



Today's important articles/news in various newspapers (9th April)

April 9, 2018 Shiksha IAS Academy

Dear aspirants, following are the links of various articles taken from various newspapers. Click the link to read further. To get notification, follow the blog. Thank you

1. [Out of my mind: Trust the court](#)

That idea is a hallmark of the liberalism which is the foundation of the Constitution. Liberalism presumes a basic equality of rank among all citizens. Yet, the society has no such equality.

2. [What Nepal needs is India's friendship and support for growth: Nepal PM Oli](#)

In an exclusive interview to The Hindu, Mr. Oli says the bitterness of past relations have been put behind them, and India and Nepal must work towards a new, more equal relationship.

3. [Insider info: Sebi moves to plug WhatsApp leaks](#)

Market regulator may tell firms to change how they handle price-sensitive information.

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) is considering asking companies to frame a policy on how to handle unpublished price-sensitive information, or UPSI, and convey the policy to employees; monitor big share price changes before important events like earnings releases; conduct background checks on employees dealing with such information; identify people involved in major deals and ensure information given to junior or external teams is on a need-to-know basis; and create separate work spaces with secured access for those preparing and discussing issues that are price-sensitive.

4. [From identifying plant pests to picking fruit, AI is reinventing how farmers produce your food](#)

Sick crops? These Indian subsistence farmers know just what to do: Pull out their smartphones and take their picture. The farmers then upload the images with GPS locations to a cloud-based artificial intelligence (AI) app named [Plantix](#). The app identifies the crop type in the image and spits out a diagnosis of a disease, pest or nutrient deficiency. Plantix also aids farmers by recommending targeted biological



or chemical treatments for ailing plants, reducing the volume of agrochemicals in groundwater and waterways that can result from overuse or incorrect application of herbicides and pesticides.

5. **Rich nations have cornered 90% of farm subsidy entitlements: India-China study**
Seeking to expose the double-standards of developed countries at the World Trade Organization (WTO), a joint paper by India and China has revealed that rich nations, including the US, the EU and Canada, have been consistently giving trade-distorting subsidies to their farmers at levels much higher than the ceiling applied on developing countries. Together, the developed world has cornered 90 per cent of total entitlements, amounting to a whopping \$160 billion annually.

6. **As China continues to encircle India, earlier through ‘string of pearls’ and now the Belt and Road Initiative, why is India still hesitant to form a ‘Democratic Quad’?**

The question posed appears to be based on three assumptions, agreeing to which is a little difficult. First, China is encircling India through ‘string of pearls’ and the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Secondly, that the proposed ‘Democratic Quad’ is a response to this encirclement. Thirdly, India is hesitant to form the ‘Quad’ and that it is India’s hesitance alone that is holding up its formation.

It is true that certain security-strategic implications of the BRI have been discerned for India, particularly vis-à-vis the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Agreement, 2015. CPEC has emerged as a contentious issue between the two countries, which the Government of India has raised with China at highest levels. However, reducing the entire BRI to any perceived Chinese encirclement of India is plain unworkable. That’s not the Government of India’s official position either. The BRI has a much broader geo-political and geo-economic consideration of its own and linking it solely with India would be an unconvincing exercise. Similarly, the international community is closely watching the ongoing Chinese People’s Liberation Army’s (PLA) modernisation drive, the scale of which is unprecedented in recent history. India too has been watchful of it. Chinese Navy’s activities have, indeed, increased in the Indian Ocean region (IOR) in the last one decade or so. However, it is largely due to China’s growing economic and security engagement with the world, and, in case of IOR, with West Asia and Africa. Chinese naval presence in IOR has the potential to become a major security concern for India in unforeseen strategic exigencies. However, as of now, terming it as solely aimed at encircling India would be a rash conclusion. The Indian Government does not take an alarmist view of it, though it has been following strategic developments in IOR closely and has come up with various political, strategic and military initiatives towards the region.



इहोइहा
IAS ACADEMY
Your Dreams, Our Mission!

In fact, in the last few decades, India has espoused an Ocean-centric geo-spatial view. This view has primarily stemmed from India's own legitimate and larger aspirations to engage with the maritime region more meaningfully. Again, reducing it to being a response to China's growing naval presence would be its undervaluation. Similarly, whether the nascent 'Democratic Quad', if at all it exists, between India, Japan, United States and Australia, is essentially a response to "Chinese encirclements" or it envisages a comprehensive cooperation among the four democratic countries needs to be thought through. Besides, there is no doubt that the Chinese shadow falls across the 'Quad' in the sense that the four countries have their own strategic concerns as well as perceptions about growing Chinese power in Asia. Every country in the visualised 'Quad' has its own bilateral context with China. A perusal of their respective viewpoints in the working level 'Quad' meeting held in Manila in November 2017 reveal their divergent priorities and rationale for cooperation within the 'Quad'. It is difficult to establish that they are actively pursuing 'Quad' as a collective and uniform response to China's perceived aggressive behaviour.

Finally, every idea has its gestation period to fructify. The idea of 'Quad' has been revived after a gap of ten years. Its actualisation requires a great amount of harmonisation of interests and norms among the four countries.

Thank you aspirants. To help us, Like and share us on your social media page and follow us.