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The Current and Strategic Affairs Forum

## Webinar Summary Report: Beyond Galwan – Options for India



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## **Beyond Galwan – Options for India**

Webinar Summary Report

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### **Acknowledgements :**

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### **DISCLAIMER:**

The views expressed in this Webinar Summary Report are those of the presenters/participants and do not necessarily reflect the policies or opinions of the Government of India or any statutory body.

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### Presentations

#### 1. Presentation by Vice Admiral Anil Chopra, PVSM, AVSM (Retd).

Vice Admiral Anil Chopra commenced his address by opining that we as a country are excessively academic in nature and do not carry our plans through to the 'action stage'. One of the reasons he attributed this to was the lack of funds for implementation. He talked about a three stage strategy to rein in China :

- (a) Contain China with some military action and simultaneously boost-up diplomatic activity.
- (b) Fight it out with China, even if it meant coming back with a bloodied nose.
- (c) Align with other nations and make a strong front against China.

Some other suggestions were :

- (a) A complete moratorium on patrolling in the disputed areas.
- (b) Command and control (especially op control) of the ITBP to be vested with the local army formation.
- (c) Strongly oppose RCEP.

Maritime Issues that he touched upon included:

- (a) Complexities of the Indian Ocean.
- (b) Indo-Pacific Geographical linkages.
- (c) South China Sea.
- (d) China's IOR Economic Drivers.
- (e) China's Import Access Routes and Choke Points.

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- (f) China's maritime geography.
- (g) Facets of the PLA Navy.
- (h) Indian Navy's role as a Three Dimensional Blue-Water Navy.
- (i) Fundamentals of the Navy.

He ended his talk with the statement "Use the Navy".

### 2. Presentation by Lt Gen PR Shankar, PVSM, AVSM, VSM (Retd).

Lt Gen PR Shankar touched the following aspects on India's options beyond Galwan, which he derived from the detailed SWOT Analysis carried out by him on the subject:

- (a) Political Aspects. He stated that India needs to have a strong 'Political Statement' on where she is to go with China.
- (b) Diplomacy. We have to build strong alliances with nations like USA in order to counter China's nefarious expansionist territorial designs. He, however, opined that this may not be a simple task given the non-aligned status that India may wish to hold on to.
- (c) Economic Aspects. We have to wean away from Economic Dependence on China in a planned manner:
  - (i) India should plan on 30% economic decoupling from China in the next 5 years.
  - (ii) Strengthen its own Supply Chain Systems (from within its own manufacturing industry as well as from industries of friendly nations like South Korea, Japan, Taiwan etc.).
- (d) Strategic Aspects. China has ongoing issues with Taiwan, Hong Kong etc. India should capitalize on these to put added pressure on China.

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### 3. **Discussions and Views.**

Interesting questions came in from the audience of the webinar (which was in excess of 60 participants) and healthy discussions followed. Views on the Standoff between India and China in Ladakh were voiced by the following CASA members:

- (a) Lt Gen (Dr) Prakash Menon (Retd).
- (b) Lt Gen Syed Ata Hasnain, PVSM, UYSM, AVSM, SM, VSM (Bar) (Retd).
- (c) Lt Gen Ranbir Singh, PVSM, AVSM (Bar), YSM, SM, ADC (Retd).
- (d) Lt Gen Vinod Bhatia, PVSM, AVSM, VrC (Bar) (Retd).

After an hour and half of intellectually stimulating presentations and discussions, the webinar came to an end at 8pm IST.