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# India has a special China problem above world's general China problem: Jaishankar

Border and state of ties call for scrutiny of investments from China, says the External Affairs Minister

By: **Express News Service**

New Delhi | Updated: September 1, 2024 00:48 IST





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people's cast  
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Countries that do not have a border with China are also scrutinising investments from the country, Jaishankar added. (File)

Flagging that India has a “special China problem” which is over and above the world’s “general China problem”, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said Saturday that the border and the state of relations with the country call for investments from China to be scrutinised.

“There is a general China problem. We are not the only country in the world which is having a debate about China. Go to Europe, and ask them what is among their major economic or national security debates today. It is about China. Look at the United States. It is obsessed with China, and rightly so in many ways,” Jaishankar said, speaking at the ET World Leaders Forum here.

“So, the fact is that it is not only India which has a China problem...India has a China problem... a special China problem that is over and above the world’s general China problem,” Jaishankar said.

Jaishankar’s comments come days after diplomatic-level talks — the 31st meeting of the Working Mechanism for Consultation & Coordination on India-China Border Affairs (WMCC) was held on August 29 in Beijing — between India and China on the border situation.

Signalling some progress in diplomatic negotiations to resolve the standoff between Indian and Chinese troops that began in May 2020 along the Line of Actual Control in eastern Ladakh, India had said Thursday that the two sides had a “frank, constructive and forward-looking” exchange of views in Beijing on the situation along the LAC to “narrow down the differences” and “find early resolution of outstanding issues”.

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The two sides, according to the Ministry of External Affairs, also agreed on “intensified contact through diplomatic and military channels”.

The expression “narrow down the differences” had been used for the first time in the bilateral talks on the border standoff and, in diplomatic parlance, indicates progress in the negotiations.

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On Saturday, Jaishankar said that if people are complaining of trade deficit with China and “we are too”, it is because decades ago, “we consciously overlooked the nature of Chinese production and the advantages which they enjoyed in a system where they got a level playing field with all the advantages they brought to bed”.

“China in many ways is a unique problem because it is a unique polity, it is a unique economy. Unless one tries to grasp that uniqueness and understand it, the judgements, the conclusions and the policy prescriptions flowing out of it can be problematic,” he said.

“When we look at trade with China, investments with China, exchanges of various kinds with China...If you neglect to take into account that this is a very different country with a very different way of working, I think your basics start to go track,” he said.

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“Once you understand that because there is a general problem with China as well as our own situation, all of you know we have a very difficult situation at the border for the last four years. I think the sensible response to it is to take the precautions that a country like India is taking,” the minister said.

It has never been the government's position that it should not be having investments with China or doing business with China, he stressed.

“On the investments issue, it is common sense that investments from China would be scrutinised, I think the border and state of relations between India and China call for it,” Jaishankar said.

But countries that do not have a border with China are also scrutinising investments from the country, he added.

“Europe does not have a border, America doesn't have a border with China and yet they are doing that. The issue is not do you have investments with China or not, it is not a yes or no answer, it is what should be the appropriate level of scrutiny and how should you handle it,” the minister said.

## EXPLAINED

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An all-weather link to Leh and 14 key road projects covering four states, two UTs under the India-China Border Programme have been put on top priority by the Border Roads Organisation. These are vital for fast mobility of forces in operational situations.

“Sometimes when I read stuff where people write that we should clearly identify this as national security, it doesn't work that way anymore because what is national

security has expanded. If your telecom is based on Chinese technology, can you be impervious to it,” he asked.

“In my view, at a certain level, with certain countries in certain situations, the line between economics and security is a very thin line,” Jaishankar said.

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The border standoff has been ongoing for more than five years now and two sides have each deployed around 50,000-60,000 troops along the LAC in eastern Ladakh.

Friction points such as Galwan Valley, north and south banks of [Pangong Tso](#) and the Gogra-Hot Springs area, have seen some resolution since the beginning of the standoff with the creation of buffer zones along the LAC.



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The remaining friction points along the LAC in eastern Ladakh primarily include legacy ones such as Depsang Plains and Demchok. The last formal disengagement along the LAC took place in September 2022 when both sides pulled back troops to disengage from Patrolling Point-15 in the Gogra-Hot Springs area of eastern Ladakh.

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First uploaded on: 31-08-2024 at 15:17 IST

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