



SPECPOL

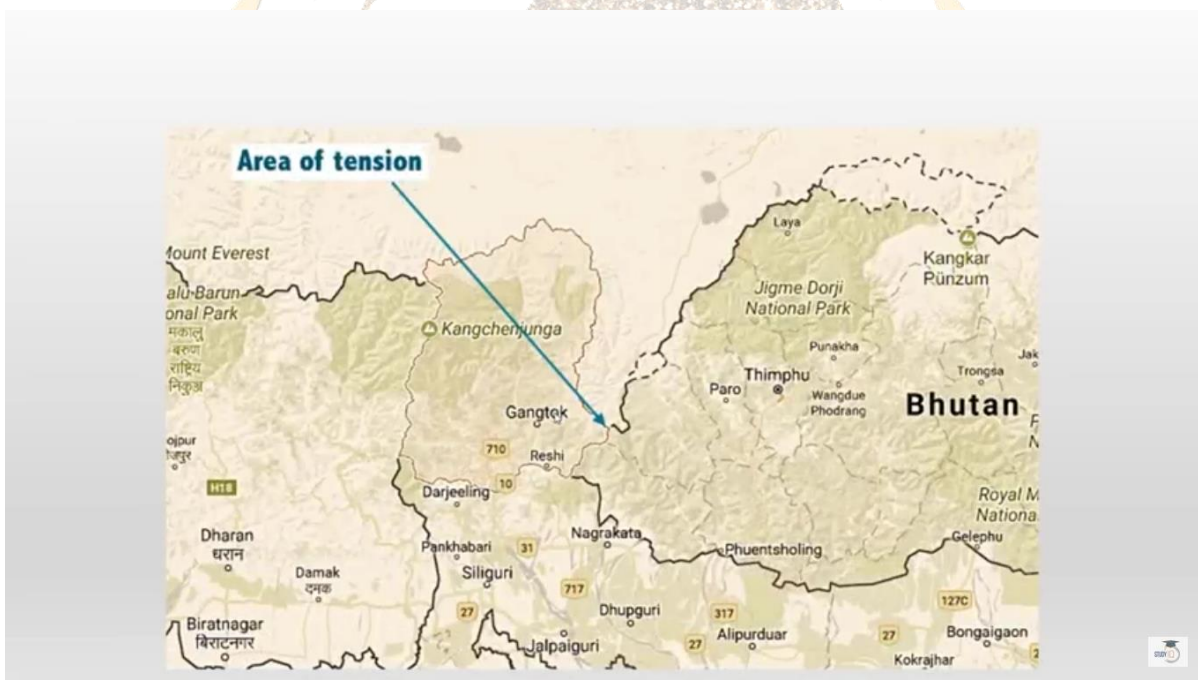
Special, Political and
Decolonization Committee

STUDY GUIDE



Doklam Conflict.

The recent standoff between India and China at the Doklam plateau which lies at a tri-junction between the India, China, and Bhutan has gained much attention. It has turned into the biggest military stand-off between the two armies in years. The Doklam lies in



the Kingdom of Bhutan, and the dispute is bilateral between Bhutan and China, however the region being of strategic importance to India, requires it to support its ally, Bhutan.

Border Disputes Between India And China:

1. **Western Sector – DISPUTED** – This comprises the Aksai Chin sector. This region which originally was a part of the state of Jammu and Kashmir is claimed by China as part of its autonomous Xinjiang region. After the 1962 war, it is administered by China. It is the second largest Indo-China border area covering over 38000 sq. km. However, it is an uninhabited land. While India claims the entire **Aksai Chin territory** as well as the **Shaksgam valley** (Indian territory gifted to China by



CBMUN 18

TRANSCEND. TRANSFORM. TAKEDOWN!

Pakistan), China contests Indian control over Daulat Beg Oldi (a tehsil in Leh, south of Aksai China-it is believed to host the world's highest airstrip)

2. **Central Sector – UNDISPUTED** – Although China has recognised India's sovereignty over Sikkim and had initiated the trade at Nathu La pass, the Doklam fiasco could mean trouble at all ends.
3. **Eastern Sector – DISPUTED** – The Arunachal Pradesh border that China still claims to be its own territory is the largest disputed area, covering around 90000 sq. km. It was formally called North East Frontier Agency. During the 1962 war, the People's Liberation Army occupied it but they announced a unilateral ceasefire and withdrew respecting the international boundary (McMahon Line). However, it has continued to assert its claim over the territory. Nowadays, almost the whole of Arunachal is claimed by China.

Brief Historical background Of India-China Border Disputes:

In 1962, Sino Indian war occurred which claimed 2000 lives and played out in the harsh terrain of Karakoram Mountains. The primary cause was the disputed border of Aksai Chin. India asserted that the region belonged to Indian Administered Kashmir, China countered it to be a part of Xinjiang province. The British Survey did present a Johnson line and later a McDonald line as border demarcation plans which were not endorsed by China.

The creation of Pakistan in 1947, the Chinese invasion and annexation of Tibet in 1950, and China's construction of a road to connect Xinjiang and Tibet through land claimed





CBMUN 18

TRANSCEND. TRANSFORM. TAKEDOWN!



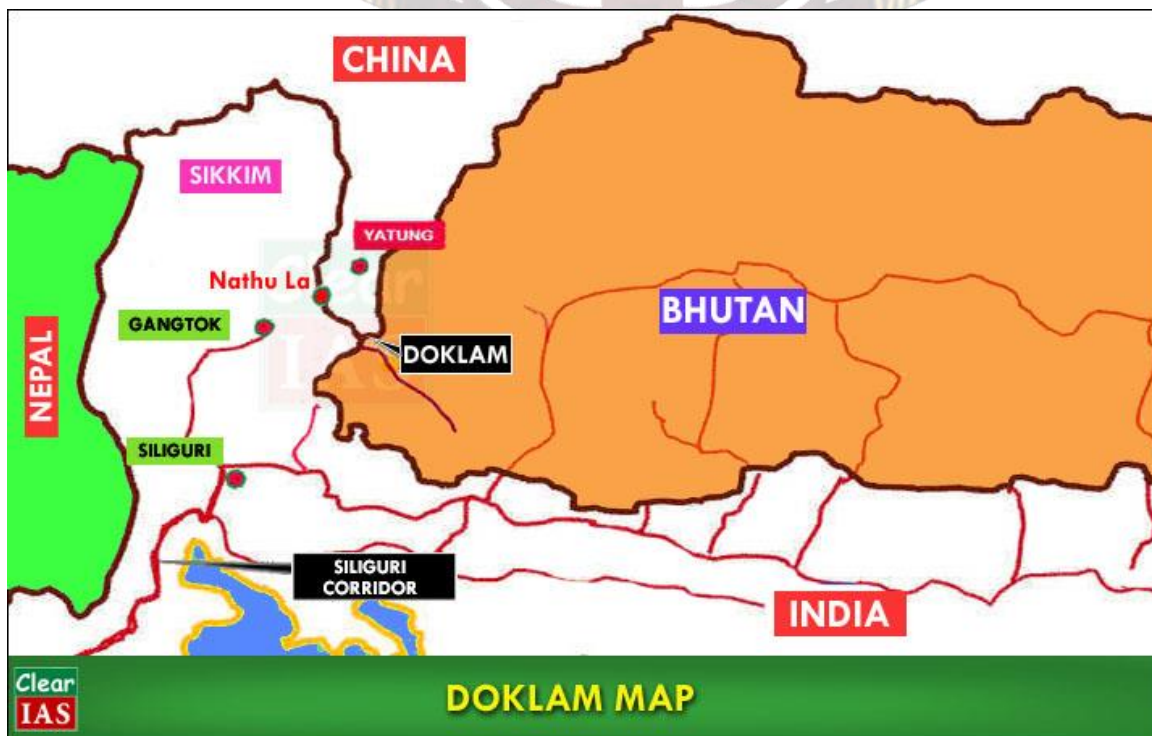
by India all complicated the issue. From 1959 forward, border skirmishes broke out along the disputed line. In 1961, Nehru instituted the Forward Policy, in which India tried to establish border outposts and patrols north of Chinese positions, in order to cut them off from their supply line. On October 10, 1962 heavy fighting started, which lasted for a month. The war lasted just

one month but killed 1,383 Indian troops and 722 Chinese troops. An additional 1,047 Indians and 1,697 Chinese were wounded, and nearly 4,000 Indian soldiers were captured. Many of the casualties were caused by the harsh conditions at 14,000 feet, rather than by enemy fire. Hundreds of the wounded on both sides died of exposure before their comrades could get medical attention for them.

In the end, China retained actual control of the Aksai Chin region.

Further read: <https://www.thoughtco.com/the-sino-indian-war-1962-195804>

Strategic Significance of Doklam Plateau:





CBMUN 18

TRANSCEND. TRANSFORM. TAKEDOWN!



A narrow strip called Siliguri Corridor slims down to 17 kilometres at its narrowest connects the big landmass of India to North East India. The Siliguri corridor is also known by a more appropriate name: Chicken's Neck.

This corridor is of pivotal importance to India as it runs rail and road networks towards the North East through it. This allows it to sustain the armed forces posted in the North East

which will form an important piece of the puzzle should a conflict arise between India and China in the region. If, however, China is able to block off the corridor, the

north east will be cut off from provisions and supplies. In this context, the Doka la Pass becomes important, In June 2017, India accused China of constructing a road in the disputed territory on the Doklam plateau. This road would link the Chinese territory of Yadong to Doklam and would allow China to transport troops and ammunitions practically at India's doorstep with great ease.

China, however, wants to get as close to the Siliguri corridor as possible to cut off the North East from the rest of India, which shall result in a shortage of reinforcements to the Indian army stationed in the North-East, requiring a complete rethink of India's military strategy.

China's presence in the area also gives it possible access to important Indian infrastructure. A hydro-electric project is located at Jaldhakariver at Jhalong, close to the border. The project is also a bridge for crossing over to Bhutan.

Further read: TRANSCEND. TRANSFORM. TAKEDOWN!

<http://www.firstpost.com/india/sikkim-standoff-strategic-importance-of-siliguri-corridor-and-why-india-should-be-wary-of-china-3785967.html>

https://idsa.in/idsacomments/doklam-china-strategic-calculus-and-india-policy-options_ggdwivedi_110817





CBMUN 18

TRANSCEND. TRANSFORM. TAKEDOWN!



Current Circumstances:

In July 2017 India and China were caught in a lengthy confrontation along their shared frontier, spiking tensions and allowing a rabidly jingoistic press in both countries to aggravate the already deep-seated mutual distrust. The current confrontation seems to be the most serious in recent times and shows no signs of de-escalating. Both countries upped the ante and deployed around 3,000 troops each in the tri-junction.

"We firmly believe that the face-off in the Donglang area will end up with the Indian troops in retreat. The Indian military can choose to return to its territory with dignity or be kicked

out of the area by Chinese soldiers," China's nationalist tabloid Global Times said on July 5. "This time we must teach New Delhi a bitter lesson."

An article on the PLA's English-language website, China Military Online, has warned that "if a solution isn't reached through diplomatic or military communication or the issue isn't handled properly, another armed conflict ... is not completely out of the question."

Beijing alleges Indian troops crossed into a region known in China as Donglang, early in June and obstructed work on a road on the Himalayan plateau. Chinese officials say the Indian side's actions infringe upon an 1890 border agreement between Britain and China that previous Indian governments pledged to uphold.

Bhutan said the construction of the road on its territory is "a direct violation" of agreements with China. " Bhutan hopes that the status quo in the Doklam area will be maintained as before June 16, 2017," its foreign ministry said. Although China and Bhutan have been negotiating the precise border for decades without serious incident, Bhutan this time sought help from India, which considers the particular patch of mountain to be a strategically vital territory and sent troops to the plateau to stop the Chinese workers. Both sides have failed to fix the issue since then. Chinese officials have





CBMUN 18

TRANSCEND. TRANSFORM. TAKEDOWN!



also warned India that it should learn "historic lessons" from its humiliating defeat in the 1962 war that both countries fought over their border. In response, Indian Defense Minister Arun Jaitley retorted that "India in 2017 is different from India in 1962," referring to its improved military strength. Indian media issued shrill warnings about Chinese expansionism, while Chinese state media ramped up their bellicose rhetoric, with the nationalist tabloid Global Times warning that Beijing would make no concessions.

On assuming power, the People's Republic of China (PRC) renounced all prior foreign agreements as unequal treaties imposed upon it during the "century of humiliation" and demanded renegotiation of all borders. The Sino-India border remains the only major territorial dispute, other than South China Sea disputes, that China has not resolved. China's growing assertiveness in its territorial claims, especially on Arunachal Pradesh, and its relentless development of infrastructure in Tibet will shape the prospects of Sino-India relations.

The Chinese have landed up in a position where they support the 1890 Convention and oppose the Anglo-Tibetan Convention of 1914 which created the McMahon Line, and second, they are left upholding the watershed principle, something that India has been arguing for in the border talks with China.

Further Read: https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/india-china_conflicts.htm

<http://foreignpolicy.com/2017/09/01/the-china-india-border-standoff-what-does-beijing-want/>

Executive Summary of Past Relevant Efforts:

Note: Consult Appendix A for relevant documents.

1. Simla Accord 1914:

To demarcate the boundary between Tibet and North East India, a convention was held at Shimla in 1914, representatives of all three i.e. Tibet, China and British India. After the discussion, the agreement was signed by British India and





Tibet but not by the Chinese officials. Presently India recognises the McMahon line, as agreed by the Shimla convention, as the legal boundary between India and China. However, China rejects the Shimla agreement and the McMahon line, contending that Tibet was not a sovereign state and therefore did not have the power to conclude treaties.

2. The Macartney-MacDonald Line:

The Macartney-MacDonald Line is a proposed boundary in the disputed area of Aksai Chin. It was proposed to China in 1899 by the British Indian Government via its envoy to China, Sir Claude MacDonald. The Chinese Government never gave any response to the proposal. Subsequently, the British Indian Government is said to have reverted to its traditional boundary, the Johnson Line.

3. Panchsheel Agreement of 1954:

The Panchsheel agreement or the 5 principles of Peaceful Coexistence are a set of principles to govern relations between states.

Its first codification took place as a treaty signed between China and India in 1954.

The five principles include:

- i. Mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty.
- ii. Mutual non-aggression.
- iii. Mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs.
- iv. Equality and cooperation for mutual benefit.
- v. Peaceful coexistence.

These principles were emphasized by the Prime Minister of India, Mr. Nehru, in a broadcast speech made at the time of the Asian Prime Ministers Conference in Colombo, Sri Lanka just a few days after the signing of the Sino-Indian treaty in Beijing. Nehru stated:

"If these principles were recognized in the mutual relations of all countries, then indeed there would hardly be any conflict and certainly no war."

4. India-China Agreements regarding the Line of Actual Control (LAC):



The LAC is the effective military border which separates Indian controlled areas of Jammu and Kashmir from Aksai Chin. It is to be noted that this border is not a legally recognised international boundary, but rather it is the practical boundary. Conventionally, India considers the Johnson line of 1865, marked by a civil servant W.H. Johnson, which put Aksai Chin in Jammu and Kashmir. On the other hand, China recognises the Macartney-Macdonald Line as the actual boundary which puts Aksai Chin in Xinjiang region of China. In 1993, when the then Prime Minister Narasimha Rao visited China, 'The Agreement for Maintenance of Peace and Tranquillity along the LAC' has been signed between India and China. In 1996 an agreement took place on Confidence Building Measures in the military field along the LAC.

5. The recognition of Sikkim:

In 2003 India and China signed Declaration on Principles for Relations and Comprehensive Cooperation and also mutually decided to appoint Special Representatives to explore the framework of a boundary settlement from the political perspective. The India-China relations received a major boost in 2003. China recognised India's sovereignty over Sikkim. This was also followed by a framework of Guiding principles and political parameters to improve bilateral ties. It proposed a three-step resolution to the border disputes:

- i. A bilateral agreement on the laid down principles.
- ii. This was to be followed by an exchange of maps between the two countries.
- iii. Once satisfied with the markings, the final demarcation of borders was to take place.

Clearly, the policies have not sufficed in realising a solution to the long-standing disputes. A status-quo exists owing to the face-off between differential aspirations of the two nations. While China's support for resolution of border disputes stands subservient to Tibet issue, India would continue to hold on to the Tibet card unless the border-disputes are resolved. Besides, the changing global and regional picture – from China's move towards 'assertive regionalism', its strengthening ties with Pakistan and its complete disregard for counter-opinions on



CBMUN 18

TRANSCEND. TRANSFORM. TAKEDOWN!



contentious issues like South-China sea – has only worsened the chances of a quick resolution.

Appendix A

Documents	Links
The Facts and China's Position Concerning the Indian Border Troops' Crossing of the China-India Boundary in the Sikkim Sector into the Chinese Territory.	http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/zxxx_662805/P020170802542676636134.pdf
Simla Accord 1914.	https://apps.cndls.georgetown.edu/projects/borders/archive/files/87feeddd03628b6e1dee2dfcdf813450.pdf
Declaration on Principles for Relations and Comprehensive Cooperation	https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/CN%20I%20N%20930907%20Agreement%20on%20India-China%20Border%20Areas.pdf
Agreement for Maintenance of Peace and Tranquillity along the LAC (agreements on LAC)	https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/CN%20I%20N%20961129%20Agreement%20between%20China%20and%20India.pdf

CBMUN 18

TRANSCEND. TRANSFORM. TAKEDOWN!





CBMUN 18

TRANSCEND. TRANSFORM. TAKEDOWN!



Appendix B

Glossary:

- Sikkim: Sikkim is a state in northeast India, bordered by Bhutan, Tibet and Nepal.
- Tibet: Tibet is a lofty Plateau on the northern side of the Himalayas. Tibet is an autonomous region, whose capital is Lhasa.
- Nathu la Pass: Nathu La is a mountain pass in the Himalayas in East Sikkim district. It connects the Indian state of Sikkim with China's Tibet Autonomous Region.
- Chumbi Valley: It is a valley in the Tibet Autonomous Region, China. It borders Sikkim, India and Bhutan. The mountains of Nathu La connect Chumbi Valley to Sikkim.
- Doka La: Doka La is a pass in the middle of the Doklam plateau, which is very close to the tri-junction border of India, Bhutan and China.
- Siliguri Pass: It is a narrow stretch of land, located in the Indian state of West Bengal, that connects India's northeastern states to the rest of India.
- Donglang: Doklam is known in China as Donglang.

Questions A Resolution Must Answer: (QARMA):

1. What should be the status of Doklam Plateau?
2. What confidence building measures can be taken to improve bilateral relations between the two states?
3. Legitimacy of China's One belt One Road Initiative in the light of State Sovereignty.

TRANSCEND. TRANSFORM. TAKEDOWN!





CBMUN 18

TRANSCEND. TRANSFORM. TAKEDOWN!



Recommended Reading:

<http://www.rediff.com/news/special/chinas-great-game-on-the-doklam-plateau/20170719.htm>

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/all-you-need-to-know-about-doklam-and-the-india-china-border-standoff/article19357499.ece>

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/why-the-brics-meeting-is-significant-for-india-china-against-the-backdrop-of-doklam-issue/articleshow/60342569.cms>

http://www.ispionline.it/sites/default/files/pubblicazioni/analysis_181_2013.pdf

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1347460>

<https://hbr.org/2002/03/the-hidden-challenge-of-cross-border-negotiations>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F3KCrHH2R7U>

CBMUN 18
TRANSCEND. TRANSFORM. TAKEDOWN!

