



Institute of Chinese Studies

WEDNESDAY SEMINAR

*Growing Uncertainty in
Existing International
Order: Whither India-China
Relations*

*Hemant Adlakha in Conversation
with Zhou Bo and Vijay K. Nambiar*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Speakers:

Col. Zhou Bo

Amb. Vijay K. Nambiar

23 April 2025

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Speakers: Sr. Col. Zhou Bo, Senior Colonel (Retd.); and, Senior Fellow, Centre for International Security and Strategy, Tsinghua University, Beijing.

Amb. Vijay K. Nambiar, former Ambassador of India to China; and, Honorary Fellow, Institute of Chinese Studies, New Delhi.

Chair: Dr. Hemant Adlakha, Associate Professor, Centre for Chinese and South East Asian Studies, School of Language, Literature and Culture Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi; and Vice-Chairperson and Honorary Fellow, Institute of Chinese Studies, New Delhi.

Date: 23 April 2025

Venue: Zoom Webinar

- The seminar explored key geopolitical and economic issues involving India and China, in an evolving global order. Sr. Col. Zhou Bo and Amb. Vijay Nambiar emphasised the complex interplay between economic diplomacy, strategic priorities, and international relations in the current international environment.
- The speakers discussed India's position as a growing economic power and its efforts to balance self-reliance and global engagement. The speakers argued that India's role in multilateral organisations, and its strategic priorities in the Indo-Pacific are vital to shaping its future economic diplomacy and geopolitical influence. Additionally, the importance of India's economic and security partnerships, particularly with global powers like the United States, China, and Russia, was highlighted.
- Sr. Col. Zhou discussed China's rise and its relationship with the West, arguing that the "liberal international order" is a Western construct, and highlighted the need for a multipolar and more inclusive global system. Other issues covered in the discussion were China's growing influence in global governance and the significance of its engagements with emerging economies, including its contributions to BRICS and its approach to regional stability.

- The speakers debated the evolving role of multilateral institutions in fostering global stability. It was pointed out that institutions such as the United Nations, BRICS, and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation have become more critical in addressing global challenges. Countries like India and China, despite their differences, share common ground in pushing for a more diversified and equitable global governance structure — one that reflects the voices and interests of emerging economies.
- The discussion also dwelt on the future trajectory of India-China relations, particularly with regard to border issues and economic cooperation. The speakers emphasised that while tensions exist, especially in the context of the border issue, both countries must focus on maintaining peace and stability. The importance of enhancing confidence-building measures was emphasised, as this would facilitate bilateral trade and promote joint efforts toward international peacekeeping missions. Such steps are critical to fostering a more positive and collaborative India-China relationship which would reflect the growing influence of emerging economies and promote a more balanced international system.

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