

AIR Spotlight: India's Reply to China's Transgression Attempt

AIR Spotlight is an insightful program featured daily on the All India Radio Newsonair. In this program, many eminent panellists discuss issues of importance which can be quite helpful in [IAS exam](#) preparation.

This article is about the discussion on “India's befitting reply to China's transgression attempt”.

Participants:

1. Lieutenant General Satish Dua - Defence Expert
2. Ajay Banerjee - Journalist

Context - On December 9th 2022, soldiers from China's Peoples' Liberation Army (PLA) intruded across the LAC in the Tawang sector of Arunachal Pradesh, which was contested by the Indian soldiers deployed there in a firm and resolute manner.

Details -

- The Defence Minister, Shri Rajnath Singh told the Parliament that the Chinese forces had tried to transgress the LAC and unilaterally change the status quo in the Yangtse area of the Tawang sector in Arunachal Pradesh. Due to the timely intervention of the Indian Commanders, PLA soldiers went back to their locations and there were no fatalities or serious casualties on our side. The Chinese troops wanted to uproot an Indian post, but the attempt was successfully thwarted by the Indian side.
- The 3488-km long India-China border that stretches from eastern Ladakh to Arunachal Pradesh has been a tense area over the last two years. Since the [Galwan incident of 2020](#), India has strengthened its deployment to the forward areas where China has been speedily ramping up infrastructure.
 - In June 2020, Indian and Chinese troops clashed violently in Galwan in the Ladakh sector resulting in casualties on both sides. The fight only involved hand-to-hand combat and did not include the firing of weapons.
- The Indian rebuff of China in Doklam in 2017 is said to be one reason for the aggression of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) in East Ladakh in 2020.
- China's main interest lies in Tawang which is strategically located in northwestern Arunachal bordering Bhutan and Tibet. This area witnesses regular Chinese incursions. In the 1962 war, Indian troops fought off Chinese forces in Tawang, which has a cultural connection to the people of Tibet – a region that China occupied in 1950.

LAC (Line of Actual Control) - A border still to be resolved

- The LAC is the demarcation that separates Indian-controlled territory from Chinese-controlled territory. India considers the LAC to be 3,488 km long, while the Chinese consider it to be only around 2,000 km.
- It is divided into three sectors - the eastern sector which spans Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim, the middle sector in Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh and the western sector in Ladakh.
- LAC is only a concept, it is not agreed upon by the two countries, neither delineated on a map nor demarcated on the ground.

1993 Border Peace And Tranquillity Agreement (BPTA)

- 1993 Agreement on the Maintenance of Peace and Tranquility along the Line of Actual Control in the India-China Border Areas. Article 1 of the agreement clearly states that the two sides will work to ensure peace and tranquillity at the border and will not indulge in activities that undercut that peace.
- The 1993 agreement was the first of the five border agreements between India and China that very specifically mention that both sides will "strictly" observe the Line of Actual Control. The other four agreements were signed in 1996, 2005, 2012 and 2013.
- In 2002, when the process of exchanging and comparing maps was going on for resolving the border dispute, the Chinese side refused to settle the LAC in the western sector in east Ladakh. That effectively stalled the process of clarifying the LAC mentioned in the 1993 Agreement for maintaining peace and tranquillity on the border.

Infrastructural Push

Roads prove integral to maintaining a heavy deployment of armed forces, however, the high altitude and rarefied atmosphere make construction activities difficult. The Border Roads Organisation (BRO), India's strategic infrastructure capacity creation agency, has been majorly focusing on building roads and bridges in states which have their borders with China.

Read more on [India - China relations](#) in the linked article.
