CHAPTER – IV

SINO-INDIAN RELATIONS – LONG PROCESS OF NORMALISATION (1947-1988)
India and China were on good terms in the 1950s following establishment of diplomatic relations between the two. However, the relations began to deteriorate after 1959 due to well known cause which led to Sino-Indian border classes in 1962. Since then the relations became so soured. But there is a great need for normalization of relation between these countries. India and China being Asia's largest and major powers have begun significant transformation and revitalization of their relationship, which if the process continues, will have a far reaching impact on the rest of the continent. Normalization of relations does mean that between hostility at one extreme and collaboration at the other, there is space enough for India and china to cultivate ‘normal’ state to state relations in response to their perspective perceptions of national interest, inevitably sensitive as these are variables in their domestic and international environments. Hence, the directions of both India’s and China’s evolving relations are of considerable importance to the efforts to construct peaceful and stable post – cold war Asia. Stable and growing bilateral relations between India and China are therefore, in the first instance vital interest to their people as they modernize and build their polity and economy. Secondly, as the two countries increasingly integrate themselves into the Asia – Pacific and global economy, and enhance their own cooperation the rest of the region would acquire major stake, in the future prospects for their own security and well being.
The term ‘normalization’ in respect of India-China relations is used here to mean: exchange of visits at the highest political level, regular interchanges among appropriate levels of officialdom; openings and opportunities for commerce, economic cooperation, joint business ventures and general well as the border trade; nonconfrontational dialogue at academic, cultural, and intellectual force; and it must be emphasized, an institutionalized mechanism in the Joint Working Group for working out confidence building measures and demarcation of the Line of Actual Control (LAC) on the Himalayan border, along which the governments have agreed to maintain “peace and tranquility” without prejudice to their respective territorial claims on the disputed boundary.¹

A detailed study is made in this chapter the position of strained India and China relations since 1950s and the long and continued process of normalization of relations between these two nations.

The India – China relations during Nehru Period (1947-1962):

Even earlier to 1946 Interim Government was formed in India there already existed some bonds of friendship between India and China. Sunyatsen had sympathy with non-cooperation movement launched by Gandhi and the Indian National Congress had always supported the Chinese struggle against imperialism. India had established diplomatic relations with Nationalistic China in 1947. The year 1947 seen as a setback in relations between two when China had been invited to Asian Relations Conference in New Delhi in 1947. India’s perception was changed however with Kaishek
Government with establishment of People's Republic of China in 1949. The friendship between two continued.²

Brajeshwar Prasad referring to ideological, cultural, religious, ethnical, philosophical and political sympathy, similarities between peoples of India and China from remote part, urged the Government to explore the possibilities of a federal imperialism and pan-Islamism in Asia; India and China are destined to be leaders of Asia; joined together they will be a force to be reckoned with.³

By early 1949, however as Red Army took over Peking the CCP declared its firm resolve to liberate Tibet. What Nehru was seeking was the friendship with China with integrity and defense of India and Indian interests in Tibet.⁴

When the People’s Republic of China was formally proclaimed on 1st October 1949 India was the non-communist country to recognize it.⁵

Indian public opinion was also clearly in favour of an early recognition of a new regime and long before the formal announcement of recognition on 30th December 1949. It had been accepted on forgone conclusion.⁶

In the 1950’s the Government of India did not hesitate the recognizing the Peoples Republic of China and started looking towards the Chinese leadership for the strengthening of bonds of friendship, like – a). The day the Chinese asked for the membership of the UN the Government of India strongly favored the Chinese case and it is on the record of the UN, that
whenever the issue of the Chinese admission regarding the merger or integration the Indian representatives always supported it. b). The Indian ruling elite are not having two options regarding the merger or integration of Taiwan with the Peoples Republic of China. India was always critical of the US arms and military aid to Taiwan on one pretext or other and was never recognized the separate entity of Taiwan. c). The India opposed the Japanese Treaty its purpose was to restore the independent status of Japan but the real motive of US, the main architect of the treaty was to prepare counter weight to communist’s in Asia. China was critic of this. India delighted Chinese by rejecting this treaty.7

Korean Crisis: On 25th June, 1950 Korean war broke out, on 7th October the decision of the UN armed forces to cross the 38th parallel in Korea was opposed by Indian prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru on 25th October P.R.C. volunteers entered the Korean war and pushed back the UN forces.8

In course of debate on Korean situation on 3rd August 1950, Nehru maintained that after having recognized the new regime it would have been accordingly unreasonable not to accept the logical consequences there of. He added, “It is not for us to criticize what they do internally in their country as it is not for them to criticize interns happening in our country.”9

Nehru made it clear that China was a great country which would not be ignored no matter what resolutions were passed and what speeches were delivered in the House. The government of India was obviously cautious. Although there were marked differences among the members in their
approach to the Korean problem almost all those who participated in the
debate that followed notably, Alladi K. Ayyar, Kamath Rajagopala Chari and
Tirumala Rao supported the Government advocacy of China's admission into
United Nations. In order to stabilize the settlement of Korean question.\textsuperscript{10}

On 29\textsuperscript{th} April 1954, an agreement on inter-course between Tibet
region of China and India signed in Beijing. The preamble to the agreement
contained five principles which come to be known a Panchasheel.\textsuperscript{11}

Chou-Enlai paid a brief visit to India in June. A joint communique was
released after a series of discussions and both countries reiterated their faith
in Panchasheel. The people of India and the Government welcomed Chou –
En – lai with warmth and goodwill. The visit of Chinese premier paid to be
brought in “Hindi Chini bhai – bhai” ness that is the feeling prevailed then.
India and China were brothers. During his visit he along with Nehru issued a
joint communique in which both reiterated their faith in Panchaseel.\textsuperscript{12}

Between 1950-54 however both sides gave assurances that amounted
to an understanding on the issues. One; the problem of defining frontiers i.e.
limits of political influence and two; the problem of defining borders that is
limits of National Sovereignty. Thus Nehru clarified the limited nature of
India's special interest in Tibet, while Chou-Enlai in word and deed indicated
his acceptance of India's special interest in Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim. A total
agreement was made by both to respect the Himalayas as the dividing line
between the northern and southern powers.\textsuperscript{13}
Nehru declared that there were no territorial disputes between India and China “except minor ones” Chou also (according to Nehru) stated that there was no territorial dispute and controversy between the two countries.\textsuperscript{14}

The close cooperation between the two leaders at Bandung Conference in 1955 and Chou-En-Lai’s second and longer visit to India during November 1956 went a long way in improving and stabilizing the relations. Chinese side repeatedly assured its goodwill for India and India made every effort to end China’s isolation from world affairs.\textsuperscript{15}

Throughout the period of 1957-58 on the surface, Sino-Indian friendship maintained. India continued her support to China’s admission to United Nations; though there were notable instances in Barahotti and Nilang in UP, Reakage in Himachal Pradesh, near Chunashel, Dungti and Akasaichin in Ladakh and several peaces in NEFA.\textsuperscript{16}

Towards the end of the summer of 1962, the border situation had definitely worsened. On 21\textsuperscript{st} July, Chinese troops opened fire on Indian Patrol in Chip-Chap valley in sinking without warning.

The Chinese demonstrated their military superiority throughout the period of actual fighting. However on 21\textsuperscript{st} November 1962, Chinese Government announced unilateral ceasefire in the area. Later Chinese 3 point proposals were rejected by Indian Government and then came the Colombo proposals the outcome of Colombo conference in 10\textsuperscript{th} to 12\textsuperscript{th} December 1962. The conference was attended by six non-aligned nations from Asia and
Africa. The proposal of conference was accepted by Nehru but Chou-Enlai did not accept in practice.\textsuperscript{17} It led only tension prevails between two and kept dispute unresolved in future.

Nehru hoped optimistically that principles of peaceful co-existence and good neighborliness were to keep the interests of both the Indian and Chinese people.\textsuperscript{18} On the other hand leadership in China was thinking in a way that was contrary to Nehru’s thinking and it culminated into conflict between the two neighboring countries.

Nehru tried to defense the tense situation through diplomatic demarches and did his best to find peaceful ways of solving the problem. The Chinese were in no mood to listen, they got closer to Pakistan and demanded self determination in Kashmir while rejecting it in Tibet. Indian stand was consistent and in accordance with international law but China applied double standards.\textsuperscript{19}

Though the Indian Government was not satisfied with several aspects of Chinese announcement of 7\textsuperscript{th} November, on the ground it accepted the ceasefire in so far it did not impede its implementation. "The Chinese Prime Minister suggested to Nehru that the officials of the two sides should meet to discuss the 20 kilometers withdrawal of their armed forces to form a demilitarized zone, the establishment of check posts and the return of captured personnel such a meeting could be of positive significance because it would mean the return from battle field to conference table.\textsuperscript{20} No talks and
discussions were possible in circumstances where India was compelled to accept an arbitrary line.\textsuperscript{21}

Nehru adopted a friendly approach. It was Nehru's hope that this approach might gradually assuage Chinese suspicions and fears. This might help in establishing a long term friendly relationship and thus avoid what he knew would be an exhausting, costly and inimical conflict. It was obviously his hope that China would treat India in a footing of equality and together they might play a role that would strengthen the independence of Asian countries and enhance the role of newly emerging countries in International Affairs.\textsuperscript{22}

He did not permit diplomatic relations to be disturbed. He kept the mission in Peking as an active monitoring and negotiated unit. He also struck to non-alignment, inspite of several blandishments. He did not change his policy though attempts were made to persuade him to change. This is truly a remarkable example of continuity in a period of deep personal shock and psychological trauma for the whole nation.\textsuperscript{23}

\textbf{The India-China Relations: The Indira Gandhi Years:}

After the death of Jawahar Lal Nehru his daughter ascended to the Prime Minstership. She continued her father's policy to a large extent. During 1962-76, India-China relations were at very low, both engaged in confrontation. Another blow came to the relationship when India and Soviet Union signed a treaty of peace, friendship and cooperation in 1971. Meanwhile relations between Soviet Union and China had already deteriorated. There were issues of discontentment between the two.\textsuperscript{24}
Relationship between India and China was almost at a halt with pacifism on the part of both countries. The first possibility of ameliorating this tension ridden situation came when in 1970, during the May Day parade, Brijesh Mishra the Indian Charge de affairs was approached by Mao Ze Dong in a receiving line and greeted warmly. The episode is better known as “Mao-Smile”. This was the first gesture of friendship in the troubled relationship. In the view of many analysts, this interest in cultivating relations with India was closely related to the border clashes with Soviet union on China’s Siberia border and Chinese isolation in the World.

In 1971 only Zhou – En – Lai the Chinese premier called on Indian Charge De-Affairs and conveyed congratulations to Prime Minister Indira Gandhi on her re-election. In the same year, China became a permanent member of UN Security Council replacing Taiwan. Therefore, China accorded thanks to the Indian leadership for supporting Chinese cause.

Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi insisted on the acceptance of Colombo proposals as a precondition for settlement of Sino-Indian disputes. Chairman Mao’s smile was widely publicized as Chinas favourable response to Indian offer of normalization of India – China relations. But nothing hopeful emerged because of slanderous propaganda campaign against India continued from China. India still hoped for some dialogue and took initiative sounding China for possible resumption of trade and exchange of ambassadors.
In 1969-70 both looked towards normalcy in their relations. Peking keen on normalization which increased hopes of New Delhi to move forward towards lessening tension. The event took place in May day parade in Beijing. Mao summoned the Indian Charge de Affairs B.C. Mishra and chatted with him on India – China relations. On the other hand the Indian Government having its hands burnt in the experience between 1959-62 was very cautious and wanted to be doubly sure to avoid any possible public ridicule.

India’s one-sided quest for normalization however continued even after the bitter experience of 1971. In early 1975, when a Chinese Ping – Pong team accompanied by Chinese Vice-Minister for sports visited India and the Chinese Premier Chen – Hai – Lien during a brief halt at Calcutta declared his government’s readiness for talks for normalizations process. He behaved differently at Kathmandu; he sympathized with the desire of Bhogyal of Sikkim to preserve the separate identity and status of Sikkim.

China spurned New Delhi efforts at normalization through its hysterical outcry against the merger of the Sikkim with India.  

At last Ambassadorial level relationship was restored in 1976. Two explanations appear plausible which led Mrs. Gandhi to do it. The first must lie in her perception that the strategic environment in South Asia was taking an adverse turn for India which had suffered a direct setback in Bangladesh with the overthrow of Mujibur Rehman in August 1975. Not only had India helped Mujibur Rehman come to power, it subsequently played a significant role in keeping his opponents at bay.
A second and more compelling explanation can be found in Sikkim’s change of status in 1974 when it became an “associate – state” within India union. In 1975 it was granted full statehood. The Chinese not only protested but beefed up troops at strategic points along the North Eastern border. Noting the obvious Chinese displeasure with India’s action Mrs. Gandhi decided it was important to initiate border talks and to do this. Indian diplomats contend it as necessary to upgrade the level of diplomatic representation.

The death of Mao Ze Dong and Zhou En Lai followed the change in leadership of China. This could also be one of the reasons of changed Chinese attitude. Leadership now came in the hands of Deng – Xiao – Ping who had taken a big step by initiating economic liberalization and modernization which resulted in the opening up of Chinese economy.

In April 1976, the Indian Foreign Minister Y.B. Chavan announced in Lok Sabha improving relation at ambassadorial level. Press and public reacted alike. K.R. Narayana assumed his post as India’s ambassador to china. Beijing also named its ambassador to India. Chen Chao Yuvan, who arrived in New Delhi in September 1976 declared that full normalization of Sino-Indian relations through the joint efforts was in the interests of people of both countries and china hoped that improve relations. With restoring ambassadorial relations diplomatic ties between two were upgraded to ambassador level after nearly gap of fifteen years.
The return of Ambassadors indicated Mrs. Gandhi’s desire for improvement of Sino-Indian relations and a willingness to push ahead in this respect. This exchange of Ambassadors did not by itself signify a détente but it had come to represent a political step for a return to normalization.

India-China relations during Janatha Government period:

Before Mrs. Gandhi assumed Prime Minstership for second time for brief span Janata Government ruled India. The redeeming feature of Janata Government’s preference was that it had not allowed border problem to act as constraint on the expansion of trade and cultural relations with China.33 Prime Minister Morarji Desai followed the policy which his earlier Prime Ministers laid down. Only significant event in the period was the visit of Foreign Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to China. Atal Bihari Vajpayee stated in the Rajya Sabha on 24th February, “that several concrete steps have been taken to improve bilateral relations between India and China. He said that since the posting of ambassadors in each other’s capital in the middle of 1976, several exchanges have taken place between India and China in diverse fields on the basis of reciprocity and mutual benefit”.34

During the short tenure of Prime Minister Morarji Desai’s rule in India (1977-79) there was some speculation about an improvement with India-China relationship but no substantial development took place during that period. The Government seemed to see much virtue in continuing the old policy. If it was really serious about normalization of relations change of policy was inescapable.
It was not until February 1979, when Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee the Minister of External Affairs in the Janata Party Government visited China, something significant happened. Mr. Vajpayee went to Beijing to discuss the normalization of relations and the border question. As Mr. Vajpayee was still in China, it attacked Vietnam. Vajpayee had no option but to cut short his visit and return empty handed. The Chinese attack of Vietnam implied the Chinese insensitivity towards India.

However the Vajpayee visit was the first by any high level Indian official exchange in 18 years. The last one was by Zhou-En-Lai in 1960. The visit provided Indian Foreign Minister a Chance to present vigorously Indian point of view vis-à-vis China. During his, visit China – Pakistan nexus was also discussed. Chinese moral and material support to Nagas and Mizos was also put in light. China's perception of Sikkim as a separate entity was also discussed. The vexed border issue was discussed, and it was felt that conscious efforts should be made to restore it. Although no substantial deal could be arrived at in the first high level contact between Chinese and Indian leaders, the visit marked a turning point in the restoration of Sino-Indian relations.

With the return of Mrs. Indira Gandhi to power in 1980 there had been new attempts to improve India-China relationship and Beijing had been sending signals to Mrs. Gandhi that China wants to improve relations with India. In early 1980's China made a proposal for a technical meeting to explore the possibility of Sino-Indian agreement.
In 1980s the relations between India and China resumed upward curve with Mrs. Indira Gandhi and Chairman Hua Gus Feng of China who met at Belgrade. It was the first top level parley between the two countries since the Nehru Chou-En-lai talks in 1960 twenty years ago. Chairman Hua Gua Feng suggested, “both countries should concentrate on the present and future and put aside past differences”. He expressed his happiness at emergence of strong Government after the recent poll and expressed that it would help India play a more useful role in international affair and added China had been consistent supporter of non-aligned movement.36

The meeting ended with positive note. Both leaders agreed that better India-China relation is essential to promote peace and stability in Asia. The meeting also revealed their common agreement on the point, bilateral problems could be solved only if two countries avoid confrontation and restore to mutual consultation.

Soon after, Vice-Premier Deng Zia peng in an interview to an Indian news agency came out with the proposal of a “package” deal to solve the boundary question on the basis of Chinese recognition of the actual line of control in the east in lieu of Indian recognition of status quo in the western sector.37 Reacting to it Indian Foreign Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao submitted in the Lok Sabha on July 1980 that ways other than the package deal (solution) could prove more ‘effective’. India on its part, hoped to settle the border question via spirit consistent with national honour and interests of both sides on the basis of equality.38
Two significant developments came out of this meeting. First Nehru's contribution towards India-China good relations was upheld and second China praised India's Non Aligned status. China maintained that it was a developing country belonging to the third world, which needed a peaceful international environment as also exchange of experience with other countries to facilitate its task of nation's reconstruction.

Huang Hua obviously with an eye towards influencing Indian public opinion also announced that the Chinese would open two ancient Hindu pilgrimage sites in Tibet namely Mansarovar and Kailash. Huang's announcement at the end of his visit that China would take a positive attitude and initiate a sustained dialogue on the border issue marked a significant departure from the earlier Chinese stand that the border problem could be shelved unless there was sufficient improvement in trade, scientific and cultural relations between the two countries. It was also decided that joint round of talks would be started soon in order to solve the long pending issues.

Notwithstanding the minor irritants creeping into their relations, the two countries carried towards the ongoing process of normalization. However in order to facilitate negotiation India dropped its precondition that a border settlement must precede improvement of relations. The process of normalization of relations between India and China consisted of three distant but yet reinforcing levels of activities; the first one is summit meetings between the Heads of states and Governments. In this course, eight rounds
of border talks were held between 1981 and 1988. Though solution to the border tangle proved to be elusive, it does not mean that the whole exercise of holding talks was public. These talks subsequently paved the way for establishing relations at the political level between the two countries.

Eight Rounds of Border Talks:

The Eight Rounds of talks between India and China from 1981 to 1988 could be categorized into two groups. The first four dealt with ‘basic principles’ and the last four with "the situation on ground".

The First Round: The first round of Sino-Indian border talks took place at Beijing from December 10th to 14th, 1981. The Indian delegation constituted of Ranjit Sethi, Joint Secretary, External Affairs, G.N. Rao India’s Ambassadors in Ultau Bator, Manorama Balla Secretary, Indian Council of Cultural Relations Usha Rohra, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Commerce and two other officials. The Chinese sides there were Mr. Ham acting as Foreign Minister in place of Huong Hua who was sick, Cheu Zha – Ouan, Director, Second Asian Dept in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ding Gu, Director Second Dept. of Commission on Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries. The Sino – Indian official level talks ended in Beijing on December 14th 1981 with both sides agreeing to continue the contacts and pursue efforts to resolve their differences on the boundary question. "The Indian delegation to the five days talks held after a gap of 20 years was led by Mr. Eric Gonselves, Secretary in Ministry of External affairs and the Chinese side by Mr. Han Nianlong Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs."
Besides the border problem the two countries also discussed the measures to increase cultural relations and trade. In the talks the Chinese offered the so called package deal or proposal. Foreign Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao rejected the proposal, contending it equated the aggressor with the victim denied the legality of McMohan line and in no way assuaged India's 1962 humiliation. Further more it was felt that package would legitimize the Chinese gains made through the use of force. The Chinese Foreign Ministry in a statement said that "an amicable atmosphere prevailed throughout the talks, and that both sides adopted a positive attitude which was conducive to further developing relations between the two countries. The Indian embassy spokesman acknowledged that exchange of views brought out the extent to which the differences remained between the two sides and also that they desired to continue efforts to resolve their differences.46

The Second Round: The second round of the Sino-Indian official talks commenced on May 17th, 1982 and concluded on May 20th, 1982. The Indian side was headed by Mr. Eric Gonsalves, Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs, while the Chinese side was headed by Mr. Fu Hao, a Former Vice-Foreign Minister. The round of talks ended in New Delhi without arriving at agreed plan for restoring tangled boundary question. Officials of two countries agreed to meet again for talks. Talks ended in same manner as in Beijing in December 1981. "The boundary talks attended by the leader of Chinese delegation, Mr. Fu Hana and Indian delegation headed by P.V. Narasimha Rao Minister of External Affairs.47 There was no desire to resolve boundary question. Lack of political direction visible clearly. It was
failure in the field of boundary settlement (package deal) but both had exchanges in other spheres like economy, cultural, science and technology.\textsuperscript{48}

The Third Round: The third round talks commenced on 29\textsuperscript{th} January and ended in Beijing on February 2\textsuperscript{nd}, 1983. The five member Indian delegation was led by K.S. Bajpai, Secretary in Ministry of External Affairs, while the Chinese delegation was led by Mr. Fu Hao, Advisor to the Chinese Foreign Ministry. This round of talks revealed that major differences between India and China still persist on border question. Border question was important for them. Xinhua, quoting reliable source said both sides were positive in their attitude in negotiations on boundary question and the air was friendly.\textsuperscript{49} In the third round talks India’s position was that it would not discuss the legality of the case on legal positions of two sides which had been fairly well documented in the official report of 1960. The one tangible concession that the Indian side was willing to make was that it would seek some common ground without abandoning its legal position.\textsuperscript{50}

The fourth Round: The fourth round talks between officials of India – China held in New Delhi from 24\textsuperscript{th} October 1983 and concluded on October 30\textsuperscript{th}, 1983 while a settlement of the dispute was still distant it was significant that China agreed to consider, if not accept Chinese package plan. The five day talk was the discussion on principles – that is China’s five principles and India’s six principles endorsed in 1982. Pro’s and con’s discussed. They did not agree but differed. The discussions were significant only for talks held on principles. The Indian side agreed to the Chinese suggestion that
normalization should proceed in other sphere without necessarily linking them to border talks. The round led to a substantial expansion of exchanges in a range of areas including science, culture and trade. Both agreed to proceed on a sector by sector basis.

The Fifth Round: The fifth round of talks between officials of India China were held from 17th to 21st September, 1984 in Beijing. The Indian delegation led by Mr. K.Natwar Singh, Secretary in the Ministry of External affairs and the Chinese delegation led by Vice – Premier Mr. Wan Li, a senior most Vice –Premier of Chinese State Council. Mr. Wan Li, sought further strengthening and development of bilateral cooperation in the field of economy, technology and culture. He said, “China and India suffered from imperialist and colonialist oppression and now both want peace and stand for task of developing their economy and stand for disarmament and have common point on many international issues.” Mr. Singh said that he held the same Views and feeling towards the development of bilateral relations. In the fifth round the Chinese position had softened somewhat and according to an Indian official closely connected with the talks, “the Chinese appeared amenable to settling the dispute along the McMohan line in the eastern sector with minor concessions. They also wanted certain pieces of Indian territory in the Aksaichin areas. This proposal was discussed at some length left abonded proposal. Following the assassination of Mrs. Gandhi; the Government appeared unwilling to take a bold initiative to try to resolve their contention issue.
The year 1985 saw the emergence of Mr. Rajiv Gandhi as the new leader of Indian people. Chinese premier, Zhas Ziang on January 1st, congratulated Mr Rajiv Gandhi on his assumption of the office of the Indian Prime Minister. In a message Mr. Zhao said "we are pleaded to note that with the joint efforts of the Chinese and the Indian governments, Sino-Indian relations have visibly improved and developed. He further said "I sincerely hope and believe that during your excellence tenure of office, the traditional friendship that has long existed between the two countries will be further strengthened and Sino-Indian friendly relations will develop to a new high. Though Rajiv Gandhi did not visit Beijing till 1988 to have discussions about the bilateral affairs he did talk to him whenever he got an opportunity at international gatherings held in other countries.

Just prior to the sixth Round, Foreign Minister Baliram Bhagat met with his Chinese counterpart, Wu Xue Quin in New York and both sides expressed considerable optimism about the forthcoming round of talks. Wu expressed that the border question was the only outstanding problem and that the dispute could be settled in a spirit of "mutual accommodation and mutual understanding". Wu conveyed Chinese Premier Zhao Zinag’s desire to hold talks with his Indian counterpart Rajiv Gandhi. Both Prime Ministers met each other in New York on October 3rd, 1985, where Ziang renewed the invitation to visit China but Gandhi stated that little would be achieved by such visit unless the proper preparatory work had been done. Simultaneously both the leaders reiterated that border problem was not an insurmountable problem.
and needed to be addressed on a priority basis in order to effect a speedy settlement.

**The sixth Round:** The Sixth round talks between officials of India-China held in New Delhi from November 4-10 1985. The Chinese delegation was headed by Vice-foreign Minister Liuxiaquing and the Indian delegation led by Secretary of Ministry of External Affairs, A.P. Venakateswaran. The two countries stated their views on the substantive issue related to the eastern sector of the disputed border and decided to discuss in detail. Those related to the central and western sectors with next round to be held in Beijing in 1986. The present round was significant only to the extent that both India and China got discussing substantive issue after having devoted attention during earlier round of guiding principles. The border, issue, which is regarded as crucial to normalizing ties between the two countries was discussed by sector. What the two sides had to achieve was removal of an irritant in bilateral relations by resolving the issue of Indian Embassy property in Beijing seized by the Chinese in 1967. The question of compensation was also sorted out.

The sub group of Property and Assets led by Mr. J.S. Teja, Secretary in External Affairs Ministry and Mr. Liu Shuqing Vice-Foreign Minister who headed the Chinese delegation concluded an agreement under which the Chinese government would make available about 35,000 square meters of area on a long term lease basis for Indian Embassy. The land would be given at a special friendship rate which was lower than the prevailing price. The two sides also agreed to assist each other in facilitating extensions of the
embassy building in New Delhi and Beijing. The sub group on Science and Technology decided to exchange delegation in Computer industry, Agriculture, Education, Plasma, Physics, Laser Technology and Biotechnology. Some progress was made in the field of cultural exchange as the two sides decided to hold exhibition on the contemporary art in New Delhi and Beijing. It was also agreed to organize a joint seminar in Beijing on socio-economic policy planning in India and China. In 1986 relations between India – china deteriorated, there were allegations of Chinese involvement in the nuclear program of Pakistan “Before the start of Seventh Round Chinese already made incursion in the area known as Sundurong chu in Arunachal Pradesh.”

Seventh Round: The seventh round of official level talks between India-China held from July 19th and concluded in Beijing on July 23rd, 1986 without any substantial progress made on boundary issue. The Indian delegation was led by Indian Foreign Secretary Mr. A.P. Venakateswaran who headed five members’ delegation and Mr. Liu Shuqing, Chinese Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs led Chinese delegation. The talks which had centered around the boundary issue proceeded in a friendly and frank atmosphere. The two sides enhanced their mutual understanding but made no substantial program. The two sides also had fruitful exchange of views on International issue of mutual concern. Both sides maintained that the talks were useful and agreed to hold the next round of talks in New Delhi. Despite the episode of 1986, the Chinese incursions into sundurong chu, talks held but it made Indian side quite circumspect and Chinese side intransigent, was actively discussed in his
round. The package proposal was simply not mentioned and little substantive agreement was reached.\textsuperscript{58}

The Eight Round: The eighth round of official level talks were held in New Delhi from November 14\textsuperscript{th} to 17\textsuperscript{th}, 1987. The Indian delegation was led by Mr. K.P.S Menon, Foreign Secretary and the Chinese delegation led by Mr. Liu shuquig Vice Foreign Minister.\textsuperscript{59} “The talks were held in a positive cordial and friendly atmosphere. Discussion took place on various aspects of bilateral relations including the boundary question. Both delegations reaffirmed their desire to improve relations in all fields and to continue their efforts to reach a peaceful, negotiated settlement of the India – China boundary question. It was also stressed that pending a negotiated settlement of boundary question peace and tranquility should continued to be maintained all along the border. Both sides agreed to make endeavors to further develop their friendly relations and expressed their optimism about prospects for the future development of bilateral relations.\textsuperscript{60} The need to avoid military confrontation was stressed on both sides in this round of talks and greater interest in economic cooperation and trade was expressed clearly. The upshot of talks seemed to be that the border issue could not be settled at the bureaucratic level and that a political initiative was necessary.

Nothing significant could be achieved by the eight rounds of talks between India and China. The level of discussion was limited to the bureaucratic standard and involvement of political leadership was absent.
Deng Xiao Ping called these talks as a “mound of stale rice buzzing over with flies”.61

In the words of Nikhil Chakravarthy the completion of rounds – “What seems to have been achieved is the awareness of the need for a political initiative. At the same time there has come about an understanding on the steps to de-escalate armed confrontation on the ground a move which will be facilitated in this season of heavy snow’s concerned area. It is also agreed on both sides that conscious effort need to be made for stepping up trade and economic cooperation which more actively in the field of cultural cooperation will certainly help better understanding at the popular mass level. Exchange of Ministerial level visits seems to be on the agenda.62


Rajiv Gandhi became the Prime Minister of India in December 1984. As a Young energetic, dynamic leader of India he initiated economic liberalization and modernization programme. He pledged to give clean administration to the impressive personality made good impression over the countries and people wherever he went. His ardent support to international peace and stability won him praises all over the world. He emerged as the leader of the third world.

Meanwhile in Soviet Union, another young and dynamic leader, Mikail Gorbachev came into the power. His reforms and restructuring programme better known as Glasnost and Perestroika had much to do not only with internal politics of Soviet Union but also with world politics. His efforts to
improve the negotiations with USA resulted in the end of cold war which had kept the world in tenderhooks for more than forty years. A fresh air started blowing all over the world and all power equations changed. Communism had disappeared from the Eastern Bloc including Soviet Union.

All these development provided India and China a fresh opportunity to enhance bilateral cooperation. When the two old enemies Soviet Union and America could become friends than why not India and China. Rajiv Gandhi took the advantage of the situation and sincerely proceeded towards normalizing relations with China. He accepted the Chinese proposal that the two countries improve relations in a series of areas, ultimately achieving a normalization of relations, even while continuing to disagree on the complex territorial issues. But New Delhi always insisted that the full normalization of relations would come only after progress was made toward the resolution of territorial issue. These adjustments in Indian policy were communicated to Chinese vice Foreign Minister Mr. Lui Shuquin during the eighth round of bilateral talks in November 1987.

Rajiv Gandhi's China visit:

With conclusion of the Eighth round of talks, after much deliberations and political initiative, former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi undertook a visit to China in December 1988. Rajiv Gandhi decision to visit China stemmed from variety of reasons. In the dismal domestic context Prime Minister Gandhi needed a major foreign policy success to boost his sagging political future. The time was ripe to use the Sino-Indian relations to seek success abroad
and to strengthen his political position. Improved Sino-Soviet relations helped to improve the relations with China. India could no longer count on unstinted Soviet support in case of Sino-Indian dispute.66

Keeping in view these entire domestic as well as international situation Rajiv Gandhi left for China for six day state visit. On his arrival in Beijing on 19th December, 1988 Rajiv Gandhi made a jubilant announcement that he had come to 'renew our old friendship' and that his visit would mark 'a new beginning' in the development of bilateral relations between the two countries.67 He held talks with all the supreme Chinese leaders. He met Chinese Premier Li Peng, Chairman Deng Xiao Ping, President Yong Shang Kun; General Secretary of Communist party of China Zhao Ziang etc.

Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi witnessed a changed Chinese attitude which was corresponding to the new realities in international politics. Deng Xiao Ping said to Mr. Gandhi, “Let both sides forget the unpleasant events in our past relations and let us treat everything with an eye on future.”68 Rajiv Gandhi was fully agreed with the statement. Deng Xiao Ping harped on the theme of peace and development in the region which indicates China’s concern in those areas. As Deng put it, "The total population of china and India exceeds 1.8 billion and accounts for more than one third of world’s population. Out two countries share the same responsibility and we should make use of the current peaceful environment to develop ourselves. It is said that the next century will be an Asia – Pacific century. It seems that the century will only be realized when China India and other developing countries
in the region are fully developed. Both sides reaffirmed their faith in
Panchasheel, the five principles of peaceful coexistence.

Deng reminded Gandhi; “The five principles for peaceful coexistence
jointly by our two countries are principles that have stood the test of time very
well. These principles are unequivocal, straight forward and clear cut. We
recommend these principles to the international community as guiding
principles for international relations. First of all, we as the two initiators should
implement them and jointly pursue these five principles of peaceful
coexistence with our neighboring countries.”

New International Economic Order:

Deng Xiao Ping had sought India’s co-operation in establishing a New
International Economic Order (NIEO). Deng told Mr. Gandhi “We have put
forward the proposal of establishing a New International Economic Order
many times. Now we must do two things at the same time in world. One is to
establish a New Political Order and the other is to establish a new
international economic order.” Rajiv Gandhi reciprocated Deng’s view.
Chairman Deng’s ideas were basically the same as the ideas held by India.

China had shown its desire to play important role in third world. For this
it had become obvious that it had to align with India. Both sides displayed
unusual flexibility when the Chinese Prime Minister Li Peng remarked. “As
long as both sides are sincere and make constant efforts to explore the ways
to settle the border issue on the principles of mutual accommodation and
mutual understanding the issue can be settled.”
These positive sentiments were reciprocated by Gandhi when he said; “The border issues are the knottiest between China and India. We should settle this issue through peaceful and friendly consultation. India is determined to settle this issue through mutual benefit and reciprocity.” The Chinese Premier Li Peng hoped that the visit of Indian prime Minister to China would create a good atmosphere and a good beginning for the settlement of the boundary issue in the future. The Indian policy towards Tibet was also welcomed by the Chinese as India pledge not to interfere in internal affair of china regarding it as an integral part of China. The two governments also agreed to establish a Joint Working Group on the boundary question and a joint Group on Economic Relations and Trade, Science and Technology.

Rajiv Gandhi’s China trip had broken the impasse and opened the ways to achieve and normalization of India – China relations. It was the first visit of an Indian Prime Minister after a gap of 34 years. It was also the highest level exchange since Zhou-En-Lai and visited India in 1960. The visit has contributed to a more relaxed climate in Sino-Indian relations. The visit led to the creation of a joint Working Group to deal exclusively with the border problem. Rajiv Gandhi describing his visit to China said, that it was a turning point in the bilateral relations, which had heralded in a new beginning. He further said that he had invited Mr. Li Peng to visit India and the invitation had been accepted.

After Rajiv Gandhi’s visit to China, high level visits at and above ministerial level between the two countries increased significantly and the
bilateral exchanges in various fields expanded quickly. Meanwhile, the Chinese Vice-Premier Mr. Wu Xueqian arrived in New Delhi on 11, 1989 on a week-long visit, intended primarily to keep up the momentum generated by the high level contacts in the bilateral field in the past. Both sides were determined to continue the momentum established by the Gandhi Deng – Li Peng summit. Wu said that a mutually acceptable solution can be found. Moreover the two sides shared identical views on many international issue and agreed to work together to establish a New International Political and Economic Order.

**An overview:**

The year 1962 will remain for long as a crucial year in the history of relations between India and China. It began rather calmly with Chinese contending with some patrol activates in the border areas. But as the year progressed the offensive activities of so called frontier guards of communist China grew and developed towards the end into a massive invasion resulting in to India-China war in 1962. India lost war due to lacunae in Indian defence preparedness and in-adequate attention given to it by Indian leadership. The period from 1961-1975 was marked by complete breakdown of relationship between these countries. Both the countries started looking each other with suspicion and mistrust. Another blow came to the relationship when India and Soviet Union signed a treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation. The Nuclear explosion by India in 1974 had its effects followed by annexation of Sikkim as a state in Indian union. During the year 1976 Ambassador level relationship restored and since than inspite of minor irritants, the efforts for
normalization of relations started. Diplomatic relationships have been restored. Later from 1981-88, eight rounds of talks held in this direction. What seems to have achieved with these rounds of talks was the awareness of the need for political imitative. With the conclusion of the eighth round of talks after much deliberations political initiative as expressed in the last round and Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi undertook a visit to China. The Rajiv-Lipeng meetings did not result in solution to the border problem but laid down path for further normalization process as discussed in next chapter.
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