



Chinese Assertiveness over Arunachal Pradesh and North Eastern States

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Abstract

China's posture toward India over their disputed border has hardened in recent years. For starters, the Chinese have taken to calling neighboring Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh, of which a substantial chunk is claimed by China, "southern Tibet." Due to China's official silence on the topic of "southern Tibet" prior to 2005, this is a significant turn of events.

It has also been said that China intends to build a railway all the way to the Arunachal Pradesh–Tibetan border. China has upped the ante in Kashmir, which is both significant and concerning. There is no doubt that China has always had a role in the Kashmir conflict. Soon after China's military takeover of Xinjiang and Tibet, construction on a road across the Aksai Chin area of Ladakh began (in 1949 and 1950-1 respectively). After the Sino-Indian War of 1962, China formally annexed Aksai Chin. India's contention that the Shaksgam Valley is an integral part of Kashmir led to China receiving a portion of Pakistan's so-called "Northern Areas" in 1963. But until recently, China thought the whole territory of Kashmir (save for Aksai Chin) was contested territory between India and Pakistan. However, in a sudden policy shift in 2010, China began calling the portion of Kashmir controlled by Pakistan "northern Pakistan" and the portion managed by India "disputed." So, it appears that China's official stance on Kashmir is that while Pakistani-Kashmir is legitimate Pakistani possession, Indian-Kashmir is a dispute region.

Keywords: - Northern state, Border issue, Pakistan, China, Arunachal Pradesh

Introduction: -

India needs to counter China's aggression both strategically and tactically. Arunachal Pradesh and the other northeastern states must be politically and economically integrated with the rest of India as a priority. Second, with Chinese influence rising fast in the region, India should be economically generous to its smaller neighbors in South Asia, especially Nepal, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka. India must connect its booming economy to its neighbors on the subcontinent.

This, along with claims that were partially corroborated by the Indian establishment and a recent piece in the New York Times concerning the permanent deployment of 7,000-11,000 soldiers of China's Chinese People's

Liberation Army (PLA) in the Northern areas of Pakistan, has sent off alarm bells in New Delhi. Given the strategic and military ramifications of these changes,

India's future ability to establish physical connections with its own northeastern states may also be facilitated by its close links with Bangladesh.

India should initiate the next stage of its "Look East" strategy and make a concerted effort to reach out to Southeast Asian countries. India's northeastern states share a geographical and cultural border with Southeast Asia, and the only way for them to grow economically is to become completely integrated with the region's thriving economy. As a result of unresolved territory disputes and worries about China's increasing military modernization, Southeast Asian governments continue to be frightened of its emergence. India's ties to Southeast Asian nations are not plagued by the same issues, thus New Delhi can capitalize on this fact by forging strong naval and strategic ties with similar-minded Southeast Asian nations like Singapore and Vietnam, as well as the region's biggest state, Indonesia.

As a second step in its "Look East" policy, India must actively involve northern democracies like Taiwan, South Korea, and Japan in its relations. While the United States, Japan, and even China have established substantial commercial ties with Taiwan, the country has been labeled a "untouchable" by India's foreign policy experts. While it is still wise for India to avoid making political statements on Taiwan, there is no reason for New Delhi to avoid doing business with the island. New Delhi may eventually want to establish ties with Taiwan's vigilant intelligence apparatus that keeps tabs on China.

New Delhi should also prioritize strengthening ties with Japan and South Korea, both of which have made large financial commitments to India's economy. Now is a good time for New Delhi to reach out to Tokyo because of Tokyo's diplomatic disagreement with Beijing over the Chinese fishing boat skipper seized by Japan in the East China Sea. Similarly, Seoul has doubts about China's intentions since it has shown either a lack of readiness or an inability (or both) to diplomatically rein in its client dictatorship in North Korea, as was seen earlier, when the South Korean warship, the Cheonan, was sunk. It may be time for India to deepen its ties to South Korea, as it has with Japan.

When considering the "Look East" strategy, India's capital of New Delhi must also take into account the fact that the United States is located to the east of the country. The United States is the most significant geopolitical player in India's eastern region due to its extensive military presence and bases across East Asia and the Pacific. New Delhi should strengthen its strategic (and economic) ties with its Southeast and Northeast Asian neighbors in partnership with the United States and should also cooperate with the US Navy in this region given the growing Indo-US partnership and the fact that many East Asian states are favorably disposed towards US military presence in the region.

India, together with its East Asian neighbors and the United States, must take precautions against a more aggressive China, but it must also ensure that it keeps up a strong deterrent posture along its northern borders. India must counter China's efforts to modernize its military and build up infrastructure in its border regions. India should not lose sight of China's expanding naval presence in the Indian Ocean region while it is focused on securing its northern borders with China. India has to counter China's growing assertiveness by bolstering its economy and military.

Chinese assertiveness over Northern Eastern states to counter India: -

To the Chinese, Arunachal Pradesh is known as Zangnan. The southern portion of Tibet is part of the Tibetan Autonomous Region of China and has always been considered part of China. China has made similar attempts to rename locations in Arunachal Pradesh before. Arindam Bagchi, a spokeswoman for India's Ministry of External Affairs, said in New Delhi that China had also requested to issue similar names in April 2017. Inseparable from India's history and future, Bagchi said that renaming geographic features in Arunachal Pradesh with made-up names will have no effect. When asked for a response to India's claim, the Chinese foreign minister "Ethnic minorities in China, like the Moinba and Tibetan ethnic groups, have worked and lived in this area for a very long time, and several place names have been down from generation to generation," he added. The Zhao's statement that "in order to improve the systematic and standardized regime of place names, the competent agency of the Chinese government has revealed the second batch of streamlined

names of areas in Zangnan for the use of the public, which falls within China's sovereign rights," citing the regulation on the administering of geographical names. In 2017, six locations had their names standardized for the first time. The External Affairs Ministry has stated that Arunachal Pradesh is "inseparable part of India," which contradicts China's assertion that it is South Tibet.

Whenever a high-ranking Indian official or politician travels to Arunachal Pradesh, Beijing raises a stink. The Line of Actual Control, which separates India and China, is 3,488 kilometers long and the subject of their dispute (LAC).

For the sake of determining a person's citizenship in any given society, physical anthropology is really not given any weight. Large-scale human migrations throughout history led to intermarriage among ethnic groups. A state's borders can't be drawn only on the basis of race. However, in China, physical ethnography is rigorously adhered to as the basis of a people's nationality. Apparently, this is how Beijing feels about the border regions of Eastern Ladakh and elsewhere.

The inhabitants of Arunachal Pradesh may very well be of Mongoloid descent, at least according to certain anthropological theories. Other than that, however, there is no evidence that Arunachal was ever a province of Tibet or China in the past. China is actively working to inflame tensions between China and India by using Arunachal Pradesh as a wedge issue. China's full-scale invasion of Arunachal Pradesh in 1961 was a direct violation of the Panchsheel idea of peaceful inter-state cooperation, which had been adopted at the Bandung Conference session in 1952. China had obvious expansionist goals, and she intended to employ military force to achieve them.

In the midst of its sleep, India was a distant country. While at the Bandung Conference, she was unable to understand the true motivations of the Chinese leaders. Despite having abandoned Tibet to China aggression and failing to adequately refute China's claims to Arunachal, Nehru never anticipated an assault from China due to his naive idealism. Unfortunately for India, they lost against China. Arunachal Pradesh has long been a contentious issue between India and China, even after China withdrew from the territory it had captured as a result of the incursion.

Not only that, but China started complaining when India's senior officials (the prime minister, home minister, and defense minister) started making official visits to Tawang. Chinese protests over Tawang's hosting of foreign dignitaries served merely to keep the territorial conflict in the spotlight. Despite its continued antagonism towards India after the 1962 conflict, China refrained from taking any major measures to draw the two forces into a confrontational attitude along the eastern boundary. The international community's reaction to her expansionist plans led to its toned down antagonism toward Arunachal. The Soviet leadership also warned Beijing against further escalating the conflict in Arunachal Pradesh. Some analysts claim that the Congress administrations in India tried to purchase peace with China by being too kind to them.

The 2014 election of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) administration in New Delhi marked a turning point in ties between India and China. Because of Pakistan's growing importance in Sino-Indian ties, China patiently waited to see how the NDA administration would treat her and Pakistan. Against the backdrop of tensions between India and Pakistan, China considered bolstering ties with New Delhi. A friend of China is an adversary of America. In order to have a neighbor that is openly antagonistic to India, she opted to make friends with Pakistan.

The Modi administration reevaluated India's stance with China on two fronts in particular. For one, China provided covert aid to US-designated terrorist groups and persons operating out of Pakistan.

The United States and India proposed designating the Pakistani terrorist Mir before the UN Security Council, but China vetoed the motion for the third time. This stance was diametrically opposed to Beijing's Uighur policy. Second, Modi's administration paid close attention to Beijing's repeated attempts to block India's entry into the Security Council. The PLA's procrastination at the negotiating table in an effort to settle the East Ladakh dispute was a common occurrence. Thus, the Modi government ushered in a dramatic shift in the defense and security establishment's outlook on Chinese antagonism. India has improved its military preparation in a short period of time by, among other things, constructing border highways, introducing more advanced weaponry, shifting to a strategy that allows for higher altitude fighting, bolstering air defenses, etc.

China experienced India's strong and impenetrable military response to its repeated covert incursions for the very first time in the Galwan incident. For failure to fight back the Indian soldiers, Beijing replaced the

commander of the PLA's East Ladakh border station and reprimanded some lower commanders. As so, it marked the first time the PLA acknowledged the existence of serious Indian opposition. The United States has made it quite apparent that it recognizes Arunachal Pradesh as an important component of the Indian Union, which brings us back to the original point of this article. This news certainly come as a surprise to Beijing. At a time when President Xi Jinping of China's whereabouts are unknown and widespread suspicions of a coup in Beijing are circulating, this statement comes as a shock.

The United States' position on the status of Arunachal is consistent with what has been articulated. The United States Embassy in New Delhi co-sponsored a cultural celebration of Arunachal Pradesh's indigenous peoples. This was done to commemorate the 75th anniversary of relations between India and the United States and the ongoing Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav festival. The annual Tawang Festival, a cultural spectacle in western Arunachal Pradesh, was inaugurated by the US ambassador three years ago, which angered Beijing. China's outraged responses to US Ambassador to India Richard Verma's visit to Arunachal Pradesh in October 2016 were predictable. A number of social sector undertakings and educational programs in the eastern state have been met with criticism from China.

Arunachal Pradesh has been on the Dalai Lama's itinerary for a while now, Since 1983, the Tibetan spiritual guru, who is hated by the communist party in power in China, has made seven trips to Arunachal Pradesh. In 2017, he came for the last time. When everything is said and done, the rest of the world believes China's claim to Arunachal Pradesh is part of Beijing's expansionist strategy. Over 5,000 square kilometers of Indian land in Aksai Chin have already been seized by her. In addition, she pressured Pakistan into giving over the Shaksgam Valley, which China required in order to construct the railway route to Lhasa, Tibet. Along the Bhutan–China border, China is also upsetting the peace and normalcy by its presence. However, the Indian government is preventing China from achieving its expansionist goal. It is imperative for India to maintain its highest level of defense and security throughout the whole Sino-Indian Himalayan border.

Chinese involvement in Northeastern states & Security implications :

Mongoloid tribes live in northeastern India. These tribes have close cultural and racial connection with the tribes in China, Tibet, and Burma. Almost all hill tribes, except for the Khasis and Jaintias of Meghalaya, are part of the Tibeto-Chinese and Tibeto-Burmese families. Some members of these tribal groups turned toward their own kind instead of the country they lived in because they felt close to the border people of what used to be East Pakistan and Burma. The northeast is in a strategic location, and it is easy for groups that don't like the government to get to China, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Bhutan, and Nepal. These groups have also gotten material and moral support from foreign intelligence agencies, which has helped the insurgency in the northeast.

Chinese help for rebels in the northeast started in the early 1960s and went on through the 1970s. In May 1966, the Nagas went to the People's Republic of China and asked for "any help that could be given." In January 1967, Isaac Muivah, the leader of the Naga National Council, and a group of 300 men arrived in Yunan province after a hard three-month trip through Arunachal Pradesh and the rough terrain of Burma. In Yunan, the Naga fighters had all been taught how to use weapons and how to fight as guerrillas. They were taught about Maoism. With help from China, the Naga rebels used better strategies and more modern weapons to become stronger and more powerful. Aside from the Nagas, the Chinese further gave moral and material assistance to the Mizo and Meiti insurgents. They did this by setting up training centers in Yunan province in mainland China and Lhasa in Tibet where the Mizo and Meiti could learn about guerilla warfare and subversion. Biseshwar, the leader of the People's Liberation Army, went to Lhasa, Tibet, with a group of 16 people in the late 1970s to get China to support their cause.

The Chinese have tried to make connections with India's neighbors in order to keep her in check. They have helped Pakistan grow into a balance to India. They furthermore tried to use Myanmar as a place to keep an eye on things from a strategic point of view. They also tried to get a significant presence in Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. India's neighbors, Pakistan, Myanmar, and Bangladesh, are the three countries that buy the most weapons from China. The Chinese counterpart have also demonstrated that they want to solve the problem with Bhutan over the border.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, when China helped Naga rebels in secret, the Burmese and Indian armies were able to work together better. And after General Ne Win met with the Indian Prime Minister in 1968. Mrs. Indira Gandhi, rebels who wanted to go to China had a hard time getting there without running into the Burmese military. But since the late 1980s, especially after the Junta took power, relations between Myanmar and China have gotten better, which worries India. India's defense readiness has been affected by the growing power of China in Myanmar and the Indian Ocean. A General from the Chinese Academy of Military Sciences said that the Chinese Navy would expand its operations into the Indian Ocean to keep it from becoming a "Indian" Ocean. Through Myanmar, China has increased its naval power in the area around the Indian Ocean. It wants a strategic outpost on islands in Myanmar that are close to the Andaman and Nicobar Islands in India. Beijing is also building roads that connect its border towns to Myanmar's railheads and seaports. It also helps Myanmar build and improve these ports."

Even though New Delhi has tried to get along with China from time to time, especially since 1993, Even though China has said it will support the Nagas and the Mizos less, it has not changed its position on the northeast. China claims 90,000 square kilometers as its own land. These 90,000 square kilometers are in the far eastern Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh, where the Indian defense minister recently accused the Chinese army of "border incursions." Since they set up a joint working group in 1988, India and China have had ten rounds of border talks. But there wasn't much of a change. Over time, both sides agreed to cut down on the number of troops and weapons on their shared border. But there are still important differences.

The Arunachal government sent a note to the army headquarters saying that 2,000 Chinese people had been seen laying the road track in the Tawang district, across from the Asaphila area. The Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) was busy building an unpaved road track across Arunachal Pradesh that led to the Line of Actual Control (LAC) as the joint working group tried to find solutions to the ongoing border dispute. Government sources said that army units in the area started gathering information and were "quite shocked" to find that the unpaved track was only six or seven kilometers away from where Indian troops are holding positions along the Line of Control (LAC). Army intelligence reports say that the road runs along the Yune Chu river and is between 8 and 10 feet wide. Intelligence reports show that construction is getting close to a place called the Yune Chu-Tadang Siko junction. For the track road to work, the Chinese army only needs to build a bridge over the river at Tadang Siko, which, according to sources, "won't be too hard for the PLA to do" since they are working on their own land. "But when the Chinese get nearer to the LAC, the situation could get scary," the sources said.

In order to improve their relationship with India, the Chinese have been telling New Delhi that they have stopped giving any help to the rebels in the northeast. It has stopped insurgent groups from going to China to learn how to use guerilla tactics. Pakistani analysts see this change in policy as a change in how China acts in South Asia. They have written that "China's strategic priorities in South Asia changed in the 1980s and 1990s. In the 1960s and 1970s, China openly backed Pakistan against India. China changed its policy toward India from being actively hostile to being passively hostile and then neutral ". Still, India is not yet sure that China has good intentions.

The "Chinese Hamlet" in Arunachal Pradesh is one of China's geographical threats.

Arunachal Pradesh is an Indian-controlled state, hence China's decision to construct a small town there violates the non-intervention principle. This concept simply states that no country may intervene in or attempt to control the internal politics of another state. It is predicated on the idea that nations should be allowed to exist in peace and security inside their own borders. According to the International Court of Justice's ruling in Nicaragua v. United States, "the notion of non-intervention is a consequence of the principle of sovereign equality of States," as it prohibits individual states or groups of states from interfering with the internal or external affairs of another state. According to the Permanent Court of International Justice's ruling in the Lotus Case (France v. Turkey), "the first and principal limitation put by international law upon a state is that a state may not employ its power in any form in the territory of another state."¹ Therefore, it is imperative that any nation-state be able to function independently of any other nation. The UN Charter and the decisions in

¹ http://www.worldcourts.com/pcij/eng/decisions/1927.09.07_lotus.htm

the Nicaragua and Lotus cases show that this principle is fundamental in international law and has been designated as a "jus cogens restriction," meaning that it has been raised to the level of customary international law and non-compliance is prohibited, subject to certain limitations². The importance of this concept in maintaining a nation's territorial integrity has been emphasized by scholars using terminology like "sovereignty," "state dignity," "inviolability of state territory," and "jus cogens." It is also recognized by the International Court of Justice in the case of Armed Activities on Congo's Territories and by the "Declaration on the Inadmissibility of Intervention in the Domestic Affairs of States and the Protection of Their Independence and Sovereignty 1965, G.A. Res. 2131 (XX) (DRC v. Uganda). Despite its significance, China's non-interventionist policy is frequently criticized.

China has undoubtedly declared the non-interventionist attitude emphatically at the Bandung Conference and on many other occasions, but its interventionist activities have exhibited that there is a contradiction between China's words and conduct. China has frequently violated international borders to achieve its goals as the world's economic and military leader. China has also engaged in "silent interference" by establishing Hamlets in Indian territory, meddling in India's domestic affairs. China secretly takes part in some interventions, but it will not use the term "intervention" to rationalize its meddling. Under the pretense of positive engagement, China is touting itself as the "New Assertive China." Therefore, it is not an exaggeration to say that China's hazy foreign policy is a two-edged sword. In theory, it may lead to the best outcomes, but in practice, it's often frowned upon.

Conclusion:

India must strengthen its defenses in Arunachal Pradesh. India must guarantee that any reaffirmation of the "One China" policy and acknowledgment of Tibet as Chinese territory is reliant on China's commitment that it would end its troublesome visa policy for Arunachal Pradesh residents. India should recognize that China's energy supply routes in the Indian Ocean are vulnerable. Therefore, India must relate the Chinese position on Arunachal Pradesh to its collaboration with China in the Indian Ocean. India and the United States should tighten their military architecture in order to create additional pressure points on China. China is concerned about Tibet and any demonstrations that may occur there. India should inform China that the Tibetan government in exile's non-interference in Tibet-related matters is dependant on China's non-interference in Arunachal Pradesh-related matters. The instruments of border negotiations must be preserved. The Chinese communist party would be motivated to increase pressure in Arunachal Pradesh by domestic issues in China, notably the situation in Tibet. For this reason, it must have the best possible defensive capabilities. The people of Arunachal Pradesh are dissatisfied with Indian Government policies & schemes and the state's slow development. India could hold a public outreach campaign about its developmental programs, hold discussions with locals about governance concerns, and reassure them that the construction of dams would not threaten their quality of life. Also, India has to communicate to locals and prevent the development of any unrest in Arunachal Pradesh that might lead to violence. India must keep a close eye on the border with China to prevent China from aiding any armed organizations in Arunachal Pradesh. India has to keep an eye on the Tibetan Youth Congress to make sure they don't resort to open violence. India has the ability to reach an agreement over Arunachal Pradesh. This would lead China to realize that the stability and unity of the nations around the Indian Ocean are deeply connected to the security of China itself, and that India's assistance is crucial to keeping the peace in that region.

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