CHAPTER IV

ROLE OF THE ARMED FORCES OF INDIA DURING
INDIA-CHINA CONFLICT 1962

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ROLE OF THE ARMED FORCES OF INDIA DURING
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(a) **Historical Background:**

The history, tradition and Indian culture are intrinsically interwoven with the majestic Himalayan mountains. Ever since the laying of the foundation of the Indian civilisation, the Himalayas have meant much more to the Indians than a mere natural boundary. Very few nations of the world can boast of such ancient demarcation of boundaries as can India. The formidable mountain ranges, the Himalayas, Kuenlun, Karakoram, Mustagh and Hindu Kush, from times immemorial have provided India with a most effective and unchanging natural barrier in the North.

These mountains have been considered to be holy since time immemorial till today. The Hindus consider these mountains to be the abode of their gods and goddesses, the retreat of Saints and 'yogis'. They serve as a source of inspiration of poets and philosophers, apart from being the source of India's great Rivers. Thus, the Himalayas have received unparalleled adoration from the Indians throughout the ages.

During the Mauryan period their empire extended up to the Hindu Kush mountains which included Kashmir and Nepal. This
has been recorded in the rock edicts set up during the reign of Ashoka the Great who finds an honoured mention in India's present National Flag — the Tricolour. The Gupta empire covered the entire Himalayan range. The Mughal empire not only included Kashmir but extended up to Ladakh. Also in the remote mountain regions, petty Chieftains established themselves as rulers, and from those Kingdoms later grew up numerous ² states such as Kashmir, Kulu, Bashar, Garwal, Nepal — to name but a few. As per the ancient Chinese traveller Hsuan Tsang the Himalayan States of Kashmir, Nepal and Assam were ruled by Indian Kings.

Thus, we see that a traditional ³ natural and customary boundary marked India's Northern frontier, and it was in existence from long before the British set foot in India. The British merely confirmed it by treaties and agreements. Thus it seems unbelievable that the Chinese should have protested against and rejected the traditional/customary boundary on the ground that correct procedures according to International Law had not been observed by the British in delimiting it. When the Russian threat became obvious to the British ⁴ they began large scale explorations and surveys of the North-West frontier as well.

After becoming independent in 1947 fortunately or unfortunately India did not have the reach or strength ⁵ of the British might and of necessity, Indian defence
orientation after independence was turned inwards rather than outwards. Also, the independent Indians continued banking on the age-old traditional attitude towards the Himalayan Borders. The famous Chinese traveller — monk Huian Tsing, who had come to India in the 7th century, describing his journey from the frontier of China to India in a memorial sent to the Tang emperor from Tunhuang described the Indian boundaries as natural, traditional and as ancient as the Indian civilisation. He further recorded that the Himalayan States of Kashmir, Nepal and Assam were ruled by the Indian Kings which fact bears enough historical authenticity.

The modern concept of fool-proof marking of the boundaries like using pillars or chains etc., i.e., demarcation and delimitation by determining it through treaties, agreements and defining it in written or verbal terms and delineating the same through sketching/mapping with exact coordinate/grid references were an unknown practice in the Indian Empires and Mountain States in the olden days. Instead, the vague system in vogue advocated a zonal concept leaving vast stretches of No-Man's land especially, in remote, desolate and inhospitable mountainous regions in between the inter-state boundaries. And whenever there was no scope for such no-man's lands, certain well recognizable, preferably a natural feature as a mountain side and ridge etc., or even artificially created means like a heap of stones, or an armed Guard, or at times a Custom's Post were considered enough
to depict the customary jurisdiction resulting from prolonged usage over the centuries.

In 1949 the Chinese Nationalist Government was overthrown and replaced by 'The Peoples' Republic of China which due to some unavoidable reasons had to be recognized by India. Ever since the establishment of the Chinese peoples' Republic, the young government initiated extraordinarily militant action in response to ambition, Communist pressures and opportunity at the time. They organised a well drawn out campaign to subdue Tibet and capture it with a view to enlarge it subsequently depending on opportunity. In the process of gaining a firm control over the Chinese mainland by Mao Tse-tung, the Chinese invaded Tibet in October 1950. They justified their action stating that according to the ancient history of China, Tibet had been conquered by their emperors and subsequently the pre-communist China had been controlling it periodically and as such the conquest and their physical control served as basis of their claim to Tibet rather ironically. They accorded top priority for the consolidating operation in Tibet which was considered the most strategic and vital territory for securing a dominating posture towards the immediate, viable likely adversary and neighbour, i.e., India in particular and Russia in general since the Russians held half of Sinkiang in 1950. There was also a growing rivalry between the two communist Giants for Communist leadership especially in the Asian part.
of the World. Over the years during the intervening period between 1950-1962 the Chinese very systematically \(^{13}\) engineered a long range design to achieve the objective choosing the least expensive course of action and proceeded rather very cautiously on the mission.

Tracing the genesis of the problem of border dispute over the Himalayan mountains and other connected issues that led to India China Conflict of 1962 we find that the Sino-Indian border became alive after the Chinese Communists invaded Tibet and integrated it into China. The border question was first raised in 1951 \(^{14}\) when the Indian government brought to the notice of the Peking regime some Chinese maps (which matter will be dwelt upon in succeeding parts of the Chapter) that showed traditional Indian territory as a part of China. The issue however, came to a head in 1959, when the Dalai Lama and his party fled from Tibet and took asylum in India.

To ensure that the Khampas and other Tibetan rebels do not use the territory around the border as a base for guerilla activities against the Chinese authorities, the Peking government concentrated a large army on India’s frontier. There were some infiltration of Chinese Armed Forces into the areas traditionally belonging to India which had been claimed by the Chinese. On October 7, 1950 the Chinese launched an attack on the Eastern Tibet and quickly \(^{15}\)
occupied Chamdo. When the Chinese attacked Chamdo, Tibet asked for India's mediation in the same way as she had asked the British mediation \(^{16}\) in 1909 and 1931. Indian Ambassador had made several verbal representations to the Chinese government to settle the Tibetan question peacefully and in turn had been assured by the Chinese regime of their peaceful intention. On March 20, 1959 the Chinese had started bombarding over Norbu Linka, Potala and various places of resistance in Lhasa. After four days of desperate fighting with at least four thousand Tibetans killed, and another equal number taken prisoners, the peace from the Chinese point of view was enforced in Lhasa. The Dalai Lama was granted asylum in India, when power struck lot poured in via Tezpur, where he made the statement to the fact that he had voluntarily left Tibet but the Chinese alleged that he had been forced to make that statement by the Indian government.

(b) **India-China Talks and Panch Sheel:**

India had promptly recognized the Communist China when the establishment of Peoples Republic of China was formally proclaimed on October 1, 1949. One of the first steps taken by the new Communist government was the invasion and conquest of Tibet. At first the Indian government sent its protests, but when the reassertion of Chinese power in Tibet became an established fact, and the cause of Tibetan independence seemed
a lost one, it had no option but to recognise China's suzerainty over Tibet.

The Indian Officials were worried about the Tibetan issue but hesitated to intervene. Their influence, however, helped to immobilise the United Nations and the United States. The Chinese then proceeded to apply to Tibet one of the cruellest programmes of expansion in the Asian history at the time. They fought armed opposition in 1951-3, put down another revolt in 1955-6 and in 1958-9 suppressed a more wide-spread insurrection which spread to Lhasa. The Dalai Lama, who escaped with thousands of Tibetans and took refuge in India reported that 90,000 of his countrymen were killed at this time. The International Commission of Jurists, after thorough investigation, charged the Chinese with planned genocide and other measures to break the Tibetan spirit which included the peculiar Communist-style of kidnapping of thousands of children. With a ruthless and powerful Army on the march just across its northern borders, India at that point of time as Nehru later mentioned was blinded by the belief that Pakistan was the only enemy. Furthermore, Nehru had turned towards China in 1952-3 to demonstrate the validity of non-alignment based upon peaceful coexistence. He sought to re-establish historic ties of friendship between India and China. In pursuing this objective India concluded a treaty with Peking in April 1954.
The treaty with China concerning trade and other relations also enunciated the five principles of Panch Sheel. The treaty was named Agreement on Trade and Intercourse between the Tibet Region of China and India. The treaty proclaimed eternal friendship between the two countries on the basis of the Panch Sheel. The Chinese solemnly affirmed their belief in five principles of Panch Sheel. These principles are mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty; mutual non-aggression; non-interference in each other's internal affairs; equality and mutual benefit; and peaceful co-existence. This treaty also dealt with the regulation of Trade and Pilgrim Traffic between India and Tibet, and establishment of Trade Agencies as also the authorisation of Trade routes.

Panch Sheel principles became the hallmark of an Asian Peace Zone as envisaged by peace-loving Nehru and the phase was reiterated constantly. Further, when spurred by the Bandung Conference of 1955, it became an Asian Slogan. In the mid-1950s the strategic subcontinent had become quite tense due to involvement of communist-nationalist imperialist drives. For both China and Russia, the region served as a temptation for testing their political as well as tactical theories in relation to the on-going competition for control over the World movement. By this time, Kashmir had also assumed major strategic importance in the considerations of these two communist giants.
The geopolitics of the Communist cold-war, therefore, were beginning to engulf the sub-continent at the period of the radical changes produced by the US- Pakistan Military Pact. The American presence sealed off the potential Soviet threat from the West, but India along with its Kashmir part of the Country on the east, were exposed to the Chinese drive.

Panch Sheel, the so called peaceful coexistence, can not be established unilaterally, it exists and has survived for long periods during the cold war only because of a balance of power or by the mutual restraints of two or more participating nations. But communist dogma does not ascribe morality to dealings with the so called 'imperialists' and therefore treaties between the two adversaries cannot and must not be honoured beyond the point of their usefulness to the Communists.

Soon after independence, India had begun to play an important role in world politics long period of foreign rule over them notwithstanding. Under Prime Minister Nehru's leadership, the country adopted a middle-of-the road policy of non-involvement with the two major Power Blocs that had come into being after World War II—the Communist and non-Communist. In fact India, together with two or three other nations had founded the informal and rather loose alliance of Non-aligned nations that has come to be termed as the 'Third World'. Pandit Nehru's idealism and his policy of
goodwill towards all won many friends for India, particularly among the newly freed countries of Africa and South East Asia.

Behind the screen Peking relentlessly pursued its objectives. As early as 1954, it began to dominate a section of eastern Ladakh, Kashmir, called the Aksai Chin (White stone) desert. The Chinese built a military road to link Sinkiang with Tibet, across the Indian territory. The project was started in 1954 and completed in 1956-7. Aksai Chin is a table land of some 14,000 feet, forbidding, desolate and deserted. Once used by Caravans for bypassing traditional mountain routes, the passage way had been neglected because of blazing summers and scarcity of water. The Chinese made it into an all weather route between their two Western territories, for the more familiar mountain passes are blocked by Winter snowing. Chinese troops crossed Aksai Chin in 1950 during their first invasion of Tibet and this terrain as it turned out later was the Chief immediate military objective of the 1962 fighting. The area of Aksai Singularly proved equally essential to be possessed by the Chinese for the retention of Sinkiang, India remained in dark about this road till as late as 1958. Indians had relied previously on the mighty Himalayas to protect their Northern flank and had paid very little military attention to the area. Military funds were relatively scarce and were used to strengthen defences elsewhere.
(c) **Political differences and Mapping encroachments on Indian Territory**:

After attaining independence India's policy towards the Northern border continued to conform to the policy followed earlier by the British. In 1950, India signed a treaty to guide Bhutan in its foreign affairs and Sikkim remained protectorate. Since 1911 Chinese had no de facto control over Tibet. Tibet was considered an independent state by the British and India continued to follow the same policy. The Chinese, however, did not appreciate India's stand on Tibet as they considered it as a Chinese Province. New Chinese Communist government announced its intention to exercise its suzerainty over Tibet and certain expansionist maps showing large chunks of Indian territory as part of China appeared and came to the notice of India. In October 1954, on his visit to Peking, Nehru referred to these maps pointing out that India's northern boundaries were well defined and were not a matter of any argument, but Chou En-Lai the Chinese premier replied in turn that they were mere reproduction of old, pre-liberation maps, which China had not found time to revise.

A widely circulated Chinese book by Lieu Pei-Hua, "A short History of Modern China" published in 1954 projected the Sino-expansionist aspirations with far off countries and many neighbours including India, creating
border dispute all over perhaps in a disguise. The maps showed the territories allegedly taken from China by the Imperialist powers between 1840 and 1919 and identified them as portions of China to be reclaimed. These areas included all of the Russian Far East possessions in eastern Siberia; the Central Asian Soviet possessions, ringing Sinkiang and Afghanistan and the Pamir region near northern Kashmir; the Sino-Indian border states of Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim; all of Korea, all of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, Thailand, Malay and Singapore; the Andaman Islands in the Indian Ocean, the Sulu Archipelago of the Philippines; Taiwan and adjacent offshore islands.

Indian Prime Minister Pt. Nehru during his visit to China in 1954 had sought clarification on which Premier Chou-En-Lai gave the excuse of having not been able to update the Chinese mapping. Ironically, through the mapping stunt China painted a good image building picture of herself as a nation eager for peaceful border settlements with neighbours of any political complexion, strictly on the basis of the so called peaceful co-existence. They concluded border agreements almost royally with Burma in October 1960, Nepal—October 1961, Mongolia—December 1962 and with Pakistan in March 1963, presenting India and Russia in bracketed hostility not willing to follow the path of peaceful co-existence. With a single masterly stroke of 1954 History text book publication, the Chinese achieved most of their long
range aims partly — a Communist and Socialist State displaying non-aggressive attitude, performing only bonafide duty of recovering the hithertofore arbitrarily annexed territories from the so called imperialists; thus belittling viable political rivals like India and at the same time showering a conciliatory attitude towards insignificant and tiny neighbours, as also lowering of India's prestige and stature in the eyes of the Third World and Afro-Asian countries. At the same time China also gained a host of advantages of far reaching consequences both territorial as well as political. Ironically, the exercise continued unabated. A recent Chinese publication, 'China— A Geographical Sketch' 38 claimed a part of Malayan Coast as their southern most part.

Chinese Premier Chou-En-Lai visited India in 1956 and the issue of the maps in question was again raised with him in connection with Burma's boundaries. He stated that his government was of the opinion that they should give recognition to the McMahon line. In 1914 at Sinita Convention, McMahon line 39 was drawn to demarcate the northern border between India and Tibet in the Eastern sector. The agreement was signed between the representative of India and Tibet. The Chinese representatives attended the convention but did not sign the agreement. In the Western Sector, the Northern border was determined by the Treaty of 1842. In the Eastern Sector, China laid its claim to all the territory.
The International Law admits, according to which when two countries are separated by a mountain chain, and in the absence of a treaty, the highest ridge and the watershed mark the boundary. Authorities on international law such as Oppenhiem, Hyde, Fenwick, Bluntschi and others subscribe to this view. In contravention of international law, they seem to believe that a traditional customary boundary has to be delimited by treaty to be valid. Finally the attempt of the Chinese in advancing of their unilateral occupation of Aksai Chin as proof of their sovereignty over that territory goes against the precepts of International Law. The Permanent Court of International Justice admits that in 're nullus' or uninhabited or scantily inhabited regions there is no need for the establishment of the same elaborate control and government as elsewhere, nor the presence of agents of the state are required in all its area.

(d) China's Planned Attack

Chinese territorial ambitions brought a new responsibility for the Armed Forces of this country by making 'live' a frontier that had been dead for ages. India's political leaders put a good deal of trust in the trade and cultural agreements they had signed with the Chinese government in the early fifties and the informal assurances the latter gave to the effect that 'there was no territorial' dispute or controversy between India and China. However, the apparently
happy atmosphere that prevailed during that (Hindi-Chini Bhai-Bhai) period received a jolt, when it became known in 1957 that the Chinese had built a road through Indian territory in the Aksai Chin area, the north-east of Leh, to connect Tibet with Sinkiang. After this, the Chinese continued to nibble deeper into Ladakh till they held several thousand square miles of Indian territory. India's reactions were slow. With the threat from Pakistan already there, it was impossible for its Army to garrison the 2000-mile long Indo-Tibet border, consisting mostly of high mountains, with semi-arctic conditions at many places, this border otherwise gave the impression against any likely deployment of enemy forces. Also, the inaccessibility of the region lent credence to this appreciation. A start was, however, made; and India began to setup posts in the sensitive areas of the region and to build roads for connecting them. The process was, however, time consuming, indeed.

The Indian government took the momentous decision to challenge the Chinese actions by establishing small and isolated outposts in the disputed areas. The objectives of this 'Forward Policy' were to block potential lines of Chinese advance; to undermine Chinese control of the disputed areas through the interposition of Indian posts and patrol activities between Chinese posts; and to threaten Chinese lines of communication and supply. By April 1961 Indian patrols were probing forward around the longestablished
Chinese post on the Chip Chap River, setting up, apart six posts in Ladakh by the end of the year.

On October 12, 1962 just before leaving for a visit to Madras and Ceylon, Nehru declared to the press that the Army had been ordered to eject the Chinese from NEFA. On October 15 Defence Minister Menon stated at Bangalore that the Chinese would be thrown from the Indian Soil. A temporary lull in the NEFA skirmishing was broken by an Indian Claim on October 16 that their Dhola post had been fired upon. Later, in reply, Peking charged that Indian troops had attacked on October 17 all along the Kechiland River, advancing northwards between Hatung Pass and Pangkangting and towards Sechang Lake. The stage was appropriately set. By October 19, 1962 there were elaborate Chinese large scale preparations for an offensive along the borders of Sikkim, Bhutan and NEFA.

In the early hours of Oct. 20, 1962 the Chinese Army launched a massive offensive both on India's North East Frontier and 1800 miles to the West in Ladakh, supported by Artillery, Mortars and Mountain Guns. Chinese did not advance in Ladakh beyond the line claimed as Chinese territory though capturing a number of Indian outposts. In the NEFA, however, deep preparations of over 160 kilometres South of the McMahon Line brought the Chinese within sights of the Plains of Assam before the advance was halted. Both in
Ladakh and the NEFA, the Indian troops fought with great courage and tenacity to hold their position, inflicting much heavier losses on the Chinese than they suffered themselves.

On the North Eastern Frontier, the Chinese launched a very powerful attack at the Western end of the McMahon line which drove the Indians from Thagla 47 Ridge and overwhelmed our Indian outposts — Tholo and Khinzemane after 24 hours of fierce fighting. During the next three days, the Chinese attack developed into a general offensive at both ends of the McMahon line. In these areas 26 KM Southwards Towang fell to the Chinese on October 26th despite bitter Indian resistance, heavy casualties being suffered by both sides; the Chinese threw the entire Division about 10,000 troops into assault on Towang 49, which was defended by a much smaller force. A fierce fighting was reported at the approaches of Walong, marked by many individual acts of bravery by the Jawans — notably the heroic act of an NCO (Non Commissioned Officer) who killed eight Chinese in a single handed charge before he himself breathed his lost.

In the Western sector a most serious situation arose when the Chinese attacking in great strength South of Towang, outflanked the Fourth Indian Division holding the 4200 metres Sela Pass. While one Chinese force, estimated at 4 brigades launched a frontal attack on the post itself. Another powerful
Chinese force carried out a pincer movement forward to the south which succeeded in cutting the only road linking the Sela Pass with the Key Defence Centre of Bomdila, 51 Kilometres to the south as a crow flies and 130 Kilometres by tortuous road over the mountains. As a result, Sela Pass was rendered untenable as a defensive position. Bomdila fell to the Chinese on November 19. That was the worst Indian reverse of 1962 tragic experience jeopardizing the entire Indian position in the Kameng Division of the NEFA.

The Chinese simultaneously carried out operations in Ladakh as well but their pattern in that area was different. In NEFA, they fought for territory and strategic passes. In Ladakh, it was a struggle for far-flung, isolated posts each manned by no more than 30 or 40 men overpowered by a far superior number of the Chinese. In the Northern sector Daulat Beg Oldi at the foot of Karakoram was overpowered by the Chinese with the ratio of 10:1, the defenders despite the heavy odds fought valiantly until, on October 23, they were ordered to withdraw.

On November 22 the Chinese suddenly declared a unilateral cease-fire to take effect from mid-night of November 21/22, 1962 proposing to withdraw 20 KM behind the line of actual control as existing on November 7, 1959 implying that in Eastern Sector they would withdraw to North of McMahon line. In the middle and the Western sectors Chinese also proposed that they would withdraw 20 KM to their
claimed line of 1960. Their proposal one after the other meant leaving China in full control of Aksai Chin, in which they were most interested. They also made clear that they were not intending to dispose of the territory of North East Ladakh.

The defeat, however, could not break the spirit of the nation or of its Army. Pt. Nehru India's Prime Minister refused to accept the Chinese terms of Unilateral cease-fire, instead he wanted the Chinese to go back to the position held by them before September 8, 1962. He also wanted aggression to end before considering the question of negotiations. The full significance of the deceptive Chinese proposals was not understood by Afro-Asian and many non-aligned countries who showed a marked inclination towards giving China the credit of seeking to switch over to the negotiating table. However, there were few of them who proposed the Colombo Proposals which were not acceptable to the Chinese where they were at variance with China's own proposals. China insisted that the Colombo mission's may purpose was only to get the two sides to the negotiating table alone without any preconditions. This insistence by the Chinese earned them the first diplomatic set back by letting down herself as wrong in the eyes of the Colombo powers who were equally friendly to the either side. China then tried desperately to isolate India in the international field but the World came to learn from the bitter experience of India and in turn China herself got isolated.
(e) Causes of the Failure of Indian Army:

Having briefly recapitulated and to an extent discussed the historical background, the diplomatic effort and various mapping stunts leading on to the planned offensive, we can now analyse various facets of multiple causes that landed up the Indian Forces in difficulties during the operations of 1962. The country had just liberated itself from the foreign yoke, and was busy enough getting hold of things at home and putting the international relations at the right key.

The country had just liberated itself with the non-violent means unheard of being so effective to compel dominating Internationally recognized Powers — The British for ending their colonial rule. Right up to 1947, defence had remained a subject out of the purview of the common public. In those days we lacked the time and the necessary attention towards matters military. Then their were the pressing problems of integrating and maintaining various fragments of the Indian society in a democratic manner. India assumed an important role in International relationship. With the signing of treaty with the Chinese — Panch Sheel the environment became conducive to the furtherance of the Indian cause. The Indian economy and the prevailing atmosphere did not support maintaining a large standing Indian force and it appeared and unwanted luxury.
With an extensive border to protect and a limited budget many sensitive areas were denied troops deployment thereby increasing the defence obligations by employing much lesser number, the regulating feature being holding of a minimum standing army. The Chinese invasion was tackled by 4 Brigades alone over a frontage of 600 miles of most inhospitable terrain (at a time when the offensive was least expected). The Chinese massive four Divisions over-ran handful of troops of 4 Brigades with a truncated Corps (Headquarters (less its other elements) just in total only one fifth of a Corps. Also the troops holding J & K and Punjab border with Pakistan could not be spared from there for operations in the East otherwise Pakistan might have taken advantage of the situation. That afforded the Chinese nearly a free run to do their business uninterrupted without bothering about the switching over of Indian forces from one front to another. The Chinese subsequently rewarded the Pakistanis in 1965 by reciprocation. As for commitment in East Pakistan, it was a complicating factor but more for its nuisance value than anything otherwise.

Relatively Small Army and Air Force garrisons in the Eastern side of the country were considered enough for anything that may happen there since we had never anticipated any threat from the Chinese. When they were actually attacked in NEFA, the Indian Army was not equipped
for action in the mountainous terrain covered with forests. 

The enemy deliberately attacked us on a ground of his choice. Circumstances forced the Indian military to meet the challenge held out by China. Some part of the debacle in 1962 can be attributed to the fact that our previous policy was oriented on defence against Pakistan alone and the feeling that, after a few shots were fired, the UN would bring round the parties to the table resulting in a cease-fire. If only there had been a revision in thinking, perhaps the things would have been comparatively better. We turned our attention to defence only around 1960 in the North rather reluctantly and half-heartedly under repeated and blatant Chinese provocations. An urgent project for improving road communications and establishment of military posts in Laddakh and NEFA, stepping up of production in the ordnance factories and negotiations for acquiring military hardware all followed up in a chain of quick defence orientation. A lot of adhoc measures in regard to tackling the massive Chinese forces in 1962 had per force to be resorted to. Within the existing meagre force resources, a Division was shifted from Punjab to NEFA, a Brigade Group from the hinterland to Siliguri complex for operational commitments in Sikkim/Bhutan and yet another to UP - Tibet Border. The Leh and Chushul air strips were activated for deployment of a Brigade Group to take care of Laddakh. The infrastructure for transhipment was almost non-existent.
Despite our defeat in 1962, the Indian soldier displayed innate material qualities with innumerable instances of individual heroism and super-soldiering, the hilly outskirts of Walong, the farthest administrative centre in Arunachal Pradesh, could have been the venue of a turning point in India's military struggle in 1962. An Indian Brigade was pitted against a full Chinese Division the firepower of which was at least thrice more effective than our own. Though the odds were fifteen to one in favour of the aggressor the Indian troops repulsed not less than 15 fierce attacks. India was humbled to an extent but did not collapse as China had hoped. During the British period, when first the Japanese forces occupied Burma, India was caught unprepared; the British authorities were in favour of withdrawing to as behind as Allahabad, while in South India the panic was so great that arrangements for evacuation of Madras and establishment of administration in the interior were considered. Fortunately for India, the Japanese had to turn back to fight the Americans off the Coral Islands.

As per B.N. Mullik India confronted China at the right time, that it did not lose any more than it would have otherwise, that India secured many other benefits and that no single individual be held responsible for those tragic events. It was the system as a whole which had basically failed, and none was to blame.
As regards contribution of other two services, the Air Force was not called upon to participate in active role in operations against the Chinese in 1962 except for giving transport support to own troops. The Air Force continued its services evacuating casualties even upto end and logistic backing was in addition. The combat element of the Air Force was not utilized for political reasons and wide international repercussions. The Naval force was, however, not considered necessary in view of a marginal naval threat in 1962. As regards foreign help the US and British help came forth apparently not out of an urge to support India but basically for containment of the Communist China. The Western powers tried to cash in on our simple request for some supersonic Squadrons from the USA to be sent to India to fight under the Command of the Indian Air Force when Sela and Bomdila felt to the Chinese in 1962. The US and the UK were approached for help in ending November 1962, if they could defend Indian cities and industrial centres against the possibility of a Chinese air attack. Before they could respond to our appeal, the Chinese unilaterally ceased-fire and stopped further advance in the Indian territory. So much was the effort of Western powers to drag India into the Western Camp, which fact was seen through by Nehru and he firmly rejected the kind of Western 'guarantee' of air defence in India. The USA had stepped into Asia due to the Korean
issue which had brought in the communist China. Nehru appreciated certain aspects worth in Russia and China and had much to criticize but the US held different views. Nehru was against forming any military alliances on the basis of interest of the powers that be. The US then turned towards Pakistan and they signed a bilateral agreement in 1959. Answering Indian queries the US projected the Eisenhower Doctrine for the containment of the Communists, only.

In their overtures to China, Pakistan approached the Communist for demarcation of the boundary in March, 1961. The Chinese responded in February 1962 and by 3rd May, 1962 both Pakistan-China concluded a joint communiqué. That resulted in cession of Indian territory to China by Pakistan.

The Sino-Pak agreement of 1963 served as a master stroke in Pakistan's anti-India Policy.

Nehru's biggest disillusionment came in October, 1962 when a trusted friend turned aggressor invading the Indian frontier in Ladakh and NEPA. He never fully recovered from the shock effect of that and his health deteriorated on an accelerated pace ending his otherwise highly commendable innings in 1964.
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