

Sino-Indo relation Impact of incursion on diplomatic relations

Abstract

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China and India, the two giant nations of the world, two among the most populous nations, having been the credit of most ancient civilization but geographically separated by the highest mountain range of the world, the Himalayas. In a natural way they attract the attention of the political scientist, researchers and experts of the international relation towards their relationship. The analysis of the relations between any two nations, situated close or far apart from each other has been a matter of importance for the studies of political scientist as well as the researchers of human behaviour. The analysis of relation of any two-country living in different situation becomes more and more important with every passing of the day, as the situation also changes with the time. The relation between these two nations has always been affected adversely by the incursion on the long border of 4,056 kilometer in different periods of time. The foreign policy of India also has displayed significant change because of the incursions. This Article will also show the significant consistency in the policy of China while dealing with India and it seems that the relation is muddled by India to keep China pleased. At the same time the research paper will emphasize on the lack of institutionalization in foreign policy in India which has grave implications for the security motive and plays hindrance in the path of India becoming major global power.

The borders of Indian and China



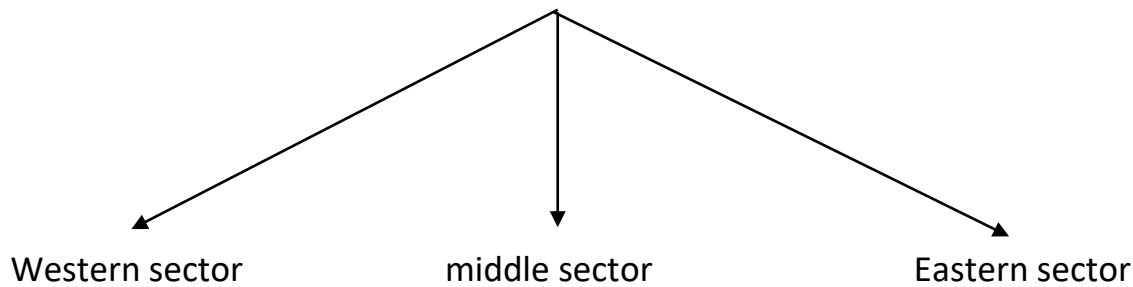
“China and India are partners in establishing a new world political and economic order.....With the emergence of India and China the standing of the Third world is getting stronger by the year.....”

(Chinese envoy 2012 Ibid)

Introduction- China and India, the two large nation of Asia, which are in relationship of more rival than a friend for many reasons like geo-strategic, economic, ideological i.e., democracy versus autocracy. The two nations although sharing land boundary are considered as Himalayan twin, are contrastingly different from each other. In the desire of making their

position strong at national, regional and international level their interests clash, bring them in a position of strong rivals to each other. Not only this, the rivalry is continued between the two nations, for getting the resources from Africa also. and the major rivalry which goes on the long border which is divided in three sectors-

Sectors of border of India and China



This long border has become a permanent source of dispute for the two nations. Since their independence. In spite of the continuous bilateral talks at high level political leaders, diplomatic envoys, military commanders, it cannot be denied that everything on the border and relationship is not very sound between India and China. The concrete and understandable reasons are available to prove this unsound relationship. The war of 1962 which had been fought for almost because of misunderstanding regarding a small territory of adjoining border left a permanent scar in the relationship.

Becoming pragmatic, both the nation resumed the bilateral relation in 1976 which is continuously increasing with infinite number of Agreements, JWGs, CBMs. But as an output of those meeting, the tension at the border did not decrease by 1% even as 20% China's total

military man power which is about 400,000 troops is located at the adjoining border of India and China¹. This huge deployment of military is not giving very good sound of relationship between the two nations and appears that China considers India as a potential threat. The relationship between India and China is currently standing at a cross road and

1. Hethlag, "The persistent military, security Dilemma between China and India" In journal of strategic studies Routledge (2009), page-819.

seems so sensitive that, even a small matter can create big problem which shows the fragility of the relation. It is true that after reformation in China and

India when the two-nation started moving on the path of fast economic growth because of liberalisation and globalisation, the interdependence of these two nations increased at a such a fast rate that, they became inevitable and complimentary for the mutual progress. But this great amount of economic interdependence also has not been able to bring stability in the border, making it sound and safe and above all tension free. The condition of economic interdependence is so great that even the common mass of India is well equipped with the low cost and easily available electronic gadgets of China from mobile to tab, electric tubes, and even the idols of Indian Gods and Goddesses. But the tension at the border remain same in spite of all these as the condition of China and India is of natural rival and not of natural friend. And hence the sensitive border always plays significant role in the continuance of the bilateral relationship. Although, the two nations don't behave as rival in the trade front but as a friend. The size of the bilateral trade is increasing every day and showing that these two are partners and not rivals. As Wen Jibabo, the famous leader of PRC commented at an ASEAN conference in 2004 that, "We are happy about the rapid growth of India's economy and its continuously enhanced influenced in the world. We believe that if abiding by the principle of equal consultation, understanding and mutual accommodation, the two sides can find solution through sincere negotiations"¹. But when the matters comes to the border, the softness delivered in the above messages just disappears and after every some gap the tension seems to occur at the border at one or the other sector. All these tensions very easily create a sense of distrust among the government, people and above all the media, who are delivering the same messages to the people.

Although the political leader in both the nations do their best to present a perfect picture of true friendship and a prosperous relationship, as they focus on the positive aspect of the relation only, although knowing the reality of the

1. People's Daily, "Premier Wen: China willing to expand cooperation with India, updated 2004/12/1 date of viewing 2012/05/19, [URL:https://www.ipes.org/pdf-file/news/archive/dec-4-China-pdf/](https://www.ipes.org/pdf-file/news/archive/dec-4-China-pdf/).

crisis occurring at the border. The crisis and the problem of the border occur sometime more than frequently but the leaders don't give those crises much space during their high-level meetings. They somehow ignore them for the better economic relationship which is much more important than development of the country.

The occurrence of disturbance of the border cannot be ignored at the same time which comes in the form of loss of life, resource and honour of the country and create hatred for China at one hand and for the leaders of India on the other among the common masses of India. The act of incursion may be widely defined as a hostile entrance into a territory or in other word entering or using others area without permission

The history of 70 years of India and China and the present time give a picture of endless cases of incursion at the border of India and China. Although since 1980's both the countries along with their heads of the states, diplomats are working tirelessly to minimize the inimical relation and maximize the cooperation in every field like political, economic, social, cultural, trade, exchange of technology etc. But these ongoing incursions are dangerously affecting the relation, positive efforts and proving detrimental by bringing them back on the same lane of enmity which is considered as unfortunate.

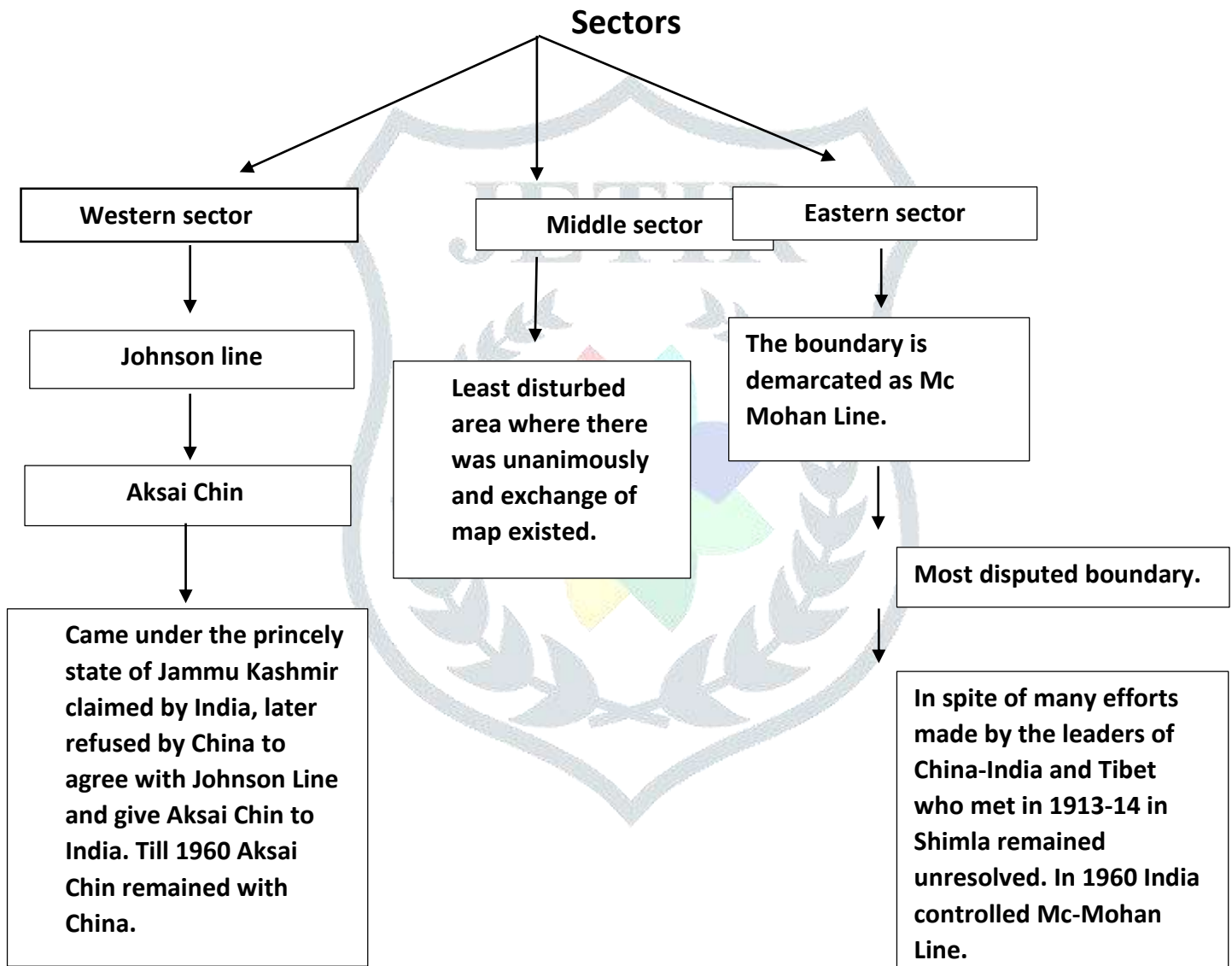
It is true that the cases of incursions occurring on the long border with the legacy of disputes which the British coloniser left between the two countries is not too much and can be under mind. But India being a peace-loving country which firmly believes in the policy of Panchsheel, that is peaceful co-existence and non-aggression, cannot tolerate such type of transgression. These activities have a strong negative impact on the bilateral relation of India as the citizens of India take these activities in seriously negative manner and keep considering China as their enemy number-1. In spite of the increasing trade relation which is mutually beneficial, the people of India always feel the presence of distrust in the relation and does not consider China as reliable friend. Because of the frequent cases of incursion more Indians possess an unfavourable view about China and consider it as strong threatening country which can disturb the peace situation in India. Since 1962 when the devastating War occur, this disturbing situation of incursion is coming every now and then. The news of cases of incursion occurring on the border area reach fast to the people of the country and nullify the efforts of the diplomats done in the form of CBMs, JWGs and the agreements. The people of India keep considering China as stronger enemy than Pakistan.

Cases of incursion- After 1956 a strong perception grew in China that US and India together are launching anti-China conspiracy to integrate rebellion in Tibet. Although in this case of incursion the policy of India was itself vague as it was excepting the Chinese autonomy over Tibet in one hand and continued fostering the autonomy of Tibet on the other, off course in a peaceful manner and provided asylum to not only Dalai Lama but large number of refugees (110,000)¹.

Besides, the issue of Tibet the cases of incursion by PLA is some time major and many time minor which present a vague picture of relationship. Out of the total boundary the LAC is not mutually agreed and India believed that the present boundary it has inherited from its imperial country Britain which made the situation worse. Where as China was of the opinion that British

had not settled the boundary issue and left a disputed legacy. The scholars who spent years in studying this most disputed border issue ever in the world believe that the border of India and China is divided in three sectors which are as follows.

1. www.uncher.org





Although both the countries agreed for not letting the cases of incursion become obstacle in the relation, but it is also true that these incidents are not taken in lighter manner and put a strong dent on the relation. For example, as per the official sources, the PLA entered 10 km inside the Indian territory in eastern Ladakh and setup a platoon sized camp on April 15, 2013 seriously affected the relation¹. As per the sources provided by the newspaper like Times of India, Indian Express and The Hindu which are the most reputed as well as largest selling newspaper in India, the number of Incursions was highest between 2003-2014 and this was the period when the “Declaration on Principle for Relation and Comprehensive Cooperation” were signed. Not only this, between the above said period the minor and major incidents could not be less than 30 as per the newspaper which comes as 2.5 average per year with Western Sector facing the highest number-19 and Middle Sector remained less disturbed with 3 and the Eastern Sector faced 8. Actually, the Western Sector which is more than 16 km long, Ladakh-Tibet autonomous region happens to

1. Chinese intrusion in Ladakh ITPB asks for a flag meet, The Indian Express April 20,2013

face distinctly different sort of disputes. Firstly, it is Aksai Chin and second is Ladakh-Tibet Autonomous Region Boundary from Change Chenmo Valley (North of Pangong Lake) which always remain sensitive and dispute prone. Out of 7 incursion which took place in 2013 in Western Sector, six had taken place in this region of Ladakh-Tibet.

Daulat Beg Oldie incursion- One incursion had taken place in the Daulat Beg Oldie sector of Aksai Chin in 2013. This much heightened incursion had lot of impact on the diplomatic relation of the two countries.



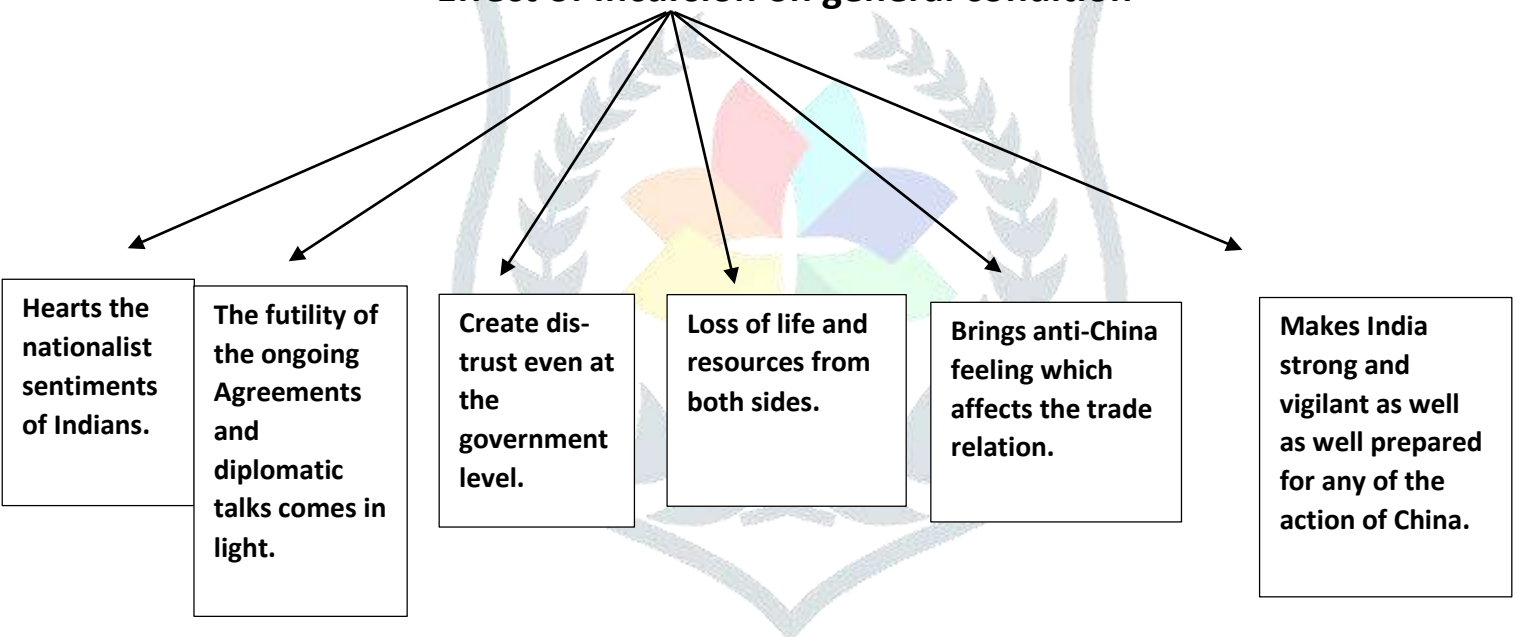
Another series of incursion which requires mention is on the state of Uttarakhand which shares 350km long boundary with China, and the CM Vijay Bahugana claimed about 37 cases of incursion between 2006-2011. The Eastern Sector was also facing numerous numbers of such examples like two in 2007 one in 2003 and 2005 and the point noteworthy is that the incursion took place during the visit of PM Atal Bihari Bajpayee to Beijing in 2003. Not only this in 2005 also, one incursion took place just after the visit of Premier Wen Jibabo's to India. Such sort of contradiction affects the mind of the leaders, citizens and the experts. Mr. Jayant Ranade, the expert on the Sino- Indian relation in one of his T.V. interview had noticed and mentioned it that China always choose the time of incursion when there is high level meet going on in the process.

Again, very severe incident took place on the same day when the President of China, Xi Jinping was meeting the Indian Prime Minister Mr. A.B. Bajpayee at New Delhi on 18 September 2014, and at that time 1000 troops of China was entering into Chumar region of Ladakh. In spite of India's tradition of maintaining peace on such Occasion, in a Joint Press Conference, A B Bajpayee could not stop himself in showing concern over the incident. The Chinese Troops continued there till 26 September, and withdrew only after the discussion of External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi at New York during UN conference.

Doklam Crisis- In another serious incident in 2017, China started constructing a road in Doklam near a trijunction border area which again created serious problem between the relation. The Indian troops came to support their Bhutanese counterpart objected to it, which resulted in the standoff. This standoff continued for 73 days, and had been solved with the wise step taken by the National Security Advisor of India Mr. Ajit Doval.

Recently, in a very bold and daring step, China started another act of incursion at Ladakh part of India in 1st week of May 2020 in the Galvan Valley. The development of events had started taking place since last some time, and has been noticed that, nearly 10,000 troops of Chinese PLA along with vehicles and tents started stationing at Ladakh very close to the place where China, India and Pakistan can meet. The troops of China crossed the Line of Actual Control which is made between the two nations in early May leading to the clashes on May 5th. There were clashes, the soldier got injured but there was no report of death. Later Chinese President Xi Jinping made an announcement about the preparedness of the country towards military and also started discussion at a high level with the officials of defence ministry.

Effect of Incursion on general condition



Effect of Incursion on diplomatic relation: So far as the case of impact of incursion is concerned it can be said with full firmness that these acts cannot damage the property and physical position of India much, but if the reaction of the people of India is seen then the issue becomes major. Many times, when the incursion is small and solved locally by the Army, the people even don't know. But when it is major the central ministry intervention is required.... like in case of Daulet Beg Oldi, at Ladakh's Chumar region in September 2014, construction of road at Doklam and the same incident at Galvan Valley in 5th May 2020, no doubt, leaves deep scare on peace making process between the two nations and also provoke the people of India to go anti-China. The reaction of India is shown in many ways like, increase in the patrolling by the Indian Army for example, in the last week of July 2013 the Indian Army increased their patrol at Tiranga which started in the trade area junction in Leh but was stopped by the PLA claiming that area as Chinses territory. Even the diplomatic talks and CBMs lose their sanctity

and shows vulnerability in the relation. These incursions clearly indicated the need of a clear-cut road map for the solution of the border questions.

Another impact of these incursions had been seen in the form of formation of The Border Defence Cooperation Agreement (BDCA) which had been signed to put an obstruction in the path of such incidents like, following the patrolling team or cutting down the communications etc. The carefully designed five steps mechanism for effective communication between the two countries were taken which can removed the great shadow from the relation. The 5 largest mechanism involved-



These incursions also encourage different types of activities on the borders like deployment of troops, Missile Tanks and other strategics arms which acted some time in positive manner also as maintaining the power of balance. The roads and railways were also started being established so as to supply essential services to the forces and in 2014 India started construction of four top priority strategic railway lines along the border of China¹. India took another step-in response to the incursion and reinforced the troops, one in 2011 and two in 2013. Besides, in 2011 taking a bold step increased the number of troops by 90,000 within next five years. Besides, ITBP made an announcement that it would deploy more forces on LAC by setting up 35 new outposts and in 2013 15,000 new troops were added.

Although incursion taken in every case can be considered as bad but one thing had been indicated which was very positive that, the strength of India came out before everyone. It has been seen that, the duration of incursion lasted from few minutes to 4-7 days at the maximum and one at Daulet Beg Oldi was 3 weeks, indicating that the PLA remained in the Indian territory only till the time they were detected by the Indian Army and were asked to withdraw from the Indian side.

At present, when the world is facing a difficult situation of the pandemic covid-19 and India is one among the worst affected countries whereas China is one which has survived this disease, the experts of the situation may think that neither of the country will prefer to get involved in military confrontation. But the major problem is, presently both the countries are being led by the leaders who are nationalists and strong which is making the situation more volatile and sensitive than earlier cases.

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Conclusion- On the basis of the above discussion, it can be concluded that in spite of all the diplomatic Agreement and the CBMs between the countries, the activities which are taking place on the border are creating situation of distrust between these two neighbours. All the above situations are making it clear that unless and until a clear road map for the solution of the border issue is not made it is rather impossible to ensure that the two countries will adhere to the clear policies given through Agreements or CBMs. there is strong requirement of CBMs to be followed very strictly and the peace Agreements are implemented properly. The duality in the action that is making the Agreements and CBMs by the high-level diplomates and almost continuous act of incursion, intrusion and transgression should not take place. It should be understood by each and every one in both the countries that the bigger objective of permanent peace at the border is to be achieved and then only they will be able to focus on the development. There will be more cooperation in the nations and the distrust will vanish from the relation which will ultimately help Asia becoming super power. **As Prime Minister Narendra Modi had once said in one of his speech that, the era of expansion is over and now, only development should take place.** Hence, China also should think pragmatically and act accordingly.

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