EDITORIALS - 31ST OCT 2026

1. CAN INDIA AND CHINA COEXIST PEACEFULLY? (GS PAPER II INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS)

This editorial '**Can India and China coexist peacefully?**' was published in **The Hindu** on 31st Oct 2026, highlights the scope for peaceful coexistence through strategic **understanding, dialogue** and **conflict avoidance**.

Sources of tension and diplomatic lessons

- **Managed coexistence** remains fragile as patrolling deviations become confrontations, allowing **border disputes** to undermine wider bilateral relations.
- The **1962 war** entrenched Indian distrust and territorial grievances; the **2020 Galwan clash**, killing 20 Indian soldiers, deepened tensions without fully explaining enduring estrangement.
- **Unclear demarcation** in Ladakh and the legacy of the **McMahon Line** complicate settlement, but border disagreements alone cannot explain persistent hostility.
- **Rajiv Gandhi's 1988 visit** and engagement with Deng Xiaoping enabled a diplomatic reset and separate **boundary discussions**, bypassing bureaucratic and military procedural hurdles.
- Subsequent initiatives increasingly resemble a **zero-sum game**; Chinese perceptions of India's **U.S. alignment**, including the Quad, as containment reinforce the stalemate.

Strategic understanding and conflict avoidance

- India should pursue **strategic stability** rather than view China as an **existential threat**, while recognising that Beijing may perceive India as a future competitor.
- **War avoidance** serves both countries: conflict would delay China's **2049 ambitions**, while India also lacks an inclination towards war.
- Both must explicitly reject **force** for dispute settlement and communicate restraint to **border personnel**, preventing another Galwan-type clash or inadvertent escalation.
- Despite **military modernisation**, the editorial assesses Chinese forces as not yet world-class and India as capable of matching China in the **high Himalayas**; restraint over Taiwan suggests military realism.
- The **2005 agreement** demonstrates scope for accommodation: Article I rejected force or its threat, while Article VII protected **settled populations' interests** in boundary settlement.
- Understanding China's **intentions** and **historical identity**, including Qing-era boundary fluidity, can reduce miscalculation; misreading Beijing could provoke unintended responses.

BEYOND EDITORIAL

Structural constraints on India–China rapprochement

- **Economic dependence:** Pharmaceutical input imports worth ₹27,032 crore from China in 2024–25 expose **supply-chain vulnerabilities**, complicating rapid disengagement.
- **Pakistan factor:** CPEC's passage through Pakistan-occupied Indian territory creates **sovereignty concerns**, obstructing bilateral accommodation.
- **Water insecurity:** China's Yarlung Tsangpo hydropower project raises **downstream concerns**, prompting Indian demands for transparency and consultation.
- **Neighbourhood competition:** Yuan Wang 5's 2022 Hambantota visit illustrated how Chinese activity near India generates **security concerns**.
- **Maritime competition:** China's Djibouti base, operational since 2017, expands naval support capacity, widening India's **strategic challenges** beyond the Himalayas.
- **Technological distrust:** India's 2020 blocking of 59 apps, including TikTok, on security grounds highlights persistent **digital sovereignty** concerns.
- **Multilateral differences:** China's consensus requirement for admitting non-NPT countries complicates India's Nuclear Suppliers Group ambitions, sustaining **institutional friction**.

2. BEYOND GULLIBILITY (GS PAPER II GOVERNANCE)

This editorial '**Beyond gullibility**' was published in **The Hindu** on 31st Oct 2026, highlights the limits of **banking safeguards** against **digital arrest scams** and the need for institutional accountability without penalising genuine customers.

Drivers of fraud and banking accountability

- **Digital arrest scams** caused losses of about ₹800 crore this year even after recoveries; impersonated officials exploit **fear of law enforcement**, particularly among older citizens.
- **Mule accounts** enable laundering of scam proceeds, sometimes with bank staff assistance; transaction histories and **AI tools** can help banks detect anomalies faster.
- The Supreme Court pressed for finalising **KYC Amendment Directions, 2026**, requiring suspected mule accounts to be flagged and temporarily restricted; implementation was assured by **December 31**.
- The RBI's **2017 circular** covers unauthorised transactions, leaving victims coerced into making transfers without recourse; compensation for **due diligence failures** would address this gap.

Safeguards against disproportionate action

- **Full compensation** for bank negligence requires careful implementation, as liability could encourage **excessive flagging** beyond actual mule accounts.
- Under **RBI directions**, unusual transfers of ₹1,000 or more relative to declared profiles, or transfers linked to reported accounts, can face **holds up to 60 days**, extendable by police.
- **Account freezes** disproportionately harm small traders and Jan Dhan holders unknowingly receiving mule-account funds; automatic police reporting and physical verification also raise **privacy concerns**.

- Scam compounds in **Myanmar, Cambodia and Laos** use trafficked Indians and benefit from some official patronage; India must apply **diplomatic pressure** on these regimes.

BEYOND EDITORIAL

Building citizen resilience against digital impersonation

- **Digital literacy:** CyberDost advisories explain impersonation tactics and fraudulent demands, helping citizens recognise **scam indicators**.
- **Independent verification:** I4C's March 2025 advisory recommends directly contacting local police to verify callers, preventing scammer-controlled **identity checks**.
- **Family support:** I4C advises consulting relatives or friends before transferring money, helping interrupt **coercive isolation**.
- **Accessible reporting:** The 1930 helpline and National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal facilitate financial cyberfraud complaints, supporting **early intervention**.
- **Behavioural awareness:** The October 2024 "Stop–Think–Take Action" message encourages pausing before responding, countering **panic-driven transfers**.
- **Community outreach:** Cyber Jaagrookta Diwas promotes recurring activities through educational institutions and local bodies, widening **preventive awareness**.
- **Preventive reporting:** Chakshu accepts reports of suspected fraudulent communications before financial loss, strengthening **citizen participation** in prevention.

3. THE WORLDWIDE OUTBURSTS OF THE POWERLESS POSE NEW POLITICAL QUESTIONS (GS PAPER II POLITY)

This editorial '**The worldwide outbursts of the powerless pose new political questions**' was published in **The Indian Express** on 31st Oct 2026, highlights how widespread **citizen rebellions** challenge concentrated power and may reshape **democratic politics**.

Shared grievances and political powerlessness

- Protests across France, India, Chile and other countries demand **political change**; despite some violence, **protester restraint** under brutal policing challenges portrayals of anarchic disorder.
- **Gen Z** often leads these uprisings, but their **social base** extends beyond youth, making generational anxiety an incomplete explanation.
- **Economic grievances** include inflation, unaffordable housing and education–healthcare cuts benefiting wealthy elites; opposition to **neoliberalism** captures only part of the unrest.
- Their common foundation is **powerlessness**: citizens, including in democracies, perceive little control over institutions and policies amid **concentrated power**, inequality, corruption, wars, climate threats and technological surveillance.

- **Political exclusion** weakens belonging and leaves people feeling unheard; **collective resistance**, aided by social media, organisation and street mobilisation, can convert vulnerability into strength.

Democratic significance and possible trajectories

- **Non-cooperation** exposes rulers' dependence on citizens' compliance, demonstrating that **political power** is conditional, contestable and not monopolised by governing elites.
- One possibility is **hyperpolitics**, Anton Jäger's term for sporadic viral outrage that leaves **power structures** unchanged.
- Alternatively, protests may compel **democratic governments** to address **structural problems**, including housing unaffordability, climate change, corruption, unregulated technology giants and wealth inequality.
- Violent **revolutions**, such as France 1789, Mexico 1910, Russia 1917 and Iran 1979, overthrew rulers but destroyed **power-sharing democracy**; the editorial considers this trajectory less likely.
- A likelier interpretation is **long-term democratic revolution**, with calm interrupted by citizen outbursts against **arbitrary power**, though outcomes remain uncertain.

BEYOND EDITORIAL

Constitutional limits of protest politics

- **Peaceful mobilisation:** Article 19(1)(b) protects peaceful, unarmed assembly, making **non-violence** integral to constitutional protest rights.
- **Reasonable restrictions:** Article 19(3) permits restrictions concerning sovereignty, integrity and public order, requiring regulation within **constitutional grounds**.
- **Public access:** In Amit Sahni, 2020, the Supreme Court rejected indefinite occupation of public ways, protecting **commuters' rights** alongside dissent.
- **Balanced regulation:** In the MKSS case, 2018, the Supreme Court favoured regulated demonstrations while protecting residents, illustrating **rights accommodation**.
- **Institutional dialogue:** The Supreme Court's January 2021 farm-law committee attempted **structured negotiation**, although a forum alone cannot guarantee settlement.
- **Public responsibility:** Article 51A(i) requires safeguarding public property and rejecting violence, providing a **constitutional benchmark** for protest methods.
- **Representative legitimacy:** Article 326 establishes adult suffrage for Lok Sabha and Assembly elections; crowd mobilisation cannot automatically replace an **electoral mandate**.