

US-CHINA CONFLICT OVER TAIWAN

SYLLABUS: GS PAPER-II (INDIA AND ITS NEIGHBORHOOD, EFFECTS OF POLICIES & POLITICS OF COUNTRIES ON INDIA'S INTEREST)

CONTEXT: The visit by **US speaker Nancy Pelosi to Taiwan** has not been well received by China. It has sparked intense tensions between the two powerful countries- China and US as **China sees Taiwan as a breakaway province**.

ABOUT ONE CHINA PRINCIPLE AND ONE CHINA POLICY

- It is important to distinguish between the One China Principle and the One China Policy to understand the cross-Taiwan Strait problems.
- The People's Republic of China follows the **One China Principle**, a core belief that sees Taiwan as an inalienable part of China, with its sole legitimate government in Beijing.
- The US acknowledges this position but not necessarily its validity.
- The US instead follows the **One China Policy**, meaning that The People's Republic of China was and is the only China, with no recognition for the Republic of China (ROC, Taiwan) as a separate sovereign entity.
- At the same time, the US refuses to give in to the PRC's demands to recognize Chinese sovereignty over Taiwan.



ABOUT TAIWAN

- Taiwan, officially the Republic of China, is a **country in East Asia**, and is the **largest land mass between Japan and the Philippines** at the junction of the **East and South China Sea** in the northwestern Pacific Ocean.

- Earlier known as **Formosa**, Taiwan is a tiny island off the east coast of China, separated from mainland China by the **Taiwan Strait**. It is a part of the '**first island chain**'- a string of island nations/territories, including Japan, South Korea and Philippines that are seen pro-US.
- Much of the world's **global supply chain of semiconductors** is reliant on Taiwan.
- Further, its contract manufacturers together accounted for more than **60% of total global semiconductor revenue in 2021**.
- Currently, only **13 countries (plus the Vatican)** recognize Taiwan as a sovereign country.

WHY ARE US-CHINA AT LOGGERHEADS OVER TAIWAN?

- While China sees Taiwan as a breakaway province, Taiwan, officially the **Republic of China (RoC)**, sees itself as an independent state. It has stood firm against China's "**reunification**" goal.
- While US maintains ties with Taipei and sells weapons to it, it officially subscribes to **PRC's One China policy-where Taiwan does not exist as a separate entity**. This position is premised on Beijing not invading Taiwan. It is this delicate diplomatic balance that Pelosi's visit may have disturbed.
- On October 1, 2021, during the 72nd anniversary of PRC, China flew over 100 fighter jets into Taiwan's air defense identification zone, setting off alarm bells.

RELEVANCE OF TAIWAN TO CHINA

- China and Taiwan's economies are inextricably linked. **China is Taiwan's biggest export partner, with an export value of 515 billion dollars from 2017 to 2022**, more than double the US, which was the next biggest partner.
- Taiwan is much **closer to mainland China** than the other islands, and has been claimed by Beijing since Nationalists were driven there during the **Chinese revolution in 1949**.
- Some have seen **Russia's invasion of Ukraine as a potential catalyst for a China-Taiwan conflict**.

RELEVANCE OF TAIWAN TO US

- Taiwan anchors a chain of islands which includes a list of US-friendly territories that the US is planning to use as a place of leverage for countering China's expansionist plans.
- The United States does not have official diplomatic ties with Taiwan but is bound by **US law (Taiwan Relations Act, 1979)** to provide the island with the means to defend itself.
- It is by far the **largest arms dealer for Taiwan and follows a 'strategic ambiguity' policy**.

INDIA'S POSITION

- **India-Taiwan Ties:** As a part of **India's Act East Foreign Policy**, India has sought to cultivate extensive ties with Taiwan in trade and investment as well as developing co-operation in science & technology, environment issues and people-to-people exchange. For instance, the **India-Taipei Association (ITA)** and **Taipei Economic and Cultural Centre (TECC)** in New Delhi.
- **India and Taiwan do not have formal diplomatic relations** but since 1995, both sides have maintained representative offices in each other's capitals that function as de facto embassies.

- **Since 1949, India has accepted the One China policy** that accepts Taiwan and Tibet as part of China.
- However, India uses the policy to make a diplomatic point, i.e., **if India believes in “One China” policy, China should also believe in a “One India” policy.**
- Even though India has stopped mentioning its adherence to One China policy in joint statements and official documents since 2010, its engagement with Taiwan is still restricted due to the framework of ties with China.

DATA LAW DELAY

SYLLABUS: GS PAPER-II (GOVERNANCE), GS PAPER-III (SECURITY ISSUES)

CONTEXT: The government has withdrawn the **Personal Data Protection Bill** from Parliament as it considers a **“comprehensive legal framework”** to regulate the online space, including bringing separate laws on data privacy, the overall Internet ecosystem, cybersecurity, telecom regulations, and harnessing non-personal data to boost innovation in the country.

ORIGIN OF THE BILL

- The **Justice Srikrishna panel was set up in 2017 in the backdrop of the Supreme Court’s verdict holding privacy is a fundamental right**, and its direction to the government to draw up a data protection framework for the country. The Srikrishna Committee released a white paper that same year, outlining the areas it would be looking at.
- In July 2018, the committee submitted a draft data protection Bill to the Ministry of Electronics and IT, which said that it would draft a fresh Bill borrowing from the ideas presented in the Srikrishna Committee Bill.
- In December 2019, the Bill was referred to the Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC), which was then headed by the BJP’s Meenakshi Lekhi. As the committee started a clause-by-clause analysis of the Bill, it also sought and received extensions for presenting its report in September 2020 and March 2021.
- In July 2021, BJP MP PP Chaudhary was appointed chairperson of the JCP after Lekhi was made Minister of State for External Affairs. The JCP received yet another extension to submit its report after Chaudhary’s appointment.
- In December 2021, the JCP tabled its report in Parliament, which Justice Srikrishna said was heavily in favor of the government. In a media interview, he said that the Bill could turn India into an **“Orwellian state.”**

REASONS FOR WITHDRAWAL OF THE BILL

- The government has withdrawn the Bill citing the **considerable number of amendments, recommendations, and corrections suggested by the JPC.** The JPC’s 542-page report has 93 recommendations, 81 amendments and members have suggested 97 corrections and improvements to the Bill.
- The Bill was also seen as being too **“compliance intensive”** by startups of the country. According to government sources, the revamped Bill will be much easier to comply with, especially for startups.

WHAT DOES THE BILL SAY ON DATA LOCALIZATION?

- Personal data was defined in the Bill as **“any characteristic, trait, attribute or any other feature information”** that can be used to identify a person.

- The Bill also identified a sub-category of **Sensitive Personal Data**, such as details on a person's finance, health, sexual orientation and practices, caste, political and religious beliefs, and biometric and genetic data.
- It also created a **Critical Personal Data category, which was "personal data as may be notified by the Central government"** in the future.
- The Bill stated that while Sensitive Personal Data can be transferred abroad for processing, a copy of it must be kept in India.
- Critical Personal Data can be stored and processed only in India.
- It also stipulates the conditions under which sensitive data can be sent abroad, such as government authorized contracts.
- Several countries have such localization provisions, considering the strategic and commercial implications of data, the **"new oil."** However, businesses both big and small, international, and domestic, have issues with such localization.

CONCERNS OF THE TECH INDUSTRY

- Indian start-ups have raised the issue that the infrastructure needed to comply with the localization stipulations will be a huge drain on their resources.
- Start-ups also often depend on international companies for services such as customer management, analytics, and marketing, which will require them to send data on their customers abroad.
- Data localization requirements would not only reduce their choices on such services but also burden them with compliance processes.
- The compliance requirements have implications for the larger U.S.-based tech companies as well, with reports indicating that umbrella organizations of U.S. businesses were lobbying against the Bill.
- One of the JPC recommendations would also have been of particular concern for social media companies as it sought to move them from the category of online intermediaries to content publishers, thus making them responsible for the posts they host.

PRELIMS FACTS

INDIAN VIRTUAL HERBARIUM

- Developed by **scientists of the Botanical Survey of India (BSI)**, the herbarium was inaugurated by Union Minister of Environment Forest and Climate Change Bhupendra Yadav in Kolkata on July 1. Since then, **the portal ivh.bsi.gov.in has had nearly two lakh hits from 55 countries.**
- Each record in the digital herbarium includes an **image of the preserved plant specimen, scientific name, collection locality, and collection date, collector name, and barcode number.**
- The digital herbarium includes features to extract the data State-wise, and users can search plants of their own States, which will help them identify regional plants and in building regional checklists.

PASMANDA MUSLIMS

- Recently, Pasmada Community has gained the attention of many political parties for inclusive growth and eradication of intra caste discrimination.
- ‘Pasmada,’ a Persian term meaning “those who have fallen behind” refers to Muslims belonging to the shudra (backward) and ati-shudra (Dalit) castes.
- It was adopted as an oppositional identity to that of the dominant **Ashraf Muslims (forward castes)** in 1998 by the **Pasmada Muslim Mahaz**, a group which worked in Bihar.
- Pasmandas encompass those who are socially, educationally, and economically backward and make up most of the Muslim community in the country.
- The term “Pasmada” is majorly used by Muslim associations in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and other parts of India to define themselves as Muslim communities historically and socially oppressed by caste.
- Backward, Dalit and tribal Muslim communities are now organizing under the identity of Pasmada. These communities include: **Kunjre (Raeen), Julahe (Ansari), Dhunia (Mansuri), Kasai (Qureishi), Fakir (Alvi), Hajjam (Salmani), Mehtar (Halalkhor), Gwala (Ghosi), Dhobi (Hawari), Lohar-Badhai (Saifi), Manihar (Siddiqui), Darzi (Idrisi), Vangujjar, etc.**



KONDAPALLI TOYS

- **Location:** Kondapalli Toys are the toys made of wood in Kondapalli village of Krishna district, Andhra Pradesh. Bommala Colony translates to Toys Colony in Kondapalli is the place where the art of crafting takes place.
- **Recognition:** It was registered as one of the geographical indication handicrafts from Andhra Pradesh as per Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999.
- **Depiction:** The artisans mainly work on producing figures of mythology, animals, birds, bullock carts, rural life etc., and the most notable one is Dasavataram, dancing dolls etc.
- **Aryakhastriyas:** The artisans who make the toys are referred to as Aryakhastriyas (also known as Nakarshalu), who have their mention in the Brahmanda Purana.
- **Toy crafting:** The Kondapalli toys are made from soft wood known as Tella Poniki which are found in nearby Kondapalli Hills.
- The wood is first carved out and then the edges are smooth finished.

The later step involves coloring with either oil and water-colours or vegetable