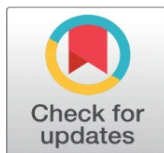
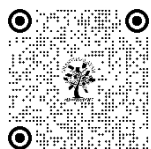


BORDER DISPUTE BETWEEN INDIA AND CHINA: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT

The two biggest and most populated nations in the world are China and India. However, both nations are embroiled in a territorial dispute concerning the sovereignty of several significant and smaller segments of land along their shared border. This border dispute has its origins in the colonial delineation of state boundaries especially in the Himalayan region towards the west the middle sector, and the eastern sector. It is common for mistrust to arise periodically across the 3,488-kilometer-long Sino-Indian border. The 1914 Shimla convention between British India and Tibet Created the McMahon line in the eastern sector and was executed without the approval of the People's Republic of China (PRC). PRC claims that Tibet was never autonomous at the time of the similar convention thereby rejecting this deal. These contested areas were the focus of the 1962 PRC-Indian War in which Chinese forces crossed the McMahon line in the east and attacked Indian border positions In Ladakh in the West. In 1967 there was a brief board conflict in the Sikkim areas. Potential confrontation over the divergent (LAC) Line of Actual Control was well minimized In 1987 and again in 2013 but tension resurfaced in 2017 when Chinese and Indian servicemen were hurt who stopped in 2020 several combat Breaks out resulting in several deaths in June of that year.

Keywords: Territorial Dispute, Shimla Convention, LAC, McMohan Line, Conflict, Standoff, Western Sector, South Tibet, PRC, Aksai Chin, RCEP, BRICS, G20.

1. INTRODUCTION

In Asia, India is the only country which can challenge the supremacy of China. India is the dominant power in South Asian region and China has been emerging as an influential East Asian power respectively. Chinese are willing to be dominant power in South Asia too. The longest running and most intricate territorial war in the world is the India & China border dispute. It primarily involves disagreements over the border regions in the eastern, central, and western sectors, with China and India both claiming sovereignty over various territories. The origins of the dispute date back to the mid-20th century, rooted in colonial-era boundary demarcations, geopolitical rivalry, and differing perceptions of history and sovereignty.

China has settled her border dispute with India's neighbors [Pakistan, Burma, Nepal, and very soon, even Bhutan]. Amongst the South Asian countries, the border dispute with India only has assumed the proportion of a "prestige issue". Therefore, one has to go into the details of their relations, political aspects, claims, and counter claims and views on border disputes. The continuous confrontation and boundary issues between India and China both nation is some of the most significant geopolitical challenges in Asia. The two nations share a lengthy 3,488 km border, much of which is contested. The primary areas of contention lie along the western sector, the middle sector, and the eastern portion of the

border between China and India. In the western sector, the boundary dispute is centered around Aksai Chin, a vast high-altitude desert that China controls but India claims as part of Ladakh. Tensions have flared numerous times in this inhospitable region, including a major war in 1962 and a recent military standoff in 2020. The middle sector, while less contentious, also has some disputed areas along the frontier. In the eastern sector, the chief disagreement is about Arunachal Pradesh a state in India that China refers to as "South Tibet" These unresolved border issues have their roots in ambiguous historical boundaries and have been exacerbated by the shifting power dynamics between the two Asian giants. Despite many rounds of talks over the years, a mutually-acceptable resolution has proved elusive, leading to a precarious situation where any miscalculation could spark a wider confrontation between the world's two most populous nations. The primary territorial contention centers around three areas: Aksai Chin, Arunachal Pradesh, and the areas of the eastern sector. The dispute traces its roots to the British colonial period when India was under British rule. The boundaries drawn by British colonial administrators, notably the McMahon Line (1914), were contested by China. India and Tibet were separated by the McMahon line which China refused to acknowledge. The boundary line demarcated Arunachal Pradesh, which China claims as part of its territory, calling it South Tibet. Conversely, The western sector's high altitude desert region Aksai China, was claimed by India, but it was annexed by China after it took control of Tibet in the 1950s.

The border dispute became militarized in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Tensions along the border increased when China annexed Tibet in 1950 leading to the PRC & Indian struggle military action in 1962. The war resulted in a decisive victory for China, and it gained control over Aksai Chin, while India retained control over Arunachal Pradesh. The conflict did not resolve the border dispute, and skirmishes continued intermittently through the decades, especially in areas like the Doklam plateau and the Galwan Valley.

2. EVOLUTION OF BORDER DISPUTE:

The Shimla Agreement of 1914 remains a significant point of contention in the continuous boundaryline dispute in the middle of both nations China & India. This agreement formalized the contentious 550-mile "McMahon Line," which delineates the boundary between British India and China/Tibet, traversing the Himalayas (Goldman 2020; Mehra 1974; Eekelen 2016). Although the final agreement was signed by representatives of the British Indian Empire and Tibet, it lacked ratification or endorsement from the central Chinese authority, which was notably weakened due to the civil war that erupted in 1911. The PRC has consistently rejected the legitimacy of Shimla Agreement, asserting that the Macartney-MacDonald Line of 1899 should be recognized as the rightful border, given that China was a party to that agreement (Eekelen 2016; Noorani 2011). By the mid-20th century, the geopolitical landscape had transformed dramatically, with the British Indian Empire giving way to the Republic of India and the Chinese Empire being replaced by the People's Republic of China. In the early years, neither state made significant territorial claims, leaving the border status in the region "undemarcated" (Smith 2014). However, by the mid-1950s, India initiated serious discussions regarding the demarcation of borders in Ladakh and Arunachal Pradesh. The situation became increasingly complicated with Aksai Chin, a territory claimed by India but located in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, already under Chinese control, facilitated by Pakistan. Approximately 179 kilometers of the 1,200-kilometer highway constructed by China between Xinjiang and Tibet runs through Aksai Chin. India became aware of this highway's construction only after it had progressed significantly, prompting Prime Minister Nehru to publicly assert India's claim over Aksai Chin and accuse China of infringing upon India's territorial integrity through road construction in the area (Bajpai et al. 2020). These developments have led to escalating tensions.

China and India's border conflict has a lengthy and intricate past, with tensions between the two nations escalating and de-escalating over the decades. The roots of the conflict lie in the ambiguous demarcation of the 3,488 km long border, much of which is contested. The primary reasons of conflict are China's dominance of "Aksai Chin" a high altitude result reason that is essentially uninhabited, but India claims, & China's claim to the Indian controlled territory of Arunachal Pradesh which it calls S Tibet. Hostilities came to a head during the 1962 PRC & India armed conflict, in which China launched offensives in both disputed areas, leading to a decisive Chinese victory. Since then, both sides have maintained a delicate status quo along the LOC line the democracy that distinguishes between areas under Chinese and Indian control. However, border skirmishes and standoffs have occurred periodically, with a notable incident in 2017 on the Doklam plateau, and 2020 saw yet another significant conflict in the Galwan River Valley that claimed lives on both sides. Despite numerous rounds of diplomatic negotiations aimed at resolving the dispute, a long-term solution has remained elusive due to the strategic importance both countries place on the contested areas and their unwillingness to

compromise on territorial claims. As both China and India grow in economic and military might, the border dispute continues to be a major flashpoint that threatens to destabilize an already precarious bilateral relationship.

3. BORDER DISPUTES IN POST-COLD WAR ERA:

The fact that Beijing and New Delhi have not allowed their mutual relationship to be characterized exclusively by border conflict is positive. Political leaders in both countries acknowledge their common interest at the mutual, regional, and international levels in the "post Cold War era". Primarily, both countries acknowledge the necessity of maintaining robust development, and financial growth to alleviate low living standards & Raise the level of living for their large population. For each country to focus on its own internal economic & social development and a stable and tranquil border region is considered necessary. This understanding likely explains why both countries have established a number of stability measures to resolve their border dispute amicably. Additionally they have started frequent defence briefings and cooperative military drills, albeit these are modest in scale and confined to less sensitive areas. Consequently, due to both sides' strategic focus on overall stability, trade has surged in recent years, significantly enhancing their economic ties. However, there is a complicated strategic competition between Beijing and New Delhi at the original level, yet both nations have refrained from ventures that could undermine each other's core strategic interests. China has attempted to adopt a more balanced stance toward India and Pakistan to South Asian countries with a lengthy history of warfare since the late 90s. China's increasing presence in the Indian Ocean, often referred to by Indian analysts as the "string of pearls strategy," primarily aims to safeguard its trade and energy interests in the region. Conversely, India, influenced by its longstanding tradition of non-alignment, And want to maintain the country's independence when interacting with other powerful nations has opted against forming strategic alliances.

In the post-Cold War period, political leaders from both nations recognize that they have numerous common interests at the bilateral, regional, and global scales. Initially, both nations recognize that they face a comparable, if not entirely identical, challenge of maintaining robust economic growth and development to alleviate poverty and enhance the living conditions of their vast populations. Maintaining a stable and peaceful border area is seen as essential for either side to concentrate on its domestic socio-economic development. This is likely the reason both nations have successfully implemented different stabilization strategies to address their border conflicts via discussions. They have also started regular defense consultation meetings and joint military drills, although the exercises are small-scale and confined to low-sensitivity regions. Due to the strategic reasoning of both parties aimed at ensuring overall stability, trade has rapidly expanded in recent years, greatly enhancing bilateral relations in trade and various economic areas over the past decades. However, there is a complicated strategic competition between Beijing and New Delhi at the original level, yet both nations have refrained from ventures that could undermine each other's core strategic interests. China has attempted to adopt a more balanced stance toward India and Pakistan to South Asian countries with a lengthy history of warfare since the late 90s. China's increasing presence in the Indian Ocean, often referred to by Indian analysts as the "string of pearls strategy," primarily aims to safeguard its trade and energy interests in the region. Conversely, India, influenced by its longstanding tradition of non-alignment, And want to maintain the country's independence when interacting with other powerful nations has opted against forming strategic alliances. Conversely, India, due in part to its extensive history of "Non-alignment" Given the need to maintain national autonomy in its interactions with other major countries, has opted not to tactically identify itself with the USA amid concerns that it could be a US-led containment strategy aimed at China. India has not actively reacted to the requests from Japan, India, and Australia, which Beijing claims is part of a strategy of 'encirclement' aimed at it. India will continue to seek to undermine any Chinese attempts to create a Sinocentric reason framework in East Asia while Beijing will surely continue to be wary of India's strategic dominance in South Asia. However, there are no signs at present that the two Asian powers are moving towards a strategic competition that would hinder their bilateral relations. Conversely, both the PRC and India have shown interest in the "Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership" (RCEP) & "ASEAN" led effort. This implies that both sides are keen to participate in East Asian region integration.

The two countries have several tangible and long lasting shared benefits on a global basis. Both parties concur that the globe ought to transition to a multi-polar system, with rising powers taking on a greater role in global matters. The two nations maintain nearly identical perspectives on global policy responses about issues like international platforms, finance and trade, climate change, and refraining from meddling in other countries' domestic affairs. Both nations have strengthened their cooperation in the "G20" and "BRICS", as well as other new multilateral groups, in recent years in an effort to compete with Western powers for influence and decision-making power on a global scale. Certainly, India & PRC's relationship on the international stage has their share of issues. An example is China's conflicted position over

India's bid for permanent membership in the "UN Security Council". Another aspect of Sino & India relations on a global scale is not without challenges. China's uncertain stance regarding India's bid to join the "UN Security Council" permanently serves as an illustration. Another factor contributing to PRC & India rivalry in various regions globally is their conflicting interests in acquiring resources to satisfy their increasing domestic energy needs.

4. THE IMPORTANT FUTURE PROSPECTUS

- India should adopt a strong nation policy for defence and strategy management which include defence budget research and development
- India should give most care to the 21st century diplomatic ties and needs the shield sword of military power, to address security concerns.
- India must focus on creating strong strategic and diplomatic relations with our neighbour's countries. India Special focus should be given to Asian and South countries for creating various economic strategic social and cultural ties.
- Strong future development in sensitive geographic reasons should be given preference.
- India should give more attention to economic activities with China, aspecially In the bilateral trade and various MOUs.
- India must shake all positive and negative aspect of strategic and relation with China.
- India should focus on prismatic theories

5. CONCLUSION

The long-standing territorial dispute between India and China along their shared Himalayan border remains one of the most intractable and volatile geopolitical issues in Asia. The two nations, which collectively account for over a third of the global population, have competing claims to vast stretches of remote and inhospitable terrain. The battle began in the 19 century when the McMahon line was created by the British Raj, demarcating what is now India's northeastern border with Tibet. However, China has never recognized this boundary, instead claiming approximately 90,000 square kilometers of territory in India's Arunachal Pradesh state. Tensions have periodically flared into violence, most notably during the PRC & India War of 1962, which ended in a conclusive PRC war victory & PRC shift in the Line of Actual Control (LAC). In recent years, a series of provocative incursions, troop buildups, and skirmishes along multiple friction points have threatened to reignite large-scale hostilities. The strategic importance of the disputed region cannot be overstated, as it provides a vital buffer zone and serves as a key source of freshwater for both countries. Resolving the India-China border dispute will require deft diplomacy, confidence-building measures, and a willingness to compromise on both sides. Potential solutions could involve formally delineating and demilitarizing the LAC, establishing joint border management mechanisms, and pursuing economic cooperation initiatives to foster greater interdependence and trust. Ultimately, finding a mutually acceptable resolution to this complex territorial dispute is essential for maintaining regional stability and enabling both India and China to focus on their pressing domestic challenges and shared global responsibilities. The India-China border dispute is a complex, multifaceted issue with deep historical roots and strategic implications. While both nations have attempted to resolve the conflict through diplomacy, border skirmishes, and confrontations, such as those in 2020, continue to underscore the difficulty in finding a lasting solution. The dispute is not only a territorial one but is also intertwined with broader regional and global geopolitical dynamics. As both India and China are rising powers, the resolution of their border dispute will have significant implications for regional stability and the international order.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

None.

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