Contours of the India - China Bonhomie

What is the issue?

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- International geo-political situation demands for greater engagement between Indian and China.
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- Wuhan summit has set the tone for the same, which needs to be sustained.
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How has the relationship evolved?

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- Early 1950s saw brotherly friendship blossoming between India and China.
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- This led some to even speculate that Indian and China would pilot the post-colonial Renaissance in the developing world.
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- But the 1962 war annulled all such hopes and the border dispute that caused the war continues to linger even today.
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- While the current governments on both sides expressed desires to work together in their initial years, thing withered eventually.
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- Also, border tensions reached a new high in the Doklam Standoff in early 2017.
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- But subsequently, there has been a course reversal as the rhetoric got milder on both sides and positivity grew through sustained engagements.
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What are the geo-political aspects of the relationship?

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- Recently, Indian PM Modi and Chinese Premier Xi met for an informal summit at Wuhan.
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- They are said to have discussed various bilateral and international issues in detail to get a better understanding on each other's perspective.
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- Notably, this comes in the backdrop of USA's increasing trade hostility with China, and Mr.Trump's temporal approach to international relations.
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- Hence, it is clear that Beijing sees India as a strategic partner to counter Trump's inward looking anti-globalisation plank.
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- Additionally, Beijing is also re-engaging with Japan, South korea and ASEAN to facilitate the emergence of a strong Asian block that furthers globalisation.
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- China is also pushing for the "Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership" (RCEP), which seeks to enhance economic ties in the Asia pacific region.
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- Notably, RCEP has – ASEAN, India, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, South Korea and China as members (ASEAN + 6).
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What will the domestic political implications for the leaders?

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- Mr. Xi has also emerged as a very popular leader within China.
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- Getting India on board to support China's multiple international initiatives will add to the polarity of Xi domestically.
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- Such support is also very critical for China if it intends to dictate the global order by replacing the US dominance.
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- For Mr.Modi too, a good equation with China would be domestically positive as investments from China would help in boosting Indian economy.
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Source: The Hindu

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