

XI JINPING REJECTS 'CLASH OF CIVILISATIONS' THEORY

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: Effect of policies and politics of developed & developing countries on India's interests

Chinese President Xi Jinping. AFP/NICOLAS ASFOURI

China's President Xi Jinping on Wednesday debunked the "clash of civilisations" theory, and appealed for harmonious dialogue and coexistence between civilisations.

Without naming the U.S., President Xi, in his address at the maiden conference on Asian Civilizations Dialogue, advocated equality, and rejected superiority of the U.S.-led West.

"If someone thinks their own race and civilisation is superior and insists on remoulding or replacing other civilisations, it would be a stupid idea and disastrous act," Mr. Xi said. "We should hold up equality and respect, abandon pride and prejudice, deepen our knowledge about the differences between our own and other civilisations, and promote harmonious dialogue and coexistence between civilisations."

Rejecting isolationism, Mr. Xi stressed that, "If countries retreat to secluded islands, human civilisation will die out because of a lack of exchanges."

Rebuttal to U.S.

The Chinese President's remarks roundly rebutted recent assertions by some U.S. officials who have stressed the emergence of a deep civilisational and race-based rift between China and the U.S. A fortnight ago, State Department director of policy planning Kiron Skinner called the U.S.-China competition as "a fight with a really different civilisation and a different ideology". Ms. Skinner spotlighted that, for the first time, the U.S. had faced a "great power competitor that is not Caucasian". The back-and-forth between China and the U.S. adds a layer of cultural rivalry, to the escalating trade between the world's largest and second largest economy.

"Various civilisations are not destined to clash," Mr. Xi observed.

He pointed out that a global "community with a shared future" is possible based on inter-civilisational exchanges. But he stressed that these exchanges should neither be compulsory, forced, or one-directional.

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