

THE SINO-INDIAN BORDER: IS CONFLICT INEVITABLE?

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ABSTRACT

The Sino-Indian Border: Is Conflict Inevitable? by Lieutenant Colonel Sachindra Joshi, 118 pages.

China and India share a complex security relationship. In recent years, the unresolved border issues that led to the Sino-Indian war of 1962 have reemerged as a major source of tension. Add to this is the growth of military power and lack of trust and transparency reminiscent of rise of Athens and Sparta, which led to Peloponnesian war. Despite a number of measures and initiatives there is a reluctance to solve the border issue. The Chinese incursions and aggressive overtures along the border have increased. In addition, there has been infrastructure development in Tibetan plateau, force modernization and force superiority. The environment is one of distrust exacerbated by Indian suspicion of Chinese intent. India doesn't want to be caught unprepared. Therefore, it is developing its infrastructure and modernizing its forces. This bilateral relationship is further strained by U.S. pivot to Asia-Pacific. The U.S. and India share broad strategic interests and values, this closeness makes China wary. As the conditions are militarily set, any miscalculation or mistake would lead to another Sino-Indian conflict. India needs to tread carefully and be sufficiently strong to thwart any threat to its interests and territorial sovereignty.

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“Guru Govind dau khare, kake lago pai, balihari Guru apne Govind diyo bataye”

(I revere my Guru (Mentor) over God, for he, who guided me to God)

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ACRONYMS

ADBI	Asian Development Bank Initiative
BD	Border Defense
BRICS	Brazil Russia India China South Africa
CBM	Confidence Building Measure
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CMC	Central Military Commission
CNA	Center for Naval Analysis
COA	Course of Action
CPC	Communist Party of China
DF	Dong Fang
DIME	Diplomatic Information Military Economic
EU	European Union
FTA	Free Trade Agreement
GA	Group Army
HADR	Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief
IA	Indian Army
IAF	Indian Air Force
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IN	Indian Navy
IOR	Indian Ocean Region
IT	Information technology
ITBP	Indo-Tibet Border Police
J&K	Jammu and Kashmir

LAC	Line of Actual Control
LOC	Line of communication
MR	Military Region
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
NSG	Nuclear Suppliers Group
ORBAT	Order of Battle
PAP	People Armed Police
PLA	People Liberation Army
PLAA	People Liberation Army Army
PLAFF	People Liberation Army Air Force
PLAN	People Liberation Army Navy
PRC	People republic of China
QBQR	Quick Battle Quick Resolution
ROI	Republic of India
ROTC	Reserve Officer Training Course
SAC	Second Artillery Corps
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organization
SED	Strategic and Economic Dialogue
TAR	Tibetan Autonomous Region
U.S.	United States
U.S.S.R.	United Soviet Socialist Republic

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Observe calmly; secure our position; cope with affairs calmly; hide our capacities and bide our time; be good at maintaining a low profile; never claim leadership.

— Deng Xiaoping, *24 Character Guiding Principal*

About fifty years ago, on October 20, 1962, China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) attacked Indian positions along the disputed border. The Chinese justified their attack to the world as self-defense and in retaliation to India's forward policy. The war resulted in a humiliating defeat for the poorly equipped and ill-prepared Indian armed forces. The war largely went unnoticed as the entire world was focused on the nuclear standoff between the superpowers. While overshadowed by the Cuban Missile Crisis, the conflict still colors the relations between these two nations.¹ However, just as the history is often written by the winners, it is rarely forgotten by the loser. The border conflict casts a long shadow over how India has perceived, and continues to perceive, Chinese intentions?²

With the end of World War II, the world evolved into a new phase of global alignment. The United States and the Soviet Union became embroiled in a Cold War vying to increase their spheres of influence. Simultaneously, as the Western powers gave up control of their former colonies, a number of new countries became independent in

¹Dhruva Jaishankar, "1962's Other Crisis: India and China Go to War," *The Diplomat*, <http://thediplomat.com/2012/10/20/seeing-china-through-indian-eyes-the-legacy-of-1962/> (accessed October 29, 2013).

²Ibid.

Asia and Africa. As the world focused on the global Cold War's front line in Europe, two countries began their transition in Asia. The emergence of the Dragon and the Elephant appeared to shift the geopolitical realities of the post-Cold War world and is being compared to the rise of the U.S., Germany, Japan and Russia in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.³ These rises led to both regional and global conflicts.

China and India are rapidly developing countries, and as two of the world's largest civilizations, have an abundance of human capital, natural resources, rising economic influence, and military power with nuclear weapons. The two countries not only account for approximately 40 percent of the world's population, but have also achieved and sustained consistent economic growth.⁴ China has become the largest workshop in the world, and India, the largest provider of information technology (IT) services. Together they are driving the global demand for consumable goods.⁵

China's economy has grown significantly in the last 30 years and has replaced Japan as the second largest in the world.⁶ Many strategists believe China will overtake

³Richard J. Ellings, "Asia Responds to Its Rising Powers: China and India," in *Strategic Asia*, ed. Travis Tanner, Jessica Keough, and Ashley J. Tellis (Seattle, WA: The National Bureau of Asian Research, 2011), ix.

⁴The Population of World, China and India in billions is (World 7.174, China 1.386, and India 1.25). geohive, "Current World Population (ranked)," http://www.geohive.com/earth/population_now.aspx (accessed October 29, 2013).

⁵World Bank, *Global Economic Prospects: Maintaining Progress Amid Turmoil*, June 2011, <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTGEP/Resources/335315-1307471336123/7983902-1307479336019/Full-Report.pdf> (accessed October 29, 2013).

⁶The growth is over 9 percent with Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in terms of Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) has grown to roughly \$10 trillion in 2010.

the United States during the first half of this century in terms of GDP.⁷ On the other hand, India has maintained a steady economic growth largely driven by internal sources, unlike China's, which is based on the exports and an influx of foreign capital.⁸ Studies by the Asian Development Bank Institute (ADBI), on growth rate trends, indicate Indian economic growth will match China's by 2050.⁹ Even if it doesn't, the continued growth and increase of economic power will likely position India among the top three global economies by 2050.¹⁰

Although, both China and India have common aspirations to emerge as global power influencers, their relations are hostage to history, territorial disputes, regional security dilemmas, and the geopolitics of the 21st century. Both of these nations have credible nuclear deterrence and are significantly modernizing their military capabilities. They have resorted to mutual efforts aimed at encirclement, counter encirclement, direct

⁷Ashley J. Tellis, "China's Grand Strategy: The Quest for Comprehensive National Power and Its Consequences," in *The Rise of China: Essay on the Future Competition*, ed. Gary Schmitt (New York: Encounter Books, 2009).

⁸Of about 7.5 percent for the last decade and has the fourth largest GDP in terms of PPP of approximately \$4 trillion in 2010. Montek Singh Ahluwalia, *India's Economic Reforms: An Appraisal*, 2011, <http://planningcommission.nic.in/reports/articles/> (accessed October 29, 2013).

⁹Rajiv Kumar and Pankaj Vashist, "Crisis, Imbalances, and India," 2011, <http://www.adbi.org/files/2011.03.29.wp272.crisis.imbalances.india.pdf> (accessed October 29, 2013).

¹⁰Ashley J. Tellis, "The United States and Asia's Rising Giants," in *Asia Responds to its Rising Power: China and India*, ed. Travis Tanner, Jessica Keough, and Ashley J. Tellis (Seattle, WA: The National Bureau of Asian Research), 12.

military competition, and competitive efforts at alliance making and breaking with states along their mutual periphery and across the globe.¹¹

The baggage of history and geography of nations is important in deciding national interests, strategies and policies. Nations cannot easily choose or change either the past or the map. The perceptions and interests are guided by the past and dictated by the geographical location. Therefore, it is important to understand the historical perspectives that provide an understanding of the complexity of the relational dynamics of the Dragon and the Elephant.

Historical Perspective

The end of World War II saw Indian independence and the birth of modern China based on differing ideologies. Two great leaders, Mao and Nehru, emerged on center stage in their countries and personally controlled foreign policies.

Mao had led a militant movement that armed and mobilized the Chinese peasantry to win a civil war and establish the People's Republic of China (PRC). Nehru, on the other hand, had alongside Mahatma Gandhi, led a movement that won an unlikely victory against colonialism through nonviolent resistance. Nehru chose a foreign policy of non-alignment while Mao adopted a policy of formal, if intermittent, support for international revolution.¹²

The modern day Sino-Indian relations started in 1950. India gained independence on August 15, 1947 from British colonial rule, adopted its constitution on January 26, 1950 and became a federal democratic republic. The Communist Party of China's armed forces defeated the Nationalist forces, forced the Kuomintang to move to Taiwan, and on

¹¹Ibid., 13.

¹²David M. Malone and Rohan Mukherjee, "India and China: Conflict and Cooperation," *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy* 52 (2010): 139.

October 1, 1949 established the People's Republic of China (PRC) in China. India was among the first few nations to establish diplomatic ties with the PRC on April 1, 1950.

There are many works that analyze and provide evidence on the historic evolution, boundary disputes, legal claims and counter claims of state-to-state relations. However, Mao summarizes and guides China's perspective the best, "Are we going to invade others? No, we will invade no one anywhere. But if others invade us, we will fight back and fight to the end. The Chinese people adhere to this stand. We are for peace, but are not afraid of war. We are ready for both."¹³

Mao often demonstrated his obsession to defend the territorial integrity and sovereignty of his newly born state. He repeatedly emphasized and declared that a strong China needed to control the territory that the Qing dynasty (1644-1912) had ruled during their golden period.¹⁴ Therefore, Inner Mongolia, Manchuria, Xinjiang and Tibet had to be secured and protected. Indians having gained independence from the British believed they had legally inherited the territory held by the Imperial Raj and desired to hold onto Kashmir, the North East Region and Goa to maintain its sovereignty and territorial legacy. The PRC on assuming power renounced all earlier foreign agreements as unequal treaties imposed on it during the 'century of humiliation' and demanded renegotiation of all borders.¹⁵ To maintain control over Tibet, the PLA entered Tibet on October 7, 1950

¹³Mao Zedong, "Our Great Victory in the War to Resist U.S. Aggression," in *Selected Works of Mao Zedong*, ed. Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party (Beijing: Foreign Language Press, 1971).

¹⁴Jonathan Holsang, *China and India: Prospects for Peace* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 34.

¹⁵Neville Maxwell, *India's China War* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1970), 63.

in the area of Chamdo and routed Tibetan forces. The Chinese established sovereignty over Tibet forcing a series of negotiations ending in the Seventeen Point Agreement, which the Dalai Lama later repudiated as signed under duress.¹⁶

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the first prime minister of India believed that China and India shared a destiny and might form the pillars of a Pan-Asian order.¹⁷ Nehru stated “the future of which I dream is inextricable interwoven with close friendship and something almost approaching union with China.”¹⁸ He started the bilateral relations on friendship and a vision of a ‘resurgent Asia’. The ethics of ‘Panchsheel, (from Sanskrit: *panch*: five, *sheel*: virtues) governed his vision of international foreign policy. Nehru enunciated the concept of ‘Hindi Chini Bhai Bhai’, meaning, ‘Indian and Chinese are brothers’ to initiate broader dialogue between the peoples of both nations, including culture and literature. The ‘Panchsheel’ are enunciated in the preamble to the “Agreement (with exchange of notes) on trade and intercourse between the Tibet Region of China and India,” signed in Beijing on April 29, 1954.¹⁹ They also clearly settled the Chinese concerns of Indian interference in Tibet with no objections by China on existing boundary issues. The agreed upon five principles are:

¹⁶Tibet Justice Center, “Seventeen-Point Plan for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet,” May 1951, <http://www.tibetjustice.org/materials/china/china3.html> (accessed July 24, 2013), 182.

¹⁷Giri Deshingkar, “The Nehru Years Revisited,” in *Across The Himalayan Gap*, ed. Tan Chung (New Delhi: Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts, 1998), 403-15.

¹⁸Krishna Nehru Hutheesing, *Nehru’s Letters to Her Sister* (London: Faber & Faber, 1963), 95.

¹⁹Ministry of India, “Panchsheel,” External Publicity Division, <http://meahindi.nic.in/hindixpsite/celdemo/panchsheel.pdf> (accessed July 23, 2013).

1. Mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty
2. Mutual non-aggression
3. Mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs
4. Equality and mutual benefit
5. Peaceful co-existence

The Chinese socialist land reforms and military crackdown on Tibetan rebels in 1959 led to the spread of the uprising in Kham, Amdo and eventually all of Tibet. The Tibetan and global fear of the Dalai Lama's capture, led the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to organize his escape to India.²⁰ The 14th Dalai Lama, while in exile, repudiated the 17 point agreement at Lhuntse Dzong as having been "thrust upon the Tibetan Government and people by the threat of arms."²¹ He reiterated his government as the sole legitimate representative of Tibetan people.²² The Chinese established the Panchen Lama (their puppet) as the head of the Tibetan government in view of political exile of the Dalai Lama.²³

Additional escalating tensions and distrust grew between the PRC and India over the Tibetan rebellion and the Dalai Lama's flight to India. In his study of China's

²⁰Kenneth J Conboy and James Morrison, *The CIA's Secret War in Tibet* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002), 34.

²¹Central Tibetan Administration-in-Exile (India), Department of Information and International Relations, "Facts About the 17-point "Agreement" Between Tibet and China," December 2011, [http://tibet.net/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/FACTS-ABOUT-17-POINT-AGREEMENT .pdf](http://tibet.net/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/FACTS-ABOUT-17-POINT-AGREEMENT.pdf) (accessed October 30, 2013).

²²Michel Peissel, *Cavaliers of Kham: The Secret War in Tibet* (London: Heinemann, 1972), 37.

²³Tsering Shakya, *The Dragon in the Land of Snows : a History of Modern Tibet Since 1947* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 193.

decision for war with India, John Graver describes the contentious talk between Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev and Mao over Taiwan, Tibet and the flight of the Dalai Lama to India. Khrushchev drew an analogy between the events in Tibet and Hungary. He described, that the events in Tibet, including the opportunity for Dalai Lama to escape to India were the fault of Communist China and not of India; as the events in Hungary were the fault of the Soviets and not of the United States (U.S.). Mao felt embarrassed, was disappointed by the Soviets' pro Delhi tilt, and "was determined to assuage his feeling of embarrassment. Mao was also jealous of Nehru's leadership of the Non-Aligned Movement and angry at Khrushchev pro-Delhi tilt. Mao was determined to knock India off its perch."²⁴

In this atmosphere of growing tension and distrust, the news of a new Chinese road in Aksai Chin (Western Sector) reinforced the Indian fears of the Chinese. With the failure to resolve the border issue diplomatically, Nehru adopted a forward policy and sent troops to establish outposts along the agreed boundary between British India and Tibet as per the Shimla accord of 1914 and known as the McMahon line. The PLA attacked on October 20, 1962 and moved into Indian-claimed territory in huge numbers, resulting in a humiliating defeat for India, followed by Chinese withdrawal. Since then, a dispute has existed with India claiming China is illegally occupying over 43,000 square kilometers (km²) in the Western Sector of Jammu and Kashmir, including 5,180 km² ceded to Beijing by Islamabad in a 1963 agreement. China disputes India's sovereignty

²⁴Peter Lee, "China 'Pivot' Trips Over McMahon Line Lessons From the Sino-Indian War," Counterpunch, 2012, <http://www.counterpunch.org/2012/11/09/lessons-from-the-sino-indian-war/> (accessed July 24, 2013).

over 90,000 km² of India's territory, in the Eastern Sector mostly in Arunachal Pradesh.
(Refer to figure 1).

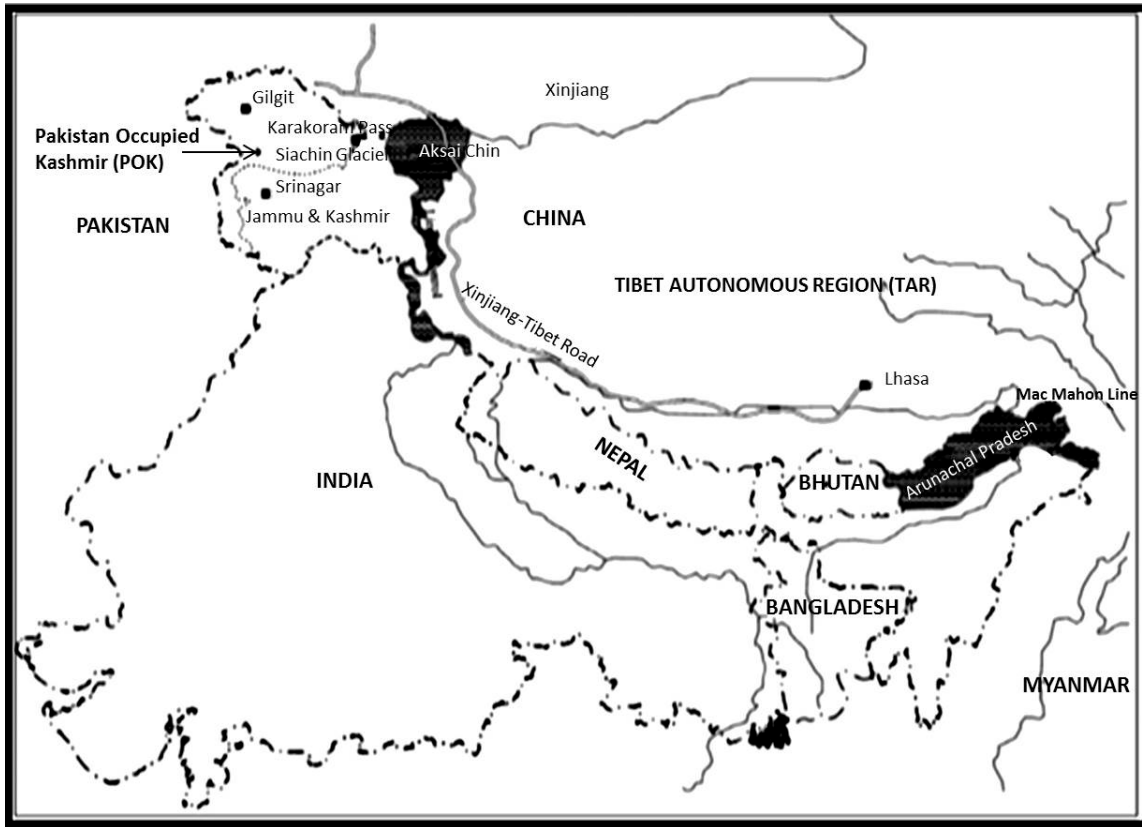


Figure 1 Current Status of Sino-Indian Border

Source: Mohan Guruswamy and Zorawar Daulet Singh, *India China Relations: The Border Issue and Beyond* (New Delhi: Viva Books, 2009), 115-6.

The dream of Sino-Indian solidarity and the foundations of peaceful coexistence under 'Panchsheel' were completely shattered by the Sino Indian War of 1962. The 1962 debacle, along with the 1947-48 war with Pakistan raised Indian awareness about the imperatives of safeguarding territorial sovereignty and national security. Post 1962, China continued support to the anti-Indian governments in Pakistan, Nepal, Myanmar

and Bangladesh, while the bilateral relations between China and India dipped to an all-time low.

The period after the 1962 war witnessed a complete breakdown in diplomatic relations between the two states. India sought assistance from the international community for military and food aid, while simultaneously increasing its efforts to build internal capacity to secure its interests. Nehru doubled the defense budget in 1963, which after his death, was continued by his successors, Mr. Lal Bahadur Shastri and Mrs. Indira Gandhi. Indian political and security debates continued to focus on the PRC.

The Chinese nuclear explosion in February 1964 strengthened the Indian obsession with the ‘Chinese peril.’²⁵ In 1964, China and Pakistan signed a joint communique supporting Kashmir’s partial secession from India.²⁶ China supported Pakistan in its war against India in 1965 by moving troops along the border and threatened to start a two front war. Chinese support to Pakistan continued during the 1971 Indo-Pak War. China started encouraging the Naxalite movement as Mao’s ‘Spring Thunder’ to create trouble in India’s North East.²⁷ In the 1960s and 1970s, China also continued assisting Pakistan’s nuclear program along with its military buildup.

To keep pace with the evolving strategic calculus in Asia, with Pakistan aligning with China and the U.S., and China’s regional threat, India signed a treaty of “Peace, Friendship and Cooperation” with the United Socialist Soviets Republics (USSR) in 1971

²⁵Holsang, 41.

²⁶John W Garver, *Protracted Contest : Sino-Indian Rivalry in the Twentieth Century* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 193.

²⁷Holsang, 41.

to safeguard its national interests. India conducted nuclear tests in 1974 and expressed its resolve and determination to maintain its integrity and sovereignty. China provided \$450 million as loans and grants to Pakistan from 1970-1980, \$30 million to Sri Lanka as long term loans in 1972, and established closer ties with Bangladesh, Burma and Nepal.²⁸

India started sympathizing with the Cambodian rebel leader, Heng Samrin and informally allied itself with Vietnam. In the 1970s, both the nations adopted a cold war approach, and except for a brief border clash in 1967 at Chola and a massive troop buildup in 1986 opposite Sumdurong Chu valley in the Eastern Sector, when China its increased military power on India's frontiers, the emphasis was on deterrence, containment and counter-containment.²⁹ China also accused India of fomenting trouble by supporting Khampa rebels in Tibet.

The diplomatic exchanges between the two nations remained severed for over a decade from 1962-1977. In 1978, Mr. Atal Bihari Vaypayee, the Indian external affairs minister, visited the PRC and officially reestablished diplomatic relations. This visit was reciprocated in 1981 by Mr. Huang Hua, the Chinese foreign minister. The 1988 visit of Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, then the Indian Prime Minister, commenced a real warming trend in bilateral relations. Both sides agreed to broaden bilateral relations and work towards a settlement of border disputes in a reasonable and fair manner. The Chinese Premier, Li Peng, visited India in December 1991 and the Indian President visited the PRC in May 1992.

²⁸Ibid., 42.

²⁹Mark Mancall, *China at the Center: 300 Years of Foreign Policy* (New York: Free Press, 1984), 437.

Significant progress was made in the areas of reducing tensions on the border by a reduction of troops and other confidence building measures (CBM), to include systematic meetings of military commanders at various levels and informing the other side of pending military exercises. However, the border dispute remains unsettled. Both nations, though working towards greater cooperation, continue their force modernization and infrastructure developments along their common border.

There have been different threats and priorities for both nations since the 1950s which have guided their war fighting doctrines and force development. China has increased its defense budget and began modernizing its forces, based upon its military doctrine. The current doctrine evolved from the People's War to Local Wars in Conditions of Informationization, with emphasis on the use of high technology, post 1991 Iraq.³⁰ The Chinese also developed supporting infrastructure in western China, especially in the Tibetan Plateau. The Chinese have not deployed any troops close to the line of actual control (LAC), but have kept them close and concentrated in operational depth, duly acclimatized for high altitude warfare. The improved lines of communication and better life support structures facilitates a faster build up, rapid deployment to battle positions and the timely application of forces at points of decision.

India has its forces deployed along its borders with both Pakistan and China. It requires deployed forces to check the movement of infiltrators and terrorists from Pakistan. India and Pakistan have fought three conventional wars in 1947-48, 1965, 1971;

³⁰ 战略学 [Science of Military Strategy] (Beijing: Military Science Publishing House, 2005), 99. It has two distinctive features: one is the high-tech feature, and the other is the local feature. Plans to use information and cyber domain to cripple adversary's capabilities before any physical operations and restricting the nature of conflict local and limited.

and one limited war in 1998; and numerous cross border raids and smaller conflicts. The Indian troops are also deployed along the Chinese borders to counter any Chinese intrusions and negate embarrassments like in 1962. India currently lacks adequate lines of communications (LOCs) and infrastructure along the borders to support its forward deployed forces. The inadequate LOCs, infrastructure and the continuous deployments along the borders with Pakistan and China have taxed India's overall defensive readiness as compared to China.

Rapid infrastructure development and force modernization clearly enhanced the Chinese war-waging potential along the border. Emboldened by the growing disparity, Chinese patrols have started becoming more aggressive and have tried to intrude across the accepted LAC a number of times; increasing significantly from 2000 onwards. The PLA have also carried out large scale military exercises, involving troop movements to high altitude areas from one military region (MR) to another in order to war game their various courses of action (COAs). The increased war-waging potential and the demonstrated intent to use force to settle the border dispute, or to embarrass India, make the situation susceptible to conflict and sudden escalation. Any conflict along the LAC has the potential to escalate into a serious major conflict and thereby lead to a second major Sino-Indian conflict.

Primary Question

Is the force posture of China along the borders indicative of another Sino- Indian Conflict?

Secondary Questions

1. What are the geostrategic settings in the region and along the common border?
2. How has the PLA evolved their doctrine, force structure and supporting infrastructure in the Tibetan Plateau?
3. How has the Indian army evolved its doctrine, force structuring, and infrastructure development along the Chinese borders?
4. What are the disparities in the balance of forces, disposition and infrastructure and the implications?
5. What are the likely scenarios for the possible conflict?

Limitations

Since the researcher has limited access to the governmental documents of either of the countries on political, strategic and military matters, the thesis is based on the unclassified open sources, written material and the viewpoints of the governments of China and India by outside analysts. The dynamics of the strategic and operational environment affect the bilateral relations immensely. However, the researcher has viewed the probability of conflict from the military point of view. Arguably, neither nation has developed a grand strategy with regards to each other. “The unshakeable and largely unprofitable preoccupations with the past on the Indian side, and an equally intense preoccupation with domestic consolidation on the Chinese side, have left their relationship under-tended.”³¹ China seems confident and is not at all ever threatened seriously by India. India, on the other hand exhibits its insecurity due to Chinese success

³¹Malone and Mukherjee.

and military expansion.³² The words strategy and doctrine are used differently around the world; Strategy is the overall approach to achieve the goal within the construct of ends, ways and means, where as doctrine is how a force operates? However, based on the usage by different countries and analysts, the researcher has at times used these words interchangeably to maintain the originality of the source.

Delimitation

There have been different perceptions about the borders and the legality of various accords. The researcher doesn't aim to discuss or justify the legality of the border issue and has based his work on the existing conditions. The relations and security aspects between the two nations are based on a host of actions and multilateral engagements. There are global and bilateral aspects which will surely dictate the security and stability environment, but have not been considered due to the vastness of the subject. The researcher has looked at the balance of security and probability of conflict from a primarily bilateral military viewpoint taking into consideration doctrine, force structuring and infrastructure in the Tibetan Plateau and the adjacent Indian border regions. The researcher has only considered the application of ground forces to look at the conflict scenario.

³²Ibid.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the researcher will endeavor to review the key existing literature related to his thesis in order to craft a systematic approach to the research. Thereafter, the research methodology is explained. The literature review is divided into three sub parts: (1) the history of relations between the two nations since their independence; (2) the present geostrategic environment; and (3) a brief review of the militaries of both the nations to include their organization, doctrine, force structure and preparedness along the border. The methodology includes the criteria and models used for the research based on three distinct frameworks.

Literature Related to the Historical Relations between China and India

There are a number of books written on the historical relations between both nations. Most writers treat them as great ancient civilizations, proud of their histories and achievements. India became independent in 1947 from a long term colonial rule and the PRC became a communist state in 1949. Both having gained their new identity, were determined to make a niche for themselves and play an important role in the world.

John W. Graver in his book, *Protracted Conquest: Sino-Indian Rivalry in the Twentieth Century*, writes about the struggle between both nations to reach a mutually acceptable accommodation. He analyzes the protracted conflict and clash of foreign policies pursued by the national governments of the two states. He argues there has been cooperation in some fields, but conflict has been the dominant characteristic of their relationship. The conflicting policies over Tibet contributed substantially to the war in

1962 and has plagued their relations ever since. The Republic of India (ROI) and People's Republic of China (PRC) rapprochement started by the path breaking visit of Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi to China indicated an important reorientation of India's China Policy.

He summarizes the problems of the China-Pak strategic entente, the nearly joint Pakistan-Chinese war against India in 1965, the transfer of nuclear weapons program information, and military collaboration with Pakistan. The PLA modernization, infrastructure development in the Tibetan plateau, supply of weapons to Sri Lanka, developing close economic and military ties with Myanmar all further exacerbate India's concerns and security. On the other side, Chinese analysts feel that there is a section of people in India (xiandang yibufen ren) who propagate a 'China threat theory' influenced by ulterior motives of the West that compounds the mutual distrust.

John Kenneth Knaus in *Orphans of the Cold War: America and the Tibetan Struggle for Survival* write on a 'Great Game' and the secret war for the fate of Tibet through diplomatic back channel and the barrel of the gun. The battlefield stretched from the peaks of Himalayas, to secret CIA training camps in Colorado, and to the corridors of the United Nations. He further highlights the CIA working with Dalai Lama, Tibet rebels and Indian assistance to train and organize the Tibetan rebellion movements. As a CIA officer in charge of American covert operations inside Tibet, he gives deep insight into never-before-revealed negotiations, the true story of hidden war and the ultimate abandonment of the Tibetan by U.S. against China.

Jonathan Holsang in *China and India: Prospects for Peace* writes about the China's efforts to cause trouble in India by encouraging the Naxalite uprising in India's

northeast. Mao described the naxalites as 'spring thunder'. In the same book, Holsang gives the historical background of Sino-Indian relations with a particular emphasis on the post-independence period. He describes the various phases as: the 1950s: Accommodation and Struggle; the 1960s and 1970s: Twenty years in the trenches; the 1980s: Cooperation with Economics as a facilitating factor; the 1990s: Contest and Continuation; and, the present era of Chindia and on the Himalayan track. He postulates that China and India cannot grow without a fierce contest between them and identifies the objective of moving a hundred million citizens out of poverty and creating jobs based on trade and investment to sustain national unity is the actual source of rivalry. He uses broader international relations theory and evidence to refute the notion that interdependence and development will lead to peace.

George J. Gilboy and Eric Heginbotham in their *Chinese and Indian Strategic Behavior: Growing Power and Alarm* provide an observed comparison of Chinese and Indian international strategic behaviors. They address four areas to lay out the systematic and critical assessment of the states: strategic culture, foreign policy and use of force, military modernization, and economic strategies. They draw an analogy from the Peloponnesian War which resulted from Athens's growth of power and the alarm it inspired in Sparta (Lacedaemon). Even the subtitle of their book echoes a passage from Thucydides *The Peloponnesian War*.

Bhawana Pokharana in his book, *India- China Relations: Dimensions and Perspectives 2009*, lays out India-China relations through the ages and identifies the border and Tibet issues as the main hurdles in their bilateral engagements. He argues that cooperative and constructive partnership in various fields will enable them to make the

21st century an Asian Century. However, that requires lasting peaceful solutions to promote bilateral relations between them.

Literature Related to the Geostrategic Setting between China and India

John Graver in his *The Gestalt of Sino-Indian Relations* opines that the relationship between China and India may be thought in terms of a gestalt theory. The basis of the gestalt theory is that before perceiving different parts of an object, human eyes see objects in its entirety, suggesting that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. The phrase “The whole is greater than the sum of the parts” is often used to explain gestalt theory.³³ Analysts on both sides often view their relations as the sum of border issues, economic rivalry, support to Pakistan, the issue of Nepal, etc, and are not able to see these as individual issues.

He further discusses the important components of Sino-Indian gestalt as the status of Tibet, the Sino-Pakistan entente and the status of Myanmar. In addition to the framework of gestalt, he uses two other frameworks to describe the complexity of relational dynamics; the structure of power and a security dilemma. These three frameworks best describe and provide the background on the geostrategic setting in the region. However, in regional and international environment, the relationship dynamics keeps on evolving, therefore, this thesis also uses the framework of strategic variables of national power : DIME (Diplomatic, Information, Military and Economic) as learnt during the instruction block in Command and General Staff College to describe the current Strategic Environment.

³³David Hothersall, *History of Psychology* (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2004), Chapter 7.

Literature Related to the China's Military

Many books, monographs, articles and reports have been written on the Chinese military, its organization, doctrine, force levels and preparedness along the common borders. The Chinese refer to Sunzi, *Art of War*, for guidance and direction for strategy, doctrine and tactics. Sunzi was a great military general, strategist and tactician, who wrote a military treatise consisting of 13 chapters addressing different aspects of warfare. His work includes guidance on espionage, deception, feigning disorder and breaking the enemy's resistance without fighting. Arguably, Chinese strategy is still based on these ancient cultural military precepts.

The Chinese recent defense white paper titled *The Diversified Employment of Armed Forces* highlights the need to build new types of combat forces. It aims “to optimize the size and structure of the various services and arms, reforms the organization of the troops so as to make operational forces lean, joint, multi-functional and efficient.”³⁴ It emphasizes building a modern military force with Chinese characteristics and works to “improve the training mechanism for military personnel of a new type, adjust policies and rules regarding military human resources and logistics, and strengthen the development of new- and high-technology weaponry and equipment.”³⁵

China's armed forces firmly base their military preparedness on winning local wars under the conditions of informationization, make overall and coordinated plans to promote military preparedness in all strategic directions,

³⁴Fu Peng, “The Diversified Employment of China's Armed Forces,” Xinhua net, 2013, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2013-4/16/c_132312681_2.htm (accessed September 22, 2013).

³⁵*Ibid.*

intensify the joint employment of different services and arms, and enhance war fighting capabilities based on information systems.³⁶

Xiobing Li's *A History of The Modern Chinese Army* provides insight into the PLA's central place in Chinese society. This book links the necessity of military modernization with China's economic growth. He argues that openness to political reforms is necessary to build a professional army. Ka Po Ng's *Interpreting China's Military Power: Doctrine Makes Readiness* is an attempt to explain the doctrinal evolution of the PLA from inception to current state. He attempts to fill the void and answer the logic of the PLA's modernization efforts and exercising assertiveness of military force. From its birth as the Red Army in the 1920s, the PLA evolved from peasant guerilla forces into a modern regular army. He highlights the early local war doctrine followed by the addition of high technology and information conditions to the local war doctrine.

Richard D. Fisher Jr. in *China's Military Modernization Building for Regional and Global Reach* asserts China's rise as a global economic and military power is an important development in the post-cold war period. He argues the coming years may see China's increased assertiveness and strategic pressure on Japan, India, the Korean Peninsula, Taiwan, Africa, and Latin America. The Chinese Communist government draws its power from the PLA making it essential for the government's existence. Overall, his work provides a comprehensive and concise account of China's evolving geo-strategy and the transformation of its military to follow that strategy.

³⁶China's Information Office of the State Council, "The Diversified Employment of China's Armed Forces," [http://www.wantchinatimes.com/UploadFiles/The Diversified Employment of China's Armed Forces.pdf](http://www.wantchinatimes.com/UploadFiles/The%20Diversified%20Employment%20of%20China's%20Armed%20Forces.pdf) (accessed September 22, 2013).

Harsh V. Pant's essay on *India Comes to Terms with a Rising China* compiled in *Asia Responds to its Rising Powers* brings out the 'Global Convergence and Growing Bilateral Divergence' between both nations. The earlier Chinese perception was that they could push around India without incurring any cost and didn't consider India important in their foreign policy calculus. He writes, the Indian government took a strong stand and expects Beijing to respect Indian sensitivities on Jammu and Kashmir just as India reciprocates Chinese sensitivities on Tibet and Taiwan.

There are additional materials on the PLA forces used as reference. This includes work on nuclear missile capabilities and force preparedness. The prominent research reports referred to are, *Chinese Nuclear Forces 2011, A Bulletin of Atomic Scientists for Nuclear and Missile Capability, the Military Balance in Asia 1990-2011 A quantitative analysis for PLA forces* and *Global Security organization for Order of Battle (ORBAT) for Lanzhou and Chengdu*.

Literature Related to the India's Military

In the past, Indians referred to the epics of *Mahabharata and Ramayana* which advocates an idealistic way of fighting to draw guidance for warfare. Some of the specific rules for combat include launching operations in the morning (by the blowing of a conch) and ending at dusk. Fighting should be conducted in open areas with no damage to civil infrastructure and the loser can be forgiven if he asks for mercy and forgiveness. With the continuing evolution of warfare, the Indians also adapted.

The most debated and discussed reference to the Indian thought process and strategy is *Arthshastra (Science of Wealth)*. It is a Kautilya's treatise on statecraft and delves into the important issues of governance by a wise and virtuous king (Rajasrhi). It

is divided into 15 books and covers the aspects of governance, economy and foreign affairs. Some analysts compare it with Machiavelli's *The Prince* because of its political pragmatism. Roger Boesche describes the *Arthshāstra* as "a book of political realism, a book analyzing how the political world does work and not very often stating how it ought to work, a book that frequently discloses to a king what calculating and sometimes brutal measures he must carry out to preserve the state and the common good." Kautilya uses the concept of *Sam, Daam, Dhand and Bheda* (to advise and ask, to offer and buy, to punish, and to exploit the secrets) to accomplish any task.

Bharat Verma, GM Hiranandani and BK Pandey in their *Indian Armed Forces, 2008* lays out the security environment, details of the Indian Armed Forces since independence and dovetails the foreign-economic-military objectives to emphasize the role of forces. They question whether India can be a great power or surrogate power while highlighting the essence of "stable and secure neighbors in India's interest." They further posit that as an emerging but benevolent power, India doesn't have any external territorial interests, but must maintain the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the nation, which poses a challenge for the Indian Armed forces in the given environment.

Stephen P. Cohen and Sunil Dasgupta in *Arming Without Aiming: Indian Army Modernization* illustrate the issue with the modernization of Indian Armed Forces and give an overview of reform efforts. They examined key factors shaping India's military modernization, deeply embedded tradition of strategic restraint, and new affluence that is driving increased defense spending and tapping the potential of advanced technology. The dichotomy and disconnect between strategic thought process and military modernization derives the title of their book as *Arming without Aiming*. The book also

examines the manner in which Indian forces are meshing their threats, doctrine and equipment against the spectrum of levels of violence. They believe that India's strategic restraint and intrinsic problem with defense policy and procedure will continue to slow down military modernization. The writers feel that a lack of military expertise among the political bosses, the lack of coordination among concerned ministries and bureaucracy and rivalries amongst the services severely hindered military modernization and made it rudderless.

M. Taylor Fravel in *China's Views India's rise: Deepening Cooperation, Managing Differences* writes "China can threaten India more than India can threaten China, which limits India's ability to influence Chinese behavior. China may underestimate Indian concerns about China's rise, while India may overestimate the threat from China, which views the US as primary strategic competitor." The current strategy of China towards India combines engagement and deterrence. He further postulates that their strategic cooperation will weaken if their international and economic interests tend to diverge.

Dietmar Rothermund in his *India: The Rise of an Asian Giant* charts the characteristics of India's development since 1947, assesses the national growth and brings out the factors impeding it. He also discusses India's democratic system, nuclear decisions and cooperation for fight against the terror with U.S. and other nations. He underscores the growing influence of its rising middle class, media, Bollywood and global diaspora.

There are sufficient materials on Indian forces, nuclear missile capabilities and force preparedness. The prominent research reports are, *Indian Nuclear Forces 2011*, A

Bulletin of Atomic Scientists for Nuclear and Missile Capability, the Military Balance in Asia 1990-2011 A quantitative analysis for Indian forces and Global Security organization for Order of Battle (ORBAT) for Indian arm.

Research Methodology

Earlier in this chapter, the researcher has given a brief review of various literatures; he will use to conduct his research. The succeeding paragraphs outlines the research methodology employed to conduct the research. The study evaluates the military situation between China and India with special emphasis on the land border issue. It aims to find out the probability of a conflict due to force posturing by the PLA and subsequent responses from Indian Armed forces. The researcher will primarily use the three frameworks of John Graver, step one of Operational design of Army design methodology and Appendix B of Strategic Estimate, JP 5-0 as learnt during the CGSC to conduct his research. The layout of the research is as shown in figure. (Refer to figure 2)

The three frame works of John Graver to include the Gestalt, the Structure of Power and the Security Dilemma describe and provide the background on the Geostrategic setting between China and India and of the region. However, as the relational dynamics between nations keep evolving based on the changing interests and priorities. Therefore, it is important to gain a better understanding and update on the ever evolving strategic environment. The Step one of Operational design is a significant tool to frame the current strategic environment.

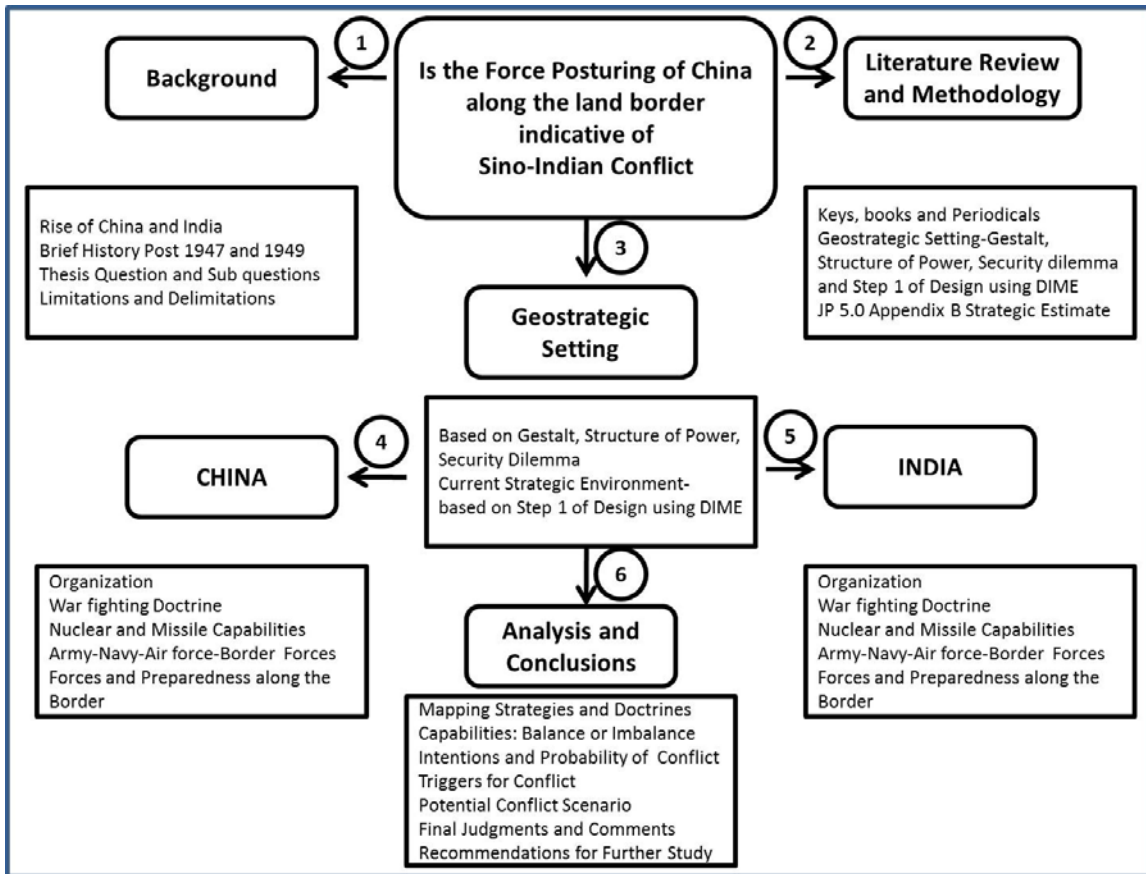


Figure 2 Research Methodology

Source: Created by author.

Operational Design is the composite of “the conditions, circumstances, and influences that affect the employment of capabilities and bear on the decisions of the commander.” It is a methodology to apply critical and creative thinking to understand, visualize, and describe unfamiliar problems and approaches to solving them. The researcher will use step 1 of the Operational Design, i.e. what is going on the environment to frame the problem? He will frame the problem between China and India within the construct of DIME (Diplomatic, Information, Military and Economic variables).

Once the researcher has framed the problem with respect to the environment, he will layout the capabilities of both nations in terms of military power. In chapter 3, he will describe the China's military and focus on its organization, doctrine and force structure. This will cover the hierarchical structure of the forces and the evolution of doctrine. The force structure will include the nuclear, missile, strength and equipment capabilities of the PLA army, navy, air force and border defense forces. The researcher will then layout the details of forces responsible for the border and their preparedness. He will then lay out the India's military in chapter 4 on similar lines.

In chapter 6, the researcher will use the frame work of the strategic estimate as mentioned in Appendix B of JP-5.0, map the grand strategies and doctrines, analyze the capabilities of both nations to determine the imbalance if any. Since the threat equals the capability multiplied by intentions, the researcher will attempt to discern and layout the intentions and probability of conflict. The possible triggers for conflict based on the current environment and potential conflict scenarios will be discussed. Finally, the aspects of further study and research on the topic would conclude the research.

In this chapter the researcher reviewed the available literature which included literature relating to the historical relations between China and India, the geostrategic setting and organization, doctrine, capabilities and preparedness of militaries of both the nations. He also laid out the research methodology for the conduct of research which is based on the three frameworks of Sino-Indian relations, Step 1 of Operational Design and the Strategic Estimate, Appendix B of JP-5.0 learned during the course of instruction at CGSC.

CHAPTER 3

THE GEOSTRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT

The relations between China and India are quite complex. The international community views this relationship with caution and interest. The last chapter reviewed the literature and the various reference materials to develop answers to the secondary questions which will assist in answering the Primary question. It also laid out the research methodology being followed for this research. This chapter covers the geostrategic environment of the region and especially border areas to better understand the complexity of bilateral relations.

John D. Graver recommends the use of three different concepts to study the dynamics of the bilateral relationship between China and India. These are Gestalt, the Structure of Power, and the Security Dilemma. He further describes the three important components of Sino-Indian gestalt for possible Sino-Indian Conflict as; (1) the status of Tibet (2) the Sino–Pak entente, and (3) the status of Myanmar.³⁷ These gestalts can also cause misperceptions, as the gestalt of Sino-Indian rivalry may fit facts to assume and interpret a rivalry even when it doesn't exist.³⁸ There are three components of Sino-Indian gestalt as described below.

³⁷John W Graver, "The Gestalt of the Sino Indian Relationship," in *The Rise of China in Asia: Security Implication*, ed. Carolyn W. Pumphrey (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2002), 262.

³⁸*Ibid.*, 63.

The Tibetan factor

Throughout history, until the Chinese military occupation of 1950, Tibet has been a *de facto*, if not *de jure* buffer between China and India. China fully understands the ethnic rift between Tibetan and Han and the sympathy all over the globe for the plight of Tibetan culture and religion.³⁹ China is actually aware of the transportation problems of getting into and within Tibet. Learning further from the disintegration of the USSR along ethnic lines, China has adopted a policy of demographic inundation of Tibet and its' other minority areas by Han settlers.⁴⁰ The PRC has also created networks of roads, railways and infrastructure with the intent to integrate Tibet into mainland China. India has given political asylum and refuge to the Dalai Lama and large numbers of Tibetans. China has always accused India for tacitly supporting the government in exile to foment trouble in the Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR). This has been further exacerbated by Tibetan refugees in Nepal.

Graver describes Tibet as China's only fundamental vulnerability vis-a-vis India, and views it as a mechanism by India to constrain China as China supports and uses Pakistan to keep India sober and under constant pressure. India on the other hand has

³⁹Ibid., 64.

⁴⁰Regarding Chinese policy in Tibet during the 1980s and 1990s, see Tsering Shakya, *The Dragon in the Land of Snows: A History of Modern Tibet since 1947* (London: Pimlico, 1999); Melvyn C. Goldstein, *The Snow Lion and the Dragon; China, Tibet, and the Dalai Lama* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997); Graver, "The Gestalt of the Sino Indian Relationship."

recognized Tibet as autonomous part of China and has not contemplated military intervention in Tibet to support the Tibetan effort to liberate them.⁴¹

Pakistan and the Sino-Indian Structure of Power

Beijing sees and uses Pakistan to constrain India and to mitigate the possibilities of intervention or support for Tibetans. It also uses Pakistan to oppose India's bid for a permanent UN seat on the Security Council by insisting that decision for inclusion must be unanimous. Pakistan's constant challenges limits India to only a regional power and enables China to operate with an elevated Asian and global influence. The Sino-Pak friendship also provides China access to the Arabian Sea utilizing the Karakorum Highway (friendship highway) and the Gwadar Port.⁴²

In 2006, Hussain Haqqani, the Pakistan Ambassador to U.S. described the relationship, "For China, Pakistan is a low-cost secondary deterrent to India. For Pakistan, China is a high-value guarantor of security against India." China sees its friendship with Pakistan as "all weather friendship" which Hu Jintao had described as "higher than the Himalayas, deeper than the Indian Ocean, and sweeter than honey."⁴³ They share common geopolitical concerns, in respect to India, which make them obvious partners. In the Center for Naval Analysis (CNA) China studies report, Murray Scot

⁴¹China Tibet Online, "Indian PM: Tibet is Part of Chinese Territory," May 21, 2013, <http://chinatibet.people.com.cn/8251234.html> (accessed September 23, 2013).

⁴²Adam Hodge, "Karakoram Highway: China's Treacherous Pakistan Corridor," *The Diplomat*, July 30, 2013, <http://thediplomat.com/2013/07/30/karakoram-highway-chinas-treacherous-pakistani-corridor/> (accessed October 12, 2013).

⁴³Hu Jintao, "Address at Islamabad Convention Center: 'Carry on Traditional Friendship and Deepen All-Round Cooperation'," <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/wjlb/zjg/yzs/gjlb/2757/2758/t285917> (accessed October 31, 2013).

Tanner, Kerry B. Dumbaugh and Ian M. Easton describe these concerns to include territorial disputes in their shared borders with India, a history of hostility and confrontations with Delhi and the powerful mutual interest in maneuvering to balance or contain India's power and influence.⁴⁴

Myanmar and the Sino-Indian Structure of Power

China through its extensive military aid maintained strategic and military cooperation with Myanmar. It has a significant footprint in Myanmar. Projects include hydroelectric dams, the ambitious Shwe Gas pipeline to transport fuel from Myanmar to China's landlocked southern Yunnan province.⁴⁵ This strategic bilateral relationship provided China a shorter access to the Bay of Bengal and the Indian Ocean. It also provides opportunities to diversify the sea lines of communication, by making available an alternative route to avoid the choke point at the Strait of Malacca. The regime change and democratic transition within the Myanmar has led to a closer relationship between India and Myanmar. With the change to a democratic government, Myanmar has realized that its real asset, other than natural wealth and mineral resources is its strategic location at the crossroad of two great civilizations.

⁴⁴Kerry B. Dumbaugh, Ian M. Easton Murray, and Scot Tanner, *Distracted Antagonists, Wary Partners: China and India Assess Their Security Relations* (CNA: China Studies, 2011).

⁴⁵Brian McCartan, "China's Footprint in Myanmar Expands," *Asia Times*, November 1, 2008, http://www.atimes.com/atimes/China_Business/JK01Cb02.html (accessed October 23, 2013).

The Sino-Indian Structure of Power

Graver describes the structure of power between India and China to include the following elements which fit together to form the Sino-Indian gestalt and he warns that issues that might appear small in isolation become significant enough for decisions for war when viewed from a total gestalt perspective. There is a definite requirement to view all of these and holistically approach the Sino-Indian structure of Power. The main elements of the structure of Sino-Indian Power are geographic areas and functional areas. They are mentioned below and are deliberated as required during the research.

Geographic areas

- the political-military status of Tibet,
- the capabilities and orientation of Pakistan,
- the political-military status of Nepal,
- the political-military status of Sikkim, Bhutan, and the Chumbi Valley,
- the political-military status of the southern slope of the eastern Himalayan region (roughly equivalent to the Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh),
- the political-military status of Myanmar,
- the political-military regime of the Indian Ocean and
- the political-military status of Bangladesh.

Functional areas

- the level of domestic support and degree of political purpose behind state efforts to influence events in the (South Asia- Indian Ocean Region) SA-IOR,
- the fiscal capabilities of China and India,
- level of support by major extra-regional powers for Indian and Chinese actions in the SA-IOR,
- military capabilities, especially the ability of China and India to project military power in the SA-IOR,
- the relative moral-ideological appeal within the SA-IOR of policies of China and India,
- nuclear deterrent capabilities of India and China vis-à-vis one another,
- strategic acumen and diplomatic skill of leaders of the Chinese and Indian states

- the military and political position of India and China in Southeast Asia and
- Chinese or Indian transit rights via Bangladesh territory.⁴⁶

The Security Dilemma in Sino-Indian Relations

Graver uses the security dilemma as described by Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* to explain Sino-Indian construct. He elaborates on the existence of a security dilemma when a state arms itself for defensive purposes, out of fears of possible hostile military action by another state.⁴⁷ In anticipation of the threat, the state proactively tends to arm itself to defend against what might happen and becomes a more powerful military. This enhances the probable threat to other states, triggering them to also arm their forces becoming locked in a mutual negative interaction. Each state views its own action as defensive, and the other states threatening, and a negative spiral may ensue in which both consider their actions purely defensive.

Jonathan Holsang, in *China and India: Prospect for Peace*, evaluates the demilitarization of the border area and highlights regular incursions in the disputed border areas of Ladakh, Tawang, Sikkim and Bhutan. The Chinese maneuvers, he states, are aimed at reinforcing claims over certain parts of frontiers rather than at deterring India. He questions the motives of incursions in Bhutan and Sikkim, as China has recognized Sikkim as part of India and Bhutan as a sovereign nation. His interviews at the Chinese and Indian foreign ministries put the onus on the local military officers for acting on their own initiative. He further elaborates that these incidents clearly bring out

⁴⁶Graver.

⁴⁷Graver; Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (NJ: Princeton University, 1976), 66-76.

the vulnerability of the Siliguri corridor which if captured, can cut off the entire Indian north eastern states and can provide China with direct access to the Bay of Bengal and the Indian Ocean.

The Sino-Indian relations have exhibited through their actions in Tibet, the Indian Ocean, and policies and bilateral relations that a security dilemma exists between them. The Chinese have adopted a “Strings of Pearl” policy which Christopher Pehrson describes as, “the manifestation of China’s rising geopolitical influence through efforts to increase access to ports and airfields, develop special diplomatic relationships, and modernize military forces that extend from the South China Sea through the Strait of Malacca, across the Indian Ocean, and on to the Persian Gulf.”⁴⁸ (Refer to figure 3).

⁴⁸Christopher J. Pehrson, “String of Pearls: Meeting the Challenge of China’s Rising Power Across the Asian Littoral,” 2006, <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdf/files/pub721.pdf> (accessed July 13, 2013).



Figure 3 Strings of Pearls

Source: Wikipedia, “Strings of Pearls,” <http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/86/Collardeperlaschino.png> (accessed July 13, 2013).

The Chinese infrastructure and supporting civilian bases around India are located in Gwadar (Pakistan), Hambantota (Sri Lanka), Chittagong (Bangladesh), and Kyaukpyu Y Sittwe (Myanmar). These bases, along with the Chinese space and satellite projects with India’s neighbors, are viewed as the India containment strategy by the Chinese.⁴⁹ However, Indian analysts view it leading to India’s tactical advantage, provided, Indians take the preparatory measures and shift their focus from the border conflict and Tibet to

⁴⁹Miles Yu, “China Cultivates Ties with India’s Neighbors in Containment Strategy,” World Tribune.com, March 26, 2013, <http://www.worldtribune.com/2013/03/26/china-cultivates-ties-with-indias-neighbors-in-containment-strategy/> (accessed August 17, 2013).

the Indian Ocean, where the Indian navy is relatively well poised due to peninsular configuration.⁵⁰ The details of navies will be covered subsequently.

The Current Strategic Environment

The four strategic variables which a nation uses as tools to influence strategic events are Diplomatic, Information, Military and Economic (DIME). Diplomacy takes a lead in bilateral and multilateral relations between nations. It is most active and may inhibit the employment of the military unless necessary. However, without sufficient military and economic clout a nation doesn't have enough leverage and is vulnerable to outside influence. The informational aspect shape all other variables and project the smart power. China has more diplomatic, economic and military clout in the international arena based on its permanent membership in Security Council, the second largest economy and a larger military. India, on the other hand based on its democratic values, freedom of speech, liberty and better human rights record attract others and fare well on information aspects. The current strategic environment between both the nations as viewed from the Diplomatic, Economic and Military perspective is provided below.

Diplomatic

The diversity and range of issues between China and India makes for a complex engagement regime. There are many areas where the convergences of views and interests have brought them closer. The common position adopted by both on environmental

⁵⁰Iskander Rehman, "China's String of Pearls and India's Enduring Tactical Advantage," *Institute of Defense Studies and Analysis*, 2008, http://www.idsa.in/idsa/comments/ChinasStringofPearlsandIndiasEnduringTacticalAdvantage_irehman_080610 (accessed July 13, 2013).

issues at Bonn Climate Summit 2013, the reforms of International Monetary Fund (IMF), and World Bank organizations, highlight the common interests. The formation of the Russia-India-China (RIC) has given a new dimension to Sino-Indian relations. The RIC has grown and seen the addition of Brazil and South Asia (BRICS) which is emerging as a strong organization (one of the largest organizations in terms of population, area and trade). China has granted a special observer status to India in Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), and is pressing for India's entry into the fold. Both the nations suffer from the menace of terrorism and have expressed their desire to tackle terrorism, as well as the effects of climate change and world financial crisis. The Indian assistance to the Sichuan earthquake victims of 2008 has been deeply appreciated by China.

However, there are other major issues that often question the diplomatic harmony. In run-up to the Hu Jintao's November 2006 visit, Chinese ambassador referred to entire state of Arunachal Pradesh as part of China. In recent years the Chinese analyst have begun to refer to it commonly as 'Southern Tibet', which was never referred to in China's official media prior to 2005.⁵¹ This along with China opposing Asian development bank loan in 2009, part of which was earmarked for a watershed project in Arunachal Pradesh demonstrates China openly questioning Indian sovereignty over the state.⁵²

These moves have signaled to New Delhi that the Chinese may be backing away from a 2005 border agreement, referred to as the "Agreement on Political

⁵¹Mohan Malik, "China Unveils 'The Kashmir Card'," *China Brief*, 10 (2010), http://www.jamestown.org/programs/chinabrief/single/?tx_ttnews%5btt_news%5d=36915&tx_ttnews%5bbackPid%5d=25&cHash=078d3aabd3#.UotuKaHnbFh (accessed July 12, 2013).

⁵²Lisa Curtis and Dean Cheng, "The China Challenge: A Strategic Vision for US-India Relations," 2011, <http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2011/07/the-china-challenge-a-strategic-vision-for-us-india-relations> (accessed July 13, 2013), 3.

Parameters and Guiding Principles for Settlement of the Boundary Question.” More specifically, since the 2005 accord stipulated that “settled populations will not be disturbed,” India argues that China has violated the 2005 agreement by laying claim to Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh. Chinese interlocutors claim Tawang is part of Tibet because one of the Dalai Lamas was born there. The Chinese have objected to recent visits to Tawang by the Indian Prime Minister and the Dalai Lama.⁵³

The issue of visas to applicants has been a bone of contention between both the nations. China has been issuing stapled visa (paper visa on separate sheet) to Indian applicants from Jammu and Kashmir which questions the Indian sovereignty over Jammu and Kashmir. Since 2009, it has started issuing paper visa to applicants from Arunachal Pradesh, which it considers disputed.⁵⁴ In November 2010, during the Russia-India-China trilateral summit, Indian Foreign Minister, SM Krishna, expressed India’s sensitivities on Jammu Kashmir to his counterpart Yang Jiechi, and drew a parallel directly between Kashmir, Tibet and Taiwan. China accuses India for delaying visas to Chinese workers and businesspersons.

China’s strategy of ‘Strings of Pearls’ around India and in the Indian Ocean and India’s ‘Look East’ policy to increase its economic and diplomatic clout, is viewed by both to enhance their sphere of influence. This also brings out the alignment and alliance with the neighbors of the other state to diplomatically put pressure on each other.

⁵³Ibid.

⁵⁴Press Trust of India, “China Issuing ‘Invalid’ Stapled Visas to Arunachal Pradesh Residents,” *The Times of India*, January 21, 2011, http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2011-01-12/india/28374355_1_stapled-visas-techi-china-weightlifting-grand-prix (accessed July 16, 2013).

Information

As noted earlier information is an important aspect of bilateral and multilateral relations amongst nations. The Chinese describes their rise peaceful (*Zhōngguó héping juéqǐ*) in a harmonious world.⁵⁵ They look for inward development before interfering with the world affairs. Since, the term ‘rise’ was being perceived as aggressive and a threat to the world order, the Chinese changed the term to Chinese ‘peaceful development’ in 2004. On the other hand, India practices Gandhi’s principle of ‘Ahimsa’ (non-violence), tolerance and restraint. Indian draws more soft power in the world due to their democratic values, freedom of speech, tolerance, rich cultural values and human rights track record.

Not many Chinese scholars can read and write Hindi and the same goes for Indian scholars. English is generally the common language. Therefore understanding among the political elites and professionals on culture, history and values had remained quite shallow. “News outlets, blogs, and other foreign policy forums are dominated by non-specialists who nonetheless speak with authority and credibility on how India should handle relations with China, and vice versa. Most often, hawkish views grab the headlines.”⁵⁶ This adds to the Sino-Indian gestalt and form perception about each other based on viewpoints of non-specialists.

⁵⁵Wikipedia, “China’s Peaceful Rise,” http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/China's_peaceful_rise (accessed July 21, 2013).

⁵⁶Mark Frazier, “How Well Do China and India Know Each Other?” *China File The Atlantic*, May 24, 2013, <http://www.theatlantic.com/china/archive/2013/05/how-well-do-china-and-india-know-each-other/276206> (accessed September 23, 2013).

Chinese media earlier did not treat India a cause of concern which is manifested by the number of articles and coverage in various Chinese media. However, post US and European Union (EU) lifting sanctions on India and the arms ban still on China, “perceptions, particularly in China are undergoing a range of both perceptible and imperceptible shifts.”⁵⁷ A qualitative review of these perceptions shows that China is paying growing attention to India’s military modernization with increased coverage in Chinese media and scholarly article.

The public opinion guides the action of political bosses, who are reluctant to resolve the border issue. The remark of Chinese premier to exercise patience in solving border disputes as “issues left over from the past” on request by Indian president K. R. Narayan to resolve the issue and not leave it for future generations reinforces it.⁵⁸ The reluctance can be attributed to many reasons, which the researcher will attempt to have a look during the analysis but the aspect of public opinion based on the information provided plays an important role.

The information war to gain strategic advantage has already begun across the cyber domain. In December 2009, hacking operation originated in china compromised more than 200 computers belonging to top-ranking Indian government official including three services vice chiefs and former National Security Advisor M.K. Narayan.⁵⁹ This is

⁵⁷Lora Saalman, “Between ‘China Threat Theory’ and ‘Chindia’: Chinese Responses to India’s Military Modernization’,” *Oxford Journal* 4, no. 1 (April 1987):87-114, <http://cjjp.oxfordjournals.org/content/4/1/87.full> (accessed November 1, 2013).

⁵⁸John W. Graver, “Sino-Indian Security Relations,” in *The Routledge Handbook of Asian Security Studies*, ed. Andrew Scobell, Joseph Chinyong Liow, and Sumit Ganguly (London: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2010), 136.

⁵⁹Cheng, 12.

a manifestation of Chinese way of waging Cyber war especially in consonance with the Limited /Local war under conditions of Informatization.

Economic

The main driver of Sino-Indian relations is the enhanced economic cooperation between the two countries. Being two of the world's largest markets, they profit from continuous engagement and cooperating economically. The agreement to initiate the Strategic and Economic Dialogue (SED) was taken during the Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao's visit to India in December 2010. The SED's objective is to "increase coordination on macro-economic policies and to provide a platform for both countries to leverage common interests and shared developmental experiences."

The first ever SED held in Beijing on September 26, 2011, had three specific working groups covering railways, water and energy efficiency, and the environment. The second SED was organized in New Delhi on November 26, 2012 and the dialogue was held between the Planning Commission of India and the National Development and Reform Commission of China. Both countries decided to increase their cooperation to cope with the current global economic situation and pursue common interests in the International Monetary Fund (IMF). During the recent visit of Prime Minister Li to India, business delegations accompanied him and of the eight agreements signed, five pertained to shoring up economic cooperation.⁶⁰

⁶⁰Hussain H Zaidi, "Indo-China Relations," *The News*, June 8, 2013, <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-182594-Indo-China-relations> (accessed July 18, 2013).

The bilateral trade has shot up from \$17 billion in 2005 to \$72 billion as of 2013, and is likely to reach \$100 billion by 2015. The two countries may also enter into a free trade agreement (FTA).⁶¹ There are a few hindrances as both accuse each other of unfair trade practices and also controlling the access of their exports. The anti-dumping disputes,⁶² the trade imbalance which is in favor of China, and non recognition of China as a market economy by India are a few of the major irritants in economic cooperation.⁶³

Another concern is water from Tibet and it's sharing by China as the upper riparian state. Tibet is the world's largest fresh water repository and the source of Asia's greatest rivers.⁶⁴ China is building a series of dams along the courses of various rivers such as the Mekong, Sutlej, Indus and Yarlung Tsangpo (Brahmaputra in India) which "seems to roil Inter riparian relations in Asia and make it more difficult to establish rules-based water cooperation and sharing."⁶⁵ (Refer figure 4)

⁶¹Ibid.

⁶²The Chinese firms are heavily subsidized by their government and allow them to dump their processed goods into the World market including India, which severely affects the Indian local business

⁶³China joined the WTO as a non-market economy in 2001. 80 countries including Pakistan has revoked and recognized it as market economy, but India is yet to recognize it.

⁶⁴Brhama Chellaney, "China's Great Water Wall," *The Washington Times*, April 8, 2013, <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2013/apr/8/chinas-great-water-wall/> (accessed July 21, 2013).

⁶⁵Chellaney, "China's Great Water Wall;" Brhama Chellaney, *Water, Peace, and War: Confronting the Global Water Crisis* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2013).

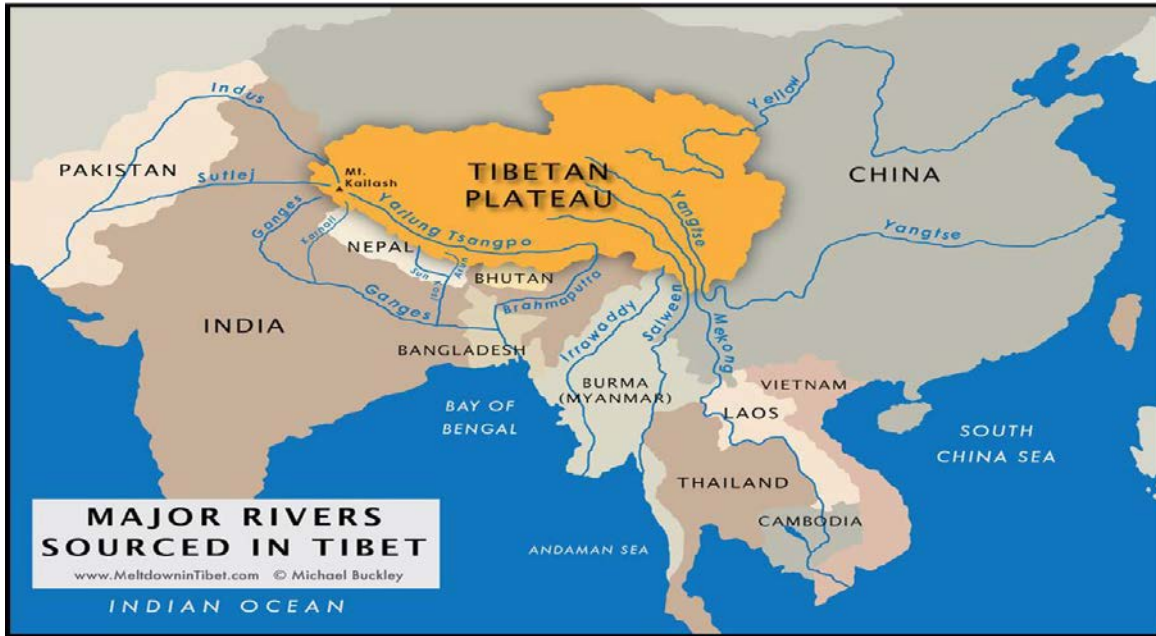


Figure 4 Major Rivers in Tibet

Source: Cleanbiz.Asia, “Major Rivers sourced in Tibet,” <http://www.cleanbiz.asia/image/major-rivers-sourced-tibet> (accessed July 18, 2013).

The China’s re-engineering of transboundary flows and absence of any water sharing agreement with any nation most severely affects India due to the amount of water flow and flooding concerns due to proximity of large dams close to India’s borders.⁶⁶ On the other hand Indus water treaty assures the world’s largest cross-border water flow into Pakistan from India, for which India has to solely depend on water from Tibetan plateau. The Ganges accord for sharing of international water between India and Bangladesh is another example of upper-lower riparian relationship and relies on water from the Tibetan plateau.

⁶⁶As per UN figures, a total of 718 billion cubic meters of surface water flows out of Chinese territory yearly, of which 347 billion cubic meters (or 48.3 percent of the total) runs directly into India.

Military

While subsequent chapters the researcher will delve deeply into the current military capabilities of both countries. This section will provide a broad overview of military aspects of their present dynamics. China and India have the largest standing militaries in the world. Having fought a war fifty years ago, they are still suspicious of each other. The Indian Army having suffered a defeat in the 1962 war is more skeptical about the opaque nature of the PLA and as the vanquished strives to learn more lessons. The relationship becomes more complex because of the gestalt, structure of power and the security dilemma between them. The present state along the border is based on an agreement on the maintenance of peace and tranquility along the LAC, as signed on September 7, 1993, and the ongoing CBMs. The agreement calls for the resolution of boundary dispute through peaceful and friendly consultations in the spirit of 'Panchsheel'.⁶⁷ The other clauses provide for a gradual reduction of troops, improved communication between commanders, a mutual pullback of troops in forward areas, limits on military exercises and measures to prevent air violations.⁶⁸ The agreement on CBMs was inked in November 1996 and included.

Special provisions for reducing the military presence, such as withdrawal of offensive weapons like mortars, tanks, howitzers, surface to surface and surface to air missile. Exercises involving more than a division were prohibited, and all maneuvers with more than five thousand soldiers needed to be announced in advance, Combat aircraft were banned at a distance of 10 km from LAC except after prior permission. Use of hazardous chemical . . . Blast operations . . . or guns

⁶⁷Stimson Paper, "Agreement on the Maintenance of Peace Along the Line of Actual Control in the India-China Border," 1993, <http://www.stimson.org/research-pages/agreement-on-the-maintenance-of-peace-along-the-line-of-actual-control-in-the-india-china-border/> (accessed June 12, 2013).

⁶⁸Holsang, 121.

or explosives within two km of LAC were prohibited except for developmental purposes. Increased meetings between their border representatives at designated places. Expand telecommunication links and establish step by step medium and high level contacts between border authorities.⁶⁹

In 2003, new efforts to combat terrorism and joint military exercises began which included joint maritime search and rescue, port calls, joint mountaineering expeditions and military exercises.⁷⁰ In 2006, a memorandum of understanding was signed to form “the basis for the defense and military exchanges between the two countries.” It streamlined the systematic and organization contacts between the defense official experts and the armed forces of China and India. In 2009, the military exchanges were called off by India in protest to denial of a visa to an Indian army General from Kashmir to visit China, as part of military delegation.

Despite all the CBMs, there are still a number of PLA patrols that violate Indian Territory and leave traces of their visit/presence. These incursions create diplomatic agitation which the Indian government registers with their Chinese counterparts. The annual violations by the PLA have increased from 90 to 140 from 2000 to 2007, and took place along the border from Pangong Tso and Chusul in Ladakh; Lipulekh in Central India; Chumbi Valley to Sikkim; and Bhutan (threatening strategic vulnerable Siliguri corridor) and Arunachal Pradesh.⁷¹ (Refer to figure 5). In 2007, the Chinese moved into Bhutan and demolished Indian unmanned forward posts in Dolam Valley, Bhutan and

⁶⁹Ibid.

⁷⁰Ibid.

⁷¹Holsang, 123.

Sikkim. Additionally the Chinese maneuvers in the Chumbi Valley caused public outrage.

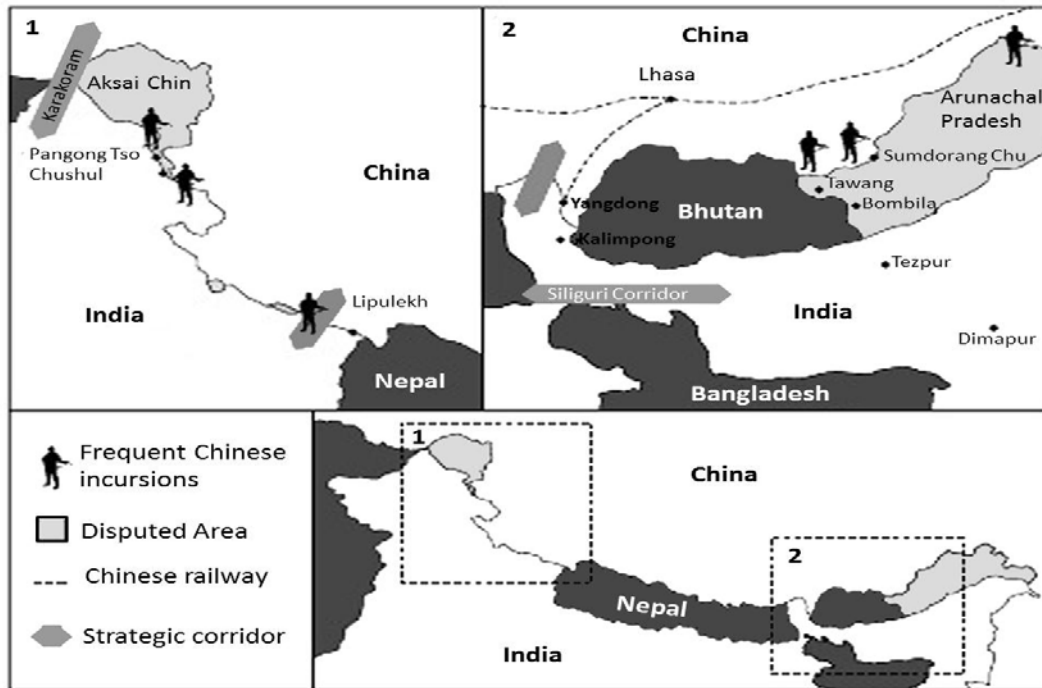


Figure 5 The Sino-Indian Border Area

Source: Jonathan Holsang, *China and India: Prospects for Peace* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 128.

To further strain relations, China, in 2009, replicated the whole of Aksai Chin area and a large part of the disputed Indo-China border on a large sized sand model. The satellite images show that China has replicated around a 1, 57,500 km² area, on a map scale of 900×700 meters (at the scale of 500:1).⁷² (Refer to figure 6)

⁷²Arun Sahgal, “Chinese Intrusion in Ladakh: Terrain Model Exposes Dragons War Preparedness,” *Eurasia Review Journal* (2013), <http://www.eurasiareview.com/06052013-chinese-intrusion-in-ladakh-terrain-model-exposes-dragons-war-preparedness-analysis/> (accessed July 17, 2013).

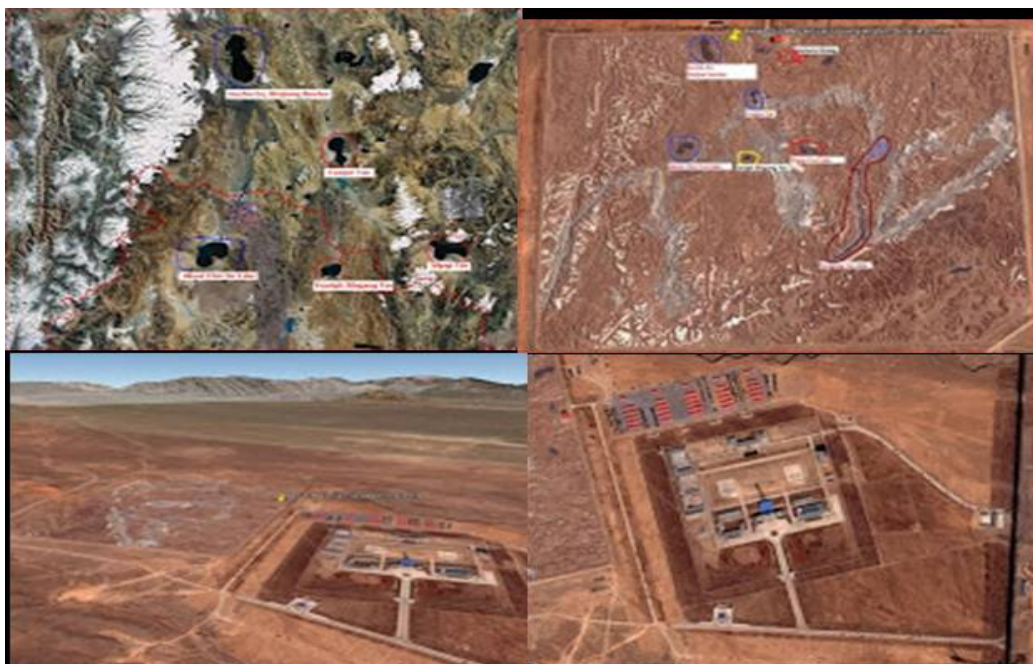


Figure 6 Chinese Terrain Model Opposite Aksai Chin

Source: “Chinese Intrusion in Ladakh: Terrain Model Exposes Dragons War Preparedness,” *Eurasia Review Journal* (2013), <http://www.eurasiareview.com/06052013-chinese-intrusion-in-ladakh-terrain-model-exposes-dragons-war-preparedness-analysis/> (accessed July 17, 2013).

The Indian strategic community questioned this initiative and raised their concerns over China’s motivation and intentions to spend money and resources to replicate the disputed area? The further investigation by bloggers discovered the PLA AF pilots walking on the model and carrying out familiarization. The recent incursion by a PLA patrol consisting of 40-45 soldiers 19 km inside Indian Territory in the Daulat Beg Oldie sector in Ladakh, led to a three week long confrontation making the situation

vulnerable for a major conflict. The frantic military, diplomatic and political negotiations eventually led to an amicable solution and pull back by both sides.⁷³

While the demilitarization and reduction of forces have taken place along the border, as per the agreement on the peace and tranquility agreement, both sides have continued to improve their defensive postures and build conventional forces in depth. The Chinese military regions (MRs) of Chengdu and Lanzhou have seen significant modernization. The 13 GA has transformed into a rapid reaction force with improved logistical capacity, mobile artillery, air defense, communication and intelligence, special forces and intensive high altitude warfare training.⁷⁴ More than fourteen airfields in the Tibetan Plateau have undergone renovation with new communication and command infrastructure, longer landing strips and depots.⁷⁵ Additionally there has been a significant increase in air power with the reinforcement of the 33rd Air Division with Su 27 UBK aircraft and the deployment of SU 27 multirole fighter aircraft.

On the Indian side, the 27th Mountain Division was relocated to its home base in December 2007 from Kashmir, and there are plans to revamp 2 Corps and 4 Corps to thwart the threat. There has been significant air force modernization including renovation

⁷³Rahul Bedi, "India and China Resolve Border Standoff," *IHS's Jane Defense Weekly*, 2013, <http://www.janes.com/article/12404/india-and-china-resolve-border-standoff> (accessed July 17, 2013).

⁷⁴Jonathan Holsang's Interview with expert, CASS Beijing, December 7, 2007 as mentioned in his book *China and India Prospects for Peace*, 125.

⁷⁵Deng Guilin, 'Air force in Tibet Sets Up a Comprehensive Logistics Support System,' *Jiefangjun bao*, July 17, 2007 as mentioned in Jonathan Holsang's *China and India Prospects for Peace*, 126.

of shelters and airstrips and positioning of SU 30 MKI fighter jets.⁷⁶ The Eastern Air Command has also upgraded air bases at Hashimara, Chabua and Jorhat.

In the maritime theatre, the Indian Ocean holds great importance as a large amount of trade for China and India passes through it. India has the advantage due to its geostrategic location and peninsular configuration. However, the greater advantage is in terms of Indian warships, infrastructure, naval diplomacy and ability to generate soft power by promptly reacting to humanitarian crisis. The Indian Navy has one operational aircraft carrier (earlier India had two of them and will have three by 2016) and has experience of operating them since 1960s, whereas China, has recently commissioned its first aircraft carrier. China under its strategy of ‘Strings of Pearl’, has gained access to strategic locations in Pakistan (Gwadar), Srilanka (Hambantota), Maldives, Seychelles, eastern Africa, Bangladesh (Chittagong) and Myanmar (sittewe) thus surrounding India. Both navies have gone for rapid modernization to transform and effectively exert influence as blue water navies.

The nuclear deterrence is poised in favor of China with more warheads. In fact, the 1998 nuclear test, by India, was designed to bridge the gap. Beijing is concerned about India’s advanced air defense program as it may affect China’s older generation of single warhead IRBMs.⁷⁷ The new missiles operated by India can undermine China’s

⁷⁶Vishnu Mahijani, “Indian Air Force Enhances Strategic Reach Against China,” TwoCircles.net, 2007, http://twocircles.net/2007sep30/indian_air_force_enhances_strategic_reach_against_china.html (accessed August 17, 2013).

⁷⁷Holsang, 139.

superiority over Tibet and Tibet's relevance as a buffer zone will be undermined by India's gradual nuclear buildup.⁷⁸

⁷⁸“India Needs to Eliminate Anxiety About China,” *People's Daily*, June 9, 2001, <http://www.china.org.cn/english/2001/Sep/18781.htm> (accessed July 21, 2013).

CHAPTER 4

The China Military

The last chapter discussed the geostrategic environment between China and India, highlighted the gestalt, the structure of power, and the security dilemma between the two nations. The current strategic environment was described through the variable of DIME. This chapter lays out the organization, war fighting doctrine, nuclear and missile capabilities of China, followed by a brief discussion of PLA Army, Navy, Air Forces and border forces. The border situation and the preparedness of the PLA for border war will also be examined.

Organization

As the largest military force in the world, the PLA consist of approximately 2.5 million personnel. It has five branches, namely the PLA Army (PLAA), PLA Navy (PLAN), PLA Air Force (PLAAF), Second Artillery Corps (SAC) and the reserve force. The Central Military Commission (CMC) is the supreme headquarters for command and leadership for the armed forces of the China. The president of the PRC heads the CMC and is assisted by several vice chairmen. It has four general headquarters and the service chiefs. The PLA is completely integrated with the CMC and works in synergy with other services. (Refer to figure 7)

PLA Ground Forces are deployed in 7 Military Regions (MR) across China that hosts a total of 18 Group Armies (GA), with each GA comprised of about 60,000 men.⁷⁹

⁷⁹Anthony H. Cordesman and Martin Kleiber, *Chinese Military Modernization and Force Development* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2006), 29.

(Refer to figure 8) Combat Ground Forces are comprised of four services - infantry, armor, and artillery and air defense.⁸⁰

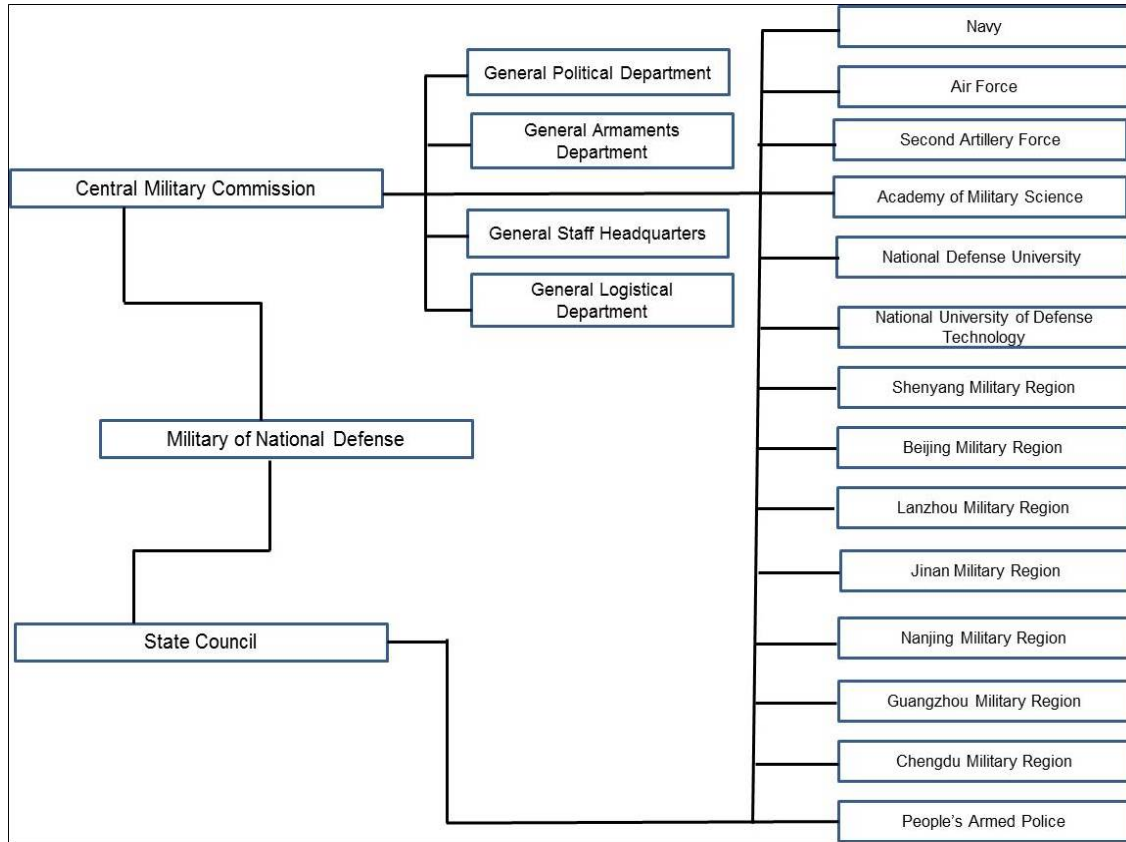


Figure 7 Chinese National Level Organization

Source: Dennis J. Blasko, *The Chinese Army Today: Tradition and Transformation for the 21st century* (New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, 2006), 26.

⁸⁰The International Institute of Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance in Asia*, 2011, 230.



Figure 8 Chinese Military Regions

Source: Congressional Research Service, *US-China Military Contacts*, July 25, 2013, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/RL32496.pdf> (accessed November 5, 2013), 9.

Doctrine

China's former and current leaders have studied and referred to *Art of War* by Sun Zi (596-544 BC) frequently in their personal and national approach to power. His treatises are based on deception, feigning disorder, breaking the enemy's resistance without fighting and the use of espionage. They reflect the importance of military force in

international relations: “Warfare is the greatest affair of state” the treatise begins, “the basis of life and death, the way (Tao) to survival and extinction.”⁸¹

Dennis Woodward examines the evolution of PLA modern doctrine from Mao Tse-Tung strategy of ‘People’s War’ to present day.⁸² By the 1970s, the doctrine had evolved to ‘People’s war under modern conditions’ by upgrading weaponry to thwart the enemy at the border and focusing on defending its cities.⁸³ This doctrine was replaced in the 1985 with doctrine of limited or local war (jubu zhenzheng) due to the after effects of limited and local conflict with Vietnam in 1979. The impact was large scale demobilization and creation of rapid response (kuaisu) units also known as shock troops which were nominated as ‘fist’ (quantou).

This led to the creation of self-contained units, striking first, winning victory by use of superior force, with the goal of a “quick battle for a quick resolution” (QBQR).⁸⁴ The success of US forces, especially the aspects of technology in 1991 Gulf War, impressed the Chinese leaders and led to the CMC approving a new doctrine of fighting a

⁸¹Sun Zi, *The Art of War*, trans. Ralph Sawyer (New York: New York Books, 1994), 164; Geroge J Gilboy and Eric Heginbotham, *Chinese and Indian Strategic Behavior Growing Power and Alarm* (Cambridge University Press, 2012), 33.

⁸²Dennis Woodward, “The People’s Liberation Army: A Threat to India ?,” *Contemporary South Asia* 12, no. 2 (2003), <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/095849302000147681#preview> (accessed June 12, 2013).

⁸³P. H. B Godwin, “The PLA Faces the Twenty First Century: Reflection on Technology, Doctrine, Strategy and Operations,” in *China’s Military Faces The Future*, ed. J. R. Lilley and David Shambaugh (New York: Armonk, 1999), 47.

⁸⁴Nan Li, “The PLA’s Evolving War Fighting Doctrine, Strategy and Tactics, 1985-95: A Chinese Perspective,” *The China Quaterely*, no 146 (June 1996): 446.

“modern (limited) war under high technology conditions.”⁸⁵ This implied active (part of limited war) and forward defense (requirement of high tech war) designed to be practiced simultaneously.

Jiang Zemin initially promulgated the doctrine of Local War Under High Technological Conditions in 1993; however, Hu Jintao emphasized the importance of information technology and released the new doctrine of “Local War Under Conditions of Informatization.” It calls for using information and cyber domain to cripple adversary’s capabilities before any physical operations take place. The *Science of Military Strategy* asserts.

It has two distinctive features: one is the high-tech feature, and the other is the local feature. The former refers to the high-tech as the material and technological foundation of war, for a large amount of high-tech weapons and equipment are used and a lot of traditional military systems are improved by the employment of high technologies. The latter means that the war is controlled within the local range. Moreover, the aim, range, tools of war and time and space of engagements are all limited. These two features determine the fundamental orientation of the future development of local war.⁸⁶

Nuclear and Missile Capability

The nuclear and missile capability is one of the tools to measure the strength of a nation. China is the only one of the five original nuclear weapon states that is increasing

⁸⁵You Ji, “The Revolution in Military Affairs and The Evolution of China’s Strategic Thinking,” *Contemporary South East Asia* 21, no. 3 (1999), <http://www.jstor.org/discover/10.2307/25798464?uid=3739672&uid=2129&uid=2&uid=70&uid=4&uid=3739256&sid=21102860026567> (accessed July 23, 2013).

⁸⁶PRC, *战略学* [Science of (Military) Strategy], ed. Guangoian Peng and Youzhi Yao (Beijing: PRC: National Military Science Publishing House, 2005), 99.

its nuclear arsenal.⁸⁷ China's white paper reiterates its policy of minimum deterrent with no first use and shunning any nuclear arms race. However, it has never defined the meaning of minimum deterrent posture in quantitative and qualitative terms.⁸⁸ This, combined with deployment of four new nuclear-capable ballistic missiles (the DF-21, DF-31, DF-31A, and JL-2) by China, is worrisome to the intelligence community.

China has a triad of nuclear delivery capabilities – land; sea and air based and has a total of 240 nuclear warheads. It includes 138 land-based, 62 Submarine launched missile and 40 Aircraft based (Refer to explanatory note (f)). The responsibility of handling warheads rests with Second Artillery Corps (SAC), and for safety, the warheads and missiles are kept separately. The details of stockpiles based on open source reports are listed below (Refer table 1)

⁸⁷Hans M. Kristensen and Robert S. Norris, "China's Nuclear Forces," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 67 (2011), <http://bos.sagepub.com/content/67/6/81> (accessed July 21, 2013): 81-87.

⁸⁸Norris and Kuacki (2011) for an insightful review of Chinese Nuclear Doctrine.

Table 1. Table Chinese Nuclear Capability						
Type	NATO designation	Number	Year deployed	Range (KM)	Warhead yield (KT)	Number of Warheads
Land Based Ballistic Missiles						
DF 3A	CSS 2	~ 16	1971	3,100	1 x 3,300	~ 16
DF 4	CSS 3	~ 12	1980	5,400 +	1 x 3,300	~ 12
DF 5A	CSS 4	~ 20	1981	13,000 +	1 x 4000 - 5000	~ 20
DF 21 ^a	CSS 5 Mod 1,2	~ 60	1991	2,150	1 x 200- 300	~ 60
DF 31	CSS 10 Mod 1	10-20	2006 ^b	7,200 +	1 X 200-300?	10 -20
DF 31 A	CSS 10 Mod 2	10-20	2007	11,200 +	1 X 200-300?	10 -20
Sub Total		~138				~138
Submarine launched missiles						
JL 1	CSS NX 3	12	1986	1,000 +	1 x 200-300	NA
JL 2	CSS NX 4	36	?	~ 7,400	1 x 200-300	NA
Aircraft ^d						
H 6	B 6	~20	1965	3,100	1 x bomb	~ 20
DH 10 ^e	?	?				
Others	?	?	1972?	?	1 x bomb	~ 20
Total						178 ^f

Source: Hans M. Kristensen and Robert S. Norris, "China's Nuclear Forces," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 67 (2011), <http://bos.sagepub.com/content/67/6/81> (accessed July 21, 2013): 85.

a This table counts nuclear-only versions DF-21 (CSS-5 Mod 1) and DF-21A (CSS-5 Mod 2). The DF-21C may be dual-capable but is normally considered conventional, and the DF-21D is under development. China has a total of 75-100 DF-21s of all types.

b An early but limited "initial threat availability" was achieved in 2006.

c Neither the JL-1 nor the JL-2 SLBM is fully operational, although warheads probably are available. The JL-2 is under development but failed recent tests.

d China is thought to have a small stockpile of nuclear bombs with yields between 10 kilotons and 3 megatons. Figures are for only those aircraft that are estimated to have a secondary nuclear mission. Aircraft range is equivalent to combat radius.

e There is no clear confirmation that the DH-10 has nuclear capability, but US Air Force intelligence lists the weapon as "conventional or nuclear."

f An additional 62 warheads include those produced for SLBMs or awaiting dismantlement, for a total inventory of approximately 240

PLA

The PLA is the military arm of Communist Party of China (CPC), and owes its allegiance to the CPC. It is an instrument of power with the CPC to fulfill its domestic and external goals. Along with People's Armed Police (PAP) and People's Militia, the PLA helps to maintain domestic stability and regime security.⁸⁹ However, PLA's main task is to maintain China's territorial integrity and sovereignty. The PRC has pursued an intensive and comprehensive military modernization for the PLA to meet the growing internal and external challenges. It has downsized the army, deactivated units with outdated equipment, and shifted some assets to the PAP. Similar actions relating to restructure has also taken place in the naval and air units.

The PLA Army (PLAA)

The PLAA maintains the world's largest ground forces with a total of 1,600,000 troops. These are organized into mobile operational, garrison, border and coastal defense and reserve troops and follow the structure of a combined corps (GA), division (brigade), regiment, battalion, company, platoon and squads.⁹⁰ The PLAA is organized into 18 GAs and 75 Divisions. The modernization drive has focused on the higher educational standards, leadership development, modern weapons, equipment, enhanced mobility, and an improved state of readiness. This has led to the downsizing and restructuring of force

⁸⁹Harold Brown, Joseph W. Prueher, and Adam Segal, *Chinese Military Power*, 2003, <http://www.cfr.org/china/chinese-military-power/p5985>, 24 (accessed September 12, 2013).

⁹⁰Windows of China, "China's National Defense in 2008," *China View*, 2009, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-01/20/content_10688124_5.htm (accessed June 25, 2013).

manning, to standard combined arms units, capable of operating in a joint environment. At present, all infantry divisions have armor with them and mechanized infantry is organic to armor units.

There are different types of ground forces based on their missions. The high priority units are small, mobile, and with advanced weapons capable of projecting power rapidly. The People's Armed Police (PAP) created primarily from demobilized PLA personnel in 1983 is focused on border security and internal defense. A reduction of 1,000,000 people in PLA in the 1980s saw an increase in PAP to a strength of roughly 800,000.⁹¹ These are large units with lighter and older equipment. The details of PLA forces as organized by role and the major equipment holding is given as under (Refer tables 2 and 3)

⁹¹“PLA, Order of Battle,” *Federation Of American Scientists*, 2013, <http://www.fas.org/nuke/guide/china/agency/pla-intri.htm> (accessed July 4, 2013).

Table 2. PLA Organization as per Role		
S. No.	Type	Details
1	Command	7 MR (28 Military districts) and 18 GA
2	Special Forces	7 SF Units
3	Maneuver (Mvre)	Armored (Armd) – 9 Armd division (div), 7 Armd brigade (bde)
		Mechanized (Mech) – 7 Mech Infantry (Inf) div, 2 (high altitude (HA)) Mech Inf div, 5 Mech Inf bde, 1 (HA) Mech Inf bde, 2 (I) Mech Inf regt
		Light – 10 Mot Inf div, 3 (HA) Mot Inf div, 1 (Jungle) Mot Inf div, 19 Mot Inf bde, 2 (HA) Mot Inf bde
		Amphibious – 1 Amph Armd bde, 2 Amph Mech div
		Mountain (Mtn) – 2 Mtn Inf bde
		Other – 1 (OPFOR) Armd bde, 1 Mech gd div, 1 Lt gd div
		Aviation – 1 Avn bde, 9 Avn regt, 2 trg Avn regt
4	Combat Support	2 Arty div, 17 Arty bde, 9 (coastal defense) AShM regt, 21 AD bde, 1 (I) AD regt, 1 Engr bde, 13 Engr regt, 5 EW regt, 50 Sigs regt
5	Reserve	Mvre – 2 Armd regt, Light – 18 Inf div, 4 Inf bde, 3 (I) Inf regt
		Combat Sp – 3 Arty div, 7 Arty bde, 17 AD div, 8 AD bde, 8 AD regt, 15 Engr regt, 1 Pontoon(Ptn) Bridging (br) regt, 3 Ptn br regt, 7 Chemical regt, 10 Sigs regt
		Combat Service Support – 9 Logistics (log) bde, 1 log regt

Source: Anthony H. Cordesman and Robert Hammond with Andrew Gagel, *The Military Balance in Asia 1990-2011, A Qualitative Analysis* (Washington, DC: CSIS, 2011), http://csis.org/files/publication/110516_South_Asia-AsiaMilitaryBalance2011.pdf (accessed June 21, 2013), 10.

S. No	Equipment	Quantity	Details
1	Air defense	7990	Air defense Gun 7700, Air defense surface to Air Missile 290
2	Anti-Tank	2006	Anti-tank Guns 1730, Anti-tank Missile 276
3	Artillery	9876	Multiple rocket launcher 1770, Self-propelled 1710, Towed 6246, Mortar 150
4	Helicopter	507	Attack 126, Search and rescue (SAR) 15, Support 278, Utility 88
5	Personnel carrier	4540	Armed Infantry Fighting vehicle 1490, Armed personnel carrier 3050
6	Tanks	4117	Light Tanks 800, Main battle Tanks 7950

Source: Anthony H. Cordesman and Robert Hammond with Andrew Gagel, *The Military Balance in Asia 1990-2011, A Qualitative Analysis* (Washington, DC: CSIS, 2011), http://csis.org/files/publication/110516_South_Asia-AsiaMilitaryBalance2011.pdf (accessed June 21, 2013), 10.

The PLA Navy (PLAN)

The PLAN is the second largest navy in the world after the US with 255,000 personnel. It has five branches--submarine, surface forces, naval aviation, coastal defense, and a marine corps.⁹² The PLAN budget accounts for 33 percent of the total PLA expenses with only 11 percent allocated for manpower. The PLAN seeks to transition from a continental/ littoral force to a robust maritime capability. The PLAN wants to develop a blue water navy capable of projecting power not only in the China's coastal area but all over the globe, including the Indian Ocean. The PLAN has actively

⁹²Global Security Organization, "PLAN Organization," <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/china/plan-org.htm> (accessed June 25, 2013).

endeavored to acquire new weapons and systems from, or develop in conjunction with, foreign suppliers, especially Russia.⁹³

The most significant change in the modernization drive of the PLAN has been in the area of training. The college graduate and reserve officer's training corps (ROTC) type programs form the basis of the officer corps, with senior middle school graduates' joining the enlisted corps. This is followed by a systematic and cohesive intra-service and inter-service training involving surface ship commanders and army unit commanders assigned to army units and maritime units, respectively, for six months. The detail inventory of PLAN is as given under (Refer table 4)

⁹³Harold Brown, Joseph W. Prueher, and Adam Segal, *China's View, China National Defense*, 24.

S.No.	Equipment	Quantity	Details
1	Aircraft carrier	1	
2	Air Crafts(AC)	456	AC anti sub marine warfare (ASW) 4, AC bomber 50 AC fighter 84, AC FGA 138, AC maritime patrol 4 AC recon 13, AC tanker 3, AC training 94, AC transport 66
3	Amphibious	87	Landing ship (LS) medium 61, LS tank (LST) 27
4	Artillery	40	Artillery gun / mortar 40
5	Destroyer	19	
6	Frigates	52	
7	Helicopters	72	ASW 38, SAR 25, support 8
8	Landing Craft	151	Amphibious 11, LC medium 20, LC utility 120
9	Logistics and support	205	
10	Mine warfare counter	85	Mine counter measure vessel 7, mine sweeper coastal 16, mine sweeper drone 46, mine sweeper ocean 16
11	Mine warfare layer	1	
12	Missile	72	Missile coastal defense
13	Patrol and coastal combatant	210	Patrol craft (PC) 101, PC coastal 75, Patrol boat 34
14	Personnel carrier	248	Armored personnel carrier
15	Submarine strategic	3	Submarine ballistic missile nuclear fuel
16	Submarine tactical	68	Submarine, attack, nuclear-powered 6, Submarine, diesel, with ASW capability 60
17	Tank	124	Tank light

Source : Anthony H. Cordesman and Robert Hammond with Andrew Gagel, *The Military Balance in Asia 1990-2011, A Qualitative Analysis* (Washington, DC: CSIS, 2011), http://csis.org/files/publication/110516_South_Asia-AsiaMilitaryBalance2011.pdf (accessed June 21, 2013), 20-22.

The PLAAF

The PLAAF is the largest air force in Asia with end strength of 310,000 personnel in five branches—aviation, airborne forces, surface to air missile units, radar and anti-aircraft artillery. In earlier days the PLAAF was an adjunct to ground forces and had a limited role of supporting the border defense. There has been a significant drive to extensively modernize the PLAAF to a more versatile and modern air force. The PLAAF

is phasing out its older air fleet with 4.5th generation and 5th generation fighter aircraft. The PLAAF writings describe three types of air campaigns.⁹⁴ Offensive, Defensive and Blockade (specifically for Taiwan). The PLAN will continue to maintain its separate naval air arm. The inventory of PLAAF is given in the table (Refer table 5).

Table 5. PLAAF Inventory			
S.No.	Equipment	Quantity	Details
1	Air defense	16600	Air defense gun 16000, Surface to air missile 600
2	Aircraft	2454	AC airborne early warning 8, Ac bomber 82, AC electronic warfare 10, aircraft fighter 1055, AC FGA 332, AC, AC recon 96, AC surveillance 3, AC tanker 10, AC training 522, AC transport 336
3	Helicopter	80	Helicopter support 56 , Helicopter utility 24
4	Missile	4500	Missile tactical

Source: Anthony H. Cordesman and Robert Hammond with Andrew Gagel, *The Military Balance in Asia 1990-2011, A Qualitative Analysis* (Washington, DC: CSIS, 2011), http://csis.org/files/publication/110516_South_Asia-AsiaMilitaryBalance2011.pdf (accessed June 21, 2013), 20-22.

Forces along Sino-Indian Borders

The military regions responsible for the Sino-Indian border are Chengdu (SW China–Tibet) and Lanzhou (Western China-Xinjiang) MR. In addition, the PLA also has the capability to mobilize and move forces from different MRs which they have demonstrated during various joint exercises. The 2009, Exercise Stride involved over 50,000 troops from four MRs of China (Jinan, Shenyang, Lanzhou and Chengdu). During

⁹⁴Anthony H. Cordesman and Robert Hammond with Andrew Gagel, *The Military Balance in Asia 1990-2011, A Qualitative Analysis* (Washington, DC: CSIS, 2011), http://csis.org/files/publication/110516_South_Asia-AsiaMilitaryBalance2011.pdf (accessed June 21, 2013), 48.

this exercise, a division from each MR moved from Shenyang to Lanzhou and Jinan to Chengdu and vice versa. The objective was to train troops to fight anytime, anywhere and in any conditions. The details of the forces in the Lanzhou and Chengdu are given in the table. (Refer table 6).

Table 6. Forces in Lanzhou and Chengdu MR			
S. No	Type of Units	Details	Remarks
Lanzhou MR			
1	Combat Support (sp) unit	Arty Bde, AAA Bde, Army aviation Regt, ECM Regt, Hi tech Recon Bureau and SF unit	Regt = 3 x Bn
2	Combat units	4 th Div, 6 th Mech Div, 8 th Mot Infantry (IN) & 11 Mot Div	
3	Logistic (lgs) sp depot	7 x lgs sp depot and 1 x MT Regt	
4	21 GA	Arty Bde, AD Bde, 61 st Div, 12 th Armored Div	
5	47 GA	139 Mech IN Bde, 55 th and 56 th Mot IN Bde, UI Armd Bde, AAA bde, Engr Regt and Comn Regt	
6	Border Defense (BD) Unit	13 x BD Regt	
7	Reserve	3 X IN Div, 2 X IN Bde , 2 X AAA Div and 3 X AAA Regt	
Chengdu MR			
1	Combat Sp Unit	Army aviation regt, Cheetah special operations group, Special Recon group, EW Regt, Tech Recon Bureau, Chemical defense (CD) tech group	
2	Combat Units	52 nd and 53 rd Mountain Infantry Bde	
3	Lgs sp depot	3x lgs sp depot	
4	13 GA	UI Armd Bde, UI Arty Bde, UI AAA Bde, 37 th Div and 149 Lt Mech IN div	
5	14 GA	UI Armd Bde, UI Arty Bde, UI AAA Bde, CD Regt, 31 st and 40 th Div	
6	BD Units	18 x BD Regt	
7	Reserve	3 X IN Div, 1 X IN Bde, 1 X Arty Bde, 2 X AAA Div and Lgs sp Bde	

Source: Global Security Organization, “Order of Battle Lanzhou and Chengdu MR,” <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/china/plaaf-intro.htm> (accessed June 25, 2013).

Preparedness of PLA along the border

China's borders are guarded by the BD units. The PLA forces are deployed in operational depth with the ability to quickly move to the point of application. A good example of this strategy and capability was China's handling of the Tibet riots of 2008. Within 48 hours, T 89/90 armored personnel carriers and T 92 wheeled infantry fighting vehicles of the Chengdu MR, 149th division of 13 GA (wearing leopard camouflage uniform for mountain warfare) appeared on the streets.⁹⁵

The Chinese have also focused on improving transportation modes along the border to support their plans. The completion of the Qinghai–Tibet railroad (QTR) has enhanced the ability to maneuver quickly and its military value was exhibited during the Lhasa riots by the rapid reaction of PLA armed forces. In addition the Qinghai- Tibet Highway, Sichuan–Tibet Highway, National Highway 214, 317 and 109 are all now asphalted. The improved lines of communication facilitate movement of forces from one MR to another and had been validated during number of exercises.

Speaking to the question hour of Lok Sabha in March 2011, Indian Defense Minister AK Antony highlighted the rapid development of rail, road, airfield, telecom infrastructure and military camps by China in the Tibet Plateau.⁹⁶ (Refer to figure 9). He acknowledged a road network improvement of 58,000 km, coupled with five operational airfields at Gongar, Pangata, Linchi, Hoping and Gar Gunsu within Tibet. As per UPI Asia study, the PLA would be able to transport approximately “10 light mechanized

⁹⁵Anderi Chang, “PLA’s Rapid Reaction Capability in Tibet,” UPI Asia Online, 2008, http://gangkyi.com/news_detail.php?id=756 (accessed July 5, 2013).

⁹⁶Monika Chansoria, “China’s Infrastructure Development in Tibet Evaluating Trendline” (Manekshaw Papers, Center for Land Warfare Studies, 2011), 30.

divisions and some heavy mechanized divisions by rail and road to Tibet from Lanzhou and Chengdu MR within 30 days.”⁹⁷ The mobilization can be disguised as an exercise or could be move out to curb riots. China’s air transport capability enables it to move additional airborne, rapid reaction and armed police directly to Lhasa. The troops from the 15th Airborne Division can be airdropped to key locations in Tibet.

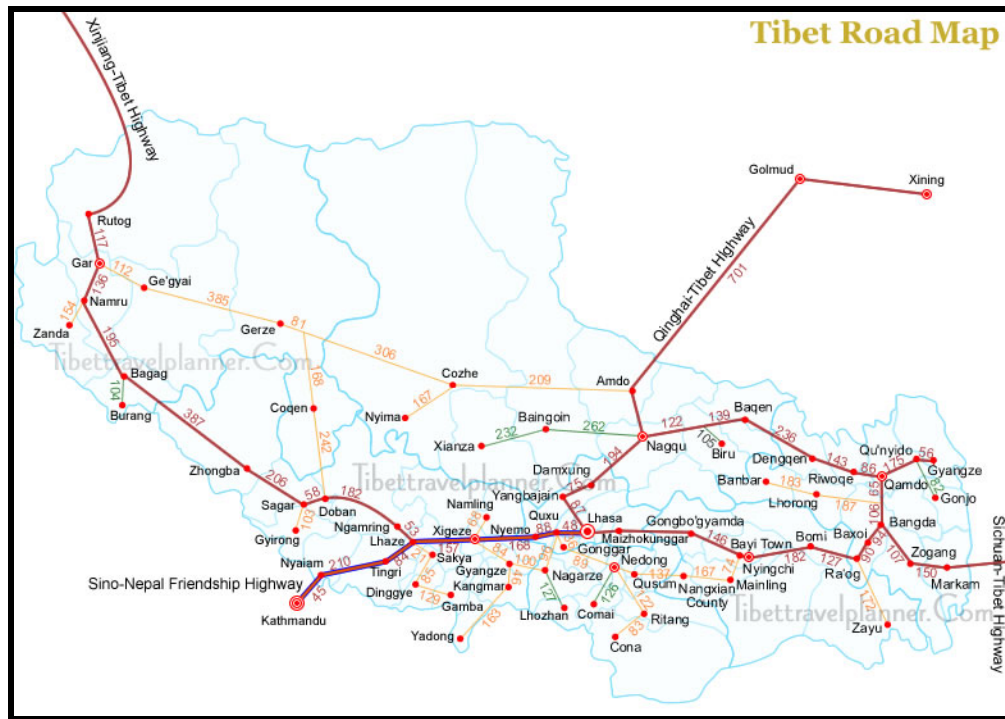


Figure 9 Tibet Road Map

Source: Tibet Road Travel Information, <http://www.tibettravelplanner.com/road-map-tibet.htm> (accessed November 5, 2013).

⁹⁷Chang.

CHAPTER 5

INDIA MILITARY

The last chapter laid out the organization, war fighting doctrine, nuclear and missile capabilities of the PLA including a brief on PLAA, PLAN, PLAAF and forces along the Sino-Indian Border. The preparedness of the PLA along the border was laid out. In this Chapter, the Indian Armed Forces, its organization, doctrine, nuclear and missile capabilities, a brief narrative on Indian Army (IA), Indian Navy (IN), Indian Air Force (IAF) and their preparedness along the border are covered.

Organization

India, as the third largest armed forces in the world, consists of approximately 1,315,350 personnel.⁹⁸ It has five service branches, namely IA, IN, IAF, Para Military Forces (PMF) and reserves. The president is the supreme commander of the armed forces. The defense minister, through the Ministry of Defense oversees its management and functioning. It is an apolitical organization, and has extensive experience operating in counter insurgency (COIN), high altitude areas (HAA) including the Siachen glacier, conventional environment, humanitarian assistance, aid to civil authority, disaster management and United Nations peacekeeping operations.⁹⁹ The combat experience

⁹⁸Anthony H. Cordesman and Robert Hammond with Andrew Gagel, *The Military Balance in Asia 1990-2011, A Qualitative Analysis* (Washington, DC: CSIS, 2011), http://csis.org/files/publication/110516_South_Asia-AsiaMilitaryBalance2011.pdf. (accessed June 21, 2013), 10.

⁹⁹India is among the largest troop contributing nations for United Nations Peace Keeping Operations.

include fighting a number of wars with Pakistan in 1947-48, 1965, 1971, a limited offensive in Kargil, and war with China in 1962.

The three branches of the Indian Armed Forces have been divided into various commands which are further divided into various subdivisions. The IA is divided into seven tactical commands; the IAF into five operational and two functional commands; and the IN into three commands. In addition, there are two joint commands namely, Strategic Force, and the Andaman and Nicobar Command.

Table 7. Organization of Indian Armed Forces		
(Commanded by President through Union Defense Minister)		
Indian Army (IA)	Indian Navy (IN)	Indian Air Force (IAF)
Northern Command Western Command Eastern Command SW Command Southern Command Central Command Army Training Command	Eastern Command Western Command Southern Command	Western Air Command Eastern Air Command SW Air Command Southern Air Command Central Air Command Maintenance Command Training Command
Joint Command	Strategic Force Command Andaman and Nicobar Command	
Para Military Forces	Indian Coast Guards, Border Security Forces, Assam Rifles	
Reserves		

Source: Created By author.

Doctrine

India's national and strategic leaders refer to Kautilya's, *Arthshastra*, for guidance. His work receives similar interest and adulation as of Sunzi's, *Art of War* in China. *Arthshastra*, means the science of wealth (or of the economy in, modern parlance), and it dwells on matters of state-craft, economic resources, political and other

relations with other states.¹⁰⁰ The military is one component of state-craft and reflects the state's power. India, having won its freedom through nonviolent means, continues to practice restraint and tolerance in its foreign policies. The initiatives on non-alignment, the concept of Panchsheel, the preferred choice of the UN as the forum to settle the Jammu and Kashmir issue even after winning the war and a 24 year hiatus in testing nuclear weapons are indicative of the underlying Indian belief in restraint, negotiation and tolerance as the essential element of state policy.¹⁰¹

The Indian military, like other militaries of the world has incorporated lessons learnt and experiences into their doctrine. It has been fundamentally defensive, as the former Defense Minister George Fernandez described it as “non-aggressive, non-provocative defense policy, based on the philosophy of defensive defense.”¹⁰² The Sundarji Doctrine, as propounded by General Sundarji is focused on deploying seven Holding Corps along the Indo-Pak border.¹⁰³ The Holding Corps are to halt the enemy advance and provide launching pads for three Strike Corps to launch into Pakistan to destroy its two strike corps through “deep sledgehammer blows” in a high intensity battle

¹⁰⁰VR Raghvan, “India-China Relations: A Military Perspective,” in *Across The Himalayan Gap Quest for Understanding China*, ed. Tan Chung (New Delhi: Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts, 1998), 55.

¹⁰¹Ibid.

¹⁰²George Fernanades, “The Dynamics of Limited War,” *Strategic Affairs* 7 (2000), <http://ww2.stratmag.com/issueOct-15/page07.htm>, (accessed July 15, 2013), 7.

¹⁰³Amit Gupta, “Determining India's Force Structure and Military Doctrine: I Want My MiG,” *Asia Survey* 35 (1995): 449-450.

of attrition.¹⁰⁴ In December 2001, in retaliation to militant attack on Indian Parliament, the government mobilized the Indian Forces and launched Operation Parakram, the largest mobilization of forces since the liberation of Bangladesh in 1971.

The mobilization of forces took three weeks, which allowed sufficient time for the Pakistan Army to counter mobilize, but also allowed the world community to put pressure on both nations to diffuse the tension. The huge size of Strike Corps took time to deploy from the hinterland and redeploy, providing time for the US Ambassador to India, Robert Blackwill, to urge the Indian government to refrain from action until President Mushraff gave his 'about turn' speech on January 12, 2002. President Musharraf, in his speech, denounced all kinds of terrorism on the pretext of Kashmir, and pledged to crackdown on militant groups in Pakistan thereby reducing India's political justification of military action.¹⁰⁵

An analysis of Operation Parakram highlighted flaws in the Sundarji doctrine and its inadequacy to respond to terrorist and hybrid threats.¹⁰⁶ This necessitated a change in the Indian doctrine resulting in the Cold Start concept. Cold Start is a limited war doctrine, focused on a retaliatory conventional strike to degrade the Pakistan Army before the international community can intervene. It aims to pursue limited gains, while not providing any opportunity for Pakistan to escalate the conflict to a nuclear dimension.

¹⁰⁴Pravin Sawhney and VK Sood, *Operation Parakram: The War Unfinished* (New Delhi: SAGE, 2003), 81.

¹⁰⁵Pervez Musharraf, "Musharraf Speech Highlights," *BBC News*, January 12, 2002, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/1757251.stm (accessed July 27, 2013).

¹⁰⁶Y. I. Patel, "Dig Vijay to Divya Astra: A Paradigm Shift in the Indian Army's Doctrine," *Bharat Rakshak Monitor*, 6 (2004), <http://www.bharat-rakshak.com/MONITOR/ISSUE6-6/patel.html> (accessed July 27, 2013).

The three Strike Corps are organized into eight Integrated Battle Groups (IBGs), and provides the ability to launch sequential and incremental strikes, rapidly along different axes of advance, and gain objectives before outside powers, such as China and US, can intervene.

India had always remained focused on the Indo-Pak border; however, with the more assertive claims and transgression by PLA patrols and aircrafts along the China border, India needs to focus on developing a new response strategy. Presently, India doesn't have any offensive capability and is in the process of raising a mountain strike corps to thwart growing Chinese challenges. In the past, Indian forces had maintained a more defensive posture and the raising of new forces and additional capability will change the Himalayan dynamic.¹⁰⁷

Nuclear and Missile Capability

The nuclear and missile capability is one of the tools to measure the strength of a nation. India carried out its first nuclear test in 1974 and after a 24-year hiatus, went nuclear in 1998. The then Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Bihari Vajpayee, in a letter to President William J. Clinton, justified the need for India to go nuclear, in view of the regional nuclear imbalance and security concern, vis-à-vis China. India has described its nuclear doctrine and its nuclear deterrent manifests as its right to self-defense, as stated in Article 51 of the United Nations Charter. It highlights the civilian control with the Prime Minister (and his designated successors) as the supreme authority to command and

¹⁰⁷Trefor Moss, "India's New Strike Corps," *The Diplomat*, August 27, 2011, <http://thediplomat.com/flashpoints-blog/2011/08/27/indias-new-strike-corps/> (accessed September 23, 2013).

control the nuclear forces through Strategic Force Command. India shall maintain a credible minimal deterrent, comprised of three specific components—leadership credibility, force credibility and technological credibility.¹⁰⁸ Indian doctrine is against initiating a nuclear strike and follows a no-first use policy. The details of Indian Nuclear forces are provided below (Refer table 8).

Table 8. Nuclear Capabilities of India			
Type/ designation	Range (KM)	Payload (KG)	Comment
Aircraft based			
Mirage 2000H/ Vajra	1,800	6300	Squadron 1or 7 at Gwalior Air Force Station
Jaguar IS/IB/Shamsher	1,600	4,775	At Ambala Air Force Station
Land Based Missiles			
Prithvi I	150	1,000	Nuclear version entered service after 1998 with the 333 rd and 355 the missiles groups
Agni I	700+	1,000	Deployed with the 334 th Missile group in 2004
Agni II	2,000	1,000	Under development; Successful test launch on September 30, 2011; Deployed with 335 th Missile Group in 2004
Agni II+	2,000+	1,000	Under development: Failed test launch on December 10,2010
Agni III	3,000+	1,500	Under development: Fourth test-launch on February 7, 2010
Agni IV	3,500	1,500	Under development: First test-launch on November 15, 2011
Agni V	5,000+	1,500	Under development: First test-launch on April 19, 2012
Sea-based Missiles			
Dhanush	350	500	Under development: Extended-range naval version of Prithvi II, seventh test-launch on March 11, 2011
Sagarika/K-15	300-700	300-700	Under development: Test-launch on February 26,2008, from a submerged platform; possible future deployment on the Arihant

Source: Hans M. Kristensen and Robert S. Norris, “Indian Nuclear Forces, 2012,” *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, 68 (2012), <http://bos.sagepub.com/content/68/4/96> (accessed July 29, 2013), 96-101.

¹⁰⁸Independent Task Force, *India’s Nuclear Doctrine An Alternative Blueprint* (New Delhi, 2012), <http://www.ipcs.org/Indias-Nuclear-Doctrine.pdf>, (accessed July 27, 2013), 5.

India maintains a triad of launch capabilities– land; sea and air based, and is estimated to have produced approximately 520 kilograms of weapons grade plutonium, sufficient to produce 100-130 nuclear warheads, of which 80-100 are estimated to have been produced.¹⁰⁹ The successful launch of the Agni V ballistic missile (range greater than 5,000 kilometers), now provides a capability to address key targets in China

Indian Army

The Indian Army is the largest component of the Indian Armed Forces and consists of 1,129,900 personnel. It is commanded by the Chief of Army Staff (COAS), a four star general and is organized into Commands, Divisions, Brigade, Battalions, Company, Platoon, Section and detachments. The IA has a total of 37 divisions, at present, with two more divisions being raised.¹¹⁰ The primary mission of the IA is to ensure national security and maintain territorial integrity by defending against external threats and aggressions and ensuring peace and security within its borders. Realizing the imbalance of forces along the border, the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) has approved the raising of a Mountain Strike Corps in 2013. The IA has been pursuing a significant modernization program combining a national research and development program while procuring new arms and equipment. The organization of IA by role and major equipment holding is provided below. (Refer table 9 and table 10).

¹⁰⁹Hans M. Kristensen and Robert S. Norris, “Indian Nuclear Forces, 2012,” *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, 68 (2012), <http://bos.sagepub.com/content/68/4/96> (accessed July 29, 2013), 96-101.

¹¹⁰Sunil Dasgupta and Stephan P Cohen, *Arming Without Aiming: India’s Military Modernization* (Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2013), 86.

S.No.	Type	Details
1	Command	3 (Strike) Corps HQ and 10 (Holding) Corps HQ
2	Special Forces	8 SF BN
3	Maneuver (Mvre)	Armored (Armd) – 3 Armd division (div), 8 Independent (I) Armd brigade (bde)
		Mechanized (Mech) – 4 RAPID Mech div, 2 (I) Mech bde
		Light – 17 Infantry (Inf) div, 7 (I) Inf bde
		Air Mvre – 1 Parachute bde
		Mountain (Mtn) – 12 Mtn div, 2 (I) mtn bde
		Aviation – 14 heptr sqn
4	Combat Support	2 Arty div, 6 AD bde, 2 SSM regt with PJ-10 Brahmos, 4 Engr bde
5	Reserve	Mvre – 25 Light Inf Bn
		Combat Sp – 20 ADA Regt
		Combat Service Support – 6 Ecological Bn, 37 (non- departmental) unit (raised from government ministries)

Source: Anthony H. Cordesman and Robert Hammond with Andrew Gagel, *The Military Balance in Asia 1990-2011, A Qualitative Analysis* (Washington, DC: CSIS, 2011), http://csis.org/files/publication/110516_South_Asia-AsiaMilitaryBalance2011.pdf (accessed June 21, 2013), 10.

S. No	Equipment	Quantity	Details
1	Air defense	5895	Air defense Gun 2395, Air defense man portable 2626, Air defense surface to Air Missile 880
2	Aircraft	26	Unmanned aerial vehicle 26
3	Anti-Tank	3000	Anti-tank ramped craft logistics 3000
4	Artillery	10758	Multiple rocket launcher 228, Towed 4010, Mortar 6520
5	Helicopter	222	Assault 12, Utility 210
6	Landing Craft	2	Landing craft, vehicles and personnel
7	Personnel carrier	1786	Armed Infantry Fighting vehicle 1455, Armed personnel carrier 331
8	Tanks	4117	Main battle Tanks 4117
9	Radar, land	12	
10	Reconnaissance	110	

Source: Anthony H. Cordesman and Robert Hammond with Andrew Gagel, *The Military Balance in Asia 1990-2011, A Qualitative Analysis* (Washington, DC: CSIS, 2011), http://csis.org/files/publication/110516_South_Asia-AsiaMilitaryBalance2011.pdf (accessed June 21, 2013), 10.

Indian Navy

As the world's fifth largest navy, IN is a well-balanced three-dimensional force consisting of sophisticated missile-capable warships, aircraft carriers, minesweepers, advanced submarines and the latest sea launched aircraft in its inventory.¹¹¹ It is commanded by Chief of the Naval Staff (CNS), and is organized into three commands, Eastern, Western and Southern command. Besides, securing national maritime borders, it strives to enhance its influence in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR), by developing its capabilities as a blue water navy. IN plays a pivotal role in India's regional military diplomacy, by carrying out naval exercises, anti-piracy operations, and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief mission (HADR) with other nations.¹¹² In recent years, the IN has seen an extensive modernization drive to meet the growing challenges. The inventory is as given in the table (Refer table 11).

¹¹¹Global Security Organization, "Indian Navy," <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/india/navy-intro.htm> (accessed July16, 2013).

¹¹²Gilboy; Eric Heginbotham, *Chinese and Indian Strategic Behavior: Growing Power and Alarm* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

Table 11. Equipment Holding of Indian Navy			
S.No.	Equipment	Quantity	Details
1	Aircraft carrier	1+	1 in service, 1 being refitted and 1 constructed
2	Air Crafts(AC)	92	AC maritime patrol 19, AC tanker 20, AC transport 37, UAV -12
3	Amphibious	11	Landing ship (LS) medium 5, LS tank (LST) 5, Landing Platform dock 1
4	Corvettes	24	Corvettes with guided missile 24
5	Destroyer	10	Destroyer with guided missile 10
6	Frigates	13	Frigates with guided missile 13
7	Helicopters	127	Airborne Early Warning 9, ASW 54, SAR 5, support 8, Utility 59
8	Landing Craft	16	LC utility 16
9	Logistics and support	48	
10	Patrol and coastal combatant	22	Patrol craft (PC) 101, PC coastal 75, Patrol boat 34
11	Submarine Tactical	16	Submarine, attack, nuclear-powered 1, Submarine, diesel with ASW capability 15

Source: Anthony H. Cordesman and Robert Hammond with Andrew Gagel, *The Military Balance in Asia 1990-2011, A Qualitative Analysis* (Washington, DC: CSIS, 2011), http://csis.org/files/publication/110516_South_Asia-AsiaMilitaryBalance2011.pdf (accessed June 21, 2013).

Indian Air Force (IAF)

The IAF is the fourth largest air force of the world and consists of 170,000 personnel. The IAF is commanded by an Air Marshal, a four star general, and is deployed into five operational, one training and one maintenance command. The mission of the IAF's mission as defined by the Armed Forces Act of 1947 is “defense of India and every part, thereof including, preparation for defense and all such acts as may be conducive in times of war to its prosecution and after its termination to effective demobilization.”¹¹³ Since 2000, The IAF has embarked on the acquisition of front line fixed wing/rotary

¹¹³Ministry of Law and Justice, “Air Force Act 1950,” <http://indiacode.nic.in/rspaging.asp?tfnm=195045> (accessed July 17, 2013).

systems for day/night operations, enhanced electronic warfare capability including air defense surveillance, acquisition and targeting.¹¹⁴ The inventory of the IAF is as listed below. (Refer table12)

Table 12. Equipment Holding of IAF			
S.No.	Equipment	Quantity	Details
1	Aircraft	1041	Aircraft fighter 112, AC FGA 419, AC recon 3, AC tanker 6, AC training 282, AC transport 219
2	Helicopter	326	Helicopter 20, Helicopter support 178, Helicopter utility 128

Source: Anthony H. Cordesman and Robert Hammond with Andrew Gagel, *The Military Balance in Asia 1990-2011, A Qualitative Analysis* (Washington, DC: CSIS, 2011), http://csis.org/files/publication/110516_South_Asia-AsiaMilitaryBalance2011.pdf (accessed June 21, 2013), 20-22.

Forces along the Sino-Indian Border

The Sino-Indian Border can be divided into three sectors, Eastern, Central and Western. The Eastern Sector includes Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh; the Central Sector includes Himanchal and Uttarakhand; and the Western Sector covers the Ladakh region. In the Eastern Sector, the responsibility of manning the border lies with Eastern Command; in the Central Sector, it's with Indo-Tibet Border Police; and the Western sector is manned by part of 14 Corps guarding Ladakh region. The Eastern Command moved to Fort William, Kolkata, from Lucknow following the 1962 War and assumed the responsibility of guarding the eastern borders of India with China, Bangladesh and

¹¹⁴“Indian Air Force,” *Global Security Organization*, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/india/airforce.htm> (accessed 17 July 2013).

Myanmar. The Order of Battle (ORBAT) of Eastern Army Command is as follows.
(Refer to table13).

Table 13. Indian Forces in Eastern Command				
S.NO.	HQs and Location	FORMATION	LOCATION	TASK
1	III Corps (Dimapur)	23 Inf Div	Ranchi	Peace location
		57 Mtn div	Silchar	COIN
		56 Mtn Div	Zakhama	COIN
2	IV Corps (Tejpur)	2 Mtn div	Dibrugarh	LAC
		5 Mtn div	Tenga	LAC
		21 Mtn div	Rangia	COIN
		71 Mtn Div	Missamari	COIN
3	33 Corps (Siliguri)	17 Mtn Div	Gangtok	LAC
		27 Mtn div	Darjling	LAC
		20 Mtn div	Binaguri	Rear area Security
4	New strike Corps	Under Raising		

Source: Bharat Rakshak, The Consortium of Indian Military Wesite, <http://www.bharat-rakshak.com/> (accessed August 21, 2013).

There are a total of five Sector HQs (akin to a bde HQ) of ITBP, manning the Central Sector and a portion of Western Sector along the Indo-China border.¹¹⁵ In the Western Sector, part of 14 Corps looks after the border along with the ITBP.

Preparedness of IA along the border

The roads on the Indian side of border have not developed due to fear that the PLA may use them in time of war and as a result, the far flung areas are still not connected. At places, Indian troops have to walk for days to reach the forward posts along the LAC. The deplorable condition can be gauged by the fact that it takes over 20

¹¹⁵“Orbat: Indo-Tibet Border Police,” 2002, http://orbat.com/site/gd/cwpf_2006/india/itbp.html (accessed July 21, 2013).

hours to drive a distance of 500 KM (300 miles) to reach the strategic town of Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh from the nearest railhead at Guwahati. In 2006, realizing the handicap, the Cabinet Committee on Security, Government of India(GoI) approved major infrastructure projects for the border region which includes building 72 roads, three airstrips and several bridges.¹¹⁶ Only nine have been completed as of 2010 and works are in progress on others. The sector details of important roads from India and China to LAC are listed below. (Refer to Table14).

The altitude in height on the Indian side sharply increases and necessitates acclimatization of troops which requires a minimum six days at 9,000 feet, four days at 12,000 feet and four days at 14,000 feet and above. It severely delays the employment of troops at forward locations which are generally over 15,000 feet. India is trying to imitate and keep the Rapid Reaction Forces (RRF) ready like China, but keeping troops ready at that altitude is a financial drain on India's developing economy and is a concept only. However, with the accretion of forces in the Mountain Strike Corps, there may be some troops earmarked for high altitude.

¹¹⁶Rajeshwari Pillai Rajagopan and Rahul Prakash, *Sino-Indian Border Infrastructure: An Update* (New Delhi, Observer Research Foundation May 2013), 9. And 27 of these roads are in Arunachal Pradesh, 19 in Uttarakhand, 14 In Jammu and Kashmir, 7 in Himanchal Pradesh and 6 in Sikkim (Initially planned to be completed by 2012).

Table 14. Details of Border Roads		
Western Sector	New Chinese Road: Head and Distance from LAC	Indian Road: Head and Distance from LAC
	Chip Chap Trig Heights; 04 km on Indian side of LAC	Up to Indian perception of LAC (local road)
	Mabdola-Kongka La; 500 m short of LAC	Just short of Kongka La
	Sirijap – Pt. 4576; 4.5 km on our side of LAC	Nanglung Lungpa 15 km (being extended to Pt. 4433)
	Chutichangla – Area Bush; 100 m inside our perception of LAC	Pt. 4715 02 km
	Setting Imisla; 50 m short of Imisla Pass	Zursar 10 km
Middle Sector Opposite Himanchal Pradesh	Manza-Churup; Churup 3 KM short of LAC (construction of road ahead of Churup in progress)	Sugar 4 KM
	Tayak- Shipki; Shipki 6 KM short of LAC (construction of road ahead of Shipki in progress)	Chuppan 5 KM
Middle Sector Opposite Uttarakhand	Bobra-Mana Pass; 1 KM short of Mana pass	Musapani (35 KM) being extended to Ghastoli
	Lungi-Jindu- Niti; 2 KM short of Niti	Malari (50 KM)
	Lungi-Tunjun La; Tujun La upto LAC	KM 16 (33 KM)
	Pulan-Lipulekh; 700 m short of Lipulekh	Jibiti (80 KM) being extended
Eastern Sector Opposite East Sikkim	Asam-Jandori Post-Dongchuila; 700 m short of Dongchuila	Tr Junc 3 KM
	Sinchella-Batangla; 75 m short of Batangla	Bheem Base 3 KM being extended to Dokala
	Sinchella-Dokala; 250 m short of Dokala	Bheem Base 3 KM being extended to Dokala
Eastern Sector Opposite Tawang	Gordon-Broken hut; 500 m from Gordon Camp	Nelya 4 KM
	Le Camp-Wangdung; 600 m from Wangdung	Lugrola
	Kechen Tso- Kerothang; 500 m from Kerothang	Lungrola 3 KM
	Nangdoh-Kharsangla; 200 m from Kharsangla	Sungetsar 7 KM
Eastern Sector Opposite Arunachal Pradesh	Chayaldz-Lung; Lung 12 KM	Lemikeng 65 Km being extended to Taksing
	Tadang-Purang Yumjo, 4 Km short of LAC	Lemikeng 65 Km being extended to Taksing
	Bipung-Shirang; Shirang	Tuting 20 km being extended to Bona

Source: Rajeshwari Pillai Rajagopan and Rahul Prakash, *Sino-Indian Border Infrastructure: An Update* (New Delhi, Observer Research Foundation, May 2013), 9.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The real cause, I consider to be the one which was formally most kept out of sight. The growth of the power of Athens, and the alarm which this inspired in Lacedaemon, made war inevitable.

— Thucydides on Peloponnesian War

The earlier chapters describe the geostrategic environment and militaries of China and India to include their organization, doctrine, nuclear forces, capabilities and preparedness along their common border. This chapter is an attempt to map the Chinese and Indian grand strategies and analyze the disparities along the borders in terms of capabilities of the militaries of both nations. The intentions as exhibited by actions on both sides and the probability matrix are also discussed. Thereafter the research paper covers the probable triggers for conflict followed by the potential conflict scenarios. The final comments and recommendations for further study will conclude the research.

Mapping Grand Strategies and Doctrine

Like most nations, China has not clearly publicized its grand strategy, however, it seems to be pursuing a plan guided and shaped significantly by its historical background, political interests, and geostrategic setting. China's grand strategy is tied to the "attainment of three interrelated objectives: first, the preservation of domestic order and well-being in the face of different forms of social strife; second, the defense against

persistent external threats to national sovereignty and territory; and third, the attainment and maintenance of geopolitical influence as a major, and perhaps primary, state.”¹¹⁷

Sino-Indian relations touch all three objectives. The Chinese use of force to crush the Tibetan rebellion in the 1950s resulted in the CIA sponsored escape of the Dalai Lama and his entourage. India provided political asylum for them and this antagonized Beijing. The escape and political asylum to the Dalai Lama, Chinese construction of a road in Indian claimed Aksai Chin, India’s forward policy of deploying troops along the perceived border (McMahon line) led to the 1962 Sino-Indian conflict. Analyzing the causes for the conflict, Allen S. Whiting postulates,

India’s miniscule military strength along the border, tenuously sustained over lengthy and arduous lines of communication could hardly be viewed as a strategic threat to China. The reasons for China engaging in this conflict were a coincidence of Tibet (due to past Indian involvement with exiles believed to be supported by United States - Nationalist agents), Soviet leaning towards India, and vulnerability due to internal crisis. Basic to all Chinese calculations was a domestic economic crisis that had persisted for three years as a result of failure in the Great Leap Forward experiment.¹¹⁸

The Dalai Lama still resides in Dharamsala, India with over 110,000 Tibetan refugees.¹¹⁹ He handed over the political responsibility to Mr. Lobsang Sangay as the

¹¹⁷Michael D. Swaine and Ashley J. Tellis, “Interpreting China’s Grand Strategy: Past, Present, and Future” (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2000), http://www.rand.org/pubs/monograph_reports/MR1121 (accessed October 11, 2013), x.

¹¹⁸Allen S. Whiting, *The Chinese Calculus of Deterrence: India and Indochina* (Michigan: Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, the University of Michigan, 2001), xxi–xxii, 37, 40–41; Manjari Chatterjee Miller, “Recollecting Empire: Victimhood and the 1962 Sino-Indian War,” *Asian Security* no. 5:3 216-241; Subrata Saha, “China’s Grand Strategy: From Confucius to Contemporary” (US Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA), 15-16.

¹¹⁹Resource Information Center, “India: Information on Tibetan Refugees and Settlements,” *United States Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services*, 2003, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/3f51f90821.html> (accessed October 17, 2013).

prime minister of the Tibetan government-in-exile at Mcleodganj (mini Lhasa), Dharamsala, India in August 2011. The Tibetan government-in exile is still a cause of concern to China with Mr. Lobsang recently seeking Indian and international support for the liberation of Tibet.¹²⁰ Many members of the Tibetan exile community are convinced the Dalai Lama has betrayed their “dream of a Tibet free of Chinese occupation.”¹²¹ The Tibetan struggle could take a violent turn after the Dalai Lama’s death (he is 78 years old), which would disturb the stability in Tibet.

The ongoing boundary dispute between China and India further infringes on the territorial sovereignty of China, which is the second objective of its grand strategy. The Chinese have a “fairly prickly and aggressive military doctrine inside a defensive structure and is very heavily built on preemption, as evident from its actions in Korea, Vietnam, India and the U.S.S.R.” The principle of ‘preemption’ is a big part of China’s active defense doctrine, says retired Rear Admiral Michael Mcdevitt, “it doesn’t limit itself to preempting a military attack and claims to react even if you act diplomatically to challenge its sovereignty. China can also argue that ‘I don’t like what you’re doing and I see that as a threat to my sovereignty and I’m going to act on you.’”¹²²

¹²⁰Times News Network, “Tibetan PM-in-exile Seeks India’s Support,” August 2, 2013, http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2013-08-02/india/41005583_1_tibetan-pm-in-exile-lobsang-sangay-india-and-china (accessed October 12, 2013).

¹²¹The Daily Telegraph, “Tibetans Accuse Dalai Lama of Betrayal,” *Western Shugden Society*, April 26, 1998, <http://www.westernshugdensociety.org/press/dalai-lama-betrays-tibetans/> (accessed October 12, 2013)

¹²²Sydney J. Freedberg Jr., “China’s Dangerous Weakness, Part 1: Beijing’s Aggressive ‘Self-Defense’,” *Breaking Defense*, 2013, <http://breakingdefense.com/2013/09/26/chinas-dangerous-weakness-part-1-beijings-aggressive-idea-of-self-defense/> (accessed October 12, 2013).

China has enhanced its activities around India to dominate the Indian Ocean by establishing “a string of pearls.” This seems to be in consonance with its third objective of “attainment and maintenance of geopolitical influence as a major, and perhaps primary, state.” The Sino-Pak entente ties India on two fronts and keeps it engaged. All the permanent members of the UN Security Council (SC), less China, have supported India’s bid for permanent membership on the UNSC. China maintains permanent membership should be based on the consent of all nations, while at the same time it asks Pakistan to oppose it. China views India’s ‘Look East’ policy, combined with the increased cooperation, shared values, and interests with the U.S. as an attempt to contain China’s rise.

India on the other hand, remains committed to strategic autonomy and nonalignment as an end in itself, and is influenced by a legacy of idealism despite exhibiting pragmatism on some occasions recently.¹²³ Like China, India is also focused on internal security, domestic order and addressing pressing social issues. The Indian prime minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, has reiterated that internal security is the biggest challenge the country is facing today. The Indian strategy is defensively defensive, and focused on building military capacities through modernization, constructing and upgrading roads, and connecting the far-flung areas to meet the external threat from Pakistan and China. India’s Look East policy aims to build economic and political ties with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) multilaterally and bilaterally.

¹²³Chandrashekhar Gupta, “India and Changing Balance of Power,” in *Indian Foreign Policy: Challenges and Opportunities*, ed. Atish Sinha and Madhup Mohta (New Delhi: Foreign Service Institute, 2007), 91-112; A. K. Damodran, “Non-Aligned Movement and its Future,” in *Indian Foreign Policy: Challenges and Opportunities*, ed. Atish Sinha and Madhup Mohta (New Delhi: Foreign Service Institute, 2007), 125-138.

The member states of ASEAN have welcomed Indian involvement to balance the growing Chinese assertiveness and influence in the region.¹²⁴ India also holds joint exercises with Singapore, Vietnam, Thailand and Indonesia and has increased its naval profile in Southeast Asia.

Capabilities: Balance or Imbalance

An analysis of earlier literature brings out the imbalance in the capabilities of both sides. China's strategy is offensively defensive including preemption as a big part of its active defense. India's strategy is defensively defensive and based on holding ground. The PLAA has 2.4 million personnel organized into 75 divisions with more organic armor. The IA has approximately 1.2 million personnel organized into 39 divisions. The PLAN and PLAAF have a larger inventories of aircraft and ships as compared to the IN and IAF. The nuclear balance is also poised towards China with over 240 nuclear warheads as compared to India's 80-100.

The Chengdu and Lanzhou MR are responsible for military activities in the Tibetan Plateau and to guard the Sino-Indian borders. They house four GAs (13, 14, 21, and 41) along with their supporting forces. On the Indian side, the forces have similar operational tasks of guarding the borders along the China, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan and Pakistan frontiers, and combating insurgencies in the northeast states and J&K. The comparison of forces as provided below displays the Chinese advantage over the Indian forces in terms of numbers and capabilities. (Refer to Table 15).

¹²⁴Lisa Curtis and Dean Cheng, "The China Challenge: A Strategic Vision for U.S.-India Relations," 2011, <http://report.heritage.org/bg2583> (accessed October 12, 2013), 8.

Table 15. Comparative Forces along the Borders				
S. No	Type of Units	China	India	Remarks
1	Combat Support (sp) unit	Arty Bde, AAA Bde, Army aviation Regt, ECM Regt, Hi tech Recon Bureau and SF unit		Arty Bde integral to Inf Div
2	Combat units	4 th Div, 6 th Mech Div, 8 th Mot Infantry (IN) & 11 Mot Div	23 IN, 57 IN, 2 Mtn, 5 Mtn, 21 Mtn, 17 Mtn, 27 Mtn, 20 Mtn, 56 Mtn, 71 Mtn Div	
3	Logistic (legs) s depot	7 x lgs sp depot and 1 x MT Regt		Integral to DIVs
4	21 GA	Arty Bde, AD Bde, 61 st Div, 12 th Armored Div		
5	47 GA	139 Mech IN Bde, 55 th and 56 th Mot IN Bde, UI Armd Bde, AAA bde, Engr Regt and Comn Regt		
6	Border Defense (BD) Unit	13 x BD Regt	5 x Sector HQ ITBP	Akin to Bdes
7	Reserve	3 X IN Div, 2 X IN Bde, 2 X AAA Div and 3 X AAA Regt		
Chengdu MR				
1	Combat Sp Unit	Army aviation regt, Cheetah special operations group, Special Recon group, EW Regt, Tech Recon Bureau, Chemical defense (CD) tech group		
2	Combat Units	52 nd and 53 rd Mountain Infantry Bde		
3	Lgs sp depot	3x lgs sp depot		
4	13 GA	UI Armd Bde, UI Arty Bde, UI AAA Bde, 37 th Div and 149 Lt Mech IN div		
5	14 GA	UI Armd Bde, UI Arty Bde, UI AAA Bde, CD Regt, 31 st and 40 th Div		
6	BD Units	18 x BD Regt		
7	Reserve	3 X IN Div, 1 X IN Bde, 1 X Arty Bde, 2 X AAA Div and Lgs sp Bde		

Source: Anthony H. Cordesman and Robert Hammond with Andrew Gagel, *The Military Balance in Asia 1990-2011, A Qualitative Analysis* (Washington, DC: CSIS, 2011), http://csis.org/files/publication/110516_South_Asia-AsiaMilitaryBalance2011.pdf (accessed June 21, 2013).

In terms of infrastructure, the Chinese have developed a better network of roads and railway systems. The Eastern, Western, Central highways, and the QTR, facilitate the lateral and vertical movement of Chinese forces into and within Tibet. The better living

infrastructure and thermal shelters, for quick acclimatization of their forces all along the region, enhance their operational readiness and force application. The configuration of terrain and gradual gradient from the Chinese sides, with most of the Chinese forces already acclimatized to operate at high altitudes adds to their advantage. The ability to move forces from one MR to another MR, as exhibited in earlier exercises, augments their capabilities.

On the other hand, the network of roads and railways on the Indian side are not adequately developed. India relies on single lane roads to connect to key towns of Tawang, Gangtok, Darjeeling and Leh with up to 20 hours of drive time from the nearest railhead. The Indian government has realized the futility of following the policy of not developing road networks to and in the border region and remote areas earlier, and has approved major infrastructure projects to connect and facilitate movements. The CCS also sanctioned raising of new mountain strike corps to reduce the disparity of forces along the border.

Intentions and Probability of Conflict

The intentions are very difficult to discern and could change overnight. However, the probabilities need to be supported by the capabilities. The intentions and probability of conflict are summarized in the probability matrix. (Refer to table 14). In the matrix, there are a set of 15 criteria. Each criteria is weighted, with two being the highest probability, one is lower and zero being the lowest from either side. A brief explanation about the criteria that were discussed earlier during the research is also provided. The matrix reflects an aggressive Chinese intent (29) vis-a-vis India (13).

The 1945-1949 civil war through which PRC came into its present form was far more violent and prolonged than India's partition and gaining independence. Even counting India's three wars with Pakistan, China has used force more frequently to settle border issues and as a tool of foreign policy compared to India.¹²⁵ As discussed earlier, the Indian President, K. R. Narayan during his visit to China, emphasized the need to resolve the boundary issue and not to keep it for future generations. The Chinese Premier, Jiang Zemin's remark, to exercise patience in solving the "issues left over from past" exhibit Chinese reluctance to resolve the issue.¹²⁶ The Chinese decision to "retract from earlier proposed an east-west swap offer and the identification of the Tawang salient as the area in which Indian concessions were necessary was an effective way of blocking resolution."¹²⁷

Recently, China unveiled new passports with the map covering borders around disputed territories from India to Southeast Asia. In 2005, India and China signed an agreement on political parameters and guiding principles stating no settled population would be disturbed in settling the boundary issue. However, increased assertive claims on the town of Tawang and State of Arunachal Pradesh violate the earlier agreed upon parameters and principles and question Chinese intent. The other criteria have been

¹²⁵Larry M. Wortzel, "China's Foreign Conflicts Since 1949," in *A Military History of China*, ed. David A. Graff and Robin Higham (West View Press, 2002), 267, 270, 282.; Heginbotham, 74; Huntington, *The Clash of Civilization*, 168-174; 218-238, 312-315.

¹²⁶Xinhua Highlights Weekly Diplomatic News, "China Ready to Expedite Talks with India on LAC Delineation," *World News Connection*, June 3, 2000. File Number 985 Accession Number 117250298 as quoted by John Graver in *Sino-Indian Security relations*, 131.

¹²⁷Graver, 131.

discussed during the earlier research and are self-explanatory. The probability matrix highlights the increased probability of conflict started by China. This has enhanced security dilemma for India.

S.No.	Criteria	China	India
1.	Revolutionary Ideas/ Foundations	2	1
2.	Frequent use of force to settle issues and a tool of foreign policy	2	1
3.	Reluctance to solve border issues	2	1
4.	More assertive claims and violating the 2005 Agreement on political parameters and guiding principles for settlement of boundary question	2	0
5.	State of forces	2	1
6.	UAV monitoring and air space violations	2	0
7.	Reports of probing action across the borders including Bhutan and Sikkim	2	0
8.	Infrastructure development along border	2	1
9.	Force Modernization	2	2
10.	Increased encirclement in Indian Ocean/ South China Sea	2	1
11.	Terrain familiarization activities	2	0
12.	Nuclear capability and deployment of missile bases	2	1
13.	Terrain advantage (gradual descent/ascent)	2	1
14.	Military exercises and ability to mobilize forces from one MR to another	2	1
15.	Defensive deployment along border	1	2
	Total	29	13

Source: Created by author.

Triggers for Conflict

Earlier paragraphs outlined the infrastructure imbalance, disparity of forces and doctrinal differences on both sides. The probability matrix reinforces the disparity of

forces and indicates China's growing advantage. The Indians, especially the military, are alarmed by the Chinese actions and are preparing to reduce threats on multiple fronts; Pakistan, China and internal security challenges. The deployed Indian military was clearly defeated in 1962 and doesn't want to be surprised again. Though, the Indian military has been good in exercising restraint, any Chinese aggressive claim or action along the border may exceed its patience, resulting in a local conflict. This could lead to a larger conflict that may not stay localized along the land borders and may escalate to other domains. The various triggers are touched upon in the following paragraph.

Tibet has been the core issue in Sino-Indian bilateral problems. In future years, Tibetan unrest may flare up, either due to oppressive Chinese policies, or by fundamentalists following the death of the Dalai Lama. The demand for greater autonomy would solicit support from Tibetan refugees in exile all around the world. The Tibetan government in exile may lead this movement, which China would consider a serious internal disorder and a threat to national unity, resulting in a military response.

The frequent intrusions inside Indian territory by PLA patrols that Chinese officials often blame on their local commanders as acting on their own discretion if followed with long term occupation of territory or casualties, could compel India to react with force leading to an escalation to major conflict. The inexperience of the Chinese and Indian lower-level local commanders and soldiers could spark a conflict. Likewise, the Sino-Pak entente, threatening India with encirclement in J&K and/or a proxy war by China supporting Pakistan to create a Kargil-like situation that could force India to react either directly, or indirectly by using its Tibet card could further aggravate the situation.

In the maritime theatre, both China and India view the South China Sea and Indian Ocean as their respective areas of influence and dislike others navies in their domain. In attempts to encircle and counter encirclement, both navies seem to be moving towards a potential conflict in the naval domain. Any issue on the land domain and/or maritime clash due to PLAN presence in the Indian Ocean and IN presence in the South China Sea could also escalate and engulf the naval domain. However, as of now, both PLAN and IN lack the capability to pose a real threat to each other. Any trigger for conflict would be a result of mistake and miscalculation from either side, however, the conditions and environment are set militarily for that trigger to escalate into a conflict.

Potential Conflict Scenarios

The bilateral and multilateral engagements on the broader areas of interests appear amicably cooperative but factors like the military posturing of forces, reluctance to solve the border issues and other aspects as mentioned earlier could be seen as setting the conditions for conflict. Broadly, there could be three potential conflict scenarios. Firstly, the conflict may flare up from a border post and result into local border skirmishes due to the aggressive Chinese posture and overtures. The increased frequency of Chinese incursions, aggressive behavior during patrol encounters, leaving telltale signs and destroying unmanned winter vacated border outposts along the LAC, that are now becoming more common may lead to it. The military would handle the situation within the scope of CBMs by lodging the complaints to the other sides, engaging through regular senior official meetings and exercising restraint. However, the Chinese increased overtures and incursions that gain wide media coverage and shape public opinion in India

could result in the growth of alarm among the populace particularly in the strategic community, which would lead to second scenario.

In this scenario, the situation might go out of the hands of military leadership and necessitate the involvement of diplomatic and political community. More recently, in April 2013, the large scale Chinese patrol intrusion in Ladakh region exhibited the trend. This led to build up of troops by India at the incident site followed by buildup of troops in the sector and operational alert all along the border by both sides. Fortunately, the situation was diffused and a likely conflict was averted after three weeks of hectic politico-diplomatic negotiations at the highest level and timely intervention of international community with an appeal to show restraint from both sides. Any mistake on handling the issue or miscalculation could have led to localized conflict along the land borders duly supported with long range artillery and air force. The probability of localized conflict is higher now. The Chinese follow up intrusions in Ladakh with ponies and horses in July 2013 and in Arunachal Pradesh in August 2013 questions their intent and reinforces the Indian security alarm.¹²⁸ The Indian CCS's approval to raise a new mountain strike corps could aptly been seen as an attempt to reduce the disparity of forces and thwart any Chinese aggressive design.

The third potential conflict scenario would include Chinese resolve to send a clear message to India, the US and its allies towards any future attempt to contain her. This would involve a larger scale conflict comprising attacks in different sectors and domains. As the main effort, the attack would progress in the eastern sector along the State of

¹²⁸BBC News, "Indian Media: Chinese 'Intrusion on Ponies and Horses'," July 22, 2013, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-india-23401673> (accessed November 14, 2013).

Arunanchal Pradesh (China claims all 90,000 km²) as it did during the 1962 war with a supporting attack along the Siliguri Corridor to threaten and cut off all the north eastern states of India. In the west, the Chinese would strongly hold and reinforce their claim in the areas of Aksai Chin and appeal to Pakistan to launch attack against India to restrict the Indian's maneuver space. The conflict would also escalate into the cyber, naval and air force domains as required and on a supporting basis. It would challenge and send a clear message to the US pivot/rebalance to Asia and any Indian alliance to contain China, This is reminiscent of the Chinese war against India in 1962 and Vietnam in 1979 that sent a message to Soviets. The probability of such a scenario is less likely but cannot be ruled out as the Chinese are known to restrict the scope. Both China and India have "no first use nuclear policy." This also restricts the scope of the conflict. The likely intervention by the international community to attempt to persuade both nations to exercise restraint could prevent such a scenario. Moreover, the political leadership of China and India realize the futility of such a war. The two most populous countries of the world can visualize the destruction and devastation a war would cause and cannot afford the human, fiscal and infrastructure losses. Unfortunately, so could Sparta and Athens.

Final Comments

In the modern world, war has been visualized as an expensive endeavor that is generally waged as a last resort. Although some argue, it can be waged for national pride, greed or interests, a Sino-Indian conflict hardly serves any purpose and would cause both nations to lose momentum in their quest for security and prosperity. China and India are the major engines of growth in Asia and aspire to play greater roles in world affairs. There seems to be greater cooperation in various fields and conflict seems to be less

relevant in pursuit of their national interests. However, the protracted low level border dispute continues due to the various issues mentioned in the research. The protracted conflict, growth of power and alarm on other side makes the environment vulnerable to conflict, which could easily escalate.

History is replete with examples of states going to war on trivial issues and the hindsight analysis brings out important lessons; the protracted contest with lack of sincere holistic approach for either side to resolve the issue or narrow down the divergence, the growth of power and nervousness on the other side, translates into a security dilemma. Similar situations prevail across the Sino-India kinship which is moving towards intensive arming by both sides and sets the conditions for probable conflict at some level. However, there is a sense of realism in the Indian thought process respecting Chinese sensitivities and mitigating their concern by not completely aligning with the U.S. that would be envisaged by China as a strategic move to contain her.

China appreciated Indian efforts to employ all means, including force, to protect the Olympic Torch from Tibetan protestors from sabotage or disruption during its travel, through India in 2008. On the other hand, the Chinese do not seem to respect Indian sensitivities when it comes to J&K and Arunachal Pradesh. In fact, they question Indian sovereignty over J&K and Arunachal by their actions which negate the good will between them. The more assertive Chinese claims on Tawang and Arunachal Pradesh as 'Southern Tibet' since 2006 (Chinese ambassador started making these claims in run up to Hu Jintao's visit of November 2006) raises Indian concerns. The Chinese also seem to be violating the "2005 agreement" by claiming Arunachal Pradesh as the accord stipulated "the settled population will not be disturbed" in settling the boundary issue.

The Chinese objection to the visit of the Indian Prime Minister and Dalai Lama to Tawang raises questions on Chinese intent.

Recently, China unveiled new passports with its map covering borders around disputed territories from India to Southeast Asia.¹²⁹ India's foreign minister deemed the new borders “unacceptable,” and a Vietnamese official described the move as “one very poisonous step by Beijing among their thousands of malevolent actions.”¹³⁰ China needs to exhibit more magnanimous behavior, respect other’s sensitivities, and develop mutual trust to create a real harmonious environment.

The Indian Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, visited China in October 2013, six months after a military standoff on their disputed border and signed a defense cooperation agreement to limit the risk of further confrontations, agreement on river cooperation and counter terrorism. However, as Ashley Tellis wrote “The old dilemmas that bedevil India with respect to China are still intact, I don’t think either side is in a position right now to get to the heart of the matter.”¹³¹ There is a long way to go and mitigate the security alarm that exists. Therefore, it is recommended that the present dynamics and their relation be studied in consonance with the existing old dilemma.

¹²⁹Michael Crowley, “Obama’s Asia Problem,” *TIME Magazine* 182, no. 17: 32.

¹³⁰*Ibid.*

¹³¹The Washington Post, “India, China sign defense accord, but problems persist even as economic ties grow,” http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/india-china-to-sign-defense-accord-but-problems-persist-even-economic-ties-grow/2013/10/22/9bed5f2e-3a83-11e3-b0e7-716179a2c2c7_story.html (accessed October 23, 2013).

Recommendation for Further Study

With the U.S. rebalancing its focus to the Asia-Pacific region, there is a definite need to understand the geo-strategic dynamics of the region. The U.S. shares similar democratic values with India and is home to ever increasing Indian diaspora. In recent times, their relationships have improved. However, the Indian rapprochement with the Soviet Union in late the 1950s through 1970s respectively contributed to Chinese aggression and overtures. These aspects make Indian cautious of embracing the U.S. to avoid giving an impression to the Chinese of any efforts to contain them. India is caught in a precarious situation with Pakistan, as the most immediate threat, and China as the long term security challenge. The Sino-Pak entente and deeper ties pose a two front threat simultaneously. While, India wants to avoid conflict with China, it understands the essence of developing enough capabilities and being militarily strong as key to deterring and preventing any Chinese aggressive design.

The U.S. approach towards China can be seen on dual track: following the policies of containment and engagement.¹³² The policy of containment results in a new dynamic between the U.S. and India growing closer and working against China. On the other hand, the Sino-U.S. economic interdependence substantiates the logic of not picking a side in the unpredictable Sino-US relationship.¹³³ Moreover, as the former Indian Prime Minister, Mr. Vajpayee said, “We can choose friends but not neighbors” brings the realism to the Indian thought process.

¹³²Malone and Mukherjee.

¹³³M. K. Bhadrakumar, “Challenges for Indian Foreign Policy,” *The Hindu*, March, 6, 2009, <http://www.hinduonnet.com/2009/03/06/stories/2009030656301000.htm> (accessed October 21, 2013).

It is recommended that any attempt to reestablish the Asia-pivot must include a clear understanding of the complex relationship between the two most populous countries, their gestalt and security dilemma. Both of these countries are on the path to economic development and aspire to be global influencers. They have credible nuclear deterrent forces and are significantly modernizing their military capabilities. They also could resort to mutual efforts of encirclement; counter encirclement with quiet competition reminiscent of pre-world war rivalries.

The balance and pivot to Asia calls for a stable and strong India capable of withstanding the Chinese overtures and assertive claims. A permanent seat for India at the Security Council would enhance its growing clout, besides recognizing its efforts and contribution to world peace. It would also provide greater representation for 1/6 of the world population, strengthen the U.S. pivot in Asia, and cement the U.S.-Indo relations and democratic values.

The writer also recommends that an accurate estimate and expenditure of budgets by both nations, including their internal defense budget will highlight the precise war waging capabilities. There is a need to work closely amongst the militaries of China and India (is being done) to more clearly discern their capabilities and intent. The Chinese anti-access and anti-denial strategy requires further study focused on their war waging effort to evaluate and better understand their overall capabilities.

Si vis pacem, para bellum,
"If you want peace, prepare for war"

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