CHAPTER V

SINO-INDIA RELATIONS AND THE BORDER-DISPUTE

INTRODUCTION:

Communist China has emerged out of a cruel, armed and long drawn revolution. India happened to be its adjacent neighbour. The two countries have got common border hence the dispute over the same. Nehru professed the policy of amicable settlement of disputes so he exhausted all means with regard to Sino-India border dispute. The Chinese mode of life, Mao's ideology and methods and open cloak and dagger - diplomacy have provided ample evidence of their disregard of pacific measures. India and China have been friendly countries even before they emerged as sovereign countries. They had cultural contacts, trade-relations and commercial ties. India had complete faith in the Chinese proclamation of 'Hindi-Chini Bhai Bhai', which proved hollow later on. The leaders of these

3. "... the history of India is a long history of her relation with the other countries of Asia" and among them, "an important place should be assigned to China - one of the oldest of civilizations, though among the youngest of nations in the Western sense, and now a growing force..." The Hindustan Times, (New Delhi), 17.7.60. Also see, Hindustan Standard, 24.4.60, article by Trilok Karni, "Sino-India Relations: An Analysis".
4. Letter to the Editor, "Policy of Drift must stop", The Hindustan Times, (New Delhi), 25.11.61 with this tactic, Peking kept India in the dark and misled by wishy-washy slogans of 'Hindi-Chini Bhai Bhai'.
two countries used to go into raptures over the 5,000 years old Sino-India friendship. It was believed that the cultural ties that existed between these two countries ruled out the possibility of a major conflict between them but later it was realised that the much talked about, century-old Sino-India amity was nothing but a myth. When the Communist China came into existence, India was the first country to recognise it on December 30, 1949, within three months of its establishment. Nehru, during his visit to Britain and America in 1949, pleaded both the governments to accord recognition to it. India had quite vociferously pleaded in the UN to give China, a permanent footing.

India's policy of soft-paddling with China could not succeed. They claim to be a democratic people and society, whereas, they had no experience of democracy of any kind-the liberal-western, emerging-Eastern, limited-czarist, new or old Soviet.

The era of Sino-India friendship commences with the signing of the Treaty of 1954, through which both the states

3. News item, The Guardian (Manchester), 2.6.62. In 1954, Chau-en-lai, the Chinese Premier and J.L. Nehru, the Indian Prime Minister signed the Sino-Indian Treaty on Trade with Tibet. The treaty outlined a set pattern of friendly

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pledged to live in peace, enlarge the area of peace and work on anti-colonial lines. In 1959, incursions, both minor and major started to occur, it was realised in the Indian Parliament that the Chinese assurances of their faith in the Panchsheel, lulled India into a false sense of security. In 1961, these doctrines appeared sham and dead as dodo to the Chinese. The Chinese admitted that the Panchsheel was a mere tool of foreign policy then. It did not constitute an abiding basis of their foreign policy. This was proclaimed openly in the episode relating to the dismissal of Chang-Weentain, the Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs. He was denounced as the opportunist

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relations, the famous 5 principles, termed as Panch Sheel; "The Preamble of...... the Agreement declared...
  1. Mutual respect for each others' territorial integrity and sovereignty;
  2. Mutual non-aggression;
  3. Mutual non-interference in each others internal affairs;
  4. Equality and mutual benefit;
  5. Peaceful co-existence". The Panchsheel was to form the basis of India's policy not only towards China but also towards other countries.


2. Editorially, "Dead as a Dodo", The Indian Express (New Delhi), 2.12.61.
having propagated the erroneous view of peaceful co-existence in accordance with the Five Principles and Bandung as the basis of China's foreign policy.\footnote{M.L. Sondhi, "Indian Foreign Policy in a multi-polar world", The Hindustan Times, (New Delhi), 2.12.61.}

Nehru is often criticised to have been led astray by the Chinese designs of cordiality. Openly, Nehru appeared to be misled by Chinese friendly gestures but he was apprehensive of malignancy. There was a gap between his public utterance and innermost feeling. He was dubious of their faith in co-existence. As early as in 1954, in an interview to Taya Zinkin, Nehru said, "Whether they believe in coexistence or not I cannot say. They pretend they do, and I must try to make them get more and more involved in acting as if they believed in it".\footnote{Taya Zinkin, Reporting India, London, Chatto, 1962, p. 208.} This was Nehru's innermost fear which he expressed privately, whereas in public Nehru never looked dubious of the Chinese policies.

THE MC MAHON LINE AND THE SIMLA CONFERENCE:

The north-eastern border of India that demarcates the territories of India and China, is traditionally known as the Mc Mahon Line. It was clearly drawn in 1913-14, with full cooperation and consent of India, China and Tibet. There was no doubt that the Mc Mahon Line (so called after Mc Mahon, the British representative at the conference) merely confirmed
the natural, traditional, ethnic and administrative boundary in the area. No boundary in the world have been as free from dispute, so well established by tradition, so free from dispute and administration, as the India-China boundary. But the Chinese have deliberately challenged the legality of border settlement through this customary line. The first attempt, by the Chinese to open the question of the delimitation of Sino-Indian boundary was made in a letter by Chou-En-lai, dated January 23, 1959, in response to Nehru's letter dated December 14, 1958. Chou-En-lai challenged that the boundary has never been delimited and also, "no treaty or agreement on the Sino-Indian boundary has ever been concluded." According to

1. Sino-Indian Border Problem, External Publicity Division, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, New Delhi, 26.2.1962, p. 1. Also see, Neville Maxwell, India's China War, Bombay, Jaico Publishing House, 1971, p.107, "The McMahon Line, of course, has never been demarcated (whether the Anglo-Tibetan notes exchanged in 1914 amount to the legal delimitation (italics) is disputed between India and China, but that the line has never been demarcated-i.e. marked out on the ground is agreed by both parties)."

2. K. Gopalaswami, "India China Boundary Question", International Studies, Vol. V, July 63.-April 64, p.15

3. White Paper, No. 1, p.52. "Sino-Indian boundary has never been formally delimited", From 1954 to 1968, the Government of India and Peking published XIV, White Papers which contained the Notes, Memoranda and Letters exchanged between the two governments. It is said, "A wrangling exchange of notes between Delhi and Peking has brought the two governments only to unequivocal and barely civil restatements of their opposed and deadlocked positions", The Times (London), 8.8. 1961.
Chou, the entire unsettled border was negotiable. Chou En-lai gave certain justifications to undo the already negotiated border. He said that the conditions for its settlement were not yet ripe then and the Chinese Government had no time to study the question. India reiterated its stand that the entire boundary was settled by custom and treaties. The Indian Government, maintained that the Mc Mahon Line was absolute, clear and infrangible, and even marginal incursions by the Chinese would not be resisted. In fact, the entire length of this border had been, "either defined by treaty or recognised by customs or by both and until the present controversy, no Chinese Government had ever protested against the exercise of jurisdiction by the Government of India upto the customary border".

In the meantime, the political situation in Tibet was fast deteriorating. On March 31, 1959, the Dalai Lama along with his party entered India and asked for political asylum, which was subsequently granted to him. This act of India was

1. "The traditional border has been known from centuries. It follows the geographical principle of the watershed which is in most places the crest of Himalayan mountains. Moreover, in most parts the boundary has the sanction of specific international agreements". India-China Border Problem, op. cit., p. 1.


perfectly in conformity with the rules of international-law and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights-1948. This greatly enraged China and in retaliation, Chou in his letter of September 1959, challenged the entire basis of the Mc Mahon Line. Chou argued that this matter was not on the agenda of the Simla-Conference of 1913-14. Though the official publications of the External Affairs Ministry, Government of India, it was maintained that, in the north-east, the traditional boundary was decided at a Tripartite Conference, held in Simla from October 1913 to July 1914, attended by the representatives of the governments of British India, Tibet and China. The correspondence between the British and Tibetan governments was kept confidential. In their Annexure to the Note of the Indian Government dated November 4, 1959, the Chinese government said, "the so called Mc Mahon Line was never discussed at the Simla Conference, but was determined by the British representative and the representative of the Tibet local authorities behind the back of the representative of the Chinese Central Government through an exchange of secret notes at Delhi on March 24, 1914, that is, prior to the signing of Simla Treaty". The note ended in a definite

2. The White Paper No.1, is often labelled as rather undiplomatic, Maxwell, op. cit., p. 106
proclamation by Peking as to them, "The so called McMahon Line was a product of the British policy of aggression against the Tibet region of China and has never been recognised by any Chinese Central Government and is decidedly illegal." This stand of the Chinese Government was, however, regretted by Nehru in his letter to Chou, dated September 26, 1959. In the same letter the Government of India categorically held that, "the McMahon Line was not an arbitrary imposition on a weak Tibet", and "It formalised the natural, traditional, ethnic and administrative boundary in the area." Through a letter, Chou laid claims to large portions of Indian territory, but the Chinese logic in challenging the legality of the line was both factually incorrect and legally irrelevant. On August 28, 1961, the Executive Committee of the Afro-Asian Council strongly upheld the natural, historical and legal validity of the Indian position, with regard to her border dispute with China and hoped that the parties concerned would resort to negotiation as a pacific method to solve their dispute.

2. Ibid., p. 38.
3. Biswanath Singh, op. cit., p. 163
4. Ibid., p. 164.
In the Simla Conference of 1913-14, the relevant question of Indo-Tibetan boundary was discussed at large and at length. The decision was agreeable to Tibet also, which was participating as an independent member. China then had accepted the capacity of Tibet to conclude treaties with Britain and China, on equal footing. The British and Tibetan plenipotenciaries exchanged notes regarding this line on March 24-25, 1914. The Indian Prime Minister Nehru, in one of his letters to the Chinese Premier, dated March 22, 1959, pointed out that this line was drawn after full discussion and confirmed subsequently by a formal exchange of letters. There was nothing to indicate the dissatisfaction of the Tibetan authorities with the agreed boundary. The Chinese representative signed the document without any reservation.

The British government described the Simla Conference as an attempt to mend relations between China and Tibet. The government explained it in the Parliament that Great Britain played the role of the honest broker. The Simla Conference was an intricate exercise in diplomacy, power-politics and espionage on the eve of World War I.

2. Ibid., No. I, p. 56.
3. Biswanth Singh, op. cit., p. 167
4. Maxwell, op. cit., p. 47
5. For details, see Aslastic Lamb, The McMahon Line and Dorothy Woodman, Himalayan Frontiers, as cited in Maxwell, op. cit., p. 47
As a reaction to the Chinese attitude, the British government sent a note on June 25, 1914, asking China either to sign it or be devoid of the privileges of the above mentioned Tripartite Convention. The Mc Mahon Line was a matter between India and Tibet and both have signed and ratified it. It establishes the fact that the treaty between India and Tibet was not signed secretly. The Chinese claim of illegality of this Line is not justified because once a treaty, particularly a boundary treaty, is freely signed and ratified by the competent parties, it becomes binding and creates rights.¹

The Chinese government, however, made a host of allegations against the Mc Mahon Line and its legality. They called it the offspring of the expansionist policy of the then British government in India. Historically speaking, it is an unsound argument. In fact, the Mc Mahon Line did not create any new border but only clarified the historic and traditional boundary between India and Tibet, which had been well recognised and was beyond dispute for centuries. It ran mostly along the crest of Himalayan ranges. The 1914 convention only provided an additional sanction to an already existing traditional frontier.²

¹ Biswanath Singh, op. cit., p. 167
² Ibid., p. 167. These facts are substantiated by relevant sources as Michells authoritative 'Report on the North East Frontier Of India' T.T. Coopers, The Mishnee Hills, London, 1873 and also from the map published by Peking University in 1929.
Moreover, the Postal Atlas of China, 1917 showed approximately the correct alignment of Indo-Tibet boundary, east of Bhutan. The International Law does not concede to the, "theory of pillars". The Mc Mahon Line was clearly delimited by Article 9 of the Simla convention, and runs along with the main watershed, as the analogy of the quoted judgment of the International Court of Justice, its validity cannot be challenged on the basis of its not being marked on the ground by pillars. The Note of the Government of India to the Chinese government on February 12, 1960 also enunciated the principle of International Law on this point.  

The main objection of China was between outer Tibet and inner Tibet and inner Tibet and China. The Mc Mahon Line was clearly shown in the map initialled by all the three representatives. It was not a secretly signed treaty, the Chinese Government, far from being in the dark about it was "aware"of it. The Chinese "plea of error" and "ignorance"

1. Ibid., p. 169
2. White Paper, No. III, p. 89 "... a watershed is the best of all possible natural boundaries. It is liable to no change and is readily recognizable.... the alignment of the northern boundary of India throughout follows the major watershed supports the fact that this became the boundary through custom and tradition".
was held void in the famous Preah Vihear case. This case held that the ignorance of China was contributed by China herself and not by the other two parties to the case. In this case, it was held, "It is an established rule of law that the plea of error can not be allowed as an element vitiating consent if the party advancing it contributed by its own conduct to the error could have avoided it, or if the circumstances were such as to put the party on notice of the possible errors."

The Aitchison Treaties Series, XIV, 1929, published this convention and the Mc Mahon Line was shown in the official maps published from 1937 onwards. Since China did not raise objections to it, it was inferred that China had accepted it. The Chinese maps from the 6th century A.D. to the present show that till the beginning of this century


4. Biswanath Singh, op. cit., p. 163. Also see, India China Border Problem, op. cit., p. 2, "... China neither protested against the boundary between India and Tibet nor did she seek modification of it after the Simla Convention".
Sinkiang never extended even as far South as the Suen Lun which at present delimits Kashmir's frontiers in the north. The map "Central Asien", published in Leipzig in 1880 by Joseph Chavan also confirmed it.¹ Even the official Chinese maps of 1893, 1917 and 1919 showed the boundary in this area as depicted in official Indian maps today.²

The Chinese government as late as in 1961-62, challenged the legal capacity of Tibet to enter into the boundary treaty of 1914.³ The present Chinese government is not legally entitled to repudiate the decision of its predecessor. She had ".....

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1. Some facts about India-China boundary by K. Gopalachari, Historical Division, Ministry of External Affairs, The Hindu (Madras), 10.12.62. "In 1950 the Chinese Government expressed their gratification over the desire of the Government of India", to stabilise the Chinese-India border and the government of India replied that the recognised boundary between India and Tibet should remain inviolate. The Chinese Government questioned neither the location nor the recognition of this boundary and the Government of India saw no reason to assume that there was any doubt regarding the border. The only pretext for doubting the Chinese intention was the fact-different alignments were shown by different maps, India China Border Problem, op. cit., p. 4

2. India-China Border Problem, op. cit., p. 4

completely overlooked the vital point that the then Government of China had agreed to the attendance of Tibet as a fully empowered third party to the Simla Conference*. 1 The state boundaries were concerned with permanent interest hence beyond state succession or war. 2

Even after the extinction of the legal personality, the Mc Mahon line created by the 1914 Simla Conference cannot be rendered void. K. Krishna Rao cogently argued "... the present boundary alignment had been established in how well before the People's Republic of China, came into existence. Consequently, as the People's Republic of China could not start out with rights than its predecessor possessed, it could not raise any fresh claim to Indian territory". 3 In 1959, the International Commission of Jurists examined the Tibetan Treaties and concluded that Tibet was a fully sovereign state, independent of the Chinese control in fact and in law. 4 The Chinese claims branding the Treaty as based on legal myths and legends were groundless. It was baseless to say that India, resorted to arbitrary argumentation,

1. News item, The Times of India, (New Delhi), 15.2.60
distortion and slander in order to justify its pronouncements. Communist China till 1958 behaved in a way that confirmed their acceptance of the Mc Mahon Line. India exercised legal control over the North East Frontier Agency. Nehru very confidently assured the Lok Sabha that the Mc Mahon Line was our boundary, map or no map. India would not allow any body to come across that boundary. In 1958, an official magazine published a map of China which included a large chunk of Indian territory in North East Frontier Agency, U.P. and Ladakh areas as parts of China. Indian government, consequently enquired about this cartographical aggression and the Chinese Government put forth its lame excuse that the surveys were not undertaken by the Chinese Government. It was in the letter, dated January 23, 1959, that Chou-En-lai raised afresh the question of the entire India-Tibet boundary including the Mc Mahon Line and eventually laid claims to some 90,000 square kilo meter of the Indian territory. The Chinese diplomacy in regard to this dispute is marked by duplicity and inconsistency. Thus the India-China border is not a complicated issue left by history, but one definitely settled by history. The Indian alignment of 2,400 square miles

1. The Hindu (Madras), 30.4. 1962
2. India-China Border Problem, op. cit., p. 6.
3. White Paper, I, p. 47
boundary, the longest in the world, had been determined by geography, confirmed by tradition and custom, sanctified by treaties and reinforced by continuous exercise through centuries of administrative jurisdiction, appropriate to the areas concerned. It turned along the major and majestic water shed ranges, such as the Agul, Musta, the Kun Lun, the Kailash, the Zaskar and the crest of Himalayas which constitute a geological and geographical unity. ¹ W.H. Johnson showed Aksai Chin, together with broad territory in the north of the Karakaram Pass, within Kashmir in a map he drew on the basis of his journey to Khotan. ² The following can therefore be logically summed up:

"(a) India's traditional frontier with China is well-known, being based on treaty, agreement and custom. Till recently, no Chinese Government has ever challenged it.

"(b) The present controversy over the frontier arose because the Chinese government for the first time laid claims to extensive areas of Indian territory in Premier Chou-En-lai's letter of 8th September 1959.

"(c) The tension on the India-China border has increased in the last three years because Chinese forces have been pushing forward to assert their claims.


² Maxwell, op. cit., p. 27.
"(d) The Government of India have stated that in spite of Chinese provocations they will always explore the possibility of peaceful settlement.......

Negotiations on this basis are unacceptable to the Government of India. But they are prepared to discuss with the Chinese Government existing disputes and such minor ratifications of the frontier as may be considered necessary by agreement". 1

TIBETAN REVOLT:

The years between 1957-60 were marked by the eruption of the Tibetan revolt, the arrival of the Dalai Lama and the first incidents that occurred along the Sino-Indian border. 2

On January 1, 1950, Mao-Tse-Tung proclaimed the 'Liberation of three million Tibetans from imperialist aggression', as the basic task of the People's Liberation Army of China. The same year the Chinese troops entered Tibet. In May, 1951, Tibetan representatives in Peking signed a Seventeen Point Agreement which provided for Chinese occupation of Tibet. But the Chinese violated its provisions. Jaya Prakash Narayan said that Nehru's talk of the two thousand year-old ties between China and India untarnished by the armed conflict, created political myopia 3

1. India China Border Problem, op. cit., pp. 13-14
as the Indian government remained blind to this rape of Tibet. Since the Tibetan revolt in March 1959, leading to the flight of the Dalai Lama to India, and the border incidents at Longju in the North East Frontier Agency in August and in Ladakh in October, India China relations which had been played upon both sides as being based on Panchsheel, steadily deteriorated, a deterioration climaxed into a massive invasion of the Indian territory in October 1962. The peaceful policy objectives with China were upset because of the Tibetan imbroglio, which constituted for India, the first tough knot in its relations with China. Since then, the analysis of India's policy towards China became an analysis of India's policy towards Tibet.

The preliminary phase of the boundary dispute with China terminated with Chou-En-lai's meeting with Nehru in 1959. It provided a sever testing ground for Panchsheel— the five principles of Peaceful co-existence which India advocated as an original Asian contribution to international relations.

The conflict that emerged between India and China happened to be the first conflict between a communist power and a non-aligned state. Even during the Tibetan revolt, there was a

1. Ibid., p. 57.
4. Eckelen, op. cit., p. V.
hope that China may limit her "expansionist aims" and settle down to a policy of peace, but China did not abandon its policy of expansionism. The boundary dispute with China arose from the Tibetan question. If China was not allowed to overturn Tibet, there would have been negligible common boundary between India and China. The Tibetan question proved to be the genesis of conflict. The efforts of the Indian Government to settle the Tibetan question were repudiated by haughty rebuffs. China maintained that the question of Tibet was China's domestic problem and no foreign influence would be tolerated. In the wake of Tibetan episode, India wanted to play the role of an "honest peace broker" but China scuttled every such efforts, consequently India tolerated Chinese conquest of Tibet in 1950. On the eve of the Chinese annexation of Tibet, Nehru declared that India would not touch the soil of Tibet. This annexation of Tibet by China transformed the military balance of power. By the treaty of April 22, 1954, India officially recognised Tibet as the Tibet-region of China and set its seal of approval

1. Nareshwar Dayal Seth, op. cit., p. 146. Also see Lok Sabha Debates, No. 15, Vol. XXXIV, Ninth Session, Cols. 3808-9. (Speech by Ranga).
2. Ibid., p. 147
5. Ibid., p. 105
6. White Paper, No. 1, p. 48
over the conquest of Tibet. There was no longer a buffer state between China and India. The Chinese expansionist designs were clear but India overlooked it. Apart from the brief episode about Tibet there was no point of serious dispute between India and China until the end of Korean war in July 1953. China emerged as a new powerful country with formidable power, able to face the American challenge in Asia. India was to play second fiddle in the new balance of power.

**THE DISPUTE DEVELOPS:**

The change in Sino-Indian relations since 1959, resulting from the Chinese suppression of the revolt in Tibet and the Chinese moves along India's Himalayan frontiers, the reactions of India to these moves had been a source of greater concern and absorption to India than any other developments in the External Affairs. The Sino-Indian border, covering 12,200 square miles, was generally unguarded. The area was remote and inaccessible to both New Delhi and Peking. In 1959 this situation was transformed by the revelation of the communist Chinese claims to the areas. Nehru described them to be over

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1. Sinha, *op. cit.*, pp. 61-62
50,000 square miles which had been an integral part of India since many decades and centuries. The Chinese claimed large areas in the NEFA, several small pockets of territory West of Nepal, and Aksai Chin plateau in Ladakh. These areas were referred to as Eastern, Middle and Western Sectors respectively. China claimed that only a customary and traditional border line existed and the border had never been defined by treaty or negotiations. India maintained that a frontier existed which had been established by custom, tradition and treaty. The McMahon Line settled the Sino-India boundary on paper otherwise it was a fact that the Sino-Indian boundary had not been formally delimited. A policy of peace and friendship based on negotiations and discussions, as instruments of pacific settlement was often mistaken for a forward policy by some foreign writers like Neville Maxwell. The traditional line as recognised by China, differed from the frontiers claimed by India. It was the area between these two lines which was in dispute.

2. White Paper, No. 1, p. 52
3. Maxwell, op. cit., p. 199. Also see, pp. 201, 205. In a crucial meeting on November 2, 1961, in which Nehru, Menon, J. Desai, Gen. Thappar, and B.N. Kaul were present new directives of forward policy emerged pp. 221, 223, 224, 233, 291, 303 and 346.
4. Current Notes on International Affairs, op. cit., p. 38
The Chinese incursions into India began in June 1954 when their armed forces entered into the Barahoti area. In 1956 also, the Chinese armed personnel entered the Nilong-Jadhang area and Shipkila. In 1959, a Chinese armed detachment entered the Spanggur area. In August, 1959, the armed Chinese patrols crossed the Thagla Ridge. The Indian government was taken aback by these incursions between 1954-59. In retrospect, these incursions proved to be a smoke-screen to their major aggressive designs in the Aksai Chin area. In 1958 it was noticed that the Chinese had constructed a 100-mile road, connecting Sinkiang with Tibet. The difference between the Indian and Chinese approach to the border problem was that India was certain and clear as to how and where the border line ran. She proclaimed her possession in unmistakable language and also showed her published maps to the world, unchanged throughout these years. However, the Chinese had been ambiguous, reticent and self-assertive. The stand of the Chinese government with regard to

1. Satyanayan Sinha, op. cit., p. 72. Aksai Chin's literal meaning is the "desert of White Stones". This land of frozen adventure was the backbone of Sino-India border dispute. Ibid., p. 69

2. K. Gopalachari, "The India-China Boundary Dispute", International Studies, V, Nos.1-2, July-April, 1963-64, p.38. Also see, "Mr. Laxman Singh from U.P. was the first person in 1954 to inform the Government about the building of the Aksai Chin Road. As our Trade Representative, he used to visit Tibet every year.... he met some labourers who had worked on building the road". Kuldip Nayar, Between the Lines, New Delhi, 1970, p. 171.
the border line was unconfounded as India's proposition about the Simla Conference of 1914 was held equally valid and legal in foreign press. ¹

**THE THREE SECTORS:**

In the Eastern Sector India claimed its areas in NEFA on the basis of the Mc Mahon Line, established in 1914 by the Indian and Tibetan and Chinese. The border of eastern Tibet was defined by this convention adjacent to Tibet. The line terminated in the East where the borders of Bhutan, Tibet and India meet and continued in the East as the Sino-Burmese border. China refused to ratify this treaty and also branded it illegal and as the one imposed on Tibet by Britain and declared that Tibet was not an independent nation to enter into a treaty of this sort. There were also differences of opinion between the Chinese and Indians with regard to drawing over of the Mc Mahon Line/Dhola (called Chedong by the Chinese) and Longju areas. The Chinese claimed that both these areas were north of the Line, whereas the Indian government claimed that they were south of it. The Chinese government contented that even if the Indian claims to the Mc Mahon Line were conceded, China had a right to these small areas. ²

In the Middle Sector the places in dispute between the two cover the area of 2,0000 square kilometre. In 1957, these areas were showed as parts of China, for the first time.

In the Western Sector, the traditional boundaries of Ladakh were recognised in a Treaty of 1842 between the British authorities and the Raja of Jammu. In this case also, China claimed that the treaty was invalid since China was not a party to it. The Indian claim extended to the north of Himalayan watershed while the Chinese claim extended south of it. This did not include south of the karakoram Range which was recognised by China and Pakistan as the boundary between Sinkiang and Pakistan held Kashmir. The Chinese since 1953, started showing this area in China and also established their outposts.¹

Coming to the Climax of border dispute one is urged to analyse the nature of Chinese diplomacy and the relations with India since the two emerged as independent nations. The first phase of their relations, beginning with China's recognition by India upto 1951 was the phase of contempt and hostility.² Despite the Chinese being hostile, India presented a picture of good relations with the Chinese people and government in cultural and political fields. Tagore visited China

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¹ Ibid., pp. 39-40
in 1924, Nehru in 1939 and Chiang and his wife visited India in 1942. China was invited at the Asian Relations Conference in 1947 in New Delhi. However, the Chinese did not fail to label Nehru as the "running dog of imperialism". This period presented relations of unique character. On Korean question the Sino-Indian relations were governed by India's desire to mediate between China and the West. In 1950-53, India played a significant role of a mediator for achieving truce in Korea. In 1954, India performed a commendable job in Geneva negotiations on Indo-China. India fully cooperated with China in solving the Korean crisis. India's mediation in Korea and surrender of interests in Tibet contributed a great deal in relaxation of initial tension between China and India, with the result that China started soft paddling with India. This dispelled the impression that Sino-India relations were not always based on ideological differences and differences of approach. This appeared to be an era of mutual intimacy and cordial ties which, beginning in 1951, climaxed in the signing of 1954-Sino-Indian Agreement on Trade with Tibet. This marked the end of second phase. The third phase ended in November-December 1956 when Chou-En-lai visited India. With the signing of 1954 Treaty containing the Panchsheel doctrines, started the honeymoon period of Sino-India relations. In 1956, Chou made a long visit to India. The relations were further strengthened by the ratification of Sino-India Agreement on Tibet on June 3, 1954,
the signing of the Protocol at Lhasa on April 1, 1955, handing over of the exchange of various cultural missions. China supported Indian action in Goa. Both India and China reacted strongly to South-East Asian Treaty Organisation and other U.S., sponsored security alliances. The goodwill during this period was reciprocal. The next phase marked the beginning of Sino-India differences. Now commenced the cartographical aggression and the Chinese game of mapsmanship. The Chinese government was not ready to abide by the KMT commitments and expressed the desire to revise the maps published by the Nationalists. These maps in 1953, started showing large parts of Indian territory within China¹ (NEFA, Bhutan and Ladakh etc.). In the same year Chou, though doubtful of the legality of Mc Mahon Line, told Nehru that in view of the present Sino-Indian relations he was prepared to recognise the Line.

In 1954, China lodged a complaint that Indian troops have entered Barohoti. In 1956-57, three times the Chinese troops were found on Indian side of Ship-ki-la and only then, it was first noticed that the Chinese have started building a road connecting Sinkiang to Tibet.² Indian government got aware of it in 1958. However, Nehru and Chou agreed to settle minor

1. White Paper, No. I, p. 3
differences through negotiations. This period, during which India and China seemed to have patched up their differences and consolidated their friendship, also contained seeds of future trouble. During 1957, the range of Sino-Indian conflicts widened. The minor border incidents started to take place, the map controversy, Nehru's objections and Chou's evasive answers, culminated to boil at the slightest pretext. The next phase starting from 1957, continued till 1958. It was free from "minor clashes". Indian public opinion was adverse to the West and not to China. This was the period of lull and animated tension.¹

The next phase, which started from July 1958 to March 1959, caused concern as the clashes renewed at Barahoti, for which the two agreed to keep demilitarised. Despite the Indian government's demand to change the maps, published by China in 1957, the Chinese government refused to do so on the ground that she had not as yet conducted the survey.² This period was responsible for the emergence of strains in Sino-Indian relations. There were rare gestures of goodwill but

¹. Ibid., pp. 111-112. Also see, Notes Memorandum letters exchanged between the Government of India and China contained in "White Papers" published by the Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi.
². China Pictorial, 15.2. 1962
³. White Paper, No. 23, November 3, 1958, p. 47
reciprocal charges of attack and counter attack. Nehru wrote a letter on December 14, 1958, to Chou regretting the Chinese claims, to which Chou replied that the Sino-Indian boundary has never been delimited. In March 1959, demonstrations broke out in Lhasa, the Tibetan Cabinet declared independence of Tibet, the Seventeen Point Agreement between China and Tibet-1951, was declared ultra vires, and Dalai Lama was given political asylum in India. It was the period of deterioration in relations when the Chinese were reported to have crossed at Khinzesmane, NEFA, Migyitun and Longju. In the wake of 1959, India was reminded of the 2000 years old friendship and the Chinese were in a mood to attack. The preliminary phase of border aggression can be categorised in three stages. During the first phase, the aim of the Communist Chinese diplomacy was, to win India's friendship and get Chinese claims approved over Tibet. During the second phase, the Chinese established their military posts in the unguarded Indian territory, taking undue advantage of India's faith in peaceful northern borders. In

1. White Paper, No. I, op. cit., p. 52
2. Ibid.
4. Ibid., p. 75.
the third phase, the Chinese levelled violent accusations against India and occupied Ladakh. Their first conquest enhanced their territorial appetite. The Chinese were establishing their stronghold over Daulat Beg Oldi, Aksai Chin and Qizil Jilga. Their aggressive designs had extended up to Chip Chap river at the Pangong Lake area in Ladakh. On May 14, 1962, Nehru reiterated the demand for the Chinese withdrawal in Ladakh, creating a no man's land of approximately 11,300 square miles. It was later noticed that the Galwan Valley incident proved to be the turning point in the history of the Sino-Indian conflict in Ladakh. Nehru, in one of the Notes sent to the Chinese government mentioned their two intentions to consolidate the Chinese position in the territory occupied by them. Its evidence was the building of a new road through the territory, the setting up of a new post and the general tempo of activity in the area. Secondly, they attempted to take advantage of the differences between India and Pakistan and between India, Bhutan and Sikkim. Till 1962, in Indian perception, China was seeking to utilise a new deliberate intrusion across the eastern boundary to bring the McMahon Line within the scope of talks that would lead to

1. News item, *The Times of India* (New Delhi), 10.6.1962
2. Sinha, op. cit., p.76. *The National Herald* (Lucknow) 10.7.1962. Also see the *Times of India* (New Delhi), 8.5.62, "Like a snake, the Chinese, having swallowed half of Ladakh, are determined to gorge up the rest".
general negotiations. The crux of the Indian interpretation was the resolve that the Mc Mahon Line should not be open for renegotiation. Dissatisfaction was mounting in India with regard to the Indian government's delay in fulfilling its promise to hold the Line inviolate. The Opposition openly declared that any meeting with the Chinese would be labelled as 'appeasement'. The Indian government's reaction, through her note of October 6, 1962, extricated the government from the awkward dilemma into which it had been put in August 1962.¹ Even on March 21, 1962, while addressing a news conference at New Delhi, Nehru did not rule out Arbitration as a method to solve the Sino-India border dispute.²

CHINA INVADES INDIA

The relations between India and China had deteriorated since the rebellion in Tibet.³ The Chinese refusal to recognise the Mc Mahon Line and Indian government's granting of political asylum to the Dalai Lama added fuel to the fire.⁴ Three years

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1. Maxwell, op. cit., pp. 327-28
2. The Pakistan Times (Karachi), 22.3.1962
4. Editorially "Sino-Indian Relations", The National Herald (Lucknow), 22.6.1967. The Sino-Indian Relations have been under strains of varying severity from the time the Dalai Lama with his fellows escaped and sought refuge in India.
after the Chinese attack on the Kongka Pass in Ladakh, they launched a massive attack in the North East Frontier Agency on October 20, 1962. When the aggression occurred, North Atlantic Treaty Organisation supported the aggressed, India. In one of their communiques, the Foreign and Defence Minister of the alliance, expressed grave concern over "the implications of such a Chinese action in Asia." ¹

The Home Minister, Y.B. Chavan held an enquiry into the aggression and later on declared that there were three fold motives of the Chinese aggression against India, ...... it wanted to show the world its military might, it wanted to force India to give up its posture of non-alignment and rush to western powers for assistance, giving up its friendship with the Soviet Union, and thirdly, it wanted to place a heavy burden on defence expenditure on India......"²

India and China did not agree about each others

¹ News item, The Hindustan Times, (New Delhi), 16.12.62. Also see Editorialy, Parliamentary Studies, Vol.XII, No.9, September 1968, p. 1., "That the intention may be to demonstrate the superior might of China to the smaller countries of Asian continent, to upset the apple-cart of India's planned economy, to discredit the non-communist path to socialism that India was following".

² News Item, The Times of India (New Delhi), 24.1.67. ..
versions of attack. India strongly labelled China as the aggressor and China did the vice-versa. However, the initial success of the Chinese troops suggest that they were the ones who managed to attack first with the advantage of surprise. On February 6, 1960, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union emphatically declared, "One cannot possibly seriously think that such a state as India, which is militarily and economically weaker than China would really launch a military attack on China."

However, the Chinese managed to occupy Dhola and openly declared that they were not restrained by the McMahon Line. In the Western sector also, the Chinese penetrated 15 miles. Many of the Indian outposts were captured by them. The Indians had diverse views about China—as a giant power awakened from centuries of sleep, as a country teeming with blue ants, as an ancient civilization, as a spearhead of

1. Sinha, op. cit., p. 77. Also see, Maxwell, op. cit., p. 423, where India is held as the aggressor.
3. The Peking Review, (Peking), 8.11.1963
international communism, as a totalitarianism reproducing the tyranny of the Manchus and also as a menace to the neighbouring countries.¹ As a result of the Chinese aggressive designs, the Indian government declared that "the Panchsheel doctrine is extinct."² The White Paper No. II, manifested how the Chinese government had flouted the Five-Principles and the Declaration of the Bandung-Conference.³ In Parliament also, there was vehement criticism of India's defence preparedness and defence and foreign policies. The Opposition demanded that the Chinese expansionism, should be curbed. In the wake of this aggression, India had military aid from all quarters.⁴ It was a dividend of India's non-alignment policy. China followed the policy of peaceful coexistence in the past as a garb to foster goodwill in Asia and accelerate the pace of its economic development. In order to isolate India, China befriended Pakistan and Burma.⁵ In 1960, China

2. The Hindu (Madras), 7.10.1962
5. Sinha, op. cit., pp. 89, 90 and 91. This Sino-Pakistan bail was confirmed by a Pact, signed on March 2, 1963. However, at the time of aggression, Pakistan's support was with China.
carried the principles of co-existence to an agreement on the Sino-Burmese border, to prove that India's recalcitrant attitude provided no accommodation.¹ For their break-through in the North East Frontier Agency, the Chinese adopted the skilful techniques of deployment and initiative.² The hate-India and Nehru of 1961 in China was essentially directed towards creating an impression among the countries of Asia and Africa that India was the main hurdle in the path of Asian-African solidarity.³ Till November 18, 1962, the Chinese launched their three-pronged drive on the Sela Bomdila and Chakoo sectors. They had their stronghold at Nathula, the centre of panoply as the decisive Sino-India war was fought there. Nathula had strategic importance as it also formed the gateway between India and Tibet. Before the hot war broke out between India and China, an avalanche of correspondence seeking peaceful settlement of borders took place in form of White Paper. When the war was taking place, the never-ending war of protest notes was occurring simultaneously.⁴ On

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² Sinha, op.cit., p. 77.
³ The Times of India (New Delhi), 12.12.1961
October 27, 1962, Nehru demanded China to withdraw at least to the position held on September 8, 1962. The restoration of September 8, position was not the apple of discord, it was expected to create a situation in which talks might occur. India's proposal was in response to the "three-point proposal,"1 made by China on October 24, 1962, for the cessation of hostilities, by which both the sides were to withdraw 20 kilometers from the 'line of actual control'. The Chinese government explained that for the purpose of 20 kilometers withdrawal, they were prepared to regard the Mc Mahon Line as the line of actual control.2 The October 24, 1962 contained phrases like, "Sino-India friendship", "Asian-African solidarity" and "Asian Peace."3 In international quarters, the Chinese "undeclared war"4 caused much concern. The Australian government commented that India was now "paying the price of its insistent support of co-existence". The U.S.S.R., initially took a neutral stand, and promised military help to India and more MIGs,

which were likely to sharpen "the existing tension between Moscow and Peking". Among the non-aligned countries, the U.A.R. was most active in finding some way to end the hostilities. In Tehran also, there was condemnation of the Chinese aggression and the failure of the non-alignment policy. However, when India was facing the Chinese menace, Nehru was not willing to abandon non-alignment. In one Press Conference, he openly declared, that one of the shocks ought to be the unquestioning satisfaction with the policy of non-alignment. The U.S.A., Great Britain, West Germany and Malaya supported India and applauded non-alignment. The U.A.R. had suggested the Afro-Asian mediation. The U.S.S.R. expressed deep concern over the grave situation and urged for an urgent cease-fire. Thus, the international public opinion sided with the Indian government's stand. The Malayan Prime Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman, who was labelled as the neo-imperialist stooge by India, favoured India over this dispute. Nehru was not prepared to part with the avowed foreign policy of India. He categorically stated, "Nothing can change the fundamentals of Indian policy,

2. Kuldip Nayer, *op. cit.*, p. 198
3. *The National Herald* (Lucknow), 23.10.62
not even China's aggression..... India will accept unconditional aid from whatever quarters she will get.... there will be no giving up of non-alignment." In Tehran, it was stated that this aggression proved that neutrality can be ruled out by international circumstances. The non-alignment was to continue as India's official policy, it was realised that it was not expedient. India's faith in non-alignment for future was conditioned by the following factors:

(1) Not to be very vocal while supporting a country. The Chinese aggression was received as a shock.

(2) Most of the support and aid that India received came from the committed and aligned nations; on the contrary the non-aligned nations were less vociferous in supporting India.

(3) The government grew more sensitive to the charges of Opposition. The Opposition repeatedly clamoured: 'where were the recognised friends and their support-like Indonesia, Ghana, Egypt and Yugoslavia.

(4) India's attitude softened towards the West as the whole-hearted support that came from the western

1. The Indian Express (New Delhi), 25.10. 1962
bloc drastically affected the policy framers to relax and revise her policy towards the West. The stand of the U.S.S.R. was ambiguous.

In consonance with the need of the hour, the state of emergency was proclaimed in India.\(^1\) The Opposition asked the government to revise the policy in general. On the basis of past experience, the government had to evolve a policy as may succeed in curbing hostility of any kind. Both the Congress and the Opposition unanimously resolved to disrupt diplomatic ties with China. However, the fundamental defect in India's China policy stemmed from India's weakness in gauging Peking's long term aims.\(^2\)

After an ominous lull at Ladakh and NEFA, on November 22, 1962, the Chinese government offered a cease-fire proposal to India.\(^3\) It followed, as a consequence of which, the 33 days war came to an end.\(^4\) There was ample controversy over the line of Actual-Control, which was September 8, 1962 position by India and November 7, 1959 position by China.\(^5\) Till November 25,

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the Ministry of External Affairs, government of India did not accept the Chinese cease-fire proposal, as the acceptance of such a proposal by India would include acceptance of Chinese control over large chunks of Indian territory in Ladakh and key positions in NEFA, such as Khingemane, Dhola, Walong and Kibitoo. ¹

THE COLOMBO PROPOSALS:

The need to bring the two contending parties to negotiating tables was realised many a time. The first concerted effort was made by the six Colombo Powers on the initiative of the Ceylonese Prime Minister, Mrs. Bandarnaike. ² It was considered to be very significant in international quarters. ³ On the eve of the Colombo Conference, December 10, 1962, the Chinese Government again enquired of India if she was ready to abide by their cease-fire proposal. India, however, replied in the negative. The six non-aligned Powers intended to negotiate only because they presupposed that the dispute constituted a threat to "the concept of Afro-Asian Unity," and also, "for the countries with policies of neutrality and non-alignment." So these six non-aligned countries - U.A.R., Ghana, Indonesia, Burma, Cambodia and Ceylon - held their meeting

１. 'Sunday Standard' (New Delhi), 25.11.1962.
３. Guardian (Manchester), 27.3.1963.
at Colombo to consider the Chinese proposal of cease-fire.¹ The Colombo-Powers were reluctant to offend China by a categorical statement in support of India. There were two points on which the Chinese disagreed with the Colombo Proposals. One was that both India and China may establish civilian posts in the no-man's land in Ladakh and the other was that the Indian army may move up to the Mc Mahon Line.² In January 1963, it was clarified by the then Ceylonese Prime Minister, Mrs. Bandaranaike, that the government of India was prepared to accept the proposals subject to have parliamentary approval. On January 25, 1963, the Prime Minister, Nehru placed before the Lok Sabha the full text of the proposals together with certain clarifications of the Neutral powers' intentions, received from the Ceylonese Prime Minister. In fact, "The Colombo-Proposals were used to lure and lull India into the belief that it was possible to ward off the Chinese menace through negotiations with Peking".³

In the spring of 1963, Peking outrightly refused to agree to the Colombo Proposals whereas India had accepted them without any reservations.⁴ Moreover, the Chinese government

¹ White Paper, No. VIII, pp. 31 and 35.
² Ibid.
³ Sinha, op. cit., p. 93.
⁴ Ibid., p. 92.
rejected the reference of the border dispute with India to the International Court of Justice. They were not in favour of arbitration and finally had rejected the Colombo proposals.\(^1\) Nehru insisted that there would be no talks until the Chinese Government accepted them in toto. It was suggested that the acceptance of the Proposals was in favour of India's security interests.\(^2\)

Later in 1964, Chou is reported to be ready for opening up the "direct negotiations", between India and China, "on the basis of the Colombo Conference proposals". He further added, "... relaxation of the Sino-Indian boundary question is entirely possible provided India agrees to return to the conference table without preconditions". Chou's statement was contained in the Chinese text of an interview he gave in Dacca to a correspondent of Associated Press of Pakistan.\(^3\)

The prospects of the Colombo-negotiations were reduced to four alternatives;

1. Address private state communication to the two contending powers- India and China- appealing to them to come to a settlement;

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1. The National Herald, (Lucknow), 8.3. 1963
2. Iqbal Singh, "India and China where do we go from here" (Part II), The National Herald (Lucknow), 9.6. 1963.
3. The Times of India (New Delhi), 28.2. 1964.
"2. Postpone the conference to an alternative venue with expanded membership;

"3. Pass resolution in general terms propounding the philosophy of non-alignment and peace; and

"4. To adopt a resolution incorporating the stand points of Ghana and the U.A.R.¹

Colombo Proposals died a lingering death as neither India nor China had accepted them for reasons of their own.

After some time, normalcy was restored at the borders. Since 1962 to 1969, India and China had a state of relations comparable to the cold-war. The 1973-74 trend in both the quarters is to revise their friendly ties shattered through the direct confrontation of 1962. Whatever may be the genesis and consequences of the Sino-India border dispute, it led to an enormous number of debates and discussions in the annals of Parliament.