

## **Chapter -3**

### **India- China Border dispute**

India – China political relations have witnessed major swings since the heyday of close cooperation in early 1950s and the nadir of the 1962 border war. Though both countries profess a desire to work closely to resolve disagreements, have rapidly expanding economic relations, and often engage in strategic cooperation in several arenas, their bilateral relationship is, by most accounts, fragile.

Some of the factors that contribute to testy India-China political relations are: mutual suspicion of each other's intentions, the bitter memories of the 1962 war (especially in India), the presence in India of Tibetan exiles led by the Dalai Lama, China's increasing clout in other South Asian States, Chinese mistrust of warmer Indo- US relations, and so on.

However, the key issues that prevent the two countries from establishing a stable relationship are the border issue and the issue of China's close relationship with Pakistan and its implication for India China relations.<sup>1</sup>

### **India- China Border issue**

Sharing one of the world's longest and most rugged frontiers, China and India are the only two countries today without a fully defined frontline. In the longest continuous border negotiating process between any two nations in Post- World War II history, China has held regular rounds of dialogue since 1981 with India to settle the festering Himalayan frontier disputes. But, besides that, the two countries have not be able to agree on a mutually defined line of control separating them.<sup>2</sup>

### **A Brief Review of the India China border Dispute**

The entire India China boundary has never been formally delimited by any mutually accepted treaty. There has existed a boundary line of actual control between the two countries. It took shape on the bases of the extent of each other's administrative jurisdiction over a long course of time. The entire boundary has been traditionally divided into three sectors the eastern sector, the middle sector and the western sector with all in dispute.

The western sector involves the dispute over the Aksai Chin, India claims as part of Ladakh and China claims as part of Xingjian. The middle sector involves a dispute over various points between the Tibet Kashmir- Punjab border junction and Nepal-Tibet-Uttar Pradesh border junction. The eastern sector involves a dispute over the area between the pre 1914 outer Line and McMohon Line.<sup>3</sup>The border dispute mainly related to McMohon Line in North East and Ladakh in North – West.

### **The McMohon line**

This is the boundary line between the two countries, east of Bhutan. India has always treated the McMohon Line as the lawfully demarcated border between India and China. But, China condemned it as 'imperialist line'. The McMohon line was determined in 1914 at a conference of the representatives of British India, Tibet and China held at Shimla. The conference was held to sort out border differences between Nepal, Bhutan, Sikkim and Tibet. The Secretary of State for India (In British Cabinet) Arthur Henry McMohon represented India in the Shimla Conference. An agreement was concluded which divided Tibet into Inner Tibet and Outer Tibet. The boundary between Outer Tibet and Indian was demarcated at the high mountain peaks. The line was drawn on the suggestion of McMohon line. It is in a way natural boundary also as it passes through Tibet Plateau in the north and Indian hills in the south. The map was signed by representatives of British India, Tibet and China. But the Chinese Government did not ratify it. Nevertheless, no government of China ever disputed this boundary line India always accepted it.

## **Line of Actual Control**

The Line of Actual Control (LAC) is the effective border between India and China. The LAC is 4,057-km long and traverses three areas of northern Indian states: western (Ladakh, Kashmir), middle (Uttarakhand, Himachal) and eastern (Sikkim, Arunachal). Chinese Prime Minister Zhou Enlai first used the phrase in a letter addressed to Indian Prime Minister Nehru dated October 24, 1959. In a letter dated November 7, 1959 Zhou told Nehru that the LAC consisted of “the so-called McMahon Line in the east and the line up to which each side exercises actual control in the west”. During the Sino- Indian War (1962), Nehru claimed not to know where the line was; “There is no sense or meaning in the Chinese offer to withdraw twenty kilometres from what they call ‘line of actual control. What is this ‘line of control. Is this the line they have created by aggression since the beginning of September. Advancing forty or sixty kilometres by blatant military aggression and offering to withdraw twenty kilometres provided both sides do this is a deceptive device which can fool nobody.” Zhou responded that the LAC was “basically still the line of actual control as existed between the Chinese and Indian sides on 7 November 1959. To put it concretely, in the eastern sector it coincides in the main with the so- called McMahon line, and in the western and middle sectors it coincides in the main with the traditional customary line which has consistently been pointed out by China. The “LAC” gained legal recognition in Sino Indian agreements signed in 1993 and 1996. The 1996 agreement states, “No activities of either side shall overstep the line of actual control.”

## **Ladakh**

Ladakh is, and has been, a part of the state of Jammu and Kashmir. The State was under British paramount till independence and later accepted to India, as an integral part of this country. Although Ladakh- China border was not demarcated by any treaty, yet India and China have accepted the existing boundary for centuries. This boundary was always shown

by India in its maps. The tourists who came to India from time to time also mentioned this border in their writings. It was made clear in a note sent by India to China in 1899 that Aksai Chin was a part of Indian Territory. The revenue records to the State Jammu and Kashmir also confirm that Aksai Chin was always a part of Ladakh region of Jammu and Kashmir.<sup>4</sup>

### **Origin of the Border Dispute**

After the end of World War-II, important changes took place all over the world and Asia could not remain aloof to this. First of all in 1947, India got independence from British Raj which lasted for more than 200 years.<sup>5</sup> Its big neighbour China was officially proclaimed in Peking in October 1, 1949. India was among the first countries to have recognized the People's Republic of China on December 30, 1948.<sup>6</sup>

On January 1 1950, two days after the recognition of China by India, it announced the liberation of Tibet as on the main task of People's Liberation army.<sup>7</sup> On October 7, 1950, 4000 Chinese troops attacked on Eastern Tibet's provincial capital of Chaundo from eight directions. The small Tibetan force was defeated. <sup>8</sup>The Chinese aggression came as a rude shock to India. India initially protested against Chinese invasion of Tibet but only mildly.<sup>9</sup>

In 1954 India entered into an agreement with China concerning trade and inter course between the Tibet region of China and India.<sup>10</sup> This agreement was signed on 29<sup>th</sup> April 1954, for a period of eight years. India surrendered its extra territorial rights in Tibet and accepted China's full sovereignty over Tibet. Thus, it was accepted that Tibet was a region of China. India gave up the right to station Indian army units in Yatung and Gyantse, rationalized arrangement for border trade and pilgrimage. India also surrendered its control over post and telegraph administration in Tibet. The five principles of Panchsheel were also imported in the agreement.<sup>11</sup> The five principles are:

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, and
5. Peaceful co-existence.<sup>12</sup>

Thou (PM of China) was probably aware that Delhi had made the biggest concession to China in modern Asian history, not only by giving up India's extra rights in Tibet but more importantly by giving India's seal of legitimacy on Chinese occupation of Tibet at a time when most nations were condemning it. China had immediately started constructing roads linking China and Tibet.<sup>13</sup>

A road was built by the Chinese across the Aksai Chin area in 1956-57. The road was meant to open Western Tibet to Chinese immigrants and to divert its trade from its traditional south ward direction into Western China and the Soviet Union.

Earlier, in July 1954 (soon after the Trade agreement incorporation Panchsheel was signed), China had sent a protest note to India alleging that Indian troops had illegally occupied Bu – Je (Barahooti), an area claimed to be within Chinese territory. India rejected this protest by saying that, Barahooti was situated with Indian State of Uttar Pradesh and an Indian post had been there for a long time. India also mentioned that Tibet based Chinese official had often been intruding into this Indian Territory.<sup>14</sup>

For some time after the communist revolution, China had not raised any boundary question. Therefore, when India noticed that about 48,000 sq miles of territory was shown as part of China, it protested. The Chinese leadership dismissed the maps as old KMT (Koumintang) government mistake. Not only in 1954, but even when Chou visited India in 1956, his attention was drawn to continuation of maps showing parts of Indian Territory as a part of

China. He assured Nehru that McMahon Line was accepted to him, and that corrections would be made in the maps.

But, India was shocked when Chou En-lai wrote a letter on 23 January 1959, claiming thousands of square miles of Indian Territory. He argued that Sino- Indian boundary had never been formally delimited and that the so-called McMahon Line was a product of British policy of aggression against the Tibet region of China. China considered the McMahon Line as illegal.<sup>15</sup>

As the relations continued to deteriorate Prime Minister of India and China met in April 1960, but differences not be resolved, nor narrowed down. Indian public opinion did not favour continuation of talk, as no fruitful results were expected. Pressed by strong public sentiments, Nehru decided to pursue the forward policy which meant that India was to exercise its effective control up to its border. By the end of 1961, about 56 posts were established by Indian forces all along the border. This step perhaps provoked China to take military action.<sup>16</sup>

The Chinese launched a massive attack on October 20, 1962 in North East Frontier Agency (NEFA) as well as in the Ladakh sector and declared a unilateral ceasefire with effect from the mid night of 20-21 November, 1962.<sup>17</sup>

The 1962 war froze both position on the border and it would take a hiatus of 15 years for diplomatic relations to be re-established.

### **Re-establishment of Diplomatic Ties**

In 1976 India and China resumed their diplomatic interaction, which had been interrupted by the 1962 war. In February 1979, on India's initiatives; Foreign Minister, AtalBihari Vajpayee visited China. This was the first high level bilateral visit since Zhou's visit to India in April

1962. initially planned for October 1978, it was perhaps fortunate that the visit eventually took place in February 1979, after the 3<sup>rd</sup> plenum of the 11<sup>th</sup> Central Committee of Chinese Communist Party had taken epochal decisions on reforms and opening up of China. After a period of fluctuation fortunes, Deng Xiaoping was firmly in command.<sup>18</sup>

Deng Xiaoping consolidated his position and power within the Communist Party of China and attained the status of paramount leader. An important intervention came from Deng Xiaoping in 1980, when he gave an interview to an Indian Journalist in which he outlined what came to be known as the package deal. Analysts judged both the interview and its timing to be purposeful although the contents were more or less on the same lines as that proposed by Zhou En-lai. In 1960 and 1962, but taking the actually existing situations the starting point of the bilateral discussions. Neither did Deng go into past history or grievances; he dismissed 1962 as a small episode that should not have happened. The offer implicit in the package deal to move out of the past was not accepted by the then Indian Foreign Minister Narsimha Rao. To use the Chinese phraseology the political leadership was neither ripe nor ready. But the return visit by the Chinese Foreign Minister Huang Hua in 1981 led to the establishment of an annual dialogue at the level of Vice Ministers.<sup>19</sup> Huang Hua's India trip was marked by the agreement to open negotiations on the border dispute and the development of India – China relations. There followed eight rounds of China India talks as an official channel of the China India dialogue on the border dispute.<sup>20</sup>

### **The Eight – Round Border Talks in the 1980s**

The eight round border talks took place in the period from hostility to detente in India- China relations. The talks obviously eased the tensions in their bilateral relations and resulted in agreement on the disagreements. These talks relieved both governments of passing too hard on matters of substance while procedural disagreement seemed to be employed as excuse for

no – progress. This suggests that neither government found it urgent to resolve the border dispute in the 1980s. Both sides hoped to reduce tensions and stabilize and improve bilateral relations, but they realized it premature to proceed to resolve their border disputes.<sup>21</sup>

### **Sino Indian Summits**

After exchange of talks (December 1988) at both the official and non- official levels, summit was held at Beijing in December 1988. At this path breaking Summit the Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping and the Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi met and held talks.

According to the joint communiqué issued on 23<sup>rd</sup> December, 1988 the following decisions were taken:

1. By forgetting the last rounds to talks the two sides will try to find out such solutions of the boundary dispute as would be acceptable to both of them.
2. On the basis of 1954 Panchshell Principles both of them will behave like good neighbours and maintain friendly relations.
3. About the boundary dispute, arising out of Sino-Indian war of 1962, a joint working group (JWG) will be formed. This decision was a revolutionary step from the point of bilateral relations.<sup>22</sup>

The JWG was set up to resolve the border dispute by examining all relevant matters. The JWG was entrusted with preservation of peace and tranquility on the border. In 1991, Premier Li Peng visited India and signed the Sino – Indian joint communiqué on December 16, 1991.<sup>23</sup> In the Joint Communiqué, they reaffirmed their independent foreign policy and the five principles of peaceful co- existence. The two sides appealed for the joint efforts for the establishment of a new international political and economic order. Indian reiterated its

positions that Tibet is an autonomous region of China and it does not allow Tibetan to engage in anti-China political activities in India.<sup>24</sup>

### **Agreements of 1993 and 1996**

After the two summit meetings in 1988 and 1991, India China interactions shifted from the border dispute to the identification of a mutually acceptable Line of Actual Control (LAC) along the India- China border.<sup>25</sup> During the visit of Prime Minister Narshimaha Rao to China, the two countries consolidated the results of Li Peng's visit to India in 1991, and signed on 7<sup>th</sup> September 1993, an 'agreement on the Maintenance of Peace and Tranquillity along the Line of Actual Control in the India – China border areas. By this agreement both the countries pledged not to resort to force or threat of force, and, instead, rely on mutual consultation toward an amicable settlement of the boundary problem. Pending such a settlement, the two countries agreed to respect the Line of Actual Control (LAC) top caution each other for a pullback in case of any deviation, and carry joint inspections to resolve divergences in perceptions about the LAC alignment, wherever necessary.

In order to preserve equal and mutual security as also friendly relation, the two sides decided to engage in consultations for a reduction of military development along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) to a mutually acceptable minimum level. The 1993 agreement stipulated, furthermore the reliance on consultation to identify Confidence Building Measures (CBM's).

The agreement required the two side to confine military exercises to mutually selected zones. The agreement ordained consultations by border security personnel to sort out various problems, as also consultations for verification/ supervision of troops reduction at the border t agreed level, and for endowing the Joint Working Groups with diplomatic/ military experts in order to enhance the capability of JWG with regard to implementation of the Agreement. The

Agreement took care to sustain mutual confidence by ensuring that, while referring to LAC, it did not prejudice the substantive contention of the two countries on the boundary issue.<sup>26</sup>

Under this auspicious circumstance, one more step towards additional CBM's could be taken in 1996, when President Jiang Zemin visited India. The two countries signed an 'Agreement on Confidence Building Measures in Military Field along the Line of Actual Control in India-China border areas. This Agreement recalling the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence, enjoined that no country would use its military strength against the other, the border defense forces of either country would not launch an attack or any military operation threatening peace, tranquillity, and stability along the border.

This agreement dealt elaborately with ceilings on armed forces and armaments to be deployed in agreed geographical zones with due regard for the principles of equal and mutual security, as also so far such matters as terrain, road communication, and time required to induct or deduct soldiers/ armament, etc.

The 1996 Agreement wisely stipulated an exchange of maps, so that divergence on intersections of LAC alignment could be clarified and eventual agreement on this alignment could be achieved.<sup>27</sup>

### **2003: Joint Declaration**

Declaration on Principles for relations and comprehensive: cooperation between the Republic of India and the peoples or Republic of China.

Prime Minister AtulBihari Vajpayee's visit to Beijing resulted in an important Joint declaration, which was signed by Indian Prime Minister and Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2003. In the declaration India and China acknowledged their mutual desire for good neighbourly relations and their broad common interests.<sup>28</sup> India also reiterated China's

sovereignty over Tibet, a reassurance that China values since the original 1954 Agreement only had a validity of 8 years (lapsed in June 1962). India received a de facto acceptance of Sikkim as an integral part of India.<sup>29</sup>

This step was taken at Prime Minister's initiative. The national Security Advisor, Mr. Brajesh Mishra, was appointed as Prime Minister's special representatives. China appointed their senior most Vice Foreign minister Dai Bingguo as his counterpart. Mr. Dai was earlier minister in charge of International Liaison department of the Communist Party of China and was then a member of the Central Committee of the party.

The work of the two special representatives was to be in addition to the ongoing implementation of the 1993 and 1996 agreement between India and China on the process of clarification of the Line of Actual Control and on the continued maintenance of peace and tranquility in the border areas. Two rounds of cordial construction and cooperative discussion between the special representatives took place on 23-24 October 2003 and 12-13 January 2004.<sup>30</sup>

### **Political Parameters and Guiding Principles**

The year 2005 marked the 55<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the diplomatic relations between India and China. During the year high level political exchanges coupled with expansion of functional cooperation enhanced the bilateral relationship.

The visit of Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao to India on 9-12 April 2005 signified a milestone in bilateral relations. An important outcome of the visit was signing of the 'Agreement of the Political Parameters and Guiding Principles for the settlement on India- China boundary question. <sup>31</sup>The Chinese Premier clarified that China regarded Sikkim as an inalienable part of India and that Sikkim was no longer as an issue in India – China relations. Premier Jiabao

also handed over to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh the revised Chinese Map showing of India.<sup>32</sup>

This was a land mark agreement that substantially bridged and accommodated the positions of both sides. According to Article III of the guiding principles, both states agreed to mutually acceptable adjustment to their respective positions on the boundary issue, so as to arrive at a package settlement to the boundary question. The boundary settlement must be final, covering all sectors of India China boundary. Article –IV notes that the two sides will due consideration to each other’s strategic and reasonable interests.

And importantly, from Indian perspective, Article-VII reads, in reaching a boundary settlement the sides shall safeguard due interests of their settlement the sides shall safeguard due interests of their settled populations in border areas.<sup>33</sup>

There is sufficient scope and more in the Guidelines, to impart maximum flexibility in the negotiations that will follow and there are more than adequate safeguard to ensure tht peace and tranquility will maintained in the border areas pending the final settlement.<sup>34</sup>

The visit by President Hu Jintao to India from 20-23 November 2006 was the highlight of the ‘India China friendship- year’ activities in 2006. During the discussion, Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and President Hu Jintao exchanged views on the boundary question and agreed that an early settlement would serve as the basic interest of both countries. They asked the special representative on the boundary question to intensify their efforts arriving towards a mutually agreed framework for the settlement of the boundary questions.<sup>35</sup>

The special representatives of India and China on the boundary issue met for the tenth round in New Delhi and Connor from 20-22 April 2007 and for the eleventh round in Beijing from 24-26 November 2007. During these talks the two representative continued their discussion

on a framework for the boundary settlement on the basis of the agreement of political parameters and guiding principles of April 2005.<sup>36</sup>

The 14<sup>th</sup> round of the special two representative's talks was held in Beijing, China from 29-30 November 2010. The special representatives continued the boundary question. The leadership of the two countries on various occasions expressed satisfaction at the progress that being made by the special representatives towards a fair reasonable and mutually acceptable solution. Both sides have declared that an early settlement of the boundary question will advance the basic interests of the two countries and shall, therefore, be pursued as a strategic objective. Meanwhile, peace in border areas was also maintained in accordance with the relevant agreements signed in 1993, 1996 and 2005, thereby creating an enable environment for making progress of discussions on the boundary settlement.<sup>37</sup>

### **Major Irritants in India-China Border Issue**

The boundary dispute between India and China stands exactly where it did when it first emerged half a century ago.<sup>38</sup>In making an assessment of or prognosis on the core aspects of the border, we can identify the three major problem areas.<sup>39</sup>

1. Firstly, the main barrier still comes from the Indian side, Indian has a multi-party political system and its society is extremely complicated. Various Indian political parties have different understanding on the India China border issue, and therefore, it is hard for them to reach an agreement on the issue.<sup>39</sup>
2. Secondly, the most important Sino-Indian border dispute is Chinese claim over 90,000 square km of Indian Territory including Arunachal Pradesh.<sup>41</sup> Since the end of Cold War China has adopted a two track approach towards India.

On the one hand, seeking to promote trade and open up the Indian market China, insisted on high- level political dialogue, confidence building measures, and military –to – military contacts; on the other, it has pursued persistently its expansive territorial agenda. Insisting on concessions, China engages itself in endless rounds of discussions, with little movement forward, on the approach toward the territorial question. The Chinese maps show Arunachal as part of the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) and call it southern Tibet.<sup>42</sup>

The Chinese claim is not new and was first aired in 1959 though both Zhou En-lai and later Deng Xiaoping said that they would be willing to recognize current realities. The claim was officially revived in 1985 in a modified form. But during the 1990's it was kept out of public posturing as the two sides tried to build a stable relationship and reach a territorial compromise. In 2006, on the eve of Chinese president Hu Jintao's arrival (for a state visit) the Chinese ambassador in New Delhi claimed that the whole Arunachal Pradesh is Chinese Territory.<sup>44</sup>

In may 2007, China denied visa to Ganesh Koyu, an Indian Administrative Service (IAS) Officer from Arunachal Pradesh, who was to be part of a 107 IAS officer study visit to Beijing and Shanghai. China pointed out that Koyu is a Chinese citizen since he belongs to Arunachal Pradesh and hence could visit China without a visa. This was a deliberate act of provocation and assertion by Chinese officials at that time.

In June 2009, China again tried to block India's request for US\$2.9 billion loan from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) as the request included US\$60 million for flood management, water supply, and sanitation project in Arunachal Pradesh. This was the first time that China sought to broadcast its claim on Arunachal Pradesh in multilateral forum.

Subsequently, in October 2009, China expressed deep dissatisfaction when Prime Minister Manmohan Singh visited Arunachal Pradesh as part of an election campaign for the state assembly elections. 45

However, by insisting on these claims, China is making a settlement of the territorial issue virtually impossible and seriously misperceiving public opinion trends in India.46

III. Thirdly, India and China conducted a number of talks 3 during 1960; 8 during 1981-1987; 15 joint working group meetings in 1988-2005 and 14 special representative meeting till October 2010. Although the meetings have made many positive achievements, it is still far away from reaching a fair, just, and reasonable agreement.47

## **II. Pakistan factor in India –China relations**

In any analysis of relation between India and China a crucial consideration has been their ties with other countries. The two most relevant states in this regard were the Soviet Union and Pakistan. While India cultivated close relations with Soviet Union, her northern neighbour China did so with Pakistan. In view of this, Sino- Pakistan relations had their impact on the course of India China relations.

Right from 1947, Pakistan searched for allies to provide security and the countries in the Muslim Middle East were always the preferred allies. Pakistan, however, also desired an ally who was nearer home, and was also strong enough to take on India. China was seen the answer. Chinese economic aid in 1950 when India was seen as attempting to economically strangle. Pakistan, Chinese support on the Kashmir dispute, Chinese understanding (unlike the Arab Middle East) of why Pakistan joined the Western security alliances, Chinese support during the 1965 war, were all seen as proof of China's commitment to Pakistan. China

provided not just symbolic and diplomatic support but also immense economic and military aid, including aid in the nuclear field.

From an Indo –centre perspective China- Pakistan relations can be seen in three phase beginning with China’s diplomatic blitz against India during the 1965 Indo- Pak war. Thereafter, Similar Chinese support in the 1971 Bangladesh war as the second phase. The final phase relates to their nuclear relations initiated in the 1970s that still continues to be active.

### **The issue of Tibet**

The issue of Tibet is still a problem between India and china. The boundary question and Tibet are inextricably linked in their historical and contemporary contexts. The India- China border dispute centred on the Tibet’s frontier extremities in the south India and China have starkly differing claim to the status of Tibet. To the Chinese government, and to almost all ethnic Chinese everywhere regardless of their political persuasions, Tibet has for centuries been an integral part of the Chinese empire, while to Tibetans, especially those in exile, Tibet has always been an independent state, occasionally under domination by another ethnic group, but always in the end regaining its former status. The current struggle for these Tibetans, therefore, is to regain the ability to exert determination again.<sup>48</sup>

From the beginning Tibet has a different culture, language, religious system, and more to the point a universally (among Tibetans) recognized system of governance. After capturing power in Tibet, Chinese authorities, and keeping in mind Tibet’s uniqueness designed their policy to bring about evolutionary rather than the revolutionary changes they had initiated everywhere in china. Tibet was incorporated into the newly constituted people Republic of china in 1951 through negotiations after a brief battle of a few day duration between Chinese and Tibetan troop in the eastern regions. The political leadership in India and china did not

have an identity of views involving the timing and the means employed by china to in integrate the outlying region with the mainland either in 1950 or 1959. The rebellion in Tibet against the Chinese rule and the flight of its spiritual leader to India generated strong passions on either side, increasing the tensions on the border. India's Defence Minister, Krishna Menon was not exaggerating when he had told Zhou Enlai in 1960 that the Tibetan development and the resulting border controversy had put every progressive India on defensive.

However, with the collapse of Soviet Union, and the gaining of independence by the Baltic state, the Ukraine and Central Asia republics which share similar historical experience, the cause of Tibet's independence received a boost. The western countries, particularly the US seem more receptive to Tibet's because than they were during the Cold War, when relations with China were viewed as a useful counterbalance to Soviet power. At a time when the Chinese are under heavy criticism from the West for rampant human right violations in Tibet and are facing a rising tide of Tibetan nationalism, they apparently need Indian help to legitimize their rule over the roof of the world. On the other hand, on the question of Tibet, India understands Chinese anxieties. India has long accepted Tibet as an "Autonomous Region of China". It is unfortunate that Dalai Lama and over 200,000 Tibetans have to live in exile in India today. In keeping with ancient traditions of India, the Dalai Lama is treated with respect and courtesy befitting his position as a holy man. But New Delhi allows no political activity by the Tibetans on Indian soil. Indian hopes that conditions with permit their early return to Tibet. In accordance with the five Principle of peaceful cooperation, India abstains from all forms of interference in this matter. 49

China, over the last decade, has established highly sophisticated military infrastructure in the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) adjoining India: five fully operational air bases, several helipads, and an extensive rail network, and thirty thousand miles of road- giving them the

ability to rapidly deploy thirty divisions (fifteen thousand soldiers each) along the border.<sup>50</sup> China has not only increased its military presence in Tibet but is also significantly augmenting its nuclear arsenal. In addition, the PLA's strategic options against India are set to multiply as Chinese land and rail links with Pakistan, Nepal, Burma, and Bangladesh improve (Malik 2012). Moreover, the spurt in violent incident and unrest and growing incident of self-immolations by Buddhist monks in Tibet keeps India engaged both in term of keeping close watch over the Tibetans in the country ensuring that they did not indulge in anti- China activities as well as providing shelter and basic amenities of life to the rapidly growing Tibetans refugees.

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