



Opportunities and Challenges for Taiwan-India Strategic and Security Cooperation under the New Situation

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From a few year ago, I have proposed many ideas related about Taiwan-India security cooperation, some of them have been put into practice, but some issues still seem to have some hesitates and doubts, making the issue of Taiwan-India security cooperation appear low-key or not the top priority.

In fact, Taiwan-India cooperation began with the establishment of representative offices between two states. From that time on, some cooperation have changed due to factors such as different government's policy or major international events, such as the 9/11 incident or the US Indo-Pacific strategy.

Of course, the critical factor will be the China. Although there have been stable exchanges in trade and culture between Taiwan and India, but the security cooperation is not increase. Even with the gradual improvement of the QUAD structure of the United States, Japan, India and Australia, and India's response to the needs of countering China. Because India is not active enough, the exchanges and cooperation between the two sides are still insufficient.

New situation

We can see the situation in the Indo-Pacific already changed from recent years. Firstly, the conflict between China and India on the border has increased, and China's border deployment has gradually strengthened because of Xi Jinping's tough and strong attitude. For example, after the border conflict between China and India, although China has withdrawn its troops, China use the usual two-step forward and one-step retreat to get more advantages. Such as India is required to withdraw from the occupied areas, the sources of border disputes and conflicts still there. China already own a bargaining chip in the border issue.

Secondly, after the strengthening of the QUAD architecture, India, the United States, Japan, Australia and other countries have already conducted in-depth cooperation on

strategic and security issues, which has extended many security cooperation issues, which must be implemented in practice to gain the trust of other countries. If India cooperate with these countries in short term consideration, but actually shrinks on many key projects to deepen security cooperation for the reason of China's attitude and response, how can it ask the United States, Japan, and Australia to provide military assistance when conflicts break out between China and India? How this cooperation and architecture can further strengthen the security link and shape a deterrent effect on China.

Thirdly, in terms of China's internal situation, if Xi Jinping continues to lead China, under his strong leadership and strong intention of establishing his own empire, the worst situation that the Indo-Pacific countries worried about may continue to occur. China's geostrategic intentions have been seen by neighboring countries. Although there is still a gap between China's military capabilities and the United States, as far as India, Japan, and Australia still concerned, if they unilaterally face the threat from China, they will never be able to defend by themselves. These countries not only requires the support of the international community in justice and legitimacy, but also in combat capabilities. The international community's support mainly comes from the United States and NATO, and the advancement of military modernization, whether India, Japan or Australia, needs the assistance and support of the United States. The QUAD architecture make the possibility of military cooperation more reality.

Fourth, in the United States, Biden administration's new Indo-Pacific policy naturally seems to continue Trump's Indo-Pacific strategy, but the determination of tough sanctions or the development of strategic high-tech weapon system to counter China's military threat remains need to be observed. The nature of the Chinese Communist regime cannot be reasonable, you must have the several superior force to force China to negotiate. The United States is already developing hypersonic weapons, and the development of space technology is also being strengthened. As long as the United States is willing to help to enhance the military capabilities of countries under the QUAD architecture and plus, it can organize a strong defense network and deter China's rash military actions.

Opportunities for strategic security and cooperation

Obviously, the QUAD architecture is an overall structure of countermeasure against China's threat, it's not enough to invest many resources to prevent China only by the QUAD countries, US, Japan, India and Australia. If these four countries sleep in the same bed, but have different dreams or argue with reason of unfair provision of resources, the function and integration of QUAD will be loosening and insufficient. Especially when Indo-Pacific Countries face a specific regional issue, it still needs the input and assistance of the key neighboring countries. For example, on the Korean Peninsula issue, South Korea's assistance is needed; on the East China Sea and Taiwan Strait issues, Taiwan's input is required; on the South China Sea issue, the assistance of neighboring countries, especially Vietnam, Singapore and Malaysia can play a important role. In particular, Vietnam's geostrategic role is more important in SCS. Although the cooperation of

QUAD and plus is very important, it may be even more critical if the bilateral or multilateral cooperation between the plus countries and QUAD can be deepened.

Although Taiwan cannot participate in the "QUAD+" so far, it should strengthen bilateral and multilateral security cooperation relations with the QUAD and plus countries, but it may not be led by Taiwan. The cooperation projects and contents can be led by the United States, Japan or India. From this dimension, Taiwan-India cooperation should be concerned by Indo-Pacific countries, if Taiwan-India military cooperation is sensitive, they can participate in activities and trainings organized and lead by the United States or Japan. These exchanges including defense think tank talk, military education, military technology, non-traditional security, maritime security, etc., it should be possible now and without causing disputes.

I listed the following specific items of Taiwan-India security cooperation for your reference.

Military education

1. Language course for two sides officers, Taiwanese officers go to India to learn English and Hindi, Indian officers go to Taiwan to learn Chinese and PLA studies
2. Exchanges between the two parties' military academy students
3. The two sides exchange in command and staff college level and joint operations courses in the war college.
4. Military think tank exchanges

Military diplomacy

1. India dispatched active military attachés to Taiwan
2. Taiwan sends more service attachés to India including navy and air force officer.
3. Military Intelligent Exchange Conference
4. Mutual visits of warships
5. High level ranking officers mutual visits and activities

Defense Technology

1. Cooperation and joint research and development of advanced military technology
2. Military chip development and use cooperation
3. Anti-ship missiles and submarine R&D cooperation
4. U.S. weapons training and logistics cooperation

Non-traditional and maritime Security

1. Joint rescue exercise at sea
2. Cyber security cooperation and exercises
3. Co-participate in relevant US military training courses
4. Anti-terrorist special forces exchanges
5. The military role in HADR

If Taiwan and India are willing to sincerely deepen security and strategic cooperation, in fact, there are many projects can be done. If we can plan the future phases and schedules of cooperation in advanced by the possibility, naturally, it will be a matter of course.

Editor's Note: the views expressed in *Asia Insights* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the policy or the position of their institutions.

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