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THE VERBAL WIZARD



ENGLISH LANGUAGE (RC)

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THE CLAT COMBAT

Reading Comprehension 5

Two fronts? Are New Delhi and Tokyo taking the first, low-key steps to create a potential two-front dilemma for an aggressive Beijing? Commentary in Chinese policy circles is certainly taking note of this possibility as India and Japan begin their first bilateral air exercise ~ "Veer Guardian 2023" ~ which will commence on 12 January and continue for two weeks at the Hyakuri Air Base in Japan. The military exercise, which will involve the Indian Air Force and the Japan Air Self Defence Force deploying some of their latest inventory, reflects the growing defence ties between the two nations. But more importantly, it just could, if followed through and with the Americans firmly in the background, open up two fronts for the People's

Republic of China (PRC) to manage ~ India and Taiwan. Beijing has ratcheted up military tensions with both New Delhi and Taipei in recent times and Tokyo, which has its own share of historical baggage and territorial disputes with the PRC, has been supportive of both in their confrontations with China. In recent months, Japan has approved a landmark increase in its defence budget and spoken about the necessity to defend Taiwan against a potential Chinese attack on the island nation. Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida has already announced his intention to "fundamentally reinforce Japan's defence capabilities within the next five years", continuing with the policy shift away from the post-World War II pacifist Constitution. In 2021, at the peak of the China-Taiwan face off, Japanese Defence Minister Nobuo Kishi, Shinzo Abe's younger brother, had said Taiwan's security was linked to that of Japan's. "China's aggressive behaviour clearly shows that if anything happens with Taiwan, we will be affected too," Mr Kishi's predecessor as defence minister had added. With the military balance firmly in China's favour and some uncertainty regarding the USA's willingness to intervene in the event of an invasion of Taiwan by China, these statements are being seen as an attempt to prepare the ground for Japan's greater involvement in responding to a future crisis, media reports suggest. Against this backdrop, it would make sense for Tokyo to deepen military ties with New Delhi to ensure Beijing also has an accentuated front to deal with in its South. India, on the other hand, has been preparing for the long haul as far as its territorial disputes with China in the Himalayas are concerned. In the Indian strategic community, there is near-unanimity that if the Taiwan front is opened up by Japan upping the ante, it would be poetic ~ and strategic ~ justice given the two-front dilemma China has created for India by propping up Pakistan. Joint and coordinated actions by India and Japan have the potential to give the Chinese pause for thought, especially if the Americans don't get involved directly. That Chinese strategic thinkers have started publicly discussing the "challenges and threats of fighting on two fronts simultaneously", citing the ongoing tensions with India and Taiwan, is not an insignificant development. Expectations of unsavoury events tend to fulfil themselves.

1. Based on the facts mentioned in the passage, Japan's policy towards Taiwan is

- (a) to defend Taiwan against a potential Chinese attack.
- (b) to remain neutral in the China-Taiwan conflict.
- (c) to support China's aggression towards Taiwan.
- (d) to oppose Taiwan and aid the aggressor country.

2. According to the passage, what is the significance of Chinese strategic thinkers discussing the "challenges and threats of fighting on two fronts simultaneously"?

- (a) It demonstrates their lack of regard for the circumstances.
- (b) It is a result of their escalating hostilities with Taiwan and India.
- (c) It is a noteworthy development.
- (d) It depicts an uncertain, unplanned event.

3. Which of the following can be inferred about Japan's policy towards China?

- (a) They are supportive of China's aggressive behavior.
- (b) They are neutral towards China.
- (c) They are against China's aggressive behavior.
- (d) They've decided to launch a counter invasion as their response.

4. Which of the following can be understood about India's stance towards the territorial disputes with China?

- (a) They are willing to resolve the disputes peacefully.
- (b) They are prepared for a long-term conflict.
- (c) They are not concerned about the disputes.
- (d) They have chosen not to react in this instance.

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5. Which of the following is the meaning of the idiom “Taiwan front is opened up by Japan upping the ante,” as used in the given sentence?

- (a) To witness an unusual event
- (b) To raise the cost or price of something.
- (c) To buy something very expensive.
- (d) To do something badly or cheaply.

1.Ans: (a)

Sol: Option (a) is correct. Consider the middle of second paragraph, it mentions Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida.....constitution.” Here they have discussed Taiwan’s security. Options (a), (b) and (c) are opposite to what is discussed. Hence (a).

2.Ans: (c)

Sol: Option (c) is correct. Consider the final paragraph of the passage, “citing the ongoing tensions.....themselves.” As it mentions it to be “not an insignificant event” we can infer option (c) to be correct.

3.Ans: (c)

Sol: Option (c) is correct. Consider the lines in the middle of the second paragraph. It can be inferred that Japan is completely against China’s aggressive behavior, but it doesn’t say that they have decided to launch a counter invasion as their response. Hence (c) is correct.

4.Ans: (b)

Sol: Option (b) is correct. Consider the lines at the end of the second paragraph, “India on the other hand, has been preparing for the long haul.....concerned.” Hence option (b) is correct.

5.Ans: (b)

Sol: Option (b) is correct. The idiom ‘up the ante’ refers to raise the cost or price of something. Hence (b).