



## Opting out of Belt and Road Initiative

### What is the issue?

\n\n

India did not attend the recently held Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) Forum in China.

\n\n

### Why India did not attend?

\n\n

\n

- India referred to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and affirmed that **“no country can accept a project that ignores its core concerns on sovereignty and territorial integrity.”**

\n

- International isolation is not India’s biggest problem as China’s connectivity projects under Xi’s BRI gathers momentum.

\n

- India is too large an economic and political entity to be isolated by another power.

\n

- **India’s real challenge** is to match its claims on territorial sovereignty with effective action on the ground.

\n

\n\n

\n

- Although the popular discourse in India sees Kashmir as a bilateral issue with Pakistan, China has always made it a three-body problem.

\n

\n\n

### China-Pak angle:

\n\n

\n

- China is in occupation of a large part of Ladakh in the north-eastern part of J&K.
- To the west, Pakistan had ceded part of the territory controlled by it to Beijing after the Sino-Indian border conflict of 1962.
- China's first trans-border infrastructure project in Kashmir — the Karakoram Highway — dates back to the late 1960s. Since then, China's presence in Pak-occupied Kashmir has steadily grown.
- As the CPEC deepens the integration between Pakistan occupied Kashmir and China, Beijing looms larger than ever before over J&K.

\n

\n\n

### **Does China alley India's concerns?**

\n\n

\n

- In the last few days, Beijing seemed eager to address India's sovereignty concerns about CPEC.
- Delhi was not impressed though, for the pickings seemed meagre.
- Nevertheless, the effort by the two countries to address the tricky issue of territorial sovereignty in Kashmir is welcome and must continue.
- While it may be prepared to talk, Beijing is unlikely to suspend work on its economic and strategic projects in Pakistan occupied Kashmir.

\n

\n\n

### **What India needs to do?**

\n\n

\n

- India must now articulate a political framework for economic and commercial cooperation across the contested frontiers of Kashmir in all directions.
- The Sino-Indian argument on CPEC in Kashmir is deeply connected to the

question of Arunachal Pradesh.

\n

- While China asks India to downplay the sovereignty argument in Pakistan occupied Kashmir, Beijing objects to all Indian activity, political or economic, in Arunachal Pradesh.
- The state is part of the Indian Union, but is claimed in entirety by China.
- **In Arunachal, India needs to raise its game on accelerating the state's economic development and its connectivity to the rest of India.**
- Delhi must devote high-level political attention to the long-neglected Andaman and Nicobar islands that sit across China's planned maritime silk routes in the eastern Indian Ocean.

\n

\n\n

\n\n

**Source: The Indian Express**

\n



**IAS PARLIAMENT**  
*Information is Empowering*  
A Shankar IAS Academy Initiative