Chapter III

Boundary
CHAPTER- III

BOUNDARY

China and India share a long boundary, sectioned into three stretches by Nepal and Bhutan, which follows the Himalayan Mountains between Myanmar and Pakistan. A number of disputed regions lie along this border. At its western end is the Aksai Chin region, an area the size of Switzerland, that sits the Chinese autonomous, region of Xinjiang, and Tibet (which China declared as autonomous regions in 1965). The eastern border, between Myanmar and Bhutan, comprises the present Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh (formerly the North East Frontier Agency).

The Great Game

The definition of India’s territorial boundaries, never before considered important, became a first priority for the British, who sought to protect India from foreign invasion as the cornerstone of its empire from the Persian Gulf to the Indian Ocean. Their preoccupation focused almost entirely on Russia’s advances in Central Asia, especially toward Afghanistan and the sea routes from Iran (Persia). Yet it was China that had historically carried on a lively trade with India along the silk routes, established protectorates in Central Asia, asserted control in Kabul and in the Khyber Pass, and shared the longest border of more than 2,500 miles (4,000 kilometers) with India. (Frankel and Harry, 2004:24) The evolution of India’s northern borders is a legacy of British rule. The remoteness of the Chinese and Indian civilizations and the Himalayas had ensured that there was never a conflict between India and China. (Kalha, 2003: Hindustan Times)

Curzon’s Forward Policy

The desire of British foreign policy was seen in the decision taken by Governor General Curzon’s in which he decided to have “Forward Policy” and the establishment of a permanent

---

1 The Great Game is a term used for the strategic rivalry and conflict between the British Empire and the Russian Empire for supremacy in Central Asia. The classic Great Game period is generally regarded as running approximately from the Russo-Persian Treaty of 1813 to the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907, Johnson, Robert,(2006), *Spying for Empire: The Great Game in Central and South Asia, 1757-1947*, (London: Greenhill)
British representative in Lhasa. He had no desire to negotiate with the Chinese but wished the Younghusband mission to deal directly with Tibetan authorities. (Ghosh, 1970: 1) The British preoccupation with what was seen as the menacing Russian advance towards India dominated policy towards Tibet in the first years of the twentieth century. Curzon believed that, like the north-west frontier, Tibet had become a board for the ‘Great Game’, and he wanted that the Younghusband mission to be sent to Lhasa in 1904. To stake Britain’s claim there. (Maxwell, 1970; 40). This was to gradually make Tibet a ping-pong ball amongst great empires surrounding it and, given its difficult terrain, decentralization and apathy to building great military strength, Tibet came to be viewed as their last post or the buffer zone between various expanding and shrinking empires since medieval times. Be it the Mongols, the Russian, the Chinese, British India at some point in time, they evolved access to Tibet’s rulers and then tried to wield influence in matters of policy and succession amidst this ritualistic world of lamas.

Indian imperial connection was added to it from the late 18th century when the expansion of British Empire in India has arrived at Tibet’s borders and become interested in it. (Swaran Singh, 2003:43). As in the informal dynamics of India-China relations during the post-colonial period, Tibet has appeared to be nearly invisible. However, an understanding of Indo-Tibetan relations helps clarify the context of the politics of India-China relations and buttresses a broader analysis of the objective impact of changing global and regional power structures. (Dawa Norbu, 2001:283).

**India-China Boundary Sectors**

India-China Boundary in the Western Sector, as in any other sector, lies in the great Himalayas. The state of Jammu and Kashmir which is situated in this sector is completed within the fold of the Himalayas. It covers about 350,000 square kilometers of mountain tract. From west to east the length of this tract is about 700 kilometers, and from north to south it is about 500 kilometers. (Bajpai, 1971: 81) India-China Boundary in the Central Sector is located in high Himalaya. Generally the portion between the rivers Kali and Sutlej is known as the Central sector. This mountain tract covers about 38,000 sq. km. and contains the area of all the three Himalayan sections, the Siwalik, Himachal (lesser Himalaya), and Himadri (great Himalaya). (Sen, 1971: 121) India-China boundary in Eastern Sector, so far as the eastern
sector is concerned, precisely refers to the controversy whether the McMahon line is acceptable or not. Both the claimants, India and China, sharply differ on this point. I have discussed it in detail in these Chapters under the sub heading of McMahon line.

"The India-China boundary line is divided into three sections, east, middle and west. The area of the disputed regions is about 125,000 sq. km, of which the east section is about 90,000 sq. km, the middle section 2,000 sq. km, and the west section 33,000 sq. km. At present, the entire disputed regions in the east and middle sections are basically under India's control. On the Chinese side of the boundary, the topography is made up mainly of high mountains and bushes, the terrain there is dangerously steep and the weather is bad; half of the year is the icebound period, on the Indian side, the terrain is sloping gently and the natural condition is better" (http://www.chinaembassy.org.np.). Well authenticated records both Chinese and Tibetan including the China-Tibet treaty of 822 AD and the Chinese maps of the Tang dynasty indicate historic Tibetan frontiers such as are shown by the red line on the skeleton map which was placed by Sir Henry McMahon, on February 17, 1914 at the Simla Conference. (Maxwell, 1970; 40)

The McMahon Line

The boundary between the North-Eastern Frontier Agency (NEFA) of India and the Tibet region of China is often referred to as the McMahon Line. Sir Henry McMahon was the British representative at the conference held at Simla in 1914 between the then British Government of India, China and Tibet. The line was agreed to by India and Tibet on 24th March, 1914, and was marked also on a map attached to the draft Convention initialed by the plenipotentiaries of India, China and Tibet. The McMahon Line merely formalized the traditional and customary boundary between India and Tibet. Under international law, a traditional and customary boundary, following unchanging and distinctive natural features, stands defined and needs no demarcation. (Government of India, Publication Division, 1963:12-13) One interesting fact of North-Eastern Frontier Agency is that as late as 1910-11, there was no Chinese presence there. During Simla convention British made significant, territorial concessions to meet Tibetan religious susceptibilities. (Mehra, 1985:2)
The main thrust of the open British effort at the conference was to get China to accept a division of Tibet into two zones, Inner and Outer Tibet, (Mansing, 1992: 71) such as had recently been agreed between China and Russia in the case of Mongolia. China's suzerainty over the whole of Tibet was to be recognized, but she was to enjoy no administrative rights in Outer Tibet and would thus be kept back from the borders of India. (Mehra, 1985:2)

**McMahon draws inner and outer lines of Tibet**

On 12 January 1914, where the claims and counter claim of China and Tibet had been presented, the Viceroy in a telegraph to the Secretary of state outlined a boundary for Tibet along with a dividing line between 'the inner and outer' zones. For the Tibet-China frontier he based his line on, (Pathak, 1971:156)

(a) the limits of Tibet as shown in Chinese maps;

(b) the terms of treaty pillar of 912 A.D;

(c) the fact that the country is occupied by the people of Tibetan race, language and religion; and

(d) the absence of regular Chinese administration in any of the included areas.

For the frontier itself he had shown,

A line along watershed of Kuen-Lun, Altn Tagh and Humbol ranges, thence north of Kokonor and along crest of Nau Chau to about longitude 101. Then to the south running just west of Donkyr to a point where Hwang Ho rounds east corner of Machin range and along eastern limit of Gyarong, Gyakog, Chagyet to Tachienlu which remains in Tibet. Line then runs to corner of sharp bend of Yalong Ho, longitude 102, and thence up the Yalong and Litang rivers to point where latitude 28 cuts latter river for the second time. Thence it follows latitude 28 to crest of Mekong-Salween divide and runs southward along the watershed to about latitude 27 Degree 30' where it crosses Salween to its Western watershed and follows it to Isu Razi pass, which thus becomes the trijunction point of the Tibet-China India frontiers. (Pathak, 1971:156)
As for outer Tibet,

Watershed of Kuen Lun, Marco Polo and Shuga Ula ranges to about longitude 96, then skirting west comer of Tsaringnor and crossing Yangste river at about longitude 97 to Jyekundo, which should remain in Outer Tibet. Along Mekong-Yangste divide (except where departure from watershed in an easterly direction may be found necessary in order to include whole of Draya and markham within Outer Tibet) passing Chinese boundaries pillar at Pamotang west of Batang to a point abreast of Yakalo. Thence across Mekong valley just north of Yakalo to crest of Mekong-Salween divide and southward along the divide to a point abreast of Mekong. Here it crosses river just south of Mekong to Salween-Irawaddi divide thence along the divide to Tilla La and from that pass along northern watershed of Taron valley to the nearest point of Tibet-India Frontier. (Pathak, 1971:176)

There was one major lacuna in this boundary, of which McMahon was not unmindful, and this related to the fact that it excluded Derge nd Nyarong from Outer Tibet. But even though these were two of the richest districts and Tibetan evidence as to their possessions, and administration was very strong, the British Plenipotentiary intended to use them as bargaining counters to make the Chinese agree to the inclusion, in Outer Tibet, of Chando and Draya which are nor similarly held by Chinese troops but are strictly more important to Tibet. (Pathak, 1971:177)

Meantime McMahon was working on the problem of Tibetan rights in 'Inner Tibet' which, the Secretary of State had urged, needed clear definition so as to avoid incurring of unnecessary responsibilities. His dilemma was obvious:

"I am unable, at the present moment to define what should be the Tibetan position in that zone, but I think the more we attempt to define it, the greater our responsibilities may become."

"On the advantages of constituting this non-autonomous Inner Zone, however, his mind was clearly made up of Tibet gains". (Pathak, 1971:179)
It cannot be converted into a Chinese province, its territorial integrity and safety from outside exploitation are assured and it comes within the scope of the various safeguards which apply to all Tibet under the 1904 agreement.

Understandably the Secretary of State had been informed that the position of Inner Tibet would differ from that of Outer Tibet in that China can station officials, establish colonies, and sent troops there. In other words, the Government of China can do any degree short of converting it into a Chinese province, administer the Inner Zone.

"In April 1914, McMahon pressured the Chinese delegate into initialing a text based on the Tibetan-approved line. The Chinese government immediately repudiated the agreement. The Chinese rejection was a blow to McMahon's buffer scheme. However, McMahon had meanwhile negotiated another buffer and zone of defense for the Himalayas. He had made a separate agreement with the chief Tibetan delegate; this agreement defined the frontier line along the crest of the Assam Himalayas, based on the 1911-13, Abor Expedition. The line was marked on a large-scale (eight miles to the inch) map; however, this map and the details of the McMahon-Tibetan agreement were not communicated to the Chinese. On a much smaller-scale map, which was used in the discussions of the Inner Tibet-Outer Tibet boundary, the McMahon-Tibetan boundary (which would become the McMahon Line) was shown as a sort of appendix to the boundary between Inner Tibet and China proper". (Calvin, 1984:1)The Schedule of 1914, which belong to the Simla Agreement, states that, “Outer Tibet shall not be represented in Chinese parliament or in any other similar body”. (Mehra, 1979: 115)

**McMahon’s main achievement at Simla**

But the most far-reaching result achieved at Simla was the delimitation of 850 miles of boundary between India and Tibet. This was arranged through talks between McMahon and Lonchen Shatra with Bell and Rose acting as Tibetan and Chinese adviser respectively. McMahon’s brief was contained in the Memorandum drawn up by the Chief of the General Staff. The objective was entirely strategic; a line of frontier intended “to meet the forward policy of China”. When the conference began Bell had advised McMahon: (Woodman, 1969: 178)
“The best way would be for us to show the Lonchen the frontier we want, ask him to agree to it, and hear what he has to say... The Tawang Monastery is clearly Tibetan... We must try to get the Tibetans to give us this up to the boundary line, which we want. We will tell them that it is necessary to have a straight boundary and that we give them the area of south of Tila in exchange ... We should not begin the discussion of this Tibetan-Indian frontier, until the China-Tibetan frontier is settled between Rima, Menkong, Atuntze and Sanga Chatzeng because on this will depend the easterly starting point of the Indian-Tibetan frontier, whether we can give the Tibetans the Tila area in exchange. We should also insist in getting the Tawang area south of the red line and adjoining Bhutan though this seems undoubtedly Tibetan territory, as otherwise Tibet and Assam will adjoin each other and, if Tibet should again come under Chinese control, it will be a dangerous position for us”.

China described the McMahon Line as ‘illegal’. She maintains that China had never accepted the 1914 Simla Agreement and that Tibet had no right to enter into any agreement with India. Neither of these contentions holds well in international law. (Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, 1963: 7)

The McMahon Line and the Chinese Government’s attitude to it

The boundary between the Arunachal Pradesh or North-Eastern Frontier Agency (NEFA) of India and the Tibet region of China is often referred to as the McMahon Line. Sir Henry McMahon was the British representative at the conference held at Simla in 1914 between the then British Government of India, China and Tibet. The Line was agreed to by India and Tibet on 24th March, 1914, and was marked also on a map attached to the draft Convention initialed by the plenipotentiaries of India, China and Tibet.

The McMahon Line merely formalized the traditional and customary boundary between India and Tibet. Under international law, a traditional and customary boundary, following unchanging and distinctive natural, stands defined and needs no demarcation.

China has described the McMahon Line as ‘illegal’. She maintains that China had never accepted the 1914 Simla Agreement and that Tibet had no right to enter into any agreement with India. Neither of these contentions holds well in international law. (Report of the Indian Officials on Boundary Question, 1961:30)
Representatives of China and Tibet participated on equal terms in the 1914 Simla Conference. China should have protested, within a reasonable time, if she wished to challenge Tibet’s right to sign the agreement. Her prolonged silence and conduct can only mean, under the well-known principle of Estoppel applied in law, that she accepted the conclusions of the Simla Conference.

Even on merits, Tibet’s right to sign the Simla Agreement cannot be questioned. Tibet had in the past entered into a number of treaties which were not only considered as valid by the parties concerned, but were in actual operation for decades. The treaty of 1842, which Tibet signed with Ladakh and Kashmir, confirmed the traditional Tibetan boundary in the west and regulated trade relations, and continued to be in operation right up to own times. Similarly, the Nepal-Tibet treaty of 1856 was in actual operation for 100 years until it was abrogated by China-Nepalese Treaty of 1956. (Sali, 1998:12).

**China accepts McMahon Line on Myanmar (Burma)**

China’s description of the McMahon Line as ‘illegal’, and the consequent staking of territorial claims against India amounting to 32,000 square miles in Arunachal Pradesh (NEFA), is opportunistic. It follows the well-known imperialistic expansionist pattern.

_How arbitrary the Chinese attitude is can be seen from the fact that China has accepted the McMahon Line elsewhere, vis-à-vis Burma._

There is a Myanmar (Burmese) section of the McMahon Line. At the time of the 1914 Simla Conference and until 1935, Myanmar (Burma) and India were jointly administered by the British. The Chinese have accepted the Burmese section of the McMahon Line without the slightest modification, and recognized it as the traditional and customary line.

China’s recognition of the McMahon Line in Myanmar was incorporated in the Sino-Burmese (Myanmar) Border Agreement signed in January 1960.
By recognizing the McMahon Line in Burma in one breath and refusing to recognize it in the contiguous territory of India’s north-east frontier (Arunachal Pradesh) in the next, China’s illogical and opportunistic position stands self-exposed.

India has several times confronted China with this inconsistency without being able to elicit a reply, much less an explanation. (Report of the Indian Officials on Boundary Question, 1961:31)

The evidence in support of the boundary alignment claimed by India and by China

India has refuted China’s claims with massive evidence pertaining to natural geographical features defining the boundary and to tradition, treaties and administrative control, all showing conclusively that the areas claimed by China have always been part of India.

China has based its claims on nothing better than mere evidences. Such ‘evidence’ as China did produce was thin and it cannot stand impartial scrutiny. (Report of the Indian Officials on Boundary Question, 1961:32)

The Indian evidences on Boundary

The Indian alignment of the boundary generally follows the commonly accepted watershed principle. A watershed is a mountain range dividing two river systems or basins.

In the west (Ladakh), the boundary lies along the watershed between the Indus river system in India and the Yarkhand and Yurung Qash system in China. Further south, in the middle sector, the boundary follows the watershed between the Sutlej in Tibet and the Ganges in India. In the eastern sector, i.e. east of Nepal, it is the crest of the Himalayan range forming the watershed between the northern tributaries of the Brahmaputra and the southern tributaries of the Tsangpo.

The Chinese evidences on Boundary

On the other hand, the Chinese alignment, made known for the first time at the meeting of the officials of the two countries held in 1960, lacks unity and consistency and jumps from range to range unconnected even by spurs. It zigzags across rivers, lakes, minor watersheds, etc. above all, the Chinese frontier has been a shifting one, marching with their advancing armies.
An argument advanced by the Chinese was that religious dues or charitable contributions paid to Tibetan monasteries amounted to taxes and proved Tibetan administration of the areas concerned. They forget that the Chinese delegate to the tripartite conference at Simla in 1914 between India, Tibet and China had himself stated that “what is termed spiritual influence should not be confused with what is termed temporal authority”. Report of the Indian Officials on Boundary Question, 1961: 44)

*While India has produced authentic maps and survey reports to show the border alignment is where these maps it to be, China has adopted a peculiar attitude in regard to maps. The maps have been changing, pushing the border forward after every few years.*

In fact, at the officials’ meeting the Chinese side did not consider it necessary to exchange maps in support of the respective claims of the two countries. When they did produce maps, these were in the 1:5 million scale, which could hardly be precise.

**India can prove her sovereignty over the areas now claimed by China**

The evidence of history, maps and administrative control is briefly outlined below, sector by sector.

**The Western Sector** (Ladakh): the Indian alignment of Ladakh’s boundary with Tibet and Sinkiang is a traditional one dating back at least ten centuries. It has been well known and accepted by both sides. Chronicles, travelers’ account and Chinese and other maps prove this alignment to be correct.

*The Royal Chronicle of the Kings of Ladakh written in the 17th century supports the Indian alignment. The accounts of Ippolito Desideri, a Jesuit priest who travelled from Leh to Lhasa in 1715-16, James Baille Fraser, who visited the area in 1820, and the Indian traveler Nain Singh (1873) also tally with the Indian description of the boundary.*

Chinese maps show that, before the 20th century, Sinkiang province of China did not extend even as far south as the Kuen Lun mountain range. It certainly did not include the Aksai Chin area further south, in the Indian territory of Ladakh, across which the Chinese have stealthily built a road. A map drawn towards the end of the 6th century showed clearly that the Kuen Lun Mountain formed the southern limits of Sinkiang. The annals and maps of the western
territories of the empire, published in 1762 in China, had a number of maps, all of which showed that Sinkiang did not extend even up to where the Indian alignment was being shown, that is, along the Kuen Lun Mountains.

The maps published by Peking University in 1925 and showing the maximum extent of Ching dynasty, that is, before 1911, shows that Sinkiang did not include Ladakh’s Aksai-Chain area. The maps of western Tibet in the New Atlas and Commercial Gazetteer of China, draws on the basis of authoritative official Chinese surveys, showed the northern and eastern boundaries of Ladakh more or less in accordance with the Indian alignment. So does the maps Central Asien compiled from the latest sources by Dr. Joseph Chavanne and published at Leipzig in 1880.

The inhabitants of the neighbouring Indian villages in Ladakh regularly collected salt from the Lakes in Aksai Chin, Lingzitang and area further south. These areas, now claimed by the Chinese, were the traditional pasture grounds for Indian villages. Permits for hunting expeditions in the areas were issued by the Kashmir authorities. Report of the Indian Officials on Boundary Question, 1961:22)

In addition to delimitation by the historic process, the Ladakh-Tibet boundary received at least twice, in 1684 and 1842, further confirmation and sanction by treaty. The 1684 treaty, signed between Tibet and Ladakh, continued to be valid, and in force, through the 18th and 19th centuries. The second treaty confirming the traditional Ladakh-Tibet boundary, in 1842, was signed between Kashmir and Ladakh on the one hand and Tibet and China on the other. One of its articles stipulated: “we shall remain in possession of the limits of the boundaries of Ladakh and surrounding dependencies, in accordance with the old customs, and there shall be no transgression beyond the old established frontiers.” Report of the Indian Officials on Boundary Question, 1961:12)

The area of Ladakh claimed by the Chinese for the first time in 1959, besides being part of India by tradition and treaty, were regularly and effectively administered by the Indian authorities’ right up to the Indian alignment. There is considerable evidence of Indian administration of these areas in the revenue records. Regular assessment and settlements of revenue were made from time to time, and revenue collected from all inhabited places up to
the boundary. Those areas which were not inhabited were also shown in the revenue maps, and control was exercised over them through the levy of duties on flocks and pastures, maintenance of caravan routes and rest house, and supervision and control over trading routes. A systematic settlement of revenue up to the traditional alignment was made in 1860-65 and revised from time to time.

Official reports and accounts prepared by explorers and surveyors sent by the Government of India to different parts of Ladakh at various time, and officials' maps, provide conclusive evidence showing that the jurisdiction of the Indian Government extended over these regions.

**The Middle Sector:** In the middle sector the India-China boundary separates Tibetan from the Indian States of Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand (Garhwal area).

That the present Indian alignment lying along the Spiti-Para watershed is traditional is attested to by travelers such as Moorcoft (1819), Gerard (1821) and Thomas Hutton (1838).

Literary and historical sources show that the Sutlej-Ganges watershed has been the traditional boundary between India and Tibet in the Garhwal area. The Skanda Purana, an ancient Hindu scripture, mentions that all the tributaries of the Gangaes lay in Kedar Kshetra. We Have it also on the testimony of the renowned Chinese traveler Hieun Tsang, who visited India about 640 A.D, and the copper plate inscription of the Katyuri Kings of Garhwal and Kumaon, that the Hindu kingdom of Garhwal extended right up to the Sutlej-Ganges watershed.

*The famous map of Central Asia published by Jules Klaproth in Paris in 1836, and the map 'Central Asien' compiled from the latest sources by Joseph Chavanne and published in 1880 show the boundary along the watershed.*

In Spiti, the area right up to the watershed was included in British-Indian revenue settlements from 1851 and the area was topographically surveyed in 1850, 1879, and in later years. Further south, the area up to the Shipki Pass has always been included in the Indian villages of Namgai and has been surveyed in 1882, 1897 and 1920. The Government of India has, for long, maintained the Hindustan-Tibet Road right up to the Shipki Pass.
The frontier area of Garhwal up to the Sutlej-Ganges watershed were covered by the revenue settlements of 1815, 1842, 1856 and 1920. They were also topographically surveyed by official survey parties.

The Eastern Sector: The north-east boundary of India Arunachal Pradesh (NEFA) follows the crest of the Himalayan range, which here forms the northern watershed of the Brahmaputra except where the Lohit, Dihang, Subansiri and Nyamjang rivers break through. This watershed range is a majestic wall of nature, higher than the India-China watershed boundary in the middle and western sectors. (Report of the Indian Officials on Boundary Question, 1961:2)

That the traditional boundary lay along the Himalayas is proved by various sources, including religious scriptures and travelers’ accounts.

Unofficial maps, both Chinese and others, prove the traditional basis of the Indian alignment. A map compiled by certain Jesuit missionaries and Lamas under the order of the Chinese Emperor Kang Hi between 1711 and 1717, and the map published by Peking University in November 1925, both show the frontier of India as lying where the present Indian alignment lies.

'Panchsheel' agreement between India and China

An agreement on Trade and Intercourse between Tibet and India was signed on April 29, 1954, and ratified on June 3, the same year.

Under the agreement India gave up all the extra-territorial rights and privileges enjoyed in Tibet by the predecessor British Government of India and recognized that Tibet was a region of China. The agreement specified trade agencies, market and pilgrim routes and laid down regulations for trade and intercourse across the common border between India and Tibet. The agreement was to be in force for eight years.

In the preamble of the agreement, two countries reaffirmed that they would abid by the Five Principles of Peaceful co-existence (Panchsheel). Those were: mutual respect for each other’s territorial integrity and sovereignty, mutual non-aggression, mutual non-interference in each other’s internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful co-existence.
The 1954 Agreement on Trade and Intercourse between Tibet and India lapsed on June 2, 1962, at a time when the high principles enshrined in it lay in ruins on the Sino-Indian border as a result of China's double-faced behavior.

Looking back, it seems extraordinary that Indian representatives did not raise the frontier issues as such; the Panchsheel Agreement was a moral, if not a lasting victory for the Indian idea of peaceful relations. It was surely naïve of the Indians to settle for pious phrase making, and to assume that Chou En-lai meant what he said when he told them the Agreement settled all problems. This would have been an opportunity to raise the issue of the McMahon Line, which Nehru had already described in the Lok Sabha as India's boundary. A settlement might have been reached on the Aksai Chin and the McMahon Line in 1954. Neither China nor India had formally claimed the Aksai Chin, and Indian officials tied their own hands at the beginning of the Conference by agreeing to the Chinese proposal that frontiers should not be discussed. (Subramanian, 2001: 225)

The China could establish its full legal claims over Tibet only after Nehru recognized Tibet as a part of China in 1954. Once this occurred, China then began officially to claim territory along the Indo-Tibetan border, using the provisions of the 1954 treaty as its rationale. In fact, China's claims are primarily based on Tibetan—not Chinese—documents, which would be valid only if India recognized Tibet as a part of China. Chou En-lai himself acknowledged this in a letter dated 5 November 1962, sent to Asian and African leaders concerning the boundary dispute, in which he cited only Tibetan evidence to support China's claims. In this letter he concedes that the names of rivers, passes, and other places in the eastern sector (NEFA/ Arunachal Pradesh) are in the Tibetan language. Also the inhabitants of the middle sector "are nearly all Tibetans" and Tibetan archival documents indicate that the "local government" had consistently exercised its jurisdiction over the Tibet-Sikkim border area. Chou based China's claims over the Aksai Chin by declaring that it was once a part of Tibet's Zinjiang and Nagari District. This is confirmed by Jagat S.Mehta, who was one of the chief Indian representatives at the 1960 Indian and Chinese officials' meeting on boundary question. He recalls that most of the 245 items of evidence presented by the Chinese side were official Tibetan documents.

With such a weak position on the border question as well as within Tibet, the Chinese pursued cautious policies both in Tibet and towards India during the early 1950s. Mao and Chou
sought to synchronize their external and internal policies regarding Tibet. Internally, they sought to consolidate China's military power in inner Asia as expeditiously as possible. This was accomplished by 1957, when four highways began to connect Tibet with China proper and Xinjiang and after most members of Tibet's traditional ruling class had been co-opted into the transitional Communist set-up in Lhasa which was deceptively liberal and generous. (Dawa Norbu, p 287)

**China makes its territorial claims**

Up to the end of 1956, China gave India to understand that there was no border dispute between the two countries. When, in October 1954, Prime Minister Nehru visited China on a good-will tour he politely drew the attention of Chinese leaders to certain maps published in China showing parts of Indian Territory as belonging to China.

Mr. Chou En-lai explained to Prime Minister Nehru that these were old Kuomintang maps which the new regime had no time to revise.

More than four year went. In his letter to Prime Minister Nehru dated January 23, 1959, Mr. Chou En-lai, for the first time questioned the established boundary alignment between India and China. Even at this stage he laid no specific claims to Indian Territory. These came on September 8, 1959, when Mr. Chou En-lai in a letter to Prime Minister Nehru gave details of the Chinese demand covering 50,000 square miles of Indian Territory in Ladakh and Arunachal Pradesh (NEFA).

When questioned by Prime Minister Nehru why these claim had not been mentioned to him in 1954, when he had brought up the subject of Chinese maps, Mr. Chou En-lai, characteristically replied that the question had not been raised then “because conditions were not yet ripe for its settlement and the Chinese side, on its part, had had no time to study the question.”

**India's efforts to settle the dispute by peaceful means**

India took a number of steps to settle the dispute peacefully. When, in 1954, China started intrusions into Indian border area, India did not give publicity to them “in the hope” to quote Prime Minister Nehru in his letter to Mr. Chou En-lai dated September 26, 1959, “that
peaceful solution to the dispute could be found by agreement by the two countries without public excitement on both sides."

In the voluminous correspondence (running into 600,000 words till the end of March 1963) that has been exchanged with China over the border question, India has repeatedly emphasised the need, and her desire, for a peaceful settlement of the dispute and has suggested measures by which this can be achieved.

In April-May 1958, at the invitation of the Government of India, talks were held between representatives of the two Governments on the question of Barahoti, in the middle sector on the border of Uttarakhand, which China claim to its territory. The Government of India suggested that pending a settlement of the dispute in this neither side should send arms or civilian personnel into this area. China agreed not to send arms personnel, but refused to agree not to send civilian personnel.

The talks disclosed that China did not, at that stage, even have precise knowledge of the area it was claiming. Nothing came out of talks.

On November 16, 1959, the Government of India, keen as ever on a peaceful settlement, proposed that in the Ladakh area India should withdraw her troops to the line which China claimed as its boundary, and that Chinese troops should withdraw behind the traditional and customary boundary alignment shown on Indian maps. The proposal was intended to eliminate the risk of border clashes. China rejected this proposal.

In April 1960, Mr. Chou En-lai visited Delhi at the invitation of Prime Minister Nehru. When the two Prime Ministers failed to resolve the differences between the two countries, it was agreed that officials of the two sides should meet to examine all relevant documents in support of the stands of the two Governments and submit a report. The Government of India published, on February 14, 1961, both the Indian and Chinese sections of the report. *China, at first, did not acknowledge even the existence of the report, and finally published a garbled and truncated version of the Chinese section of the report-14 months after India published the report.*
On May 14, 1962, the Government of India renewed their suggestions, first made on
November 16, 1959, for the withdrawal of the troops of the two sides in Ladakh. India went
out of the way to express her willingness to permit the use of the Aksai–Chin Road,
constructed by the Chinese in Indian Territory, for Chinese civilian traffic. This offer was
made as a token of India’s earnest desire for peaceful settlement. China rejected the offer.

The Government of India, on July 26, 1962, drew the attention of the Chinese Government to
the tense situation in Ladakh and indicated willingness, as soon as the current tension had
been eased and the appropriate climate created to enter into further discussions on the basis of
the report of the officials submitted in December 1960.

The Government of China insisted that discussions on the boundary question should take
place on the basis of the report of the officials, but stipulated that there could be no question
of their vacating the Indian Territory unlawfully occupied by them.

The Government of India suggested, on August 22, 1962 that discussion be held between the
two Government for the definition of measures to restore the status quo of the boundary in the
Ladakh region, which had been altered by force during the past five years by China.

While notes for finalization of dates for talks were still being exchanged Chinese troops on
September 8, 1962 marched across the hitherto peaceful international boundary in the eastern
sector of Arunachal Pradesh (NEFA).

Even then, the Government of India, hoping against hope, requested the Government of China
on October 6, 1962, to correct the situation created by this latest Chinese aggression and to
withdraw their forces to their side of the international frontier so that the Indian proposal
regarding talks for reducing tensions, made earlier, could be pursued further.

China replied on October 20 with a massive, pre-planned attack on Indian defence posts,
simultaneously in the widely-separated western and eastern sectors, making deep advance into
Indian Territory.
Evidence of China's territorial claims were part of a plan

In retrospect, Chinese aggression against India appears to have been part of a plan dating back at least to 1954. This is evident from the fact that, even though China officially repudiated the traditional and customary boundary between India and China only in 1959, surreptitious Chinese intrusions into Indian Territory had started in 1954, becoming more extensive from 1957 onwards.

China constructed a road across Indian Territory in the Aksai-Chin area in Ladakh in 1957 and arrested and ill-treated an Indian patrol party in that area in 1958. In 1959, an armed Chinese party crossed the north-eastern frontier of India and occupied the Indian frontier post of Longju. There were numerous other similarities incidents along the border.

The Government of Indian protested against these incidents but believed that these were the result of irresponsible behavior by Chinese local commanders. Disillusionment came slowly. When, in September, 1959, China cast aside the mask and came out openly with its clam to 50,000 square miles of Indian Territory, Prime Minister Nehru was “greatly surprised and distressed”, and wrote to Mr. Chou En-lai on September 26, 1959: “when our two countries signed that 1954 Agreement in regard to Tibet, I hoped that the main problems which history had bequeathed to us in the relations between India and China had been peacefully and finally settled. Five years later, you have brought forward a problem that dwarfs in importance all that we have discussed in recent years.”

**Indian Territory occupied by China before October 20, 1962**

Before the massive invasion of October 20, 1962, China had occupied surreptitiously and through a series of intrusions about 12,000 square mile of Indian Territory in Ladakh. India and China fought a brief war in 1962 when Mao was leader of China and Nehru was the Prime Minister of India. Mao made a mockery of Nehru declaration that “Indians and Chinese are brothers” Chou En-lai said the aim of the war was to “teach India a lesson.”

**Indian tolerance- occupation of a portion of its territory by China**

Because India continued to have faith in her policy of peace, despite Chinese provocations and intrusions into Indian Territory. In the words of Prime Minster Nehru, in matters like this
“decision can only be made by conference, by agreement. Countries do not, should not, go to war without proceeding in these other way...”

Writing to Heads of Governments of various countries on October 27, 1962, a week after Chinese invasion Prime Minister Nehru said: “We have endeavored to follow the policy of peace in our differences with our neighbours. That is why when the Chinese aggression first started in Ladakh five years ago, we showed patience and restraint”.

Even though 12,000 square miles of territory was occupied by Chinese forces, we did not force a crisis, but continued to explore possibilities of peaceful and honorable settlement.”

Dali Lama’s visit to India in 1956

When the Dalai Lama arrived in India on 25 November 1956 to take part in the 2,500th Buddha Jayanti celebration, not much was known in India about the serious situation in Tibet. The Dalai Lama was then actually unhappy over the situation in Tibet. Recounting in his Autobiography years later his visit to Rajgahat, he mused: (Rahul, 1970: 191-192)

“My very first visit on my first morning in Delhi was to the Rajghat, the place of cremation of Mahatma Gandhi. I was deeply moved as I prayed there on the green lawns, which slopes to the Jumna River. I felt I was in the presence of a noble soul; the soul of the man who in his life was perhaps the greatest of our, age the man who had contained till death itself to preserve the spirit of India and mankind; a true disciple of Lord Buddha and a true believer in peace and harmony among all men. As I stood there I wondered what wise counsel the Mahatma would have given me if he had been alive. I felt sure he would have thrown all his strength of will and character into a peaceful campaign for the freedom of the people of Tibet. Wish most fervently that I had had the privilege of meeting him in this world. But, standing there, I felt I had come in close touch with him; and I felt his advice would always be that I should follow the path of peace. I had still have unshaken faith in the doctrine of non-violence which he preached and practiced. Now I made up my mind more firmly to follow his lead whatever difficulties might confront me; I determined more strongly than ever that I could never associate myself with acts of violence.” (Rahul, 1970: 191-192)
As he felt that he could do very little for his people in Tibet, he almost decided not to return to Tibet until there was some positive sign of change in Tibet. He sought the advice of Prime Minister Nehru and even asked him for asylum in India for himself and the member of his Government. (Rahul, 1970: 191-192)

**India Rising Voice in Favour of Tibet**

India's protest against the Chinese use of force in Tibet in 1950 met with a rebuff from Peking. Later the India-China treaty of "the Tibet Region of China" was on the basis of formally unconditional acceptance by India's right there, the treaty nevertheless was made against the background of the Chinese assurance to the Tibetans of autonomy in the most comprehensive terms. Without that background the inclusion of the *Panchsheel* principles as a preamble to the treaty.... ironical as it has proved, would be an act of moral monastery. (The Hindu, 20, Sept., 1959.)

The ordinary people even our Prime Minister would sometimes appear to be with the ordinary people in this respect do not care for the legal niceties of difference between "suzerainty " and " sovereignty" but for all their friendliness for the Chinese, they cannot give up idea that the Tibetan as a people have an inalienable right to their own way of life and a distinctive nation existence if they wish to have one. (Hindustan Standard, March 24, 1959)

On March 29, 1959, a "Tibet Day" was observed in New Delhi. N.G. Goray, leader of the Praja Socialist Party, in a speech for the occasion, stated that Indian public opinion had expressed itself unmistakably and that "Whenever liberty is threatened whether by the Western imperialists or the Eastern, the voice of our people will not falter."On the following day, the Bharatiya Jan Sangh staged a "Hands off Tibet" demonstration before the Chinese Embassy in New Delhi and the Chinese Consulate in Bombay. The demonstrators in New Delhi attempted to deliver a memorandum to the Chinese Ambassador, who refused to accept it. They then threw it into the Embassy compound. It called upon the Chinese to preserve the status quo in Tibet, there by implying no-interference with Tibet's internal administration, It also called for proper respect for the person and the authority of the Dalai Lama, for withdrawal of Chinese forces from Tibet, and for non-interference in the way of life, culture, traditions, and religion of Tibet. (The Statesman, March 30, 1959)
On March 31, 1959, the Communist Party of India issued a statement virtually paraphrasing the Chinese communique, asking the Government of India to investigate rebel activities at Kalimpong, and sent its "warm greetings to the Communist Party of China under whose wise guidance the People's Government of China is leading the people of Tibet from medieval darkness to prosperity and equality." Meanwhile, the Communist press in India began to allege collusion between Indian officers and "anti-Chinese spies." (The Hindustan Times, March, 31, 1959)

Since the Communist Party's statement and particularly its endorsement of Chinese charge concerning Kalimpong was issued after denials by the Government of India and Nehru personally, the party aroused great resentment throughout India. Communist representatives in Parliament were isolated both within and outside the houses. The Communist Party's support of the Chinese position incurred the personal ridicule of Nehru. "The Party", he stated, "shows more than we suspected, a certain lack of balance in mind and total absence of feeling of decency and nationalism. What they are, I don't know. They cease to be Indians if they talk in this way." (The Statesman, April 6, 1959)

The various political parties of India became quite vocal in their denunciation of Chinese actions in Tibet. The Praja Socialist Party adopted a resolution at its annual conference in Delhi describing Chinese suppression of the Tibetan Revolution as comparable to Russian action in Hungary, It stated that Chinese actions constituted a "direct threat" to India and criticizing the "submissive" policy of the Government of India. A resolution adopted by the Jammu and Kashmir Praja Parishad at its annual conference in April was equally critical of China. It stated that the "Communist dictatorship of China has strangulated Tibet and begun to cast an evil eye on Ladakh. The National Committee of the Praja Socialist Party expressed its grave concern over events in Tibet. Chinese action there, it said, posed a warning to all who "cherish the right of a people to shape its own destiny." Further it stated that," "The entire nation with the expectation of the Communist and their supporters has realized the true significance and deep seated cause of the conflict in Tibet. Our people have been moved to deep sympathy by the agony of Tibet. They know that the true cause of conflict lays in Tibet's determination to assert her personality and preserver her individuality". (The Statesman, April 6, 1959)
The Working Committee of the Indian National Congress was more moderate in its statement regarding developments in Tibet. In its resolution, it fully endorsed the policy of the Government of India regarding Tibet and declared that any event in Tibet, which led to suffering there, was matter of sorrow for the people of India.

Even the Bolshevik Party of India was prompted to issue a statement from Delhi expressing its. "Deep concern at the situation in the Tibet Region." The Revolutionary Socialist Party, a Marxist group, was somewhat more out-spoken than the Bolshevik Party. In the April edition of call, its monthly organ, the Party stated:

"The feudal and religious nationalism of Tibet has hardly any chance to stand up against the onslaughts of the Chinese Communist "big leap" for the integration of the whole of China. It was, however, expected that the Communists leaders in China would proceed warily in Tibet. That hope has been largely believed. It should not have been difficult to provide the Tibetans the fullest scope for a national self-determination that would be integrated with the cherished cultural values of Tibetan past and the Tibetan national genius. The failure to do this has clearly created a situation where imperialist provocateurs may have found scope for their activity." (The Statesman, April 19, 1959)

But even if imperialist agents have been active behind the Khampa rebellion in Tibet. We have to put on record that we have every sympathy with the national sentiments of the Tibetan people, and we find no valid reason why the Chinese Communist Party should not allow Tibet to evolve as another sovereign. "People's Republic" as the "People's Republic of Outer Mongolia" – as was done by the Soviet Union under Lenin's guidance. (The Hindu, April, 19, 1959)

It seems rather curious that, in the speeches of Nehru considered national security as a general interest never figured at all, not to speak of prominently. This stands out rather prominently in comparison with the fact that in the context of certain geographical territories India's policy makers did indeed think seriously and hard about national security. India's Panchsheel pact with China over Tibet was a proof of India's preoccupation with this problem of national security. (Bhattacharya, 1978: 48-49) "If we believe in Panchsheel, we follow it, even if no
country in the wide world follows it. Of course, it cannot be easily followed in a one-sided way” -Jawaharlal Nehru (Rowland, 1970: 117)

When China accused Nehru of being connected to the revolt in Tibet, it created public outrage in India. As incidents took place on the border, China issued dominated parliamentary sessions (Mehta, 2003: 73)

**China-Nepal Treaty**

The period from 1955-1959 witnessed the starting of the Constitutional form of Government in Nepal and the India-China rivalry mounting in Nepal. In 1955 King Mahendra had succeeded to the Napalese throne at the age of 35 after the death of his father King Tribhuvan. The young King personally edited the first constitution of the country and consented to the nation’s first election. On August 1, 1955 a treaty was concluded at Kathmandu between Nepal and the China. The principles of *Panchsheel* were reiterated in this treaty. Tibet was recognized as an integral part of China and provision was made for exchange of Ambassadors. After the signing of this treaty, China began a propaganda campaign for Nepalese friendship. On September 21, 1956, after secret negotiations in Kathmandu, another agreement was concluded between Nepal and China. Nepal was to be allowed to establish three trade agencies in Tibet in exchange for three Chinese agencies in Nepal. Personnel at these agencies were to enjoy diplomatic immunity. Nepalese and Chinese traders were to be allowed to trade in four cities of Tibet and Nepal respectively. Border trade pilgrimages were to be allowed to continue. Nepal was granted the right to establish a consulate- general at Lhasa and China was to be allowed to do the same at Kathmandu. Nepal was to withdraw its military escorts from Tibet. (Mehra, 1985:72). Finally, the notes eliminated the extra-territorial rights and tax exemptions enjoyed by the Nepalese in Tibet.

This agreement and the notes accompanying it were quite disconcerting to the Indian Government. The Chinese had succeeded in circumventing the Indian position by sending several officers of diplomatic standing into Nepal and thereby established direct means of communication and influence in Nepal. In so doing the Chinese were able to open a new phase of Nepali foreign policy by renewing the historical policy of playing off China against India. (Indian’s Foreign Policy, Selected Speeches, 1961:336)
In October 1957 Nepal's Prime Minister Tanka Prasad visited Peking. While there he was presented with a promised gift of 60 million Indian rupees as a contribution to Nepal's Five-Year Plan. So China started appeasing Nepal to get her support on boundary issues. (Mehra, 1985:72)

**China-Bhutan Negotiations**

The Chinese Communist Government did not leave India in doubt regarding its hostility towards her and the decision to annex Tibet. The Government of India reacted, but in an un-coordinated and spasmodic way. The anxiety to secure the Himalayan frontier, should Tibet pass to conclude new treaties with Border States of Bhutan, Sikkim and Nepal. (Jain, 1960: 43) The Chinese Government rushed through border negotiations with Bhutan. Peking proposed for Bhutan to give economic aid for the development of infrastructures and to join a Himalayan Federation comprising Bhutan, Nepal, Sikkim, NEFA, and Nagaland. (Mankekar, 1968: 33-34). When in 1965 Bhutanese dissidents in Kathmandu along with their Nepalese hosts reportedly sought Chinese help in promoting the Federation, the Royal Bhutanese government was stated to have opposed the scheme. Bhutan has resisted using the idea even as propaganda not only because it sees it as an unnecessary provocation to India but also because it fears Nepalese designs behind the plan. (Dutt, 1980: 11) As McMahon line maps demarcates that the boundary line, which passes through the mountain ranges through Tu Lung La and Menlakathong La to the Bhutan border, has been accepted by China as border demarcation between Tibet and Bhutan. India however has serious reservations on this. (The Chinese Threat, Government of India Press, 1963: 25)

**China-Myanmar (Burma) Treaty**

The question relating to the map attached to the treaty between Burma and China. It affects the north-eastern corner of India, which impinges on Myanmar (Burma) and which a litter further up touches China. Three countries are involved in the question. What kind of treaty two independent countries like Burma and China may make between themselves about their boundary is their concern. But where that touches India, it becomes concern. India-Burma boundaries meet at a point near the Talu Pass. First of all, that border has been accepted by traditional, custom and practice. Indian boundaries runs along the High Himalayan watershed
which naturally separates the Tibetan plateau from the Indian Sub-continent. In the eastern sector, this traditional boundary of India was confirmed in 1914. That is what is Known as the McMahon Line. But the Boundary Treaty which was signed between Burma and China on October 1, 1960. In this treaty no definite co-ordinates of the tri-junction had been mentioned. It implies that China in case of Burma excepts the McMahon Line which it does not except in case of India. (India’s Foreign Policy, Selected Speaches, 1961:336). As the small stretch between the Tirap frontier tract and Burma was also redrawn in the same manner by 1914 agreement. (Sinha, 1979: 62)

What cannot be calculated accurately is the effect, which the 1954 agreement had on other countries bordering China. Nepal, for example, must have been influenced by India's posture toward China, and subsequent Nepal-China relations doubtless reflect this influence. Burma too was affected, and its willingness to enter into boundary negotiations on Peking's terms can probably be traced in part to the 1954 Sino-Indian Agreement.

**Dalai Lama takes Asylum in India**

March 17, 1959, following the suppression of the Tibetan rebellion, the Dalai Lama, with a party of eight, fled Lhasa. On the evening of March 31, the party crossed the Tibetan border into India in the Tawang sector of the Kameng subdivision of NEFA and was received by the assistant Political officer of the Sub-division The Dalai Lama was given Asylum in India. That constituted the turning- point in the India-China relations. Peking expressed its grave displeasure at the asylum and warm reception the Dalai Lama got in India. The Chinese Government protested to New Delhi against strong adverse reaction in the Indian press and among the people against the outrageous conduct of the Chinese in Lhasa. The Government of India replied that India was a free, democratic country, where freedom of expression prevailed." (Mankekar, 1968:17)

In India unlike China, the law recognizes many parties and gives protection to the law recognizes many parties and gives protection to the expression of deferring opinions,' stated New Delhi; note to Peking. The Chinese Government also accused New Delhi of giving official reception to the Dalai Lama at the frontier and of even drafting the god-king's press statements for him and distributing them to the correspondents. There was no doubt however;
that both the Government and the people of India were deeply stirred by the events in Tibet and public opinion had turned sharply against China a fact that stuck out a mile. The Dalai Lama added fuel to the fire. At a press conference held at Mussoorie on, 1959, he declared that Tibet was a sovereign State when it signed the 1951 Treaty with China. He insisted that that treaty was signed "between two sovereign and independent Governments." (Mankekar, 1968 :17)

India-China Growing Disillusionment along the boundary (1954-1959)

The thawing culminated in the signing of the Panchsheel Agreement on 29 April 1954. As the Foreign Secretary of the period, S. Dutt reminisced, at the beginning of the negotiation of this treaty, in December, 1953 the new Indian Ambassador Raghavan, alluding to the boundary question in his talks with Chou En-lai, asked for settlement for "small questions between India and China" "remaining outstanding between the two countries" Chou "rejoined that the two large countries like India and China with a common frontier were bound to have some questions but all these could be settled smoothly." He insisted that they should settle questions, which are "ripe for settlement". When during the negotiations of this treaty, differences regarding the ownership of some passes in the middle sector of the border region cropped up, New Delhi and Beijing swept them under the carpet. The two delegations agreed not to pursue the subject and accepted a form of words which left the ownership of the passes aside. While in the agreement in India surrendered its extra-territorial rights on Tibet, China accepted the autonomy of Tibet. Not only the treaty was titled as "Agreement between India and China on Trade and Intercourse between Tibet Region of China and India," but also the joint communique mentioned the phrase "Tibet region of China". (The Chinese, 1963:28) The whole process amounted to, as Prime Minister Nehru was not wrong to hold, China's implicit acceptance of the general outline of the frontier, if not detailed delineations, as shown in the Indian maps". (The Chinese Threat, 1963:28).

Below this surface friendship, smoldered mutual suspicion and envy. When Beijing reduced the duration of treaty from 25 years, as suggested by Nehru, to 8 years, Nehru began to suspect China's, particularly Mao Zedong's intentions and gave instructions for opening more check-posts along the India-China border in the areas which might be considered disputed. The only recommendation of Himmat Singhji Committee to define India's boundary in all
sectors in the map, left unimplemented, was also implemented. The Survey of India map was accordingly instructed; and the Survey of India map published in July 1954 defined the Indian alignments in the western sector approximately along Ardagh line. While in his talks with Zhou during latter's visit to India in June 1954, Nehru found Zhou "free from bitterness against Pakistan" despite its membership of the Western alliance, particularly the SEATO, Pakistan's alliance with the West made its forcible occupation of the upper part of Kashmir a fait accompli. Nor was Nehru's return visit to Beijing in October 1954 was at all reassuring; he failed to gauge Mao's mind. Nehru, who is known for his foresight and proactive approach, seemed to see the threats of a Sino-Pak convergence at the upper tip of north Ladakh of the Ladakh-Aksai Chin area. So on his return from China he decided: "I have to see India getting strong; I cannot afford to have the Chinese sitting on my neck across the Himalayas". (The Chinese Threat, 1963:28).

But China further charge that it was only after the rebellion in Tibet that the Indian Government formally laid claims to large tracts of 'Chinese territory' is not only false but also palpably absurd. India maps over at least the last one hundred years have been showing the traditional Indian alignment. It is strange that the Government of China should deliberately display ignorance of a large number of editions of official maps by the Survey of India on different scales and in general circulation for so many years. Indeed, some of these maps had been officially handed over to the authorities in Tibet at various times. (The Chinese Threat, 1963:28).

On the other hand, it was only when the Chinese had decided to put down local autonomy in Tibet ruthlessly that Premier Chou En-lai, for the first time, stated in January 1959 that the India-China frontier was not delimited and later, after March 1959 when the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan refugees were given political asylum in India, he put in a specific Chinese claim to over 50,000 square miles of Indian territory. (The Chinese Threat, 1963:28)

China says when the Communists came to power in China in 1949, the India-China borders were left, at best 'undefined' in the western sector, defined but un-delimited in the eastern sector, and delimited but un demarcated in the middle sector, with vast areas unoccupied at either end of the border. The Tawang tracts, conspicuously in the east, and Ladakh-Aksai Chin the area enclosed by the Karakorams and the Kunluns – in the west were, more or less,
no man's land. The India-China border issue in its early phase centered on appropriation of those unoccupied areas. (The Chinese Threat, 1963:29).

Many in India have criticized Panikkar's (Indian Ambassador to China during that period) handling of this matter. As Ambassador Kaul said, "I have no doubt in my mind that Panikkar's action was right on moral, political and strategic considerations and in the short and long term interests of India. We had a hostile neighbour in Panikkar's, backed by the USA and the West, as Pakistan, especially on the Kashmir question. The Soviet Union's relations with India were still in the process of formulation and had not yet become friendly. "Suzerainty" according to the Chinese was an imperialist concept. India's insistence on "Suzerainty" after accepting China's "sovereignty" would not only have looked ridiculous but meaningless and made no difference whatsoever in the actual situation on the ground. It would only have further aggravated India-China relations and increased China's suspicion of India. (Kaul, 1979: 44)

On all grounds-political, economic, military, long term and short term there was no other policy India could have adopted except to recognize China's sovereignty over Tibet and try to develop friendly relations with Pecking. Nehru's policy on this question was the right policy and Panikkar did not "push" Nehru into it, as so believed. (Kaul, 1979: 45)

New Delhi's rationale for this pact certainly included the belief that Panchsheel was a major step forward in international morality and gained for India greater stature in the international community. Unfortunately it did not work out this way. The Praja Socialist weekly newspaper Vigil expressed it well at the time when it editorialized, "It is rather an irony that a treaty which guarantees between India and China peaceful coexistence and mutual respect first international document to set a seal on the abolition of Tibet's autonomy". It added in its next edition: "We think the Prime Minister need not have gone out of his way to give China a kind of moral certificate in regard to her action in Tibet. ... "we think there should be some way for big nations to acquire friendship and create a 'peace area' without extinguishing the independence of a small nation that might have the misfortune of lying between them. It could have been argued that Tibet was a fair price to pay for the moral containment of China, particularly since the legal extent of Tibet's independence had always been a debatable subject. But Peking's words and actions consistently indicated that China had no intention of
being contained, morally or otherwise. It had no intention of being contained, morally or otherwise. It was not publicly known until 1959 when India published its first "White Paper" on relations with China that Chinese forces violated Indian soil but a few weeks after the Panchsheel agreement was signed. (Woodman, 1969: 221)

Nonetheless, Chinese methods in Tibet were a shock to Nehru. He was alive to the possible repercussions of China's control of Tibet. He told Parliament on December, 1959 that the McMahon Line of the Simla Convention was the definitive frontier of India and that no-one would be allowed to cross it. India believed that Tibet should remain autonomous but would not guarantee autonomy. He was sharply challenged by MPs of widely differing denominations. Professor N.G. Ranga, a congress leader from Andhra, and later one of the founders of the Swatantra Party, held that Chinese views of sovereignty implied. (Woodman, 1969: 221)

There was astonishingly little reaction in India to this vital change in the balance of power in Asia. The Korean still absorbed the minds of the Indian leaders, who were playing a prominent part in bringing about a cease-fire. A revolution in Nepal, the Kashmir issue, internal difficulties in Telangana -- all those diverted attention from Tibet. 'The Government of India,' one writer comments, 'was considerably relieved when the Tibetan problem was settled mutually between Tibet and China.' The Statesman (Calcutta), without criticizing the terms or the method of achieving Agreement, observed:

Indian statesmen would be either human or politic if they failed to consider the latent dangers, were Tibet subsequently absorbed in a more drastic manner. Even as things are Communist Power might prove an uneasy neighbour. (Woodman, 1969: 221)

In his letter of 23 January 1959 Chou En-lai stated, "first of all' I wish to point out that the India-China boundary has been formally delimited. Historically no treaty or agreement on the India-China boundary has ever been concluded between the Chinese central government and the Indian government. Panchsheel was indeed soon tested, for on July 17, 1954, the India Ministry of External Affairs received a relatively cordial note from the Counselor of China in India objecting to the entry of some 30 Indian troops into "Wu-Je of the Ali Area of the Tibet Region of China" (Jain, 2004: 25)
On September 24, 1959. In an aide memoires to the Chinese charge Affairs, the Indian Government related two new border incidences near Shipki La pass: The first of these occurred on 10th September, when a party of Indian border police on its way to the Ship La pass sighted a party of Chinese Military Personal on the Indian side of the frontier. On the Indian patrol trying to advance, the Chinese personal threw stones at it and threatened to use their grenades (The Statesman, 24, Sept., 1959)

On 20th September 1959 a party of 27 Indian Border Security Force came face to face with a party of 20 Chinese troops and officers two miles on the Indian side of the Shipki La Pass. The Indian commanding officer asked the Chinese Officer to withdraw his troops. The officers replied that he had received no further communication from his Government. The Government of India was pained and surprised at this conduct of the Chinese Commanding officer. (The Statesman, 24, Sept., 1959)

The boundary question arose only, indirectly during discussions on Article 4. Chinese officials introduced a draft stating that the Chinese Government 'agrees to open a number of mountain passes'. T.N. Kaul, extremely familiar with the Chinese mind, at once objected on the ground that this was a way of claiming ownership over what were in effect border passes. The Chinese then withdrew their draft, making a virtue of their action by describing it as a concession. Finally, it was laid down that pilgrims and traders could travel trough the following passes and routes: (i) Shipki La; (ii) Mana pass; (iii) Niti pass; (iv) Kungri Bingri pass; (v) Darma pass and (vi) Lipu Lau pass. The customary route leading to Tashigong along the valley of the Shangatsangpu (Indus) valley was also proclaimed open for travelers. (Kaul, 1979: 44)

India wanted this Agreement to stand for twenty years; China agreed only to eight, with an extension if either party requested it six months prior to the expiry and the request was agreed by the other party. Indian newspapers and politicians praised it, claiming the great superiority of Indian diplomacy over that of Curzon's days and self-righteously setting the achievement against American efforts at the time to drag India into their strategic network against China. There were only a few tears shed for 'poor Tibet'. The frontier issue was largely overlooked. The Amrita Bazar Patrika was one of the few papers which saw the implications of Nehru's trust in China's goodwill ' From the very start [Nehru] had ruled out any discussion of the
India-China frontier, and in the resulting agreement he succeeded in getting a tacit approval of
the McMahon Line.' (Chand, 1982: 24)

The National Herald, usually considered as reflecting Nehru, wrote categorically: “The
frontier as Prime Minister Nehru had occasion to remind the House of the People a few weeks
ago, remains fixed and cannot be altered. From Sikkim and Bhutan to the northeast extremity
of Assam, the frontier follows the McMahon Line laid down at Simla in 1913 and in the north
and northwest, to the northernmost part of Ladakh, the frontier though undefined, has
followed too clear a customary line to be considered changeable.” (Chand, 1982: 25)

The Times of India assumed that silence on the border question was welcome, in as much as it
is an acknowledgement of the validity of the existing boundary line ... In any case; the Indian
Government will stand by the McMahon Line and will not allow anyone to cross that
boundary. (Kaul, 1979:54)

In October 1956, when Nehru and Chou En-lai were traveling back to Delhi across the Punjab
from the Bhakra-Nangal dam, they talked about recent Sino-Burmese discussions on the
McMahon Line from the Diphu Pass to the Izu Razi Pass. That evening Nehru wrote the
following record for his personal and confidential use: (Kaul, 1979:55)

“Premier Chou referred to the McMahon Line and again said that he had never heard of this
before though of course the then Chinese Government had dealt with this matter and not
accepted that line. He had gone into the matter in connection with the border dispute with
Burma. Although he thought that this line, established by British imperialists was not fair,
nevertheless, because it was an accomplished fact and because of the friendly relations which
existed between China and the countries concerned, namely India and Burma, the Chinese
Government were of the opinion that they should give recognition to the McMahon Line.
They had, however, not consulted the Tibetan authorities about it yet. They proposed to do so.
(Woodman, 1969: 221)

China has demolished ... a buffer state. In international politics when a buffer state is
abolished by a powerful nation that nation is considered to have aggressive designs on its
neighbours.said Acharya Kripalani, Indian, Parliamentary Deputy, 1954. (Woodman, 1969:
88)
Zhou En-lai, in his reply dated January 23, 1959, said that the border question had not been raised in 1954 because, as he put it, "conditions were not yet ripe for its settlement." (Bhat, 1967: 64)

In order words, China signed with India the 1954 agreement embodying the five principles of peaceful co-existence including respect for the territorial integrity of India, without knowing that were the territorial limits of India, or for that matter, of China herself.

About the McMahon Line, Zhou said, on 23, January 1959:

"An important question concerning the Sin-Indian boundary is the question of the so-called McMahon Line. I discussed this with your Excellency (President of India) as well with Prime Minister Nehru. I would now like to explain again the Chinese Government's attitude. As you are aware, the McMahon Line was a product of the British policy of aggression against the Tibet region of China and aroused the great indignation of the Chinese people. Juridicially too it cannot be considered legal ... On the other hand, one can not of course fail to take cognizance of the great and encouraging changes. India and Burma, which are concerned in this line, have attained independence successively and become states friendly with China. In view of the various complex factors mentioned above, the Chinese Government, on the one hand, finds it necessary to take a more or less realistic attitude towards the McMahon Line and, on the other hand, cannot but acts with prudence and needs time to deal with this matter. (Bhat, 1967: 65)

Later, Zhou said on 11, November 1959. "The Chinese Government absolutely does not recognize the so-called McMahon Line"

The Indian position regarding the McMahon Line was amplified by Nehru thus: "Our boundary is what has been called the McMahon Line, but the boundary was not laid down by McMahon. It was recognition of the long-standing frontier on the high ridge of the Himalayas which divided the two countries at the watershed". (Bhat, 1967: 66)
All this while, from 1950 when the first diplomatic dialogue took place between India and China on the question of the Chinese occupation of Tibet, until the uprising in Tibet and the Longju incident in 1959, the exchange of protest notes, memoranda and letters as well as the Chinese intrusions were kept a closely guarded secret by the Government of India. Peking did not choose to divulge them to the public either, while friendship and goodwill delegations from both countries kept chanting slogans of friendship. Thus the five principles of peaceful co-existence turned out to be a confidence trick. As Nehru himself put it: (Bhat, 1967: 68)

"Despite our friendliness, China's behavior towards us has shown such utter disregard of the ordinary canons of international behavior that it has shaken severely our confidence in her good faith. We cannot, on the available evidence, look upon her as other than a country with profoundly inimical intentions towards our independence and institutions. (Bhat, 1967: 69)

Tibet is the blunder of Nehruvian foreign policy because by accepting Tibet as an integral part of China, Nehru provided fodder to the Chinese imperialist design. He eliminated a buffer state between India and China through conceding Tibet saw Chinese territory. He scarified centuries old India spiritual and religious relationship with Tibet. That was the time when China was not very strong and the important power were looking for an Indian initiative to oppose Chinese infiltration in Tibet. They were ready to offer their support. But this golden opportunity could not be exploited. Nehru's Tibet policy proved practically against the tradition simple algebra of foreign policy that is "National Interest should be the basis of foreign policy". Instead of pursing national interest, they adopted idealism, which was bound to fail. Nehru should have gone for a realistic approach on borders issues and Tibet. The simla agreement is very important to define Indian borders with Tibet which should not be ignored during the Sino-Indian border talks. (Bhat, 1967: 64)

The India-China 1962 War

On June 2 1962, the Panchsheel agreement of 1954 between India and China lapsed- it had already been a dead-letter. The government of China had violated it through harassment of Indian pilgrims, traders and nationals in Tibet and by aggression into Indian Territory. Mankekar, 1968:19)
In the late fifties, after China invaded Tibet, China built outpost on the edge of Ladakh and a road that connected the region with Tibet and the western Chinese province of Xinjiang. In 1958 an Indian patrol was captured and Nehru sent soldiers into the Aksai, a desolate 8000-square-mile plateau occupied by China. China answered back with an offensive during October and November, 1962 and captured 2000 more square miles before a cease-fire was called.

It was tense time, with the world's two most popular nations at war. Trenches were dug in Calcutta and Delhi, and the Hindu festival of Lights was canceled out of fear that the lit up cities would be easy targets for Chinese air raids. Up until that time India had been a neutral country like Switzerland. (W.E. Garret, National Geographic May 1963)

During the fighting more men died of altitude-induced heart failure and brain hemorrhages than gunshot wounds. Helicopters carried victims that were in such bad shape their skin had decayed away leaving only bones. Chinese soldiers were better prepared than their Indian counterparts. They had spent a year in Tibet getting acclimated to the cold and altitude.

India was worried that China was going to invade disputed and largely undefended region of Assam in far eastern India. At that time Assam was the home of rich jute and tea plantations that provided one fourth of India's exports.

The United States supported India. The Kennedy administration feared that India might fall like domino and contemplated using nuclear weapons if China invaded India a second time. In one meeting Robert McNamara told Kennedy: “Any large Chinese Communist attack on any part of the area would require the use of nuclear weapons by the U.S., and this is to be preferred over the large number of U.S. soldiers.”

The Chinese invasion of India came just after the Cuban missile crisis and there was a real concern that China seriously threatened India. One of Kennedy's advisors told him using nuclear weapons wasn’t such a wise move because it was “going to create problems with the Japanese” and “all the yellow people.”
Legacy of the 1962 War and the Aksai

China captured 45,000 square kilometers of land an area that makes up about 20 percent of Kashmir and includes a small area that Pakistan ceded to China and has yet to relinquish any of it. A formal cease-fire line was never established. Even so the border remains mostly peaceful and "border peace and tranquilly" agreements were signed in 1993 and 1996. In 1995, China and India began withdrawing troops along the borders. Each side had a force with more than a 150,000 men.

Colombo Conference Proposal

In order to break the statement and to provide a basis for agreed cease-fire arrangement, the representatives of six Afro-Asian countries (Sri Lanka (Ceylon), Indonesia, Cambodia, U.A.R, Myanmar (Burma) and Ghana) met at Colombo, between 10th and 12th December, 1962, and made certain proposals. “the conference believes,” said this unanimously adopted document, “that (Colombo) proposal, which could help in consolidating the ceasefire, once implemented, should pave the way for discussion between representatives of both parties for the purpose of solving problems entailed in the ceasefire position.” The intention of the conference obviously was that the Colombo proposal should be accepted by both parties, so that substantive discussions on the border problem could take place between the two countries. India accepted the proposal in full, but China did not accept them, and took an ambiguous stand, stating their agreement ‘in principle’. (Ministry of External Affairs, 1964: 7)

In brief, the reservations made by the Chinese Government on 8th January, 1963. The Indian Army should not advance into area in the eastern sector from which the Chinese forces had withdrawn in accordance with their declaration of unilateral ceasefire and withdrawal dated 21st November, 1962, and while the Chinese will maintain their civilian posts in the demilitarized zone in the Ladakh sector, there should be no Indian civilian posts of any kind in this sector of the demilitarized zone. (Ministry of External Affairs, 1964: 7)
Colombo Powers to India

Clarification given by the representatives of the Colombo powers to the government of India on 13\textsuperscript{th} January 1963. On western sector: - The withdrawal of Chinese forces proposed by the Colombo conference will be 20 km as proposed by Prime Minister Chou En-lai to Prime Minister Nehru in the statement of the Chinese government dated 21\textsuperscript{st} November and in Prime Minister Chou En-lai letter of 28\textsuperscript{th} November 1962, i.e. from the line of actual control between the two sides as of November 7, 1959 as defined by the government of China. Secondly the demilitarized zone of 20 km created by Chinese military withdrawals will be administrated by civilian Colombo Conference proposals. It is as to the location, the number of posts and their compositions that their composition that there has to be an agreement between the two Governments of India and China. Eastern Sector: - The Indian forces can, in accordance with the Colombo Conference proposals, move right up to the south of the line of actual control, i.e. the McMahon Line, except for the two areas on which there is difference of opinion between the Governments of India and China. The Chinese forces similarly can move right up to the north of the McMahon Line except for these two areas. The two areas referred to as the remaining areas in Colombo Conference proposals, arrangements in regard to which are to be settled between the Governments of India and China, according to the Colombo Conference proposals, are Che Dong or the Thagla Ridge area and the Longju area, in which cases there is a difference of opinion as to the line of actual control between the two Governments. Middle Sector: - The Colombo Conference desired that the status quo in this sector should be maintained and neither side should do anything to disturb the status quo. (Ministry of External Affairs, 1964: 24-25)

The Boundary Question

According to India, the traditional boundary in the eastern sector had been formalized by 1914 Simla agreement between Tibet and India. It also provided China with proper status in Tibet in 1914. India sees in such a view nothing repugnant to its recognition of people's China's legitimate and dominant interest Tibet region. According to China, Tibet was never competent to enter into any diplomatic agreement with a foreign power. (Aitchison, 1929: 35-38)
As Neville Maxwell says, the Foreign Secretary of the Indian Government in 1928 had explained the omission of 1914 treaty from the forthcoming edition of Atchison's treaties of the Simla documents and the trade agreement which Britain had gone on to sign with Tibet, again secretly; if the documents were published, he wrote, 'a short account of the Tripartite Convention and of its secret history would have to be given. In view of the possibility that publication now of the facts of the Declaration (though it seem unlikely that China is still unaware of its existence) may force her to take over notice of it and so afford a fresh handle for anti-British propaganda', it seemed 'on the whole most prudent' to leave the documents out. The British authorities in Burma were informed of the existence of the Anglo-Tibetan boundary agreement (which concerned them, too), but not those in Assam, and the state Government there was left in the belief that its boundary was beneath the foothills. The Tawang Tract continued to be part of Tibet. In the twenty years after the Simla Conference occasional British forays, usually Punitive expeditions, were made into the tribal belt, but there was no attempt to make McMahon's maps line the effective boundary. The line was, in effect, forgotten. (Maxwell, 1970: 54)

"The first of these issues, that is the legal status, involves an examination of whether the 1914 formalization of the traditional boundary was in order. No discussion of the Indo-Tibetan boundary in the Eastern Himalayas can escape entanglement in this question of the validity of the 1914 Agreement and the status of Tibet. In fact, the position of Tibet and her relations vis-a-vis China and India were the only aspects of the problem that received any attention till late in the 150s. Perhaps the best study of the type is the article on 'International situation in the Tibet' by Sardar D.K. Sen. However, neither that article nor the numerable other less knowledgeable studies of the subject escape from the fallacy of looking at Tibet's status as something immutable. They insist on treating Tibet as having always been independent, always been a protectorate or always been a vassal. This may have considerably facilitated discussion on a purely theoretical level. On the other hand, it ignored the objective realities of the developments in international law after the Second World War and the change of almost all former colonies and protectorates into independent States." (Maxwell, 1970: 56)

Another and largely different stand is that of the former Government of Tibet. A detailed analysis of these standpoints is beyond the scope of a survey of this nature, primarily
concerning itself with the boundary. A brief resume of the Chinese and Indian views can, on the other hand, be of relevance. (The Chinese Threat, Government of India, 1963, p.25)

This natural, traditional and customary boundary was formalized by the McMahon Line Agreement of 1914 signed by the Indian and Tibetan Governments with the knowledge of the Chinese Government. The Chinese Government, who is now refusing to recognize the McMahon Line, claim that the Agreement was arrived at outside the Simla Conference attended by the representatives of the three countries, and allege that the British Representative concluded the Agreement through a secret exchange of letters with the Representative of Tibet. In fact, the Chinese Government had conferred full powers on their Representative and, what was even more significant, accepted without any reservations the credentials of the Tibetan Representative who had been vested with full powers in the name of the Dalai Lama and authorized to function as an equal plenipotentiary with those of China and India to settle all matters pertaining to Tibet. Thus, the Chinese Government accepted a procedure, which, under diplomatic usage, is normally adopted at international conferences of representatives of sovereign State. (The Chinese Threat, Government of India, 1963, p.26)

That China did not later ratify the Tripartite Agreement does not in any way invalidate the agreement reached in respect of the boundary alignment between Tibet and India. In fact, all Chinese reservations had been merely regarding the boundaries of Inner Tibet and outer Tibet. “Memorandum given by the Foreign Minister to the British Minister in Peking, 30 May 1919, showing that the objections of the Chinese Government to the Simla Convention concerned only the boundaries of Inner and Outer Tibet”. The Simla Convention was published in Aitcheson’s *Treaties, Engagements and Sanads*, and can by no means be said to have been secret. There was never any objection or indeed comment of any kind by the Chinese Government of the time regarding the boundary shown on the Simla Convention Map (The Chinese Threat, 1963:25) and formalized in the earlier exchange of letters on 24th and 25th March 1914 between the Indian and Tibetan Representatives. (The Chinese Threat, 1963, p.26) On 24th Mc Mahon gave two copies of map delineating the boundary between India and Tibet with a note attached which said that as Tibet has accepted the Indo-Tibetan frontier from Isu Razi Pass to the Bhutan frontier, it may now be considered that “the Tibetan ownership of private estates on the British side of the frontier will not be disturbed, and if the
sacred places of Tso Karpo Tsari Sarpa fall within a day’s march of the British side of the frontier, they will be included in Tibetan territory and the frontier modified accordingly…” (Aitchison, 1929: 34-35). Replying to this, Lonchen Shatra said “I have now received orders from Lhasa, and I accordingly agree to the boundary as marked in red in the two copies of the maps signed by you subject to the conditions, mentioned in your letter, dated the 24th March, sent to me through Mr. Bell.” (Aitchison, 1929: 34)

Moreover, such Chinese evidence as was produced at the talks of the officials relating to other sectors of the boundary is of Tibetan origin and is based on; the assumption of a Tibetan Government which functioned all along her frontiers without Chinese presence or support (Aitchison, 1929: 35). By quoting such Tibetan evidence with approval, the Chinese Government has themselves confirmed Tibet’s authority to negotiate and conclude treaties with her neighbors regarding her boundary. How then can the Chinese who, on the one hand, quote Tibetan agreements with India when they appear to corroborate their stand in the Middle and Western Sectors, disown a similar Tibetan agreement with India when it does not serve their purpose in the Eastern Sector? In November 1947, the Government of China, after the transfer of power to the Government of India, enquired whether India had assumed the Treaty rights and obligations till then prevailing between India and Tibet, as distinct from those between India and China. This is the strongest possible proof both of the validity of the McMahon Line Agreement and its recognition by the Chinese Government. (Aitchison, 1929: 27).

Britain had convened in Simla in 1914 a tripartite conference, including a Tibetan delegate and a representative of the Chinese central Government, the ostensible purpose of which was to regulate relations between Lhasa and Beijing by demarcating a line to divide inner and outer Tibet as spheres of influence of China and Britain. The British approach to border was thus that of an imperial power, and not one of defending the Indian nation state. In fact, the British had never considered India a nation. The ruling British view, most famously expressed by John Strachey in his 1988 book was that: "The then Foreign Secretary of the Indian Government, Sir Henry McMahon, however arranged secret and bilateral negotiations in Delhi with Lhasa in March 1914, in which the Tibetan representative was induced to accept a new border line, which came to be named after the Foreign Secretary. It was drawn on a map
on a scale of eight miles to the inch, covering the sector from just short of Laos to Bhutan through Burma – which the British had then included as part of their Indian empire. (Dutta, 177: 87)

The Lhasa authorities repudiated their representative’s unauthorized action: The Chinese Government, suspecting what had gone on behind its representative’s back, declared that any agreement reached between Britain and the Tibetan authorities would be “illegitimate and null”. In his report to London, the then Viceroy in India had also disowned McMahon’s dealings with the Tibetans. McMahon’s actions at Simla thus had also exceeded his authority. The Government in London tacitly expressed severe disapproval by transferring McMahon out of India. (Subramanian, 2001: 43)

In the mid 1930s, Olaf Caroe, then a British official in New Delhi, retrieved from the archives documentation concerning the McMahon Line. The British government began thereafter propagating that the McMahon Line was indeed India’s legal boundary, claiming it to be legitimized by a formal assent of Tibet and China, for which Caroe arranged a forgery to support the false assertion: that the boundary had been agreed to at the 1913-14 Simla Conference. Consequently, in the 1940s, some British maps began showing the McMahon Line as the boundary, qualified only with the word; "Undemarcated". During World War II and immediately after it, the Chinese Kuomintang government protested to the interim Indian Government. In early 1947, and even as late as in 1949, the KMT government in China although by then on the way out, still delivered to New Delhi a formal note repudiating all documents emanating from the Simla Conference. On October 16, 1947, even the Government of Tibet, calming to be free and independent, sent a note to New Delhi demanding the return of vast tracts of land from Ladakh to Assam. (Subramanian, 2001: 43)

But on November 20, 1950, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru proclaimed to Parliament that the McMahon Line was indeed India’s border with Tibet in the North West, reiterating that it had been "fixed by The Simla Convention of 1914", even as the survey of India of the Home Ministry then had published the official map of India showing the border as ‘undemocratic’ and ‘undefined.’ He went on to say “map or no map, the McMahon Line was India’s boundary and we will not allow anybody to come across it”. In February 1951; the Nehru Government also annexed Tawang, affirming McMahon who had drawn his line to bring
PTawang into India. Lhasa had then vigorously protested India's seizure of Tawang, and again made clear that Tibet regarded the McMahon Line as without validity. And yet the Indian Government began to pretend that there was no dispute on the border, and that there was nothing to discuss about it with China. The sage advice of Patel was ignored, for Nehru to rue it later (Subramanian, 2001: 44).

After Independence, the Ministry of States, headed by Vallabhbhai Patel, published two White Papers; in July 1948 and February 1950. Both showed the entire northern boundary from the Indian-China-Afghan trijunction, the subject of the Sino-Pakistan agreement to the India-China-Nepal trijunction as "undefined", in contrast to a clear depiction of the McMahon Line in the east.

This was the position when India and China signed the Panchsheel Agreement on Tibet on April 29, 1954. In June that year Chou En-lai came to Delhi. Nehru paid a return visit to China in October. Between the two visits Nehru wrote a fateful document. He first wrote to the Secretary-General of the Ministry of External Affairs on May 12, 1954. "We should establish checkpoints at all disputed points, wherever they might be, and our administration should be right up to these borders" Nehru wrote to more Notes to him. They should be read, alike, by those who denounce him as an "appeaser", belittle him as a "romanticist", as well as by apologists who laud him as an "idealist". Nehru was in truth a hardliner. The first note of June 18, 1954 warned: "No country can ultimately rely upon the permanent goodwill or bona fides of another country." A Sino-Soviet split was "not inconceivable". He added: "certainly it is conceivable that our relations with China might worsen." We must "not be taken unawares". The Agreement on Tibet "is not a permanent guarantee... Of course, both the Soviet Union and China are expansive."

In spite of Sino-Indian mutual understanding on the "Principles of Panchsheel of regional and global issues", China betrayed India "on the border issue" in 1962 resulting into adopting a stern posture vis-à-vis China. Both the countries had considered the "Border dispute" as a key factor in their relations after 1962. (Sali, 1988: 6-7)
The Convention had failed to produce a tripartite agreement, and a great deal regarding the boundary issue remained unresolved. Indeed, a legacy that continues to plague Sino-India relations had been germinated at this conference. McMahon, however, was convinced that a great deal had been accomplished. Firstly during January and March the British and Tibetans, without consulting the Chinese, had reached agreement on the Indo-Tibetan border in the Assam Himalayan area, and secondly a new set of trade regulations was signed in 1914, which replaced those of 1893 and 1908. (Greenhut II, 1982: 42)

Sino-Burmese Boundary Agreement based on McMahon Line

Indeed the Indian position regarding the McMahon Line as coinciding with the traditional boundary has found support, where the Sino-Burmese sector of the McMahon Line boundary is concerned, in the Sino-Burmese Agreement of 1960. In other words, Chinese arguments are proof of the fact that, with regard to the position of Tibet before 1950, (India’s Foreign Policy, Selected Speeches, of Jawaharlal Nehru, September 1946- April 1961, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, 1961: 316) they accept what suits them and reject what is not in consonance with present Chinese claims.

"Most of the geographical name" that are in Ladakh and NEFA, Chinese commentators say, "are in the Tibetan Language" and they are consequently parts of Tibet.

This is a wholly untenable argument to support a territorial claim. No country has made territorial claims on philological bases. Because certain places like Se La or Dirang Dzong have Tibetan names, they do not automatically become part of Tibet since, by the same logic, most of Tibet and a considerable part of Sinkiang have names like of the places, Khotan, Kailash, Mansarowar, Rakastal etc. or Sanskrit or Prakrit origin, could well be claimed as parts of India.

(India’s Foreign Policy, Selected Speeches, of Jawaharlal Nehru, September 1946- April 1961, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, 1961: 317)

Chinese Interpretation of the McMahon Line

Chinese propaganda also claims that Indian armed forces crossed the "illegal McMahon Line" and occupied Longju and the Thagla ridge area. The Chinese claim that these two places lie to...
the north of the McMahon Line. But, as has been pointed out, the traditional boundary in the Eastern Sector lies along the highest watershed ridge and the area south of it is traditionally a part of India and administered by Indian authorities. Indeed the official communications of 1953 and 1955 from local Chinese officers, the tsona Dzongpons, show that even the People's Government in China, for many years after they had established their authority in Tibet, had in this sector accepted the international alignment as shown on Indian maps. In an attempt to justify their recent illegal intrusion into the Thagla ridge area the Government of China cited the co-ordinates of the western terminal point of the McMahon Line on the Treaty Map. The McMahon Line Map was mainly illustrative in nature and indicative of the basic fact that the boundary lies along the highest watershed ridge. In an explanatory Memorandum McMahon himself has recorded:

"...... It will be seen that the boundary line on the west follows the crest of the mountain range, which runs from peak 21431 through Tu Lung La and Menlakathong La to the Bhutan border. This is the highest mountain range in this tract of the country. To the north of it are people of Tibetan descent; to the south the inhabitants are of Bhutanese and Aka extraction." (India's Foreign Policy, Selected Speeches, of Jawaharlal Nehru, September 1946- April 1961, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, 1961: 29)

That the map is on too small a scale to show the boundary in detail and that it does not give precise geographic locations is recognized even by the Chinese in the Sino-Burmese Boundary Treaty where they admit that there could be variations between the co-ordinates of the 1914 Treaty Map, India could claim more territory to the north of the line shown by her as the international boundary in the Eastern Sector. (The Chinese Threat, 1964: 28)

But the Government of India did not fill up to this line. Only towards the end of the British, the Indian Government started pushing the administration into the tribal area north of Himalayan foothills so far left unoccupied by the Indians. Yet, they did not touch the Tawang tract. Moreover, the KMT Government of China did not recognize the McMahon Line. It took up the border issue with the British and subsequently with the Government of independent India. In the Asian Relations Conference of April 1947, held in New Delhi, the Chinese delegates strongly protested against the map of Asia showing Tibet as an independent country outside China; and India had to withdraw the map in the face of such protest of the
Kuomintang Government. One of the last acts of Kuomintang Ambassador had been to remind the Indian Government that it had not recognized the McMahon Line, as until he stayed in India he protested by giving letter and memorandum to Indian government. (Panda, 2003: 77) On 18 November 1949, he delivered a note to the Ministry of External Affairs of India repudiating the Simla Convention, which laid down the McMahon Line.

India signed the agreement on Trade and Intercourse in Tibet with China on April 29, 1954, which stated in its preamble the “Five Principle of Peaceful co-existence, Panchsheel. No mention in the treaty was made on the finality of the so-called McMahon Line. China also maintained its silence, since as Zhou Enlai was later to say that "the time was not ripe then". (Panda, 2003: 77)

The border dispute between India overtly and China surfaced when China published the completion of a motorable road across Aksai Chin linking Xinjiang with western Tibet. The Chinese described that "notable engineering feat" in an article on the achievement of their first five-year plan in the July 1958 issue of China Pictorial, and showed it on a map. The Sino-Indian border dispute was thus formally notified by the map and by the subsequent Indian reaction to the same map. Thereafter the relations founded on Panchsheel tumbled for the worse steadily, culminating in a border war between the two giant nations in 1962. (Subramaniam, 2001: 43)

Zhou En-Lai’s Letter to Prime Minister Nehru on November 7, 1959. Which as the Sino-Indian boundary has never been delimited and it is very long and very far or comparative far from the political centers of the two countries, I am afraid that, if no fully appropriate solution is worked out by the two Governments, border clashes which both sides do not wants to see may again occur in the future. And once such a dash takes place, even though a minor one, it will be made use of by people who are hostile to the friendship of our two countries to attain their ulterior objectives. There is a history of long-standing friendship but no conflict of fundamental interests between our two countries, and our Governments are initiator of the Five Principles of peaceful Co-existence. We have no reason to allow the tension on the border between our two countries to continue. (Quanyu, 2005: 240-41)
Border talks

Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi visit to Beijing 1988

After 1962 war it was Prime Minister Rajeev Gandhi’s visit to Beijing in December 1988 that brought some sense of direction to India-China relations. Both agreed that Panchsheel should be made the base for solving the entire dispute between the two. The leaders of the two countries held earnest, in-depth discussion on the India-China boundary question and agreed to settle them through peaceful and friendly consultation and to establish a joint working group on the boundary question. The Chinese side expressed concerns over anti-China activities by some Tibetan elements in India. The government of India said Tibet is an autonomous region of China and that anti-China political activities by Tibetans are not permitted on Indian soil. (India-China Joint Press Communiqué, issued on 23 December 1988, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, 1988)

Prime Minister Narasimha Rao visited Beijing and the Agreement of 1993

Later on Confidence and Security Building Measures (CSBM) were designed for resolving border disputes. The first such agreement on the maintenance of peace and tranquility along the line of actual control in the India-China border area was on designed in 1993 under the CSBM agreement, of which Article VIII states that, “Each side of the India-China Joint Working Group on the Boundary question shall appoint diplomatic and military experts to formulate, through mutual consultation, implementing measures for the present Agreement. The experts shall advice the Joint Working Group on the resolution of difference between the two sides on the alignment of the line of actual control and address issues relating to the redeployment with a view to reduction of military forces in the areas along the line of actual control. The experts shall also assist the Joint Working Group in supervision of the implementation of the Agreement, and settlement of differences that may arise in that process, based on the principle of good faith and mutual confidence.” Article V says that two sides agreed to take adequate measures to ensure that air intrusions across the line of actual control do not take place and shall undertake mutual consultations if occurs. The two sides should also consult on possible restrictions on air exercises in areas to mutually agree near line of
actual control. (Bilateral Treaties & Documents, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, New Delhi, 7, September, 1993)

President Jiang Zemin visited New Delhi and the agreement of 1996

In 1996 agreement between the government of the Republic of India and the government of the People’s Republic of China on Confidence Building measures in the military field along the line of actual control in the India-China border areas was signed. Article II of the agreement mentions that “two sides reiterate their determination to seek a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable settlement of the boundary question, pending an ultimate solution to the boundary question, the two sides reaffirm their commitment to strictly respect and observe the line of actual control in, the India-China border areas, no activates of either side shall overstep the line of actual control.” Article IV states that both sides shall avoid holding large-scale military exercise involving more than one division and more than one bridge group and each side shall be entitled to obtain timely clarification from other side. Further Article XI states that mutual consultation in the India-China joint working group on the boundary question and the India-China diplomatic and military experts groups shall assist the joint working group in implementing measures under this agreement. (Bilateral Treaties & Documents, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, New Delhi, 29, November, 1996)

President Hu Jintao visited New Delhi and the agreement of 2005

Under the latest agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and Government of the People’s Republic of China on the Political Parameters and Guiding Principles for the settlement of the India-China Boundary Question on 11, April , 2005. Under it Article VII states that “in reaching a boundary settlement, the two sides shall safeguard due interests of their settled population in the border areas.” Further Article VIII states that “within the agreed framework of the final boundary settlement, the delineation of the boundary will be carried out utilizing means such as modern cartographic and surveying practices and joint surveys”. Article IX states that “India-China Joint Working Group and the Diplomatic and Military Experts Group shall continue their work under their work under the agreements of 1993 and 1996 including the clarification of the line of actual control and implementation of confidence building measures.” Article X states that “delineation and demarcation of the India-China
boundary to be subsequently undertaken by civil and military officials and surveyors of the two sides.” (Bilateral Treaties & Documents, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, New Delhi, 11, April, 2005)

**Chinese claim on Arunachal Pradesh**

The recent provocative claim made by the Chinese ambassador that the Indian frontier state, Arunachal Pradesh, belongs to China was nothing new except that it was made publicly and made on the eve of the Chinese President Hu Jintao’s visit to India in November 2006. You don’t have to be a political genius to figure out that it was not a loudmouthed ambassador making an unplanned impulsive political statement. He could not have made that statement without an approval from Beijing or more likely he made that statement with an instruction from Beijing. Remarkably the Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson refused to comment on the goading statement made by her country’s ambassador in India. Unfortunately many in Indian diplomatic circle meekly viewed it as Chinese government’s refusal to endorse the ambassador’s claim.

Throughout the brief history of territorial dispute between India and China, India chose to be on the defensive side for all the wrong reasons. India failed to use the ‘Tibet card’ as a bargaining chip in the territorial negotiation with China. China knows it very well that India would not dare raise the issue of Tibet either on international plate form or in bilateral talks.

How many times India and China met in past three decades to settle the border dispute? So many times that I gave up keeping the number, yet no amicable solution was found till to date. The primary reason for the lack of any conclusive solution for this problem was due to the fact that both the parties were unwilling to discuss the history of the disputed territories sincerely, but eager to use the same history to make claim of their territories. Both the countries know well that there was no Indo-China border until the Chinese annexation of Tibet, the buffer state that separated the two disputing nations for centuries.

The Chinese claim over Arunachal Pradesh was based on the history of Tibet, not on Chinese history. There is validity to this claim if India regarded Tibet as an integral part of China. Historically Tibet owned the large territories of present day Arunachal Pradesh, especially the
Tawang district. However, India on the other hand also has a historically attested reason to claim over Arunachal Prades. Ironically it is also based on Tibetan history.

With the demise of the Manchu dynasty in China in 1912, the Thirteenth Dalai lama drove out the Ambans, the Manchu emperor’s representatives in Tibet and their security forces out of Tibet and declared Tibet as an independent sovereign nation.

In 1914 British tried to mediate a negotiation between Tibet and China to settle the political status of Tibet and territorial dispute between Tibet and China. China declined to sign the treaty. With a failure to resolve Sino-Tibet dispute, British decided to settle the Indo-Tibet border directly with Tibet. On July 3rd 1914 the British foreign secretary Sir Henry McMahon and the Tibetan government representative Lonchen Shatra signed the Simla Convention. They accepted the McMahon Line, which accorded Tawang to British India, as an officially accepted boundary between the two nations. The actual map showing the McMahon Line as a boundary between Tibet and India was published by Survey of India in 1937. In 1954 India officially called the territories accorded to her side of the McMahon Line NEFA- North East Frontier Agency. To consolidate her claim over NEFA, in 1972 India gave it an Indian name, Arunachal Pradesh, which remained a Union Territory of the Central Government of India until 1987. In 1987 Arunachal Pradesh formally became an Indian state.

Reflecting on the history of this region any oxymoron can see the complexity of the issue as India wanted China to accept the McMahon Line, which she inherited from the British Raj’s Simla Convention signed with an Independent Tibet, but India refused to recognize Tibet as an occupied country. India cannot have both the way. India has to give Tibet, her partner in Simla Convention- a genesis of the McMahon Line, a sovereign political status at least historically in order to give any validation to her claim over Arunachal Pradesh.

Tibet has been of crucial importance to the dominant power of South and East Asia in their respective strategic calculations in the past, just as it is today. The domination of the region by either power directly or indirectly, has been an accurate indication of one powers supremacy over the other. At the turn of the century, it was the arena of the "Great Game" between Great Britain, Tsarist Russia and Qing/Republican China. And by 1950' when two nationalist
regimes had emerged in China and India. Tibet became a matter of acute contention between the two states (Bajpai and Matto, 2000: 275).

The critical question was: who should occupy the strategic frontier region between the two giants? Nehru submitted to Chinese demand by 1954, Panchsheel agreement, hoping that both parties would respect the Himalayas as the limit of each other’s political influence and defense perimeters. Since then, much has happened in India-China relations. India’s relation with China until 1959 could be divided into two main chronological periods: (1) from 1949 to 1954 a period of limited relations, with numerous gestures of friendship on India’s part and considerable response to it by China’s (2) From 1954 to 1959, the Hindi-Chini bhai period. When on surface India-China relation were remarkably good, where as beneath the surface there were numerous points of friction and conflicting purposes and aims; and that opened armed conflict in late 1962. (Ramachandran, 1996: 58)

In this diplomatic ping pong game played between India and China over the Himalayan border China seems to have the upper hand at present. In order to score points India needs to have a foreign policy paradigm shift. She had to move away from the failed Nehru-Menon foreign policy regarding her dealing with China. In early 1950s Nehru’s ill-conceived vision of creating Pan-Asia solidarity with the Communist China blinded him to see the ulterior motif hidden behind the diplomatic façade presented by Chinese premier Zhou Enlai. Over four decades had passed since Nehru was betrayed and the infamous slogan, “Hindi Chini Bai Bai” was shattered into pieces, but India still carries on the same debacle policy designed by Krishna Menon. Nothing seems to have learnt from Nehru’s blunder. India’s perpetual denial of Tibet’s status in history had hurt India in the past and will continue to hurt India in securing her border with China. China on the other hand, has a good reason to carry on with the same mindset, because it worked for them. The Chinese ambassador’s claim of Arunchal Pradesh as Chinese territory on the eve of Hu Jintao’s visit is not a coincidence. It’s a message from Chinese government to announce what’s in Hu Jintao agenda now or in future.

India must be aggressive diplomatically with a fresh and more insightful foreign policy in dealing with China. The best card India can use to bargain with China is Tibet. Nothing perturbs China diplomatically more than Tibet and Tibet is not a dead issue yet. India is a host nation to Tibetan government in Exile and home to the Dalai Lama, accepted leader of the
Tibetan people inside and outside Tibet. With India’s initiative more countries will come forward to join India to raise Tibet on the international plate form. India has everything to gain if the issue of Tibet is solved. Tashi Phuntsok, United States of America, November 27, 2006)

Tawang Issue

China states that in mid-19th century British tried to create a boundary on the North East Frontier of the British ruled India. There was not much problem drawing a line over the vast uninhabited and sparsely populated territories on map until they struck on an inhabited territory of Tawang, an important trading town. They discovered that Tawang belonged to Tibet. Tawang, where the sixth Dalai Lama was born, has a special place in the history of Tibetan Buddhism. The current Dalai Lama, the 14th spiritual leader, had taken the Tawang route to flee from, Tibet in 1959 after a failed uprising against the Chinese. (Hindustan times, New Delhi, 9, September, 2009) But India says that it trading center on the Indian frontier and it was used by Nain Singh the Indian trader trained by British in 1856. Nain Singh maps shows that Tawang was part of India. (Wilford, J.N, 1981: 414)

Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama visit Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh in 2009 that has been an irritant in India-China ties and recent reports have talked of troops build up on both sides of the border. Tawang is home to one of the holiest Buddhist monasteries. China says Tawang historically has been a part of Tibet, so it should be included in its territory. Tibetan leaders had infuriated the Chinese by saying that Tawang was part of India. The Dalai Lama visited Itanagar, Bomdilla and Tawang. In 1962 war, the Chinese had seized control of Tawang and Bomdilla but later withdrew. In 2008, Arunachal Chief Minister Dorji Khandu, who hails from Tawang, had gone to Dharamsala to invite the Dalai Lama to inaugurate a hospital in the town. The Tibetan leader has contributed Rs 2 million for the multi-specialty hospital. (Hindustan times, New Delhi, 9, September, 2009.)

China’s Strategic alliances with Indian neighbours

One issue emblematic of the India-China strategic dissonance is Burma. Indeed, there are several important parallels between Burma and the vast territory whose annexation brought Han forces to India’s borders for the first time in history of Tibet. India and China may be
5,000-year-old civilisations but the two had no experience in dealing with each other politically until Tibet's forcible absorption made them neighbours. In contrast, India has had close historical ties with Tibet and with Burma, part of the British Indian empire until 1937. The majority people of Burma, the Burmans, are of Tibetan stock, and the Burman script, like the Tibetan one, was taken from Sanskrit. Today, Tibet and Burma are at the centre of the India-China relationship. Having lost the traditionally neutral buffer of Tibet, India sees Burma as a hedge against China's authoritarian rise. It is significant that the resistance against repressive rule in both Tibet and Burma is led by iconic Nobel laureates, one living in exile in India and the other with close ties to India but under house arrest in Rangoon. Equally remarkable is that the Dalai Lama and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi received the Nobel peace prize in quick succession for the same reason: for leading a non-violent struggle, in the style of Mahatma Gandhi.

Yet another parallel is that heavy repression has failed to break the resistance to autocratic rule in both Tibet and Burma. More than half a century after Tibet's annexation, the Tibetan struggle ranks as one of the longest and most-powerful resistance movements in modern world history. With no links to violence or terror, it actually stands out as a model.

Similarly, despite detaining Suu Kyi for nearly 13 of the past 19 years, the junta has failed to suppress the democracy movement, as 2008 September's monk-led mass protests showed.

For the autocrats in Beijing, who value Burma as an entryway to the Bay of Bengal and Indian Ocean, the demonstration of people's power in a next-door state was troubling news because such grass-roots protests could inspire popular challenge to their own authoritarianism. Having strategically penetrated resource-rich Burma, Beijing is busy completing the Irrawaddy Corridor involving road, river, rail and energy-transport links between Burmese ports and Yunnan.

For India, such links constitute strategic pressure on the eastern flank. China is already building another north-south strategic corridor to the west of India - the Trans-Karakoram Corridor stretching right up to Pakistan's Chinese-built Gwadar port, at the entrance to the Strait of Hormuz - as well as an east-west strategic corridor in Tibet across India's northern
frontiers. In Burma, Beijing is also helping construct a 1,500-km highway leading to Arunachal Pradesh.

Such links hold serious implications for India because they allow Beijing to strategically meddle in India’s restive north-east and step up indirect military pressure. Operating through the plains of Burma in India’s north-east is much easier than having to operate across the mighty Himalayas. In 1962, Indian forces found themselves outflanked by the invading People’s Liberation Army at certain points in Arunachal (then NEFA), spurring speculation that some Chinese units quietly entered via the Burmese plains, not by climbing the Himalayas.

The potential for Chinese strategic mischief has to be viewed against the background that the original tribal insurgencies in the north-east were instigated by Mao’s China, which trained and armed the rebels, be it Naga or Mizo guerrillas, partly by exploiting the Burma route. During World War II, the allied and axis powers had classified Burma as a “back door to India”. Today, India shares a porous 1,378-km border with Burma, with insurgents operating on both sides through shared ethnicity.

Tibet and Burma are going to stay pivotal to Indian security. The centrality of the Tibet issue has been highlighted both by China’s Tibet-linked territorial claim to Arunachal and by its major inter-basin and inter-river water transfer projects in the Tibetan plateau, the source of all of Asia’s major rivers except the Ganges. By damming the Brahmaputra and Sutlej and toying with the idea of diverting the Brahmaputra waters to the parched Yellow River, Beijing is threatening to fashion water into a weapon against India.

The junta has run Burma for 47 years, while the communist party has ruled China for 60 years. Neither model is sustainable. The longest any autocratic system has survived in modern history was 74 years in the Soviet Union.

But while Burma has faced stringent sanctions since the 1988 pro-democracy uprising, the post-Tiananmen sanctions against China did not last long on the argument that engagement was a better way to bring about political change - a principle not applied to impoverished Burma.
India cannot afford to shut itself out of Burma, or else - with an increasingly assertive China to the north, a China-allied Pakistan on the west, a Chinese-influenced Burma to the east, and growing Chinese naval interest in the Indian Ocean - it will get encircled. Just as India has not abandoned the Tibetan cause and indeed remains the seat of the Tibetan government-in-exile despite doing business with China. (Brahma Chellaney The Times Of India, 16 Jan 2008)

China’s infrastructure development on Indo-Tibet boundary

China’s government is building an airport in Tibet for, Everest aspirants which may find a new foothold in China, barely 100km from the Qomolangma (as the mountain is known in Tibetan) base camp. In a bid to turn its side of the world’s tallest peak into a climber’s paradise, China is building a new airport, to be called ‘Peace Airport’, in an apparent message for Tibetan rebels and, probably, India too.

The $71.7-million airport coming up in Xigaze (also called Shigatse) prefecture in Tibet, which shares borders with Nepal, Bhutan and India, also appears to be a politico-cultural coup of sorts.

Besides climbers, the airport is expected to draw more visitors to the Tashilhunpo monastery of the Panchen Lama, appointed by the Chinese government and recently inducted into the Chinese parliament. Notably, the Panchen Lama has played a key role in helping the government run a campaign against the Dalai Lama.

Xigaze, the second largest city in Tibet after Lhasa, falls on the China-Nepal highway, which will make it easier for air passengers to travel to the Himalayan nation by road. This will be the fifth civilian airport in Tibet. The four other airports are in Lhasa, Qamdo, Nyingchi and Ngari. China is also building the world’s highest airport, at an altitude of 4,436 metres, in Nagqu prefecture. (Times of India 11,, April 2010)

Construction of the ‘Peace Airport’ began in April, 2009 and will be completed by October, 2010. It is built to handle 2.3 lakh passengers and 1,150 tonnes of cargo and take care of 2,580 take-offs and landings a year till 2020, the official media quoted Xu Bo, director of the Civil Aviation Administration’s Tibet branch, as saying. Two main climbing routes are
recognized — the technically easier southeast ridge from Nepal (used by Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay in 1953) and the northeast ridge from Tibet. Xigaze falls on the China-Nepal highway, and is about 100km from the Everest base camp. ‘Peace Airport’ at Xigaze will give climbers a headstart, besides making road travel to Nepal easier. Xigaze has four other peaks over 8000m.

It is also home to the Tashilhunpo monastery, the seat of the Panchen Lama, appointed by the Chinese govt. (Times of India 12, April 2010)

After dramatically increasing its military expenditure over the last several years, in 2010 China has raised it by only 7.5 percent, marking the first time in nearly 21 years that the rate of increase has fallen below double digits. While there are a number of factors behind this, the Chinese government has used this to announce its pacific intent, underlining that it has always tried to limit military spending and set defence spending at a reasonable level. China’s foreign policy thinkers and political establishment have long sought to convince the world that Beijing’s rise is meant to be a peaceful one, that China has no expansionist intentions, that it will be a different kind of great power.

As China emerges as a major global power, it will expand its military footprint across the globe, much like that other great power, the US, whose bases surround China. The rapid expansion of China’s naval capabilities and broader military profile is a classic manifestation of its great power status. China’s new naval strategy of “far sea defense” is aimed at giving Beijing the ability to project its power in key oceanic areas, including and most significantly the Indian Ocean.

China is courting other states in South Asia by building container ports in Bangladesh at Chittagong and in Sri Lanka at Hambantota. Consolidating its access to the Indian Ocean, China has signed an agreement with Sri Lanka to finance the development of the Hambantota Development Zone at the southern tip of Sri Lanka, which includes a container port, a bunker system and an oil refinery. China’s activities at Marao in the Maldives have also generated apprehension in New Delhi.

China’s involvement in the construction of the deep-sea port of Gwadar on the Southwest coast of Pakistan has attracted a lot of attention due to its strategic location, about 70
kilometres from the Iranian border and 400 kilometers east of the Strait of Hormuz, a major oil supply route. It has been suggested that it will provide China with a “listening post” from where it can “monitor US naval activity in the Persian Gulf, Indian activity in the Arabian Sea, and future US-Indian maritime cooperation in the Indian Ocean.” Though Pakistan’s naval capabilities alone pose no challenge to India, the combinations of Chinese and Pakistani naval forces can indeed be formidable for India to counter. (China’s Naval Expansion in the Indian Ocean and India-China Rivalry, Harsh V. Pant, 2008)

**Points of Contention between India and China**

Diplomatic relations were severed after the border war in the Himalayas in the 1960s and were not restored until 1976. China doesn’t recognize India’s 1975 annexation of Sikkim or India’s claim on the state of Arunachal Pradesh. And it rejects the McMahon Line drawn between Tibet and British India in 1914.

Both sides have beefed up their military presence along their borders. Chinese cross-border incursions nearly doubled from 140 in 2006 to 270 in 2008 according to Brahma Chellany of the New Delhi based Center for Policy research.

Beijing was angered by a visit by Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to Arunachal Pradesh State in October 2009. Around that time Chinese border guards waved their guns at an India road crew building a road near the India-China border. The incident made front page news in India.

China opposes India getting a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council. It claims Sikkim and 90,000 square kilometers of Arunachal Pradesh while India claims that 38,000 square kilometers of its territory in Kashmir that China took over in the 1960s. In the late 1980s there was fighting along the Tibetan border between China and India in the late 1980s.

India was angered by China's strategic alliance with Pakistan, nuclear support and sale of missiles and other weapons to Pakistan. China was concerned about India’s nuclear tests in 1998 and providing a haven for the Dalai Lama.
India and the United States have a strategic partnership to maintain leverage over China. China maintains strong ties with Pakistan and Bangladesh to keep pressure on India China supports the regime in Myanmar but India does not.

There is some friction between India and China over the presence of the Dalai Lama in India and Indian support of the Tibetan government in exile. After the Chinese invasion in 1950 many Tibetan refugees fled into India. There are currently 120,000 exiles from Tibet in India. The Dali Lama and many of the exiles make their home in Dharmasala, India.

Why do Chinese troops make quick forays across the cold frontiers of three Indian states to do seemingly trivial things like painting rocks in Mandarin, drop cold-drink cans, soaps and cigarettes? It’s a primeval marking of territory. For more than 20 years, the China has always used incursions into Ladakh, Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim as an assertion of its claims over Indian Territory. But increasing forays in 2009 are a reaction to an Indian militarization of its eastern border, “over the last two years, India has added new bases along the area and invested infrastructure, Chinese are reacting to it.” In 2008, there were around 230 Chinese incursions; there were 76 in the three months before that. There were no such teasing forays in August.

While border skirmishes and posturing have defined the relationship of Asia’s largest countries for more than 40 years, both sides are going today going the extra mile to keep matter calm. India’s uneasiness with China, and vice-versa, has always been apparent, but the biggest deterrent to escalating tension is a fast-growing economic relationship: Trade between the two was worth $52 billion (Rs 2.6 lakh crore) in 2008, a 34 percent rise over the previous year.

“These things (incursions) are bound to happen in the absence of a mutually accepted border,” said Alka Acharya, a professor of Chinese studies at the JNU. “However, I do think there is some degree of concern in China about the increase in military infrastructure on the Indian side. Articles have come out in the Chinese media questioning India’s intentions.” “We cannot entirely dismiss the fact that this (incursion) is some kind of a response from the Chinese to bring the question (border dispute) on table and highlight the problem.”
Indian government sources agree with this view. Thirteen rounds of talks have taken place between India and China on the border question, without much progress.

Both sides do not confront each other when the ‘intrusion’ happens along unsettled boundaries such as Ladakh and Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh. But Indian troops have stopped Chinese movement into Sikkim, which has a settled boundary. In such cases Chinese have quietly returned. Here’s what India has done over two years to make the Chinese uneasy.

Deployed a squadron of frontline combat aircraft, the Soviet-made Sukhoi-30MKI, at the Tezpur base in Assam in June 2008. Upgraded five airbases in eastern and northeastern India, including Tezpur, Chabua and Jorhat (Assam), Panagarh (West Bengal); and Purnea (Bihar).

In the process of raising two new mountain divisions at a cost of Rs 650-700 crore for deployment in the north and northeast. Each division will have around 15,000 soldiers. In 2009, Russian made T-20 battle tanks were deployed in the higher reaches of Sikkim following repeated Chinese incursions last year in Finger Area, a 1 km silver of land on the northern tip of Sikkim.

In Ladakh, Daulat Beg Oldi and Fukche airfields have been reactivated in 2009 while the Nyama and Chushul airfields are being reopened.

This has been done to strengthen its air maintenance operations in the region. says army officers. The idea is to build up our strategic presence over there.” (Hindustan Times, September, 2009).

As both India and China play down incursions across the LAC into Indian territories, what is the truth behind the Chinese activity which might be less war-like than the western front but has deepened worry lines over Beijing’s objectives?

Even as the foreign ministry and other government agencies look to justify incursions as nothing particularly new and as rooted in different perceptions of LAC, security officials and experts feel the government ought to take things more seriously as perhaps for the first time incursions have been reported from all four sectors -- Ladakh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh.

"It is well known that the LAC is not clearly defined but the foreign ministry is only acting as
an apologist for China by saying so. Isn't China responsible for the delay in clarifying the exact LAC position? Incursions have been reported even from settled areas like Ladakh. India is pretending there is no problem when it does exist," said Parthasarathy. He felt India needs to be prepared by arming itself militarily and strengthening deployment.

Chinese incursions do happen, admits Pranab ‘But Mechanism in Place, No Cause for Panic’ (Times of India, January 13, 2008.) Chinese forces “some-times” intruded across the LAC, said there was no need for India to press any “panic button” over the issue.

Defence Minister A.k.Antony, on his part, said, “Whenever there is any issue (intrusion), it is always taken up through the appropriate channels and that system is continuing.” The fact, however, remains that there have been around 300 cases of intrusions by Chinese troops all along the 4,057-km LAC-right from east Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh to Joshimath in Uttarakhand and Pangong Tso lake in Ladakh- over the last two years. This is seen by many as a deliberated strategy by China to put pressure on India and strengthen its claim on disputed area along the LAC.

The Chinese intrusions into Sikkim in August-September, 2009 in particular, have raised worries here, especially since Beijing had earlier accepted the state to be part of India. As for China’s massive build-up of infrastructure along the LAC. Which will allow its troops much quicker access to border area. It is a “known fact” that Chinese infrastructure in terms of roads, electricity and availability of other facilities “is much superior to those on our side.”It’s only in recent months that India has begun to counter the bolstering of infrastructure by China, with detailed plans for all the three sectors- western (Ladakh), middle (Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh) and eastern (Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh).These plans include a 608km road network project along LAC, which will have 27 road links along Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh, as well as the overall 7,603-km special accelerated road development programme for the entire North-East.

According to Chellaney, this is the first time China has opened pressure points against India all along the Himalayan frontier in peacetime after the 1986-87 skirmishes. "The glaring fact is that Chinese incursions are happening even in Sikkim, even though the Sikkim-Tibet border is the only sector Beijing does not dispute. Similarly, Chinese incursions are occurring in
Uttarakhand territory -- the middle sector -- although the line of control there was clarified in 2001 through an India-China exchange of maps," said Chellaney.

India allowed Dalai Lama to visit Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh 2009 overruling China's objections but it might be a case of too little, too late. "To the great discomfiture of Beijing, the Dalai Lama has been saying publicly that Arunachal, including Tawang, is part of India. Yet, New Delhi is loath to exploit this. It actually blocked the Tibetan leader from visiting Tawang in 2008," added Chellaney.

There is a perception that because China has shown signs of cooperating with India over issues like climate change as they fight attempts by developed countries to impose green commitments and have shared interests in international platforms like G-20 and BRIC, India could perhaps condone border excesses. Parthasarathy rubbed the contention. "Does it have any meaning at all when you consider that Pakistan is also cooperating with India over climate change? Irrespective of these factors, we have to be ready militarily," asserted Parthasarathy. (Mea turning a blind eye to China 'incursions', Experts feel India should increase Deployment on Border, Sachin Parashar)

Defence experts in India are already warning the government that China might resort to a 1962 war-style gamble. Incursions by Chinese troops on land and in air into India have increased. The army has sounded an operational alert on the India-China Line of Actual Control (LAC) after reports of a Chinese military exercise involving 50,000 troops in Tibet...India places 15,000 troops stationed in Manipur to counter threat from Chinese influence in Myanmar.

There seems to be growing tension between India and China. Beijing onk exception to the detention of United Arab Emirates air force aircraft at Kolkata airport in 2009. It called the incident an attempt by Indian officials “to spy on Chinese military secrets” and said India violated diplomatic rights because the cargo onboard belonged to China.

The tensions along “Actual Line of Control” in the Ladakh area of Kashmir. Chinese helicopters, troops and rock markings were recently found on the Indian Territory bordering China. So, just what is China up to? Though India describes them as minor incursions, but it’s worried about the design and the grand plan of the Chinese behind these. The aggressive
patrolling, assertive transgressions and vituperative articles in state media aimed against India, is all part of the larger design to keep India off balance. And China is doing that currently through a large military exercise named Stride 2009. The military exercise involves 50,000 troops, tanks and aircraft. Beijing’s intention is to practice moving divisions to the Indian border quickly, across thousands of kilometers from this far corner of China. A Chinese general bluntly says, “The unprecedented exercise is to improve long-range projection.”… Though played down by the Indian government for diplomatic reasons, 30,000 additional troops – with weaponry and artillery support – are being rushed to the country’s northeast region bordering China. Indian troops deployed on the disputed border with China are also being reinforced, following the second incursion in the Ladakh region in the last eight months in 2009.

In an era of increased tension, Chinese forces have built a robust network of roads and rails to the border and India has placed SU planes at Tezpur to 3200 Km or 8500 Km with fuel tanks. More worrisome for India is the Chinese claim on Arunachal Pradesh and repeated incursions into border villages and reports of a Chinese military exercise involving 50,000 troops in Tibet. A highway built by China parallel to the border, with approach roads intruding into Arunachal Pradesh, is also a matter of concern as it can be used by the Chinese Army to move quickly – with artillery – to capture parts of the state. Not taking these developments lightly, the Indian Army is preparing for any eventuality, putting the troops deployed on the border on operational alert and increasing vigilance in Arunachal Pradesh. A full mountain division of about 15,000 troops, under the command of three brigadiers, is being stationed in Arunachal Pradesh in areas where border fortifications may be weak. This division would be attached to the 4 Corps unit, based out of Tezpur in Assam.

Growing influence: A second division of the same strength is being deployed in Manipur and attached to the 3 Corps, based out of Dimapur in Nagaland. This division would be placed on the Bangladesh-India-Myanmar axis to counter any threat from China’s growing influence in Myanmar. Since raising new divisions takes a lot of time, sources said the Indian Army is pulling officers and troops out of peace-time postings from across the country to form the two divisions quickly.
Defence experts in India are already warning the government that China might resort to a 1962 war-style gamble, though maybe not on the same scale, to divert attention from rising inflation in the country. Writing in Defence Today, a strategic journal, Editor Bharat Verma claimed that China might make the move as early as October. According to government sources, such a perceived threat has been already discussed by the army’s top brass, following which the decision to fortify all positions on the Sino-India border was taken. More Indian troops on China border. ( Iftikhar Gilani, Daily Times – September 14, 2009).

The Sino-Indian War involved a month of heavy fighting in harsh, high-altitude conditions, with huge logistical problems. There is no definitive history of the conflict, but reportedly some 1,300 Indian troops and 700 Chinese were killed before China declared a ceasefire, having seized much of the territory it claimed in both the northeast and northwest (Ladakh.) The fighting was followed by forty years of standoff across the border of the disputed areas.

There are news reports emanating from Beijing and Delhi where we see the rising temperatures between Indian and China. There have been border violation and firing across the border in South Tibet (Arunachal Pradesh in India and in the Aksai Chin area of China. Aksia Chin was a border area between Pakistan and China. Pakistan resolved the border by giving China 5000 square miles of Aksia Chin to Beijing. This allowed China to build land roads to Tibet.

There are more boats patrolling the idyllic Pangong Lake, the only water body shared by India and China, than ever before.

But Asia’s giants, playing a cat-and-mouse game on this cold northern frontier, make sure their boats don’t make contact, when earlier they did without much fuss.

Most of the lake, 180 km north of Leh, is with the Chinese. “There is tension,” said an army officer who refused to be identified as both sides would officially not talk about tensions. “We used to patrol unarmed; now we go with weapons.” Said the officer: “You cannot trust the enemy.” The army is preparing for military exercises with troops moving 105 mm artillery guns in Chishul called Tak Makoo or black mountains were troops taking positions (Hindustan times, 2009).
India has confirmed all the incursions, blaming them on the unclear demarcation of the Line of Actual Control.

Report of incursions in Uttarakhand. But the Indo-Tibetan Border Police, which mans the border, and the state police denied it.

"Though there has been no such incident recently, it’s not new. Every year around August-September Chinese activity is seen near the border," said Uttarakhand police chief Subhash Joshi. China has denied all reports of incursions. (Arun Joshi, Hindustan Time, September 14, 2009)

Delhi may play down Beijing’s posturing in Arunachal Pradesh but a concerned Indian Army is raising two more divisions, or about 30,000 men, in the Northeast.

The army has sounded an operational alert on the India-China Line of Actual Control (LAC) after reports of a Chinese military exercise involving 50,000 troops in Tibet, where Beijing has increased its activities. Correspondingly, the Indian Army is said to be conducting an operations exercise in Arunachal.

Sources said one of the two new divisions would be stationed in Arunachal to take care of the China-India-Myanmar axis and the other at Leimakhong, 20km from Imphal, to cover the Bangladesh-India-Myanmar axis. One of the divisions is already being raised, sources said.

Although the two divisions together make up a Corps’ strength, they would be separated and placed under the respective controls of the 3 Corps and 4 Corps, sources said. The division at Leimakhong will be under the 3 Corps, based at Rangapahar near Dimapur in Nagaland. The one in Arunachal will be under the 4 Corps, based in Upper (eastern) Assam.

The divisions are being raised fast and army officers have been issued posting orders to various locations. Troops have been pulled out of army units from across the country. The 57 Mountain Division in Manipur is expected to move to southern Assam.

On the flip side, moving in a new division and moving out an existing one would mean additional responsibilities for the Assam Rifles in Manipur. Till now, militancy in Manipur has been handled mainly by the army but with a new division busy raising its troops, the
paramilitary force will come under severe test. Army alert on China (Nishit Dhoabhi, The Telegraph – September 12, 2009

A massive upgrade of infrastructure and military capabilities is under way along the disputed India-China border in a bid to be prepared for any misadventures from the other side.

To this end, a huge jump in military strength along the border is under way. While a decision to locate Sukhoi-30 fighters at Tezpur from June 2009 has already been announced, the Indian Air Force (IAF) may also beef up its presence in the Chabua airbase and maintain heli-lift capabilities in other parts of the north-east.

For decades since the 1962 war, India had officially decided not to develop its border with China fearing that it would provide easy access to invading Chinese troops. A few years ago, that policy was junked and India plunged into an aggressive development of its border infrastructure.

It is now reactivating several airstrips built during World War II or the 1962 war and abandoned later. On May 31 this year, the IAF reactivated the world's highest airstrip, at Daulat Beg Oldie in Ladakh, originally built during the 1962 Sino-Indian war. The strip, close to the Karakoram pass, is capable of landing AN-32 transport aircraft.

Several other advanced landing grounds, such as Fukche, Chushul and Nyama have also been made functional. "The logistics disasters of 1962 will never be repeated," says an air force officer, referring to India's inability at the time to provide support to its army in the frontlines.

India has also been trying to quickly catch up with China in building all-weather connectivity almost up to the last post, essential for a strong response to any Chinese misadventure, say many within the military leadership. "They are much ahead of us in infrastructure, but we are fast catching up," said a military source. A large network of roads is also being built; over 30 major new road links are in progress, besides several smaller strips.
In the north-east, the army is raising two divisions, with 15,000 to 30,000 soldiers. They would add strength to the defence of the Arunachal Pradesh border, especially Tawang, which China is very keen to reclaim.

“We did exhibit our ability to carry out swift beefing-up of deployment during Operation Falcon in 1986-87,” says a senior army officer. Operation Falcon refers to India’s troop movement during the standoff with China at Sumdorong Chu, raising the country’s third artillery division along the northeast border, with Bofors howitzers and indigenously manufactured Pinaka multi-barrel rocket launchers.

The absence of noise from the military leadership on the alleged Chinese incursions is because India wants to be discreet about its build-up, so as not to spark off any unnecessary complications between the Asian giants.

Military leaders also insist that though India may not match up to China in numbers, it is capable of responding well in the event of a major skirmish. “We are not the army of 1962. We have a competent presence, and technologically we are superior on many fronts,” says a former commander of an army corps deployed along the northeast, an opinion shared by many senior army officers.

“I don’t frankly see any change in the situation along the border. But, hypothetically, if it came to a military confrontation, we are confident of our capabilities,” the army headquarters said. India is beefing up China border defences (DNA – September 14, 2009)

**Joint Working Groups on Boundary Question**

There are some positive things happening in India-China relations. One most important form for the India- China official debates has come to be the annual meetings of the India- China Joint Working Group on Boundary Question (JWG) which has come to be one of the most effective and generic form for implementing India-China confidence building measures (CBMs). It was created in the backdrop of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi’s visit to China in December 1988. JWG talks involves Foreign Secretary from Indian side and Vice Foreign Minister from the Chinese side, it not only involve officials from the Ministry of External Affairs, but also include military officials and experts from both sides.
Affairs (MEA) but also has representatives from armed forces and the Survey of India, involves in these meetings. (Swaran Singh, 1999: 22)

The high point in JWG meetings had occurred during their discussions during the Eighth round of talks in August 1995 at New Delhi where the two sides had agreed to actually disengage their troops from four border posts in the Wangdong region where they had come to be deployed at alarming proximity to each other. This was hailed as the first example in the post-cold war era where actual disarmament by mutual agreement ever took place amongst Asian countries. But apart from these broad-based policy postures and political commitments, the JWC has also institutionalized regular meetings at more operational levels. Of this importance have been the regular meetings between the India-China military commanders posted in the border regions. As that of Bumla and Dichu in the eastern sector, and at Spanggur near Chushul in the western sector, apart from these regular flag meetings, the commanders on both sides are also provided with ‘hotline’ telephone links to ensure consultations in case of any intrusions or other contingencies. (Swaran Singh, 1999: 23). The JWG meetings even continued during the heated post-Pokhran II scenario for India-China ties. These regular meetings and exchanges had continued as per schedule. The annual Commanders meeting which was scheduled for June 29, 1998 was held as planned. It clearly proves the depth and durability of India-China CBMs that works as the foundation for India-China friendship and understanding. (Swaran Singh, 1999: 23). The boundary between India-China extends over 2,400 miles, and separates the Indian territories of Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim, and Arunachal Pradesh from the Sinkiang and Tibetan region of China on which JWG should come out with a solution which is accepted to both. So that India-China relations can become normal for trade and development of the region as a whole.

Easing of Tensions between China and India

India and China drew closer together in the late 1990 and 2000s primarily out economic self interest. They have been working to forge better political and economic links and restore trust between the two countries. Regular meeting since the late 1980s on border issues have not made yielded much progress on the disputed territories. (Jeffrey Hays, 2008: 22)
India-China have signed two landmark agreements namely 'Peace and Tranquility Agreement' in 1993 and CBMs to improve relations further, Border Personnel Meeting are held six times a year between the Indian and Chinese Military delegations. At the invitation of the People Liberation Army, a Border Personnel Meeting was organised between India and China on May 01, 2010 at Chinese Border Personnel Meeting Hut, opposite Chushul, to celebrate International Labour Day. The formal meeting held in atmosphere of cooperation and camaraderie, greetings were exchanged by both sides. Also both sides agreed to join hands in contributing to peace, stability and development of the region in consonance with Border Peace and Tranquility agreements. (Rattan Sharma, Sun News, 2 May, 2010)

China and India signed a border security agreement in 1993, a peaceful cooperation accord in 1994, and a cooperation agreement in 2003 and formed a “strategic cooperative partnerships” in 2005. There is a tacit an agreement that China will not muck around in Kashmir if India does not muck around with Tibet. Of late China has backed India’s candidacy for membership to the United Nations Security Council. (Jeffrey Hays, 2008: 27)

It appears that China has unofficially recognized India’s claim over Sikkim by allowing cross border trade there and India unofficially recognizes Chinese control over Tibet. It is hoped that China could act as an intermediary between India and Pakistan and diffuse tensions between the two countries. (Jeffrey Hays, 2008: 28)

Chinese president Jiang Zemin visited India in 1996. Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee visited China in June 2003. During the trip he issued a statement that Tibet was part of China. In November 2003, India and China held their first ever joint naval exercise together. (Jeffrey Hays, 2008: 8)

In April 2005, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao visited Bangalore and said that India and China should take the lead in the new “Asian century.” Jiabao and Indian Prime Minister Singh also signed agreements to increase military cooperation, trade and transportation links. The two countries agreed on a road-map to settle their decades-old border disputes and build a new “ridge of friendship.” (Jeffrey Hays, 2008: 9)

Chinese President Hu Jintao visited India in November 2006 and declared “a year of friendship” between the two countries. In May 2006, military leaders of China and India met
in Beijing, In early 2007, the foreign ministers of China, India and Russia held a joint meeting. In April 2007, China and India held talks on their border dispute. Officials from both countries described the talks as “friendly” and “constructive.” Talks on improving toes were held in October 2007. (Jeffrey Hays, 2008: 10)

In December 2007, China and India held their first ever joint war games “to build trust.” About 100 soldiers from each side participated in the drill, which lasted nine days and was held in China’s Yunnan Province. (Jeffrey Hays, 2008: 11)

In January 2008, Singh visited Beijing and a number of agreements were signed China and India characterized themselves as cooperative, complementary friends rather than regional rivals. The tone was amazingly cordial when considering the two countries have unresolved border disputes still pending and are emerging as major global competitors. (Jeffrey Hays, 2008: 12)

As Indian Prime minister Manmohan Singh on 14, April, 2010, said India and China were working very hard to find a “practical” and “pragmatic” solution to the boundary question and its resolution would take time. “We have the border problem and that problem has to be resolved. We are working very hard to find to have a practical, pragmatic solution to that problem.” He said at a press conference in Washington when asked about relations between India-China.

Noting that both countries “recognize that it would take time”, he said the two countries have agreed that pending the resolution of the border issues, peace and tranquility should be maintained along the Line of Actual control and by and large that situation prevails on the ground. (Hindustan Times, 15, April, 2010)

On the overall India-China relations, we can conclude that the economic contents of the relationship has increased significantly, with China today being India’s largest trading partner. There are large Chinese investments in our country and there are large Indian investments in China. “On the economic front the relationship is moving in the right direction.
On multilateral issues, there is recognition in China that there was a similarity of approach between the two countries and they can gain by working together. In this context, the Copenhagen conference on climate change in December, 2009 during which India and China worked closely to block developed nations from imposing their agenda.