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Briefs, scans the best academic platforms, national newspapers & leading think tanks to pick the most relevant articles & research. It converts them into crisp, high-impact points you can directly use in your mains answers.



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Amit Pratap Singh
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India and the rising cost of strategic autonomy

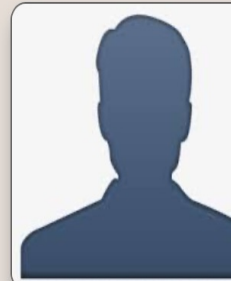


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India and the Rising Costs of Strategic Autonomy

July 24, 2026 | Issue Brief



Ghadeer Nabiza

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Context India has retained its strategic autonomy but faces growing diplomatic costs as it simultaneously manages partnerships with competing powers such as the US, Israel and Iran.

Facts

India has strategic stakes with the US (Quad), Israel (defence, IMEC) and Iran (Chabahar Port, INSTC).

India adopted policy of restraint, dialogue & de-escalation, without assigning political blame.

Analytical Crux

India's strategic autonomy is no longer about maintaining equal distance from major powers but about managing increasingly interconnected relationships. As geopolitical competition intensifies, every diplomatic choice carries higher strategic and economic costs. India's foreign policy must therefore balance autonomy with pragmatic multi-alignment while safeguarding long-term interests. Strategic autonomy and multi-alignment are complementary but distinct concepts, both becoming harder to sustain in a polarised world.

Verbatim Quotes

"The challenge for New Delhi will be not whether to preserve it, but how to manage the growing costs that accompany it."

— Ghadeer Nabizade

China's water threats , India's Malacca leverage

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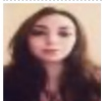
WEEKLY

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China's Water Threats, India's Malacca Leverage and Growing Indo-Pacific Contestation

While China's leverage over India runs through an upstream river Beijing controls, India's leverage over China runs through a chokepoint India will now sit astride. The Strait of Malacca is a 930-km passage between the Malay Peninsula and Sumatra through which an approximate of 40–50 percent of global trade and 80 percent of China's crude oil imports transit.



By Aparna Rawal | Jul 11, 2026



Context

China is increasing its leverage over Brahmaputra through upstream infrastructure and India is asymmetrically by strengthening its presence around the strait of Malacca through Great Nicobar and Sabang.

Facts

■ Around 80% of China's crude oil imports pass through the Strait of Malacca, creating the "Malacca Dilemma".

■ China's 60 GW Medog Dam on the Yarlung Tsangpo began construction in July 2025.

Analytical Crux

Since India cannot match China's leverage over Brahmaputra, it seeks strategic influence over the Malacca Strait-critical to China's energy security. Rather than escalating tensions, India aims to raise the costs of Chinese coercion through maritime infrastructure and Indo-Pacific partnerships. The case illustrates how geography, connectivity and sea power increasingly shape strategic competition in Asia.

Verbatim Quotes

"While China's leverage over India runs through an upstream river Beijing controls, India's leverage over China runs through a chokepoint India will now sit astride."

- Aparna Rawal

Bangladesh's strategic balancing & India's challenge

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/ Bangladesh's Strategic Balancing and India's Neighbourhood Challenge: China Will Consolidate Influen

Bangladesh's Strategic Balancing and India's Neighbourhood Challenge: China Will Consolidate Influence if New Delhi Fails to Deliver

In several neighbouring countries, including Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal, China has demonstrated an ability to move from agreements to implementation far more rapidly than many competitors. India, despite enjoying unmatched geographic and cultural advantages, has often struggled with delays



By Anand Kumar | Jul 24, 2026

Context

Dhaka is diversifying its external partnerships rather than moving away from India, making timely delivery of projects central to India's regional influence.

Facts

■ Bangladesh elevated ties with China to a "Comprehensive Strategic Cooperative partnership."

■ China is supporting Teesta River Project & Mongala Port modernisation, both strategically significant for India.

■ India lost the Mongla SEZ project after implementation delays, highlighting a delivery deficit.

Analytical Crux

Delivery, not historical goodwill, now determines regional influence. Bangladesh's engagement with China reflects strategic diversification rather than diplomatic realignment. While India's geographic, economic and cultural links remain indispensable, implementation delays have weakened its competitive edge. Strengthening connectivity, completing infrastructure projects on time and resolving pending bilateral issues will be essential for sustaining India's "Neighbourhood First" policy amid rising Chinese influence in South Asia.

Verbatim Quotes

"India's regional influence will increasingly depend on its ability to deliver, not merely on geography or historical goodwill."

— Dr. Anand Kumar



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