

Topic: INDIA-CHINA DOKLAM STANDOFF

Doklam is a disputed territory claimed by both Bhutan and China. Doklam is situated roughly 15 kilometers southeast of the **Nathu La** pass that separates India and China and about 30 kilometers southwest of the **Dramana Chhu** (river) in Chumbi Valley that lies primarily in Tibet. On the western edge of the Doklam plateau is **Doka La, a pass connecting the Indian state of Sikkim** with either Tibet in China according to numerous Chinese government statements and maps or linking Sikkim and western Bhutan according to equally numerous maps and statements from the Bhutan and India governments.

China and Bhutan have agreed via **written agreements of 1988 and 1998** that both countries will maintain peace and the status quo in the region. **In June 2017, China attempted to extend a road in a sector of Doklam triggering a stand-off between China and India and a demarche against China from Bhutan.**

The tense standoff has only escalated, raising concerns in both capitals of an all-out military conflict. Both sides have made threats while simultaneously calling for negotiations. India told China last week that it was ready to hold talks if both sides pulled their forces back from the disputed border area. But China countered on Monday by insisting the road was being built on its sovereign territory, and warned India not to "push your luck." It also added that no meaningful dialogue can be held with India until it "unconditionally" withdraws troops from the disputed Doklam area and said foreign minister Wang Yi has authoritatively made Beijing's position clear on the issue.

Doklam serves as a strategic area for India as it **connects India's mainland with its remote northeastern states**. India has said the Chinese road project threatens its access to the corridor, while China has questioned why India should even have a say in a matter that concerns only Beijing and Bhutan. India's army chief warned earlier this month that India's army was capable of fighting "2 1/2 wars" if needed to secure its borders. Indian analysts said China appeared to be trying to pre-empt settlement negotiations by establishing a Chinese presence in Doklam.

HISTORY OF INDIA CHINA RELATIONS:

Cultural and economic relations between China and India date back to ancient times. **The Silk Road** not only served as a major trade route between India and China, but is also credited for facilitating the spread of Buddhism from India to East Asia. Relations between contemporary China and India have been characterised by border disputes, resulting in **three military conflicts — the Sino-Indian War of 1962, the Chola incident in 1967, and the 1987 Sino-Indian skirmish**. However, since the late 1980s, both countries have successfully rebuilt diplomatic and economic ties. In 2008, China became India's largest trading partner and the two countries have also extended their strategic and military relations.

INDIA'S NEW MOVE – MONGOLIA

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has invited Mongolia's new president Khaltmaa Battulga to visit India, a diplomatic move that may have significant effect on international relations in South Asia. After all, when you invite a person who fought and won the Mongolian presidential election on a populist, anti-China platform, and that too at a time when a heated standoff between New Delhi and Beijing continues along the border in the Sikkim sector, heads are bound to turn.

Topic
Introduction

To understand Battluga's anti-China views, which in fact helped him win the presidential election, it is important to note that China purchases 80 percent of Mongolian exports. Mongolia's economy grew by a measly one percent last year, a stark contrast from an impressive 17 percent in 2011. It has been hit hard by a more than 50 percent fall in the price of copper, its main export, over the past five years, while slowing growth in its biggest customer China has hobbled the economy. Given the slow growth, **anti-China sentiment** has been growing in Mongolia and people want to reduce the country's dependence on China, something which was advocated by Battluga.

An incident which also worsened the ties between China and Mongolia was when the Buddhist-majority Mongolia had invited **Tibetan spiritual leader Dalai Lama** to visit the country in November 2016.

An angry China had reportedly closed an important border with Mongolia after Dalai Lama's visit, resulting in many Mongolian truck drivers, who were left stranded at the border. Eventually, Mongolia gave in to pressure from China and promised never to invite the Dalai Lama again.

China views the Dalai Lama as a separatist seeking to split Tibet from China and strongly opposes all countries from hosting the monk, who has been based in India since fleeing Tibet during an abortive **uprising against Chinese rule in 1959**.

Read further:

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/doklam-standoff-a-look-at-key-background-of-the-dispute/articleshow/59748578.cms>

<http://www.firstpost.com/india/narendra-modi-invites-mongolias-new-president-khaltmaa-battulga-india-just-sent-a-message-to-china-3857241.html>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/China%E2%80%93India_relations

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Doklam>