China stands ready to work with all member states to make new and greater contributions to the security and stability of the region and the world at large.

The Global Security Initiative, which was proposed by Chinese President Xi Jinping, advocates a new path for security that features dialogue over confrontation, partnership over

alliance, and win-win results over zero-sum outcomes, Wang said. China is willing to implement this initiative alongside all member states, vigorously promoting the “Shanghai Spirit.”

Wang put forward a five-point proposal at the meeting, calling on SCO member states to practice true multilateralism and provide solutions to global challenges, remain committed to sharing weal and woe and shielding against interference from forces outside the region, focus on common concerns and enhance regional counter-terrorism capabilities, improve cooperation mechanisms and strengthen their platform combating emerging transnational crimes, and deepen exchange to provide experience for the development of a global community of security for all.



Chinese State Councilor and Minister of Public Security Wang Xiaohong attends the 20th Meeting of the Security Council Secretaries of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Member States and delivers a keynote address in Beijing, capital of China, June 24, 2025.

SCO Defense Ministers' Meeting held in China



The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Defense Ministers' Meeting on June 26, 2025 convened in Qingdao, east China's Shandong Province.

It is necessary for the SCO to serve as an anchor of stability amid the current complex global situation, Chinese Defense Minister Dong Jun said while addressing the meeting.

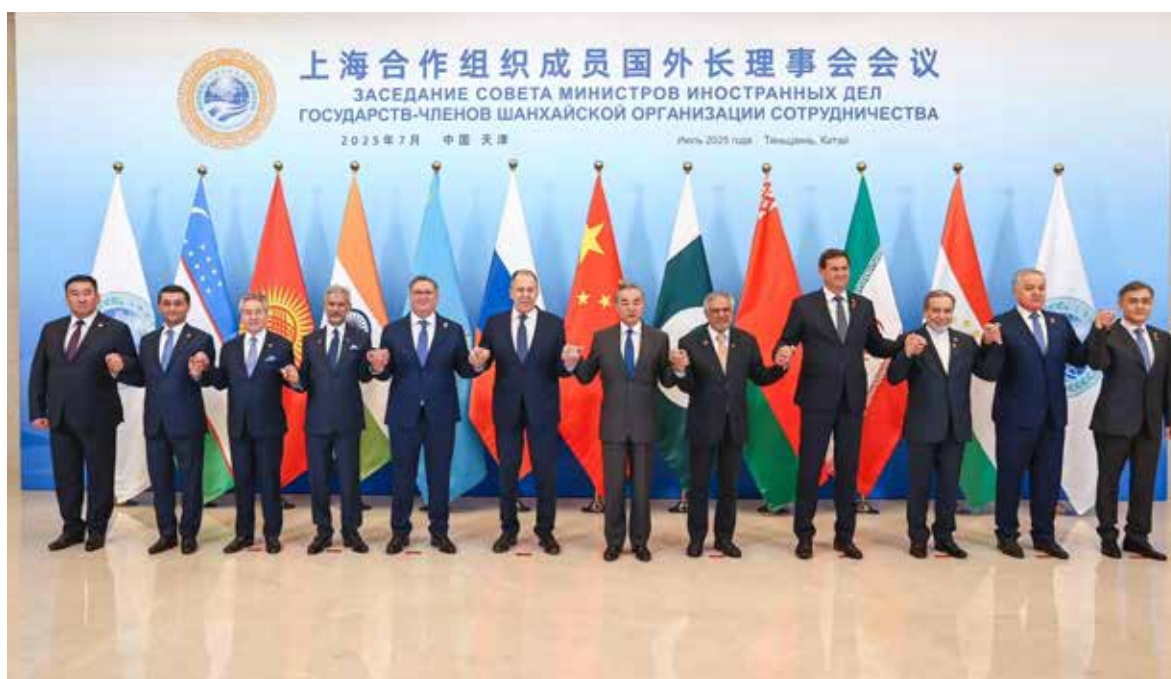
China is willing to work with all SCO member states to adhere to the original

aspiration of the organization, carry forward the "Shanghai Spirit," firmly safeguard international fairness and justice, jointly address security challenges, and promote steady and far-reaching defense and security cooperation, Dong noted.

All parties participating in the meeting agreed to enhance strategic communication, promote practical cooperation, and jointly maintain regional peace and stability.



Wang Yi: Meeting of the SCO Foreign Ministers Council Makes Sound Preparations for Tianjin Summit



On July 15, 2025, Member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and Foreign Minister Wang Yi chaired the Meeting of the Council of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Member States in Tianjin.

When meeting the press with SCO Secretary-General Nurlan Yermekbayev after the meeting, Wang Yi said that President Xi Jinping attaches great importance to this meeting and has made a special arrangement to meet with the foreign

ministers of SCO member states and heads of its permanent bodies. Xi Jinping stressed that the SCO should remain true to its founding mission, meet the expectations of the people, and shoulder its mission of the times, which has provided guidance for the high-quality development of the SCO.

Wang Yi said that since assuming the rotating presidency, China has planned over 110 important events covering various fields, including dozens of ministerial-level meeting

mechanisms. These activities have made SCO's security cooperation more productive, injected greater impetus into development, improved institutional building, and greatly enhanced physical connectivity, institutional connectivity and people-to-people connectivity among member states. At this meeting, foreign ministers had thorough exchanges on various topics, achieved the expected goals, and made full political preparations for the upcoming Tianjin Summit. The foreign ministers agreed to take concrete actions in the following five aspects:

First, carry forward the Shanghai Spirit. The Shanghai Spirit, which originated at the turn of the century, is the very root and soul of the SCO and has demonstrated timeless value throughout its development course. All parties agreed that the more turbulent and changing the international situation becomes, the more the member states should be guided by the Shanghai Spirit, strengthen solidarity, deepen mutual trust, continuously enrich the profound substance of the Shanghai Spirit and make it a basic norm governing international relations.

Second, improve security mechanisms. All parties reaffirmed the need to fully implement the important common understandings reached by the leaders of member states and continuously enhance the SCO's ability to respond to security threats and challenges, including combating the "three forces" of terrorism, separatism and extremism, transnational organized crime, drug trafficking, and safeguarding information security. All parties decided to accelerate the building of "four security centers", including a universal center and its branches to address the challenges and threats to the security of SCO member states and the Anti-Drug Center. These efforts will become an important part of improving the SCO's operational mechanisms.

Third, create development opportunities together. All parties agreed that the SCO should seek greater synergy of member states' development strategies, enhance the resilience of industrial and supply chains, and foster new

growth drivers in such fields as economy, trade, investment, energy, connectivity, scientific and technological innovation, green industries and the digital economy. All parties also discussed the establishment of an SCO development bank and other financing support mechanisms, and reached a principled consensus.

Fourth, consolidate good-neighborliness and friendship. An important source of the SCO's enduring vitality lies in understanding and affinity among the people of its member states. All parties advocated for fully leveraging various mechanisms, platforms and non-governmental channels to continue the friendship from generation to generation. China will seek an amicable, secure and prosperous neighborhood, follow the principles of amity, sincerity, mutual benefit and inclusiveness and share weal and woe with its neighbors, work with other SCO countries to build a common home of solidarity and mutual trust, peace and tranquility, prosperity and development, good-neighborliness and friendship, and fairness and justice.

Fifth, uphold fairness and justice. On the occasion of the 80th anniversary of the victory in the World Anti-Fascist War and the founding of the United Nations (UN), All parties have decided to uphold the correct historical view of World War II, defend the outcomes of the victory of World War II, firmly safeguard the UN-centered international system and work for a more just and equitable global governance system. All parties particularly pointed out that the world today is overshadowed by the dark clouds of power politics and bullying, and beset by frequent international and regional conflicts. The rights of countries to survival and development are under stress, and international fairness and justice must be upheld. The SCO should meet the expectations of the international community and take more proactive actions to promote lasting peace in the Middle East and help Afghanistan restore stability and development, so as to contribute to the cause of human progress.



2025 Media Cooperation Forum of SCO Countries held in Urumqi

The 2025 Media Cooperation Forum of SCO Countries, with the theme of “Building a Better Home Together for a Prosperous Future,” was held in Urumqi, northwest China’s Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region on May 23, 2025.

Over 300 representatives from mainstream media outlets, government departments, academic institutions, and enterprises from 26 SCO member states, observer states, and dialogue partners gathered to discuss cooperation. Sohail Khan, deputy secretary-general of the SCO, attended the forum.

Participants noted that since its establishment in 2001, the SCO has upheld the “Shanghai Spirit,” which features mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality, consultation, respect for diverse civilizations and pursuit of common development. The organization has firmly supported safeguarding the core interests and major concerns of its members, making them become a trustworthy partner to one another in their paths to development and revitalization. Upholding the vision of a community with a shared future for mankind, the SCO has deepened political mutual trust among its members, achieved fruitful economic integration, made remarkable progress in security cooperation, and fostered vibrant cultural exchanges.

Participants said that media organizations in SCO countries should adopt a global perspective to grasp the transformations in the media industry, decode opportunities



for integrated development with forward-thinking, and take pragmatic actions to jointly shoulder media responsibilities. By providing truthful, objective, and fair reporting, they should elucidate the purpose and significance of cooperation among SCO countries, fostering

Over 300 representatives from mainstream media outlets, government departments, academic institutions, and enterprises from 26 SCO member states, observer states, and dialogue partners gathered to discuss cooperation. Sohail Khan, deputy secretary-general of the SCO, attended the forum.



Attendees of the forum.

a conducive public opinion environment for the organization's growth. They should also extensively cover the achievements of SCO cooperation, promote the "Shanghai Spirit," consolidate development consensus, and enhance mutual understanding and friendship among the peoples of SCO countries. Media should contribute their strength to maintaining regional peace, stability, and prosperity, and jointly advance the building of an SCO community with a shared future.

The forum was co-hosted by People's Daily and the People's Government of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. It featured an opening ceremony, a media dialogue session, and a launch ceremony for a youth cultural exchange program. During the opening ceremony, a report titled "Common Home: Public Opinion on the Development Visions in

SCO Member States" was released. The media dialogue session included a presentation on short video sharing and dissemination initiatives among media organizations of SCO countries. Representatives from Chinese and foreign media organizations will conduct research and interviews in Xinjiang after the forum.

Participants said that media organizations in SCO countries should adopt a global perspective to grasp the transformations in the media industry, decode opportunities for integrated development with forward-thinking, and take pragmatic actions to jointly shoulder media responsibilities.



International Medical Innovation and Cooperation Forum held in Guangxi

The 2025 International Medical Innovation and Cooperation Forum kicked off in Fangchenggang city, south China's Zhuang Guangxi Autonomous Region, on April 29, 2025.

The forum aimed to deepen medical innovation and cooperation with Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) countries, ASEAN nations, and countries participating in the Belt and Road Initiative.

China expressed its commitment to leveraging this forum as an opportunity to promote innovation for shared benefits and improve new mechanisms for international medical innovation and cooperation.

China pledged to maintain collaborative development by focusing on building a high-level "International Medical Opening-up Pilot Zone (China)," enhance exchanges and cooperation in the field of traditional medicine, and pursue mutual benefits to contribute to a global community of health for all.

More than 400 guests attended the forum, including leaders and officials from SCO countries. The forum introduced the "2025 International Medical Innovation and Cooperation Forum Initiative."



SCO Forum in New Delhi: Scientists, Experts Discuss Joint Research Projects

On May 21-22, 2025, the 20th meeting of the Forum of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) was held in New Delhi, organized by the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA), which currently holds the presidency.

The Forum was attended by scientists and experts from Belarus, India, Iran, China, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, as well as officials from the SCO Secretariat.

The thematic focus of the event was: “Secure SCO: Towards Transformation in the Spirit of ‘One Earth – One Family.’”

The Forum participants were addressed by high-ranking officials from the host country and the SCO Secretariat, including Kapur Mahavir, Head of the SCO Division at the Ministry of External Affairs of India, and Oleg Kopylov, Deputy Secretary-General of the SCO.





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In his address, the Deputy Secretary-General emphasized the important role of the SCO Forum as a consultative platform created to provide expert support for the Organization’s activities and the implementation of joint research projects. It was noted that the SCO pays great attention to engaging the analytical community and enabling the full functioning of a “second track,” which can support the decision-making process on intergovernmental

issues and generate ideas for further cooperation.

Over the course of two days, leading political science experts and government representatives conducted intensive and engaged discussions on a wide range of issues, including the improvement of the Organization’s activities in areas such as politics, security, economy, and humanitarian cooperation, as well as strengthening its position on the international stage.

Special attention was paid to enhancing the status and role of the SCO Forum within the Organization to achieve greater practical impact.

The chairmanship of the Forum for 2025–2026 will be transferred to the National Research Center for the SCO of the Islamic Republic of Iran.



China-India@75: Xi Jinping Exchanges Congratulatory Messages with President Murmu

On April 1, 2025, President Xi Jinping exchanged congratulatory messages with Indian President Droupadi Murmu to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Xi Jinping noted that China and India, both ancient civilizations, major developing countries and important members of the Global South, are both at a critical stage of their respective modernization efforts. The development of China-India relations demonstrates that it is the right choice for the two countries to be partners of mutual achievement and realize the “Dragon-Elephant Tango”, which fully serves the fundamental interests of both countries and their peoples. Both sides should view and handle China-India relations from a strategic height and long-term perspective, seek a way for neighboring major countries to get along with each other, which features peaceful coexistence, mutual trust, mutual benefit and common development, and jointly promote a multipolar world and greater democracy in international relations.

Xi Jinping stressed that he is ready to work with President Droupadi Murmu to take the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries as an opportunity to enhance strategic mutual trust, strengthen exchanges and cooperation in various fields, deepen communication and coordination in major international affairs, jointly safeguard peace and tranquility in the China-India border area, steer China-India relations forward along a sound and steady track, and contribute to world peace and prosperity.

Droupadi Murmu said that India and China are two neighboring major countries that are home to one-third of the world’s population. A stable, predictable and friendly bilateral relationship will benefit both countries and the world. She proposed to take the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and China as an opportunity to jointly promote the sound and steady development of India-China relations.

On the same day, Premier Li Qiang of the State Council exchanged congratulatory messages with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Li Qiang said that China is ready to work with India to take the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries as an opportunity to continuously enhance strategic mutual trust, promote exchanges and cooperation in various fields, properly handle the boundary question, steer bilateral relations forward along a sound and stable track, and bring more benefits to the two peoples.

Narendra Modi said that India and China, as two ancient civilizations, have played an important role in shaping the course of human history, and now shoulder the heavy responsibility of promoting peace and development. The development of India-China relations is not only conducive to the prosperity and stability of the world, but also contributes to the realization of a multipolar world. The 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and China will usher the bilateral relations into a stage of sound and stable development.

China-India@75: Chinese Embassy in India Holds Reception: Elephant-Dragon Tango the Right Choice, says Ambassador

On April 1, the Chinese Embassy in India held a reception to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the Establishment of China-India Diplomatic Relations at Taj Palace hotel, New Delhi. Foreign Secretary of India, Mr. Vikram Misri, together with representatives from Indian government, political parties, enterprises, think tanks, media, as well as overseas Chinese, Chinese enterprises and students attended the reception.

Quoting the congratulatory messages exchanged between leaders on the 75th

anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and India, Ambassador Xu Feihong pointed out that, over the past 75 years, despite weathering ups and downs, China-India relations have always surged forward. As for China-India relations, strategic guidance of our leaders serves as the “anchor”, friendly exchanges and cooperation form the “foundational fabric”, bridging differences through dialogue stands as the “one and only key”, and working for the future of the world is the “important mission”. The “dragon-



elephant tango” is the only right choice for both sides. We should adhere to the important consensus reached by the two leaders, build a healthy and stable, mutually beneficial and internationally cooperative China-India relationship, forge a right path for the two neighbouring major countries to coexist in harmony and develop hand in hand.

Vikram Misri said, India and China’s civilizations have played a significant role in shaping human history in their own unique

Quoting the congratulatory messages exchanged between leaders on the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and India, Ambassador Xu Feihong pointed out that, over the past 75 years, despite weathering ups and downs, China-India relations have always surged forward.

way. A stable bilateral relationship would contribute to humanity as a whole. On the basis of the meeting between PM Modi and President Xi Jinping in Kazan, we are working together to chart a roadmap for our bilateral relations to return to a stable, predictable and amicable path. We are looking at several steps to resume practical cooperation such as the resumption of the Kailash Mansarovar yatra, cooperation on trans-border rivers, direct air services and so on. We are also looking at activities to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations so as to enhance people to people ties and restore mutual trust and confidence among the public.

The guests all expressed their earnest expectation for the prospects of China-India friendship.



QR code for the full text of the remarks by Ambassador Xu Feihong



Chinese Vice-President Meets India's Foreign Minister, Focus on Improving Ties

On July 14, 2025, Vice President Han Zheng met with Indian External Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar in Beijing

China's Vice-President Han Zheng noted that in October last year, President Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Narendra Modi held a successful meeting in Kazan, which charted the course for China-India relations to restart and embark on a new journey. As two major developing countries and important members of the Global South, China and India should be partners that help each other succeed. Realizing "Dragon-Elephant Tango" is the right choice for both sides.

The two sides should further implement the important common understandings reached between the two leaders, uphold high-level guidance, steadily advance practical cooperation, respect each other's concerns, and promote the sustained, sound and steady development of China-India relations.

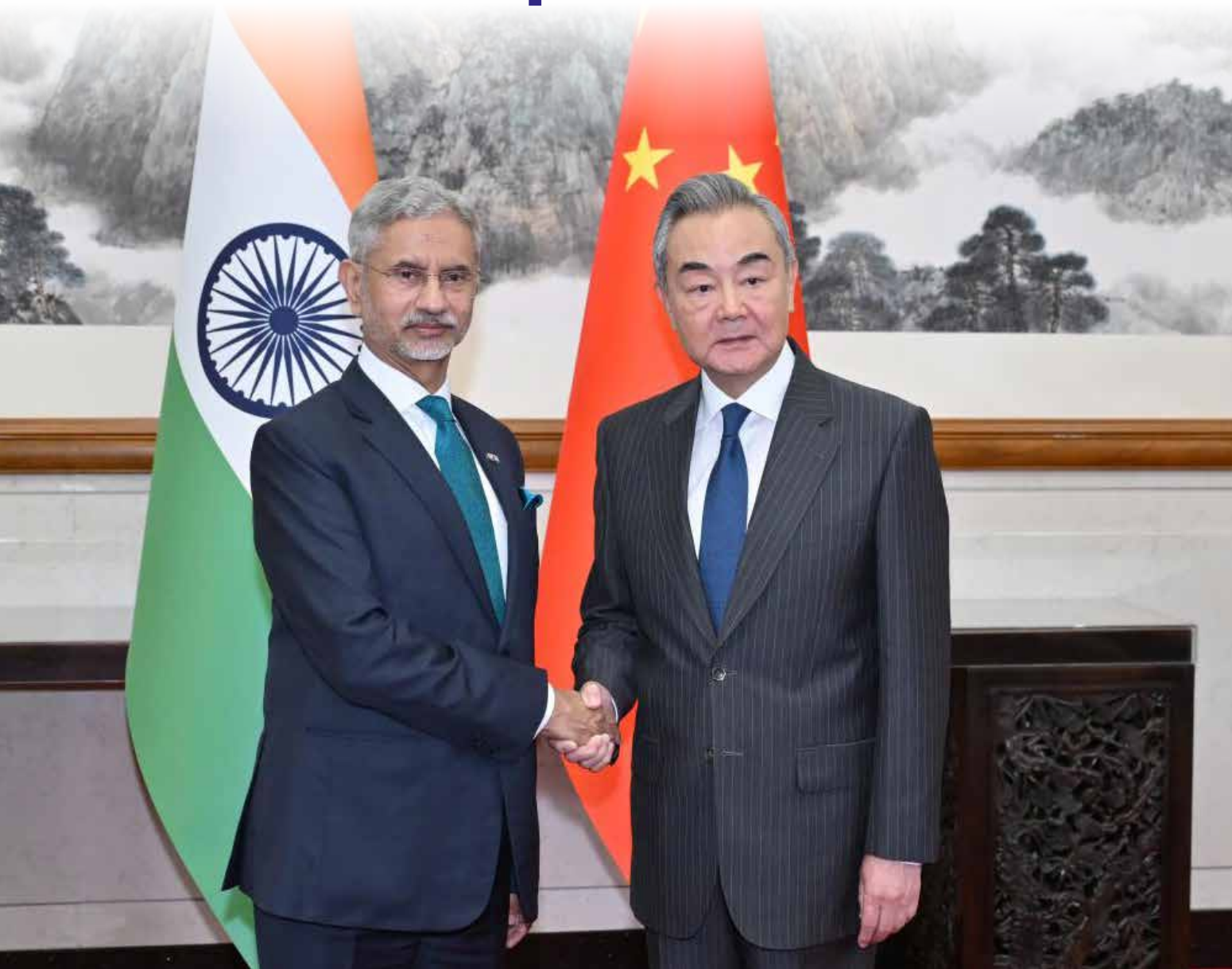
Subrahmanyam Jaishankar said that since the meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Xi Jinping in Kazan, India-China relations have steadily improved. The Indian side is willing to follow the common understandings between the two leaders, maintain the momentum of the development of India-China relations, advance mutually beneficial cooperation, and strengthen communication and coordination within multilateral frameworks. India



supports China, as the rotating chair, in hosting a successful Shanghai Cooperation Organization Summit this year.

Subrahmanyam Jaishankar said that since the meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Xi Jinping in Kazan, India-China relations have steadily improved.

China, India should Adhere to Good-Neighborliness, Friendship: Chinese FM



Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, also a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, holds talks with Indian External Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar in Beijing, capital of China, July 14, 2025.

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said that China and India should adhere to the direction of good-neighborliness and friendship, and find a way for mutual respect and trust, peaceful coexistence, common development and win-win cooperation.

Wang made the remarks when holding talks with Indian External Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar in Beijing.

As two major Eastern civilizations and major emerging economies living adjacent to each other, the essence of China-India relations lies in how to live in harmony and achieve mutual success, said Wang, also a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee.

Last year, Chinese President Xi Jinping and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi reached important consensus during their meeting in Kazan, pointing out the direction for the improvement and development of China-India relations, Wang said.

Wang called on both sides to aim high,

As two major Eastern civilizations and major emerging economies living adjacent to each other, the essence of China-India relations lies in how to live in harmony and achieve mutual success, said Wang, also a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee.

plan for the long term, adhere to the direction of good-neighborliness and friendship, and realize the “Dragon-Elephant Tango.”

Wang said that this year marks the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and India, and the sustained improvement and growth of bilateral relations have not come easily, making them more valuable to cherish.

Noting the relationship between the two countries is not directed against any third party, nor should it be disrupted by any third party, Wang called on both sides to build mutual trust rather than suspicion, pursue cooperation rather than competition, and seek mutual success rather than mutual attrition.

China is willing to work with India to implement the important consensus reached by the leaders of the two countries, consistently enhance political mutual trust, meet each other halfway to expand exchanges and cooperation, act with consideration for the bigger picture to properly manage differences, and strengthen coordination via multilateral platforms such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), to promote the sustained, healthy, and steady development of China-India relations, Wang said.

Wang said that President Xi proposed the building of a community with a shared future for humanity, and Prime Minister Modi advocated that “the world is one family,” noting that these concepts are interrelated.

Both sides support multilateralism and hope that the international order will develop in a more just and reasonable direction, Wang said.

He added that China is willing to enhance communication and coordination with India, and jointly safeguard the multilateral trading system, the stability of the global industrial and supply chains, and an international environment of openness and cooperation.

China is willing to work with India to promote an equal and orderly multipolar world and a universally beneficial and inclusive economic globalization, and safeguard the common interests of the Global South to promote regional peace, stability, development and prosperity, Wang said.

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For his part, Jaishankar said that the Kazan meeting between the leaders of the two countries has provided important guidance for India-China relations, with bilateral exchanges and cooperation across various fields being normalized.

He also expressed the appreciation for China's facilitation of the resumption of Indian pilgrimages to China's Xizang.

Noting that India and China are development partners, not rivals, the Indian foreign minister said India is willing to view its relations with China from a long-term perspective, take the 75th anniversary of diplomatic ties as an opportunity to focus on common interests,

deepen mutually beneficial cooperation, enhance people-to-people exchanges, and jointly safeguard peace and tranquility in the border regions.

He called on both sides to work on positive factors in the bilateral relationship, so that the differences will not escalate into disputes, and competition will not turn into conflict.

As India and China are important neighbors, populous countries, and major global economies, their relations carry regional and global significance, said Jaishankar.

He added that India adheres to strategic autonomy and pursues an independent foreign policy. India stands ready to strengthen coordination and cooperation with China at the multilateral level to promote a multipolar world, Jaishankar noted.

He also said that India fully supports China in successfully hosting the SCO summit as its rotating chair.



Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, also a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, holds talks with Indian External Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar in Beijing, capital of China, July 14, 2025.

Wang Yi Meets NSA Ajit Doval: China and India Not Threat to Each Other

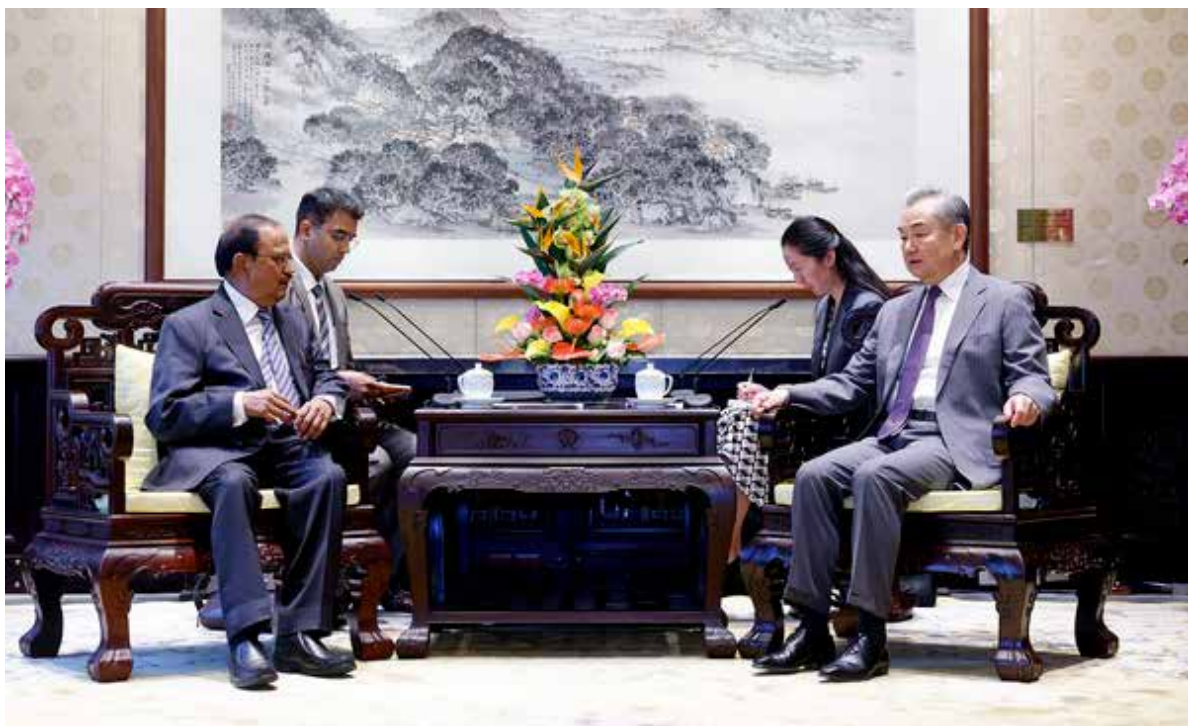
On June 23, 2025, Member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and Director of the Office of the Central Commission for Foreign Affairs Wang Yi met with India's National Security Adviser and Special Representative for the China-India Boundary Question Ajit Doval in Beijing.

Wang Yi said that in October last year, President Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Narendra Modi met in Kazan and reached important common understandings on improving bilateral relations. Recently, there have been some positive developments in the relations between the two countries, which require both sides to further strengthen communication, enhance mutual trust, and strive to resolve practical issues. Only through "a cooperative pas de deux of the dragon and the elephant" will mutual benefit be achieved. China and India should stay committed to the important consensus that they offer development opportunities and pose no threat to each other, and that they are cooperative partners, rather than competitors and rivals. China and India should follow the direction of good-neighborliness and friendship, strive for a mutually beneficial and win-win prospect, demonstrate the historical wisdom of the two ancient civilizations, properly handle sensitive issues, and maintain peace and tranquility in the border areas. Both sides should focus more on cooperation, strengthen exchanges at all levels and across all sectors, and support each other on multilateral platforms such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).



Ajit Doval said that the important common understandings reached between the leaders of both countries charted the course for the development of bilateral relations. The strategic goals of India and China are accordant, with a focus on development being both nations' top priority. Both sides should view bilateral relations from a long-term and strategic perspective, understand and accommodate each other, and expand common interests. Taking the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries as an opportunity, the two sides should promote practical cooperation in various fields, properly handle border issues, and jointly maintain peace and tranquility in the border areas. India is willing to strengthen cooperation and coordination with China in the multilateral arena and fully supports China in hosting a successful summit as the rotating chair of the SCO. He believes that India and China, as two major Asian countries, can make greater contributions to the international community.

China and India should stay committed to the important consensus that they offer development opportunities and pose no threat to each other, and that they are cooperative partners, rather than competitors and rivals. China and India should follow the direction of good-neighborliness and friendship, strive for a mutually beneficial and win-win prospect, demonstrate the historical wisdom of the two ancient civilizations, properly handle sensitive issues, and maintain peace and tranquility in the border areas.



China and India Hold Vice Foreign Minister-Foreign Secretary Dialogue

On June 12, 2025, Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Sun Weidong held a new round of China-India Vice Foreign Minister-Foreign Secretary Dialogue with Indian Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri in New Delhi, and met with Indian National Security Advisor Ajit Doval.

Sun Weidong stated that, with the concerted efforts of both sides, China-India relations maintain a hard-won momentum of improvement and development. Both sides should follow the important common understandings reached by the two leaders during the meeting in Kazan, view and handle the bilateral relations from a strategic height and long-term perspective, continuously increase political mutual trust, advance exchanges and cooperation in various areas together, properly handle disagreements and differences, push the bilateral relations forward on the track of sound and steady development, and jointly play a constructive role in maintaining international and regional peace, stability, development and prosperity.

Sun Weidong and Vikram Misri held a candid and in-depth exchange of views on bilateral exchanges and cooperation as well as international and regional issues of mutual interest. The Indian side reaffirmed its support for China's Shanghai Cooperation Organization presidency. The two sides agreed to jointly make preparations for the 24th Special Representatives' Meeting on China-India Boundary Question, which will be held at an appropriate time. The two sides will continue to hold commemorative activities for the 75th anniversary of diplomatic relations,



push for the resumption of direct flights and exchange of resident journalists at an early date, facilitate people-to-people exchanges, resume bilateral dialogue mechanisms steadily, and ensure Indian pilgrims' smooth visit to Mount Kangrinboqê Fēng and Lake Mapam Yuco in the Xizang Autonomous Region of China.

Sun Weidong expressed sympathy and condolences to the Indian side over the air crash accident in Gujarat, India on June 12, 2025.

Ambassador Xu Feihong Attended the “2025 International Chinese Language Day” event

On April 21, the Chinese Embassy in India held an event to celebrate the “International Chinese Language Day”. Ambassador Xu Feihong attended the event and had a talk with Indian teachers and students. More than 150 people participated in the event, including representatives from Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) and Tagore International School, Chinese

language enthusiasts, journalists and friends from all walks of life.

During the interaction with Indian teachers and students, Ambassador Xu introduced the history of cultural exchanges between China and India, emphasized the importance of strengthening exchanges and cooperation between the two countries, and encouraged students to learn Chinese well and act as



friendship envoys between the two countries. He elaborated the beauty of Chinese and Chinese culture, and emphasized that it was of special significance to celebrate the International Chinese Language Day on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and India. The Chinese embassy and consulates in India would provide the platforms for people to learn Chinese and Chinese culture. He hoped that more Indian friends will use Chinese language as a bridge to promote exchanges and cooperation between China and India.

Dr. Rakesh Kumar, chairperson of the Center for Chinese and Southeast Asian Studies of JNU, thanked the embassy for organizing the Chinese Language Day event. He extended his gratitude to Ambassador Xu for supporting Chinese education in India as well as cultural exchanges and youth contacts between the two countries. He also encouraged students to learn Chinese well and become envoys of cultural exchanges.

Indian teachers and students dressed in fine attire and performed wonderful programs.

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They not only demonstrated their excellent Chinese language skills and talents, but also expressed their love for Chinese language and culture and their aspiration for friendly exchanges between China and India. The Indian teachers and students immersed in Chinese cultural activities such as calligraphy, paper cutting, tea ceremony and Ba Duan Jin (also known as Eight Pieces of Brocade) are conducted at the event as well. The atmosphere was harmonious and warm.



Ambassador Xu Feihong Visits Visva-Bharati University

From June 9th to 10th, H.E. Mr. Xu Feihong, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to India, and Mr. Xu Wei, Consul-General of the People's Republic of China in Kolkata, paid a visit to Visva-Bharati University in Santiniketan, West Bengal. During the visit, they met with Prof. Probir Kumar Ghosh, Vice-Chancellor of the University, toured Cheena Bhavana and Silpa-Sadana, and held talks and exchanges with faculty members and students.

On June 9, Ambassador Xu Feihong arrived at Santiniketan and visited Cheena Bhavana of Visva-Bharati University. Faculty and students prepared a warm and enthusiastic welcome ceremony and staged wonderful performances featuring Sino-Indian characteristics. Xu Feihong stated that Cheena Bhavana, founded through the visionary efforts of luminaries like the eminent poet Tagore and cultural pioneer Tan Yunshan, is a



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living testament to the enduring Sino-Indian friendship. In 2014, Chinese President Xi Jinping personally awarded Cheena Bhavana the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence Friendship Award—a recognition of its role played in promoting mutual understanding and friendship between the peoples of the two countries. Xu Feihong highly commended the standard of Chinese language education at Cheena Bhavana, and encouraged students to become goodwill envoys for Sino-Indian exchanges. During the event, Mrs. Tan Yuxiu, wife of Ambassador Xu, engaged in a discussion on traditional Chinese culture with the faculty and students, instructed students in calligraphy on the spot, and presented calligraphy works to Cheena Bhavana.

On June 10, Ambassador Xu Feihong met with Dr. Probir Kumar Ghosh, Vice-Chancellor

of Visva-Bharati University. The two sides held in-depth exchanges on promoting people-to-people exchanges, as well as advancing educational cooperation between China and India. Following the talks, Ambassador Xu Feihong toured Silpa-Sadana of Visva-Bharati University.

During the visit, Ambassador Xu Feihong also visited the Museum of Rabindranath Tagore and solemnly commemorated the renowned Indian poet who made significant contributions to promoting Sino-Indian exchanges.

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Rural China's March from Poverty to Prosperity: What We Can Learn from Nujiang



Rural revitalisation in what was once among China's three poorest regions is a glimpse into what modernisation could mean for countries like India.

There are many similarities between India and China, rooted in millennia-old interactions between the two Asian neighbours. Perhaps the most striking, but least discussed, resemblance is between Yunnan, China's southwestern province, and India's Northeast.

Yunnan's geographical features, its folklore, music, dance, social customs, the facial appearance of its people, and their traditional attire – not to speak of its breathtaking beauty – exhibit a lot of similarity with our own northeastern states.

Like Manipur, Assam and the rest of the northeastern part of India, Yunnan is a kaleidoscope of ethnic diversity. The Yi, Bai, Hani, Dai, Zhuang, Miao, Hui, Lisu, Lahu, Wa, Naxi and other ethnic groups in Yunnan have much in common with the ethnic communities in our Northeast. The Ahom dynasty, which ruled present-day Assam for nearly 600 years, was a descendant of the Tai race that migrated from Yunnan province.

Yunnan also has its own version of the Ramayana, known as Langka Sip Hor, which is popular among the Dai people in the province. It has many Sanskrit and Pali words, and the epic has undergone some adaptation to suit the environment of Yunnan.

The province does not share a border with India, but the Nujiang Lisu Autonomous Prefecture – prefecture in China is an administrative district – in Yunnan shares a long border with Myanmar, which in turn shares a border with India.

Until eight years ago, Nujiang was one of the three poorest rural regions in China. Today, like the rest of China, it is a picture of eye-catching prosperity. How did it achieve this dramatic transformation?

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The answer came to me most unexpectedly on the day I arrived in Lushui, a small town in Nujiang, in late March. I had come here to participate in an international conference, the Nujiang Forum, on how the Global South can eradicate poverty through mutual learning. A four-hour flight from Beijing to Dali in Yunnan, followed by a three-hour car drive from Dali



A-housing colony for poor people relocated from-mountains.

to Lushui, had left me exhausted. I needed to loosen up my limbs and refresh my mind in the open air.

So I went for a leisurely walk on a promenade along River Nujiang behind the hotel where many international delegates like me were staying. Nothing about this breathtakingly beautiful promenade, packed with tourists, suggested it was a very poor and bare area just a decade ago.

The local government, as part of its anti-poverty campaign, had decided to relocate the poor living in the nearby mountains. It built large high-rise housing communities in Lushui and other towns, with schools, hospitals, playgrounds and community centres, and persuaded them to move here. The people needed jobs. Among the many job-creating economic activities the government identified was tourism. Nujiang, with its lush green mountains, lucid rivers and clean air, had many tourist attractions. Hence, the town received a

gift – a long riverfront promenade lined with dozens of brightly shining shops, restaurants and hotels, including a Hilton.

China's 'Magic Bullet'

Nujiang occupies a special place in the country's anti-poverty campaign. In 2013, soon a year after he became general secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC), Xi Jinping, who is also the country's president, declared his mission to free China of extreme poverty by the end of 2020. This goal was indeed reached nationwide. Yunnan, which in 2012 had 8 million poor people out of a population of 48 million, also achieved the goal. But Nujiang had been a tough nut to crack. Over 98 per cent of the region consists of high mountain canyons and thick forests. Nearly 80 per cent of the area has a gradient of more than 25 degrees. The poverty rate here was more than nine times the national average.

The goal of poverty eradication had to be achieved by ensuring “One Income, Two Assurances, and Three Guarantees”. Besides facilitating employment for income, the government assured food security and clothing, and guaranteed basic medical services, safe housing with drinking water and electricity, and free and compulsory education for nine years.

A majority of the people lacked proper food, clothing and shelter. They seldom ate rice, and survived on forest produce. Their scattered hamlets were inaccessible. They trekked in deep valleys and snowy mountains on foot, using sky ladders and ropeways with bamboo strips, and crossed rivers on primitive canoes. Their nomadic economic activities were limited to slash-and-burn farming and hunting. Efforts to improve the living conditions had been going on since the 1980s when China embarked on a path of economic reforms. But progress was slow.

Xi Jinping’s mandate was that “no poor ethnic community should be left behind, and no poor person should be left behind”.

The number of poor people in Nujiang was small compared to China’s 1.4 billion population – only around 300,000. The “magic bullet” that ensured the success of “Garibi Hatao” in China and especially in places like Nujiang was the policy of “targeted poverty eradication”. The government mandated that every poor family in the country be individually identified and the specific cause and extent of its poverty be carefully investigated. Thereafter, the family was “targeted” with a plan tailor-made for it to be lifted out of poverty.

This strategy is premised on the fact that poverty can have many root causes, such as illness, disability, poor infrastructure, weak market connectivity, lack of education and

employable skills or shortage of production funds. These call for differentiated solutions for different individuals and areas. Accurate identification of the causes of poverty for each family was regarded as the critical “first button”. If the “first button” in a shirt is not fastened properly, the remaining buttons are bound to get fastened wrong – an initial mistake could render families to slip back into poverty later.

The goal of poverty eradication had to be achieved by ensuring “One Income, Two Assurances, and Three Guarantees”. Besides facilitating employment for income, the government assured food security and clothing, and guaranteed basic medical services, safe housing with drinking water and electricity, and free and compulsory education for nine years. For ethnic group such as those in Yunnan – 25 out of 55 ethnic group in China live here – free education is guaranteed for 15 years. Education in China at all levels – from kindergarten to universities – is mostly provided by government-run institutions.

The entire machinery of the government and communist party was mobilised for the campaign, from the top to the bottom. Five levels of communist party secretaries and government officials had to work together – provincial, municipal, county, township and village. At the village level, every poor household had a contact official in charge of poverty elimination. The official was a member of the Village Task-Force, which had the responsibility to analyse the cause of poverty in each poor household, assess their specific needs; make suitable development plans with the active involvement of the households; and coordinate assistance and resources from higher authorities.

Committed party workers were sent to work and live in remote villages and hamlets for two or three years, sometimes longer. Each cadre was required to build “family” relationships with people assigned to them, and see that the benefits of the poverty eradication programme

actually reached the targeted families. Random third-party evaluations were conducted regularly.

Businesses, universities, mass media and other civil society entities were given specific responsibilities as part of an integrated plan focused on helping build local industries and create sustainable employment opportunities.

Each poor family had its own digital file in the national database. A national and provincial information platform created for real-time monitoring of poverty alleviation kept track of the progress of each targeted family and village. The Beijing-based International Poverty Reduction Centre in China (IPRCC) conducted meticulous research of the Chinese experience, and shared it with global audiences.

The effort came to be known as the “Second Long March”, in a nod to the 10,000-km Long March undertaken by the Mao Zedong-led CPC in 1934-1935 during the Chinese Civil War.

In a clear message to the party and government that complete eradication of poverty was his personal priority, Xi himself has visited nearly a hundred villages in poor and remote areas of China in the past 13 years. He emphasised that the success of the poverty eradication programme can only be judged by the poor. “The times set the question papers. We answer the papers and the people are paper marker,” he said in a speech. Other members of the politburo and provincial leaders of the communist party also go on regular “inspection tours”.

After the goal of eradication of extreme poverty was achieved by the end of 2020, China has launched a new programme – rural revitalisation. This aims to consolidate the gains of poverty alleviation, achieve greater productivity in agriculture, develop specialty industries in rural areas supported by modern technologies and locally trained talent, and promote greater rural-urban integration. It prioritizes the use of renewable energy, protection of the intangible cultural heritage of

the countryside, and further improvement in the living standards of the rural people.

Focus on Sustainable Employment

Xi ordered that the “targeted” poverty eradication programme, in order to be effective and sustainable, must be based on creation of employment and entrepreneurship opportunities. He took the position that handouts, except in the case of deserving citizens – such as the aged and the disabled with no family support – would make people lazy, and render them vulnerable to relapse into poverty.

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Infrastructure development has played a key role in transforming the economic and social life in Nujiang. A new airport, expressway, highway, bridges, energy pipelines, solar farms and water transport facilities have been built. Travel time to remote areas is drastically reduced – Yang Wenwen, my Chinese guide who works in the finance department of the Nujiang local government, said that in some cases it has been cut from over 24 hours to just 10 minutes.

Digital technology has enabled local villagers to sell agricultural products and handicrafts to markets across China via booming e-commerce platforms, such as Taobao and Jingdong, Pinduoduo. Through live-streaming apps and short video platforms like Wechat, Tiktok and



Green Spice Industrial Park.

Kuaishou, the government promotes local scenery and industries, while farmers market goods and tourism services.

The programme of our conference included a field visit to Nujiang Green Spice Industrial Park, built by China Communications Construction Company as part of its 'CSR' contribution to the anti-poverty mission. The park featured tsaoko cultivation and processing. Amomum tsaoko is a cardamom spice plant that grows abundantly in the forests of Nujiang, but brought no benefit to the villagers in the past.

A decade ago, Yunnan Agriculture University and private enterprises teamed up to produce a wide range of tsaoko-based innovative products – medicines, beverages, cosmetics, seasoning spices, cookies and so on – all nicely packaged and sold all over China. The new approach involves a full industrial chain approach, focusing on large-scale planting, standardised cultivation and hi-tech harvesting and processing. Since transportation is difficult in mountains, drones are used to transport the tsaoko harvest – up to 50 kilograms over three kilometres in just four minutes – to processing workshops.

Thus, tsaoko has proved to be a “golden fruit”, causing a ten-fold increase in farmers’ incomes. Nujiang has become the largest tsaoko planting area in China. Many different kinds of honey and a wide variety of walnut-based products, including walnut juice, are produced in the park and over 140 species of aromatic plants used in edible and healthcare products have been introduced here.

Like Assam, Yunnan grows both tea and coffee. While Assam has focused only on branding its tea, Yunnan has developed both its tea and coffee industries in a big way and now accounts for 98% of China’s total coffee production.

Relocating the Poor

Perhaps the most striking evidence of the success of China’s anti-poverty programme is the relocation of large numbers of poor people from their inaccessible homes in the mountains to modern multi-storied apartments in urban areas. We visited one such housing community, with wide well-laid roads and a beautiful park; a spacious community centre with a canteen for the elderly people whose children have migrated to big cities and who cannot cook at home; a well-equipped clinic; a library; children’s play area; and a grievance redressal centre. In front of the community centre is a large open-air theatre for recreation and cultural activities. In a factory at a nearby industrial estate, hundreds of women were making baseballs and other sports material meant for export to Korea and Japan.

Not far from the community centre is a government-run primary and secondary school, with digital classrooms and well-equipped science laboratories, an arts and crafts workshop, and a special hall for teaching English. Most students in this school were from ethnic minority families. Students use AI to correct their English pronunciation. The method that helps them is interesting: The software provides a sentence, the student

reads it aloud, and the software scores their pronunciation and points out the incorrect words.

After visiting this colony where the poor have been provided free housing, I was reminded of a poem in a Chinese government book on its anti-poverty campaign. Recitation of the poem by Du Fu, an eighth century sage-poet from the Tang Dynasty, is compulsory for Chinese school students. Titled 'My thatched hut was torn apart by autumn wind', it laments the condition of the poor in those times. Here are some lines from the poem:

*Could I get mansions covering ten thousand miles,
I'd house all poor people and make them beam with smiles.
In wind and rain these mansions would stand like mountains high.
Alas! Should these houses appear before my eye,
Frozen in my unroofed cot, content I'd die.
Rural tourism*

No country in the world has developed rural tourism as a conscious strategy for poverty eradication the way China has. In the first quarter of 2024, China's rural areas received over 780 million tourists. Nujiang itself is an example. City-dwellers from Yunnan and other provinces are attracted to its secluded and scenic spots, its spectacular landscapes and the rich cultural heritage of its multi-ethnic communities. Over 50,000 people in Nujiang have found employment opportunities in tourism and related industries.

Dr Li Xiaoyun, a celebrated professor at the Beijing-based China Agriculture University, and a keynote speaker at the conference, explained the importance of rural tourism as an integral part of the poverty eradication and rural revitalisation strategy. "Boosting agricultural production, and making it a part of the complete value-chain of agri-industrialisation, is one critical element of increasing farmers' incomes. We have achieved considerable success in this. But our

strategy is more holistic. Rural people should feel proud that they are living a new life with all the necessary amenities, and are not cut off from China's prosperous urban society. One of the best ways of ensuring this is by promoting rural tourism, which involves creating modern infrastructure and basic amenities with clean, aesthetic and eco-friendly features, while retaining the essential cultural characteristics of Chinese villages."

Li has implemented more than 50 rural tourism projects, and won many national awards for transforming remote and poverty-stricken villages in Yunnan and other provinces.

In a conversation with me, Li, said:

"The rapid modernisation of China in the last four decades has seen large-scale migration of people from villages to urban areas. Urban prosperity has enlarged the population of not only the urban rich but also the urban middle class. But these people still have memories of their life, and their parents' life, in villages. They have a strong urge to seek their rural roots. Now they also have incomes to support their aspirations. This combination is prompting them to spend their weekends and holidays in villages. They also make it a point to bring their children along, so that they can tell the next generation stories about their family history and the history of rural China. Remember, family and community are very

Yangpo, remote and inaccessible, was steeped in poverty about a decade ago. The local government upgraded all the houses with its funds, keeping their traditional look intact. The villagers were supported to build extra rooms to accommodate tourists. Some were given loans to build comfortable inns, restaurants and shops, all in the traditional rustic style.



Tsaoko farmers by the riverside.

strong institutions in China, just as they are in India.”

I could not help seeing parallels with the rapidly changing society in India. India’s villages, including those in north-eastern states, do not lack attractions for domestic and foreign tourists. Availability of necessary and authentic information online, cleanliness, connectivity, comfortable inns and bed-and-breakfast facilities, safety and security, people trained in hospitality, and encouragement to local private entrepreneurs to invest would go a long way in developing rural tourism in India.

An Iconic Village Bookstore

In India, poverty eradication is understood only in terms of lifting people above a certain income-based poverty line. What is mostly overlooked is whether families that officials claim are no longer poor have access to good housing, good schools, good healthcare, clean water and sanitation, sports and recreation

facilities, cultural centres, museums, libraries and so on. China’s anti-poverty strategy is holistic. It has not only raised incomes, but has also comprehensively improved their quality of life. I got a glimpse of this when I visited Yangpo, a village located high up on the Gaoligong mountain range, some of whose peaks rise over 5,000 metres. The serpentine road from Lushui to Yangpo had 36 sharp bends that only the most experienced and strong-hearted drivers can navigate.

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come here each day for an experience that harmonises the natural beauty of mountains with the traditional culture of Yunnan.

But not everything in Yangpo is traditional. What caught my eye was something strikingly contemporary at the entrance of the village. On top of one of the mountain ridges, overlooking a valley framed by two hills sacred to the Lisu and Bai ethnic groups, stood a spectacularly modern building. I asked Yang Wenwen, my Chinese guide, what it was. "It is the Nujiang Grand Canyon Bookstore established by Librairie Avant-Garde," she told me.

The building indeed has an avant-garde look. It has two large triangular-shaped concrete blocks sitting on a three-level viewing deck that protrudes on a steep mountain slope. Going down a flight of stairs, I stood in front of its cave-like entrance. Inside was a modern bookstore that could easily match the best in any big city. It had books, mostly in Chinese but also some in English, on a wide variety of subjects from all over the world – on arts and culture, history, science and technology, local ethnic traditions, and more. The works of Rabindranath Tagore, Hermann Hesse, Franz Kafka and other international literary giants sat next to those by native writers. The bookstore had a café, an auditorium, a reading room and open-air spaces for readers who could enjoy reading books sitting among the clouds. Even though the design of the building looked modern, the philosophy that inspired it is still traditional. I was told that the two triangular blocks resemble the crossbows and arrows, used in ancient times by the local Lisu ethnic group, which became their cultural totem.

Librairie Avant-Garde is a chain of independent bookstores-cum-public-libraries in China. It was selected by the BBC as one of the 10 most beautiful bookstores in the world. It is founded by Qian Xiaohua, a Nanjing-based cultural entrepreneur. All his bookstores are marked by architecture that is stunningly unique. He has opened many in rural

China, especially in places with picturesque surroundings and historical significance.

Why open bookstores in villages when even those in cities are having a hard time due to online competition? Here is how Qian Xiaohua explained his business philosophy in an interview to China Daily. "A good bookstore is a constructive power that pushes society's progress. It should provide space, vision and nurture the people with its humanitarian spirit. I feel books have a life. Running a bookstore is like working as a doctor, saving people's souls and lives. For books, I always have a kind of reverence, just like for life."

As in India, many old Chinese villages are also facing the problem of young people migrating to cities for work, leaving the elderly and children behind. Librairie Avant-Garde is an audacious attempt to revitalise rural life, enrich village culture, and also attract urban people to the countryside.

Hua Li, designer of the rural bookstore in Nujiang says, 'Architecture should touch you at a spiritual level.'

In Yangpo, the bookstore was designed by Hua Li, the founder and principal architect of TAO, a Beijing-based design studio. "What inspired you to go to a remote village in Yunnan and conceptualise a bookstore there?" I asked him in an email interview. He replied: "As an architect, I've long felt a special connection with western Yunnan. I have a deep bond with the land and its culture. What draws me again and again to this part of China is its powerful sense of place – the uniqueness of its topography and the ways in which local culture has grown in dialogue with the environment. From the outset, the site possessed a quiet but profound presence. This kind of authenticity and intimacy is becoming increasingly rare in modernized urban contexts."

"At the same time," Hua Li, who studied at Tsinghua and Yale universities, said, "Nujiang was undergoing significant transformations as part of China's broader rural revitalization



Bookstore.

and poverty alleviation efforts. Many villages in mountainous areas had been relocated to more accessible valleys due to harsh living conditions. Yet, we saw in Yangpo an opportunity for a different approach – one that didn't depend on relocation, but instead sought to bring new vitality into the village from within, through cultural investment."

By collaborating with Librairie Avant-Garde, Hua Li hoped "to plant a seed for long-term change – and the impact has surpassed expectations. Since my first visit in 2021, Yangpo has transformed from a typical rural village into a more vibrant community, with younger residents returning from cities to open guesthouses and restaurants. The village no longer feels left behind. More importantly, the bookstore is quietly shaping a cultural shift: local children now spend weekends browsing books, forming memories that may influence their lives for years to come. The project has grown beyond architecture – it has become part of the village's living fabric."

Explaining his professional philosophy, Hua Li said, "I think the constant in architecture is that you always need to design with your heart. Architecture is not just about dealing with functions. Only those buildings that touch you at a spiritual level will last and their core will never change. I would like my architecture

to be timeless, to be able to withstand the challenges of time."

What India Should Learn

As I embarked on a return journey from Lishui to Mumbai, I wondered: What is the one image that most strikingly symbolises "Modernisation with Chinese Characteristics", a phrase one routinely comes across in debates about China these days? The answer, incontestably, was the mountain-top bookstore in Yangpo village.

Foreigners visiting China generally associate the country's modernisation with the glistening airports and railway stations that are the largest in the world, sleek bullet trains that are the fastest in the world, and mesmerising skyscrapers in Shanghai, Beijing, Chongqing and other Chinese cities that are among the tallest in the world. At night, these skyscrapers put up a dazzling show of lights, the likes of which one rarely sees in other global cities. But I do not regard these as the only stories of China's modernisation.

There are other, more inspiring, stories of modern China. These are told by places like Nujiang. The symbol of transformation here is the bookstore perched in sublime seclusion on the slope of the ageless Gaoligong mountain, overlooking the vast expanse of a valley below where the meandering Nujiang river flows into the Andaman Sea. If the sacred mountain knows how its inhabitants suffered in the past, the equally sacred bookstore, which treasures knowledge from around the world, today stands as a proud messenger of how an ancient civilisation has cast off the shackles of the past and is revitalising itself with the power of modern technologies and a modern outlook.

Our northeastern states, as well as the rest of India, can learn a lesson or two from China's modernisation.

The author is founder of the Forum for a New South Asia and served as an aide to the then Prime Minister of India Atal Bihari Vajpayee. The views expressed are personal.

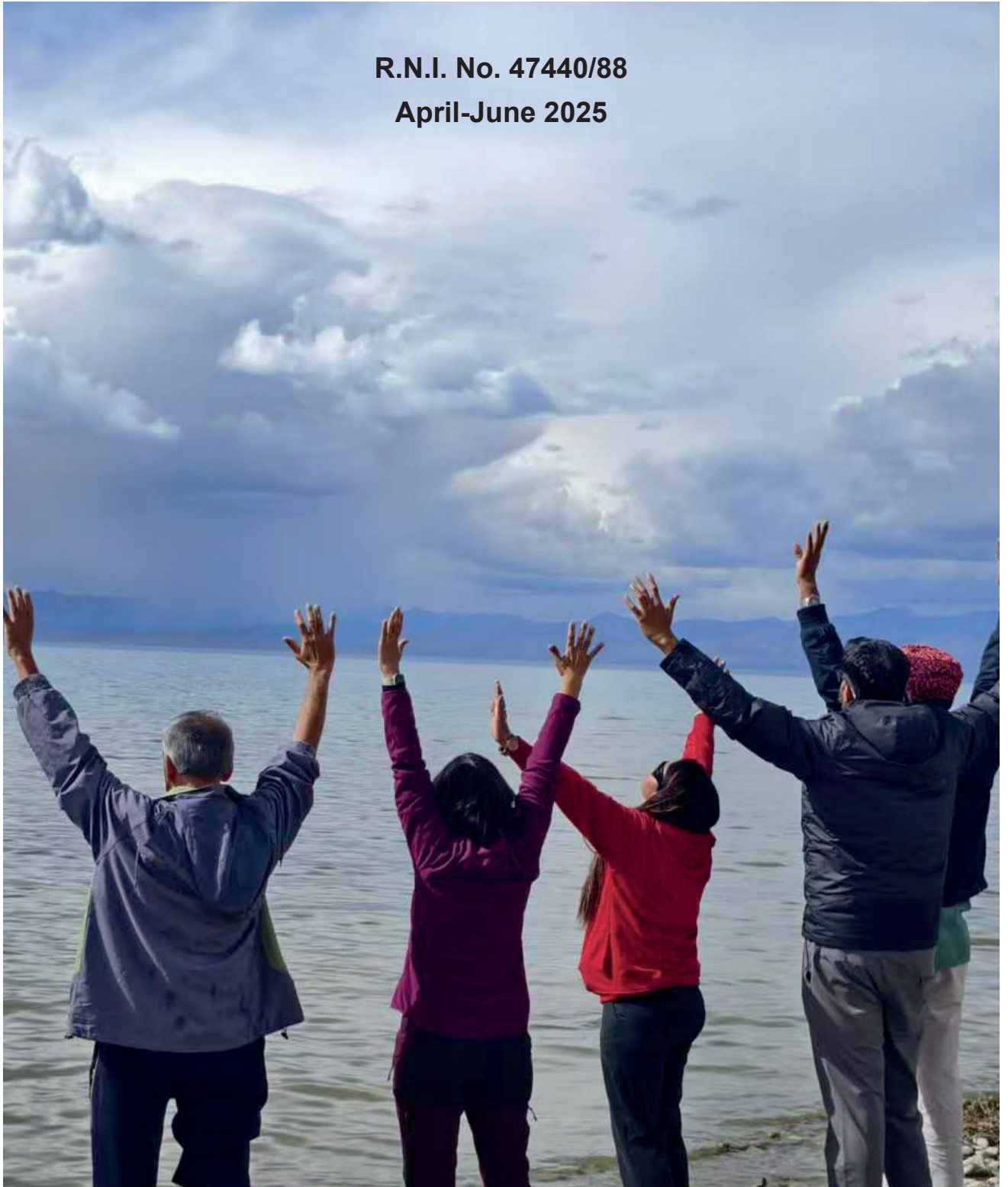


80TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATION

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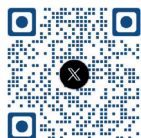


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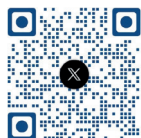


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