China-Taiwan Tussle

What is the issue?

Coinciding with the 72nd anniversary celebrations, China flew over 100 fighter jets into Taiwan's air defence identification zone setting off alarm around the world that it was prepping to take over the island by force.

What is the history of China-Taiwan relation?

Taiwan earlier known as Formosa and formally as the Republic of China (ROC) is a self-ruled island that lies about 161 kilometres off the coast of mainland China. It is a democracy with a separate government and a military.

- The Republic of China (ROC) was founded in 1912 in China.
- At that time, Taiwan was under Japanese colonial rule as a result of the 1895 Treaty of Shimonoseki, by which the Qing ceded Taiwan to Japan.
- The ROC government began exercising jurisdiction over Taiwan in 1945 after Japan surrendered at the end of World War II.
- The ROC government relocated to Taiwan in 1949 while fighting a civil war with the Chinese Communist Party.
- The ROC, the non-communist frontier against China was the only China recognised at the UN until 1971.
- In 1971, the UNGA recognised the People's Republic of China (PRC) as the only legitimate representative of China to the global body which led to the withdrawal of ROC from the U.N.
- The PRC believed that Taiwan must be reunified with the mainland while the ROC has held out as an independent country.
- The US backs Taiwan's independence, maintains ties with Taipei, and sells weapons to it but officially subscribes to PRC's **"One China Policy".**

  The "One-China policy" is a policy asserting that there is only one sovereign state under the name China, as opposed to the idea that there are two states, the PRC and the ROC.

- As the British prepared to exit Hong Kong in 1999 the "**One Country,**

Two Systems" solution was offered to Taiwan but it was rejected by the Taiwanese.

The One Country Two Systems policy was originally proposed by Deng Xiaoping in the late 1970s. Currently Hong Kong and Macau Special Administrative Regions have been placed under this system.

- In 2004, China started drafting an anti-secession law aimed at Taiwan.
- In 2009**,** Taiwan attended the World Health Assembly as an observer, marking its first participation in an activity of the U.N. since its withdrawal in 1971.



What is the current tension about?

- The 2016 election of President Tsai marked the onset of a sharp pro-independence phase in Taiwan and the current tensions coincided with her re-election in 2020.
- Last year, Chinese conducted a military exercise in the Taiwan Strait, which separates Taiwan from mainland China.
- In October 2020, President Xi Jinping asked the Chinese army to prepare for war triggering alarm in Taiwan.
- Taiwan reported repeated incursions of Chinese jets in its air defence zone.
- In October 10, Xi spoke about peaceful reunification of the motherland.

What is the challenge for the U.S.?

- President Joe Biden has so far walked a thin line between pledging support for Taiwan and keeping the lid on tensions with Beijing.
- Rrecently, the U.S. and China had agreed to abide by the "**Taiwan Agreement**", under which it supports for the "One China Policy".

Taiwan agreement allows Washington to maintain a robust unofficial relationship with Taiwan.

- **The AUKUS pact** among the US, UK, and Australia which has imparted a new dimension to the security dynamics of the Indo-Pacific was criticised by China.

What will be the implications for India?

- India and Taiwan currently maintain “trade and cultural exchange” offices in each other’s capitals.
- Talks with Taipei are ongoing to bring a $7.5-billion semiconductor or chip manufacturing plant to India.
- India should review its One China Policy and develop more robust relations with Taiwan to send a message to Beijing.

Source: The Indian Express

