

Geopolitical Destabilization: India's US-Backed "Decoupling" from China Is a Very Dangerous Development

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For all intents and purposes, India seems to have unofficially decided to "decouple" itself from its "fellow" BRICS and SCO "partner" China, but this US-backed development is dangerous since the South Asian state might not be able to survive the domestic socio-economic and regionally destabilizing consequences of such a dramatic move.

The Decoupling That Everyone Should Have Seen Coming

Exactly as the author predicted several years back in his analytical piece about the "[21st-Century Geopolitics Of The Multipolar World Order](#)", India has finally decided to more openly embrace its long-suspected role of being the US' main continental proxy for "containing" China in the aftermath of the Galwan Incident earlier this month. Bilateral relations with China have since deteriorated to such a point that "[Russia Can't Broker Sino-Indo Peace: The Best It Can Do Is Balance Its Response To This Crisis](#)". "[Modi's Major Himalayan Mistake Crushed The Indian Military's Morale](#)", and since "[Modi Can't Put The Genie Of Indian Jingoism Back In The Bottle](#)", he's forced to surrender to the hyper-nationalist grassroots forces that the ruling BJP unleashed over the past six years by escalating tensions with China even further through the de-facto "decoupling" of these two neighboring nations.

Boycott Blowback

The specific form that it's taking in its first manifestation is its population's [unofficial "boycott"](#) of Chinese goods, which the Indian leadership believes will facilitate the clinching of a forthcoming free trade deal with the US after signaling to its new patron just how serious its people are about "[economically distancing](#)" themselves from the People's Republic. This is an extremely risky strategy that will likely result in tremendous self-inflicted damage to India's stability if it's not properly managed because of the disastrous socio-economic consequences of such a dramatic move. China is India's largest trading partner if one doesn't account for the US' recent surge of energy exports to the South Asian country over the past year, and it's also among its top foreign investors as well. India simply cannot afford to cut the economic umbilical cord connecting these two countries, which is why it's opting for a "phased" approach in implementing its unstated "decoupling" policy.

The Resurgence Of India's Class-Based Struggle

The plan, as Indian leaders conceive it to be at least, is to serve as the primary destination for foreign firms that decide to "re-offshore" from China in response to the US' "[trade war](#)" pressure. To make itself more appealing, Hindustan Times reported in early May that "[Some](#)

[states put freeze on labour laws to get business going](#)”, which prompted Al Jazeera to opine shortly thereafter that “[India’s workers face ‘race to the bottom’ of labour standards](#)”. This is a dream come true for India’s government-affiliated conglomerates and their foreign partners (both present and prospective), but a disaster in the making for its internal stability since it’ll likely provoke more class-based unrest that could unify the country’s ethno-religiously disparate masses behind a common anti-government cause. The increasingly authoritarian government, however, assumes that it can keep everything under control with its stereotypically muscular response to anti-government demonstrations.

The Self-Sustaining Cycle Of Destabilization

That’s a strategic mistake if there ever was one since the state’s history of [violently overreacting to law-abiding protests](#) actually worsens the domestic drivers of unrest by giving the angry masses more grievances to protest about, thus catalyzing a self-sustaining cycle of destabilization. In addition, the expected economic dividends of a hoped-for trade deal with the US might not materialize, or at least not as immediately as decision makers hope. America might take advantage of the fact that India doesn’t have any credible alternatives after proverbially burning its bridges with China in order to demand even more radical labor “reforms” that end up worsening the domestic situation in order for its companies to reap even greater profits in the meantime. India is therefore at risk of slipping into a strategic trap entirely of its own making, one that will also likely result in destabilizing regional consequences as well.

The Self-Fulfilling Prophecy Of “Encirclement”

The first of these is that China will inevitably respond to India’s intended “decoupling” by more actively “wooing” the latter’s South Asian neighbors along the lines of the model that it just unveiled with Bangladesh whereby the People’s Republic just [exempted 97%](#) of the former’s exports from tariffs. Expanding this policy throughout the region after perfecting its implementation in Bangladesh will weaken India’s trade ties with its neighbors and consequently contribute to its self-fulfilling prophecy that China is “encircling” it even though Beijing’s “economic diplomacy” in this respect is being practiced defensively in response to India’s US-backed [Hybrid War](#) aggression against it. Paired with the jingoistic sentiment that’s uncontrollably spreading throughout India, its leadership might feel compelled to engage in risky military adventures to “save face” at home.

Removing Chanakya’s Yoga Mask

A doubling down on India’s strategy of regional aggression would remove the friendly yoga mask that it’s worn for years in an attempt to deceive the international community into thinking that it’s “peaceful” and thus expose its true Machiavellian intentions. Many outside observers might not be aware of it, but the much more popular Machiavelli was just a later European version of the lesser known Indian [Chanakya](#) of almost two millennia prior who embodied the exact same “pragmatic” principles but took them to even more shocking extremes. Growing awareness outside of South Asia about the true basis for Indian grand strategy could irreparably harm the country’s “positive” image that it’s invested so much time, money, and effort into carefully cultivating over the decades. It would no longer just be so-called “Chinese and/or Pakistani propaganda” to consider India as the “[rogue state](#)” that it really is, but an empirical fact that would by then be impossible to ignore.

Concluding Thoughts

As can be seen from this analysis, India's intended "decoupling" from China carries with it enormous risks to its domestic and regional stability. The US is encouraging its new proxy to undertake this dramatic move since it stands to gain regardless of what happens. American companies can reap massive profits from India's trend of removing labor regulations, the American government can blame China for "stoking unrest" inside the country if a large-scale class-based anti-government movement arises in response to excessive labor abuses, and the American military can sell more weapons to its Indian counterpart in pursuit of their shared objective of "containing" China in the region. India's being set up by the US to fail, but it's all by design, not incompetence, since America is masterful at employing "constructive chaos" to advance its grand strategic ambitions everywhere in the world.

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