

## Networked and Vulnerable

### What is the issue?

\n\n

\n

- A tightly-connected world is more imperilled by cyber attack, disease and global warming.

\n

- It requires inspired leadership, In this context China have an opportunity.

\n

\n\n

### What are the present threats faced by the globe?

\n\n

\n

- The world has a population of 7.6 billion people, Of them, 5.1 billion have subscriptions to mobile phones.

\n

- 4 billion have access to internet, and 3.1 billion are active users of the social media.

\n

- Cyber terrorism is a major concern due to the easier internet accessibility and mobile usage.

\n

- The world is a risky place and it is getting riskier, the foundations of the post Cold War, post Berlin Wall global system have weakened.

\n

- Leaders are not doing enough to arrest the dangers of global warming and the “global commons” remains unmanaged.

\n

\n\n

### What are the concerns of being tightly networked?

\n\n

\n

- About 1,000-year old Roman Empire collapsed because of the viral spread of

the “network borne threats” of religion (Christianity), disease (bubonic plague) and migration (the Germanic tribes).

\n

- These threats spread because of physical and spiritual connectivity.
- They permeated every strata of the Empire’s governance and social hierarchy.
- The leadership did not anticipate or have the capability to contain the spread.
- The result was the erosion of the foundations of the Empire and its eventual demise.
- Even today challenge of managing and mitigating “network borne” threats (cyber, pandemics, global warming) is on most government and corporate agendas.
- But instead of converging towards a common purpose for managing these threats, the world leaders are adopting divergent, populist and localised approaches.

\n

\n\n

## **What are the issues with global leaderships?**

\n\n

\n

- **USA** -US President Trump has set the cat amongst the globalist pigeons with his disruptive brand of economic nationalism, trade protectionism and twittered derision of multilateralism.
- **EU** -The EU is riven by leaders like the PMs/Chancellors of Poland, Italy, Hungary and Austria who want to build a fortress against migrants and those like Chancellor of Germany and President of France who hold steadfast to the benefits of a passport free “Shengen” Europe.
- **UK** -The UK has a default PM in office because the Conservative party is irreconcilably divided over Brexit and the members cannot agree on a more palatable alternative.
- **Russia** -President of Russia appears unconcerned about the implications of his action on global stability and the Middle East is a sectarian cauldron on

\n

the boil with the two regional hegemons, Saudi Arabia and Iran, in implacable opposition to each other.

\n

\n\n

### **What is the significance of Chinese leadership?**

\n\n

\n

- The world needs not just technical talent but courageous, resilient and selfless leadership in the face of impending crisis.

\n

- The only two countries that stand out in this landscape as islands of relative stability and strong leadership are India and China.

\n

- China has recognised that this fragmented world offers an opportunity.

\n

- It has projected itself, ironically as the custodian of the multilateral rules based system and it is using its financial leverage to broaden strategic relations, Its One Belt One Road is a manifestation of this intent.

\n

\n\n

\n\n

**Source: Indian Express**

\n

