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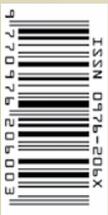
## DEFENCE BUDGET 2018-19

### TOO LITTLE FOR

# MODERNISATION

- ▶ ARMS CONTROL CHALLENGES
- ▶ FROM DETERRENCE TO WINNABILITY
- ▶ FOR FUTURE-READY CITIZENS

**CROSSED 100,  
PRESENTING  
101<sup>st</sup> EDITION**



# DEFENCE BUDGET 2018-19



An ISO 9001:2015 Certified Magazine



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# INTRUSION INTO ARUNACHAL PRADESH

In future, there is likely to be more incursions along the border but the underlying fact is that Chinese would target those areas where there is less accessibility from Indian side and the border patrols from Indian side are few and at long intervals. The need of the hour is to develop infrastructure, sensitise and train locals to act as the second line of defence.

**A**s part of China's cross-border pinching strategy, People's Liberation Army (PLA) soldiers intruded into Indian Territory in Arunachal Pradesh in December 2017. Chinese soldiers, with earthmovers and other road construction machines, had intruded more than 200 metres when the two Special Representatives (SR) — Politburo Member of Chinese Communist Party Yang Jiechi and India's National Security Advisor Ajit Doval — were holding 20th round of talks to build mutual trust and enhance cooperation along the border. The intrusion was reported in late December in the Upper Siang district. After being confronted by Indian troops near Bising village which falls under the Tuting sub-division, the Chinese soldiers abandoned their road construction machines and fled away. Subsequently, India Army returned the road building equipment and the issue was resolved but the important



*Chinese Troops enter in Indian Territory.*



lesson that is drawn from this Chinese adventure is that PLA intruded into that part where road accessibility was minimal from the Indian side and the issue was reported by the locals. This clearly highlights the fact that there is need for better road network in the region as well as satellite tracking of the Chinese activities. This intrusion which happened during the winter months also points to the fact that the Chinese are trying to draw international attention to Arunachal and are willing



to coerce India to agree to few of their ventures as the 'new normal' in the status quo along the border. This intrusion was also a collateral effect of the increasingly ambitious Chinese leadership.

### **Enforcing Chinese Perception**

Following the Chinese Communist Party Congress held in October 2017 in which Xi Jinping had reinforced his leadership, and got the approval to continue as the President of China for another five years, the individual stature of Xi Jinping has catapulted him into the annals of most powerful leaders of China. The approach undertaken by President Xi Jinping has been to appoint his cronies and staunch supporters to the Central Committee as well as the Politburo clearly highlight his intension of concentrating power and authority in his hands. This phase of consolidation of power as well as elevating himself into the same league as Chairman Mao and Deng Xiaoping manifested in the form of Xi Jinping veiled threat to India that borders would be subject to Chinese preferences and cannot be demarcated by the perception of the opposite side. This was a clear announcement that Xi Jinping wanted to promote himself as strong leader who can force adversaries and neighbours to bow down to his priorities. Since the year 2014, there have been tensions brewing between India and China along the border areas, more particularly in the Aksai Chin area, Depsang valley which was followed last year by the longest



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**CHINA  
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EXIST**



*President Xi with Chinese Army.*

standoff in the form of Doklam crisis. The resolution of the crisis took more than 70 days; clearly projecting the tense situation along the border. The crisis was diffused by some deft diplomacy and clever military strategy. The two-pronged strategy adopted by India included proactive military confrontation while at the same time working out a conducive strategy. The Doklam issue got diffused but created a serious trust deficit with regard to China.

### **Special Representatives' Meeting**

As expected, Arunachal Pradesh, being the border State of India and the activities that took place after the visit of Dalai Lama to Tawang, China with its prickly behaviour tries to push India to stand guard and it reinforced its malevolent attitude by building road and rail networks in the border regions. The laggard approach adopted by Prime

**THIS CLEARLY HIGHLIGHTS THE FACT THAT THERE IS NEED FOR BETTER ROAD NETWORK IN THE REGION AS WELL AS SATELLITE TRACKING OF THE CHINESE ACTIVITIES**

Minister Jawaharlal Nehru for not developing the border infrastructure because of his myopic vision that border roads would facilitate Chinese intrusion into Indian Territory and also accelerates their movement into mainland India. The result has been that the development of border infrastructure has languished. Further, China, as it has adopted the policy of salami slicing in the South China Sea region tried to undertake similar manoeuvres in Arunachal Pradesh. Given the fact that the Special Representative Talks' were held after a long hiatus, the impatient Chinese command along the border thought it

appropriate to venture into Indian territory.

### **China's Buddhist Politics**

The other aspect of Chinese hyper-activism along the border is more nuanced and more focussed on post-Dalai Lama scenario. Somewhere down the Chinese establishment, there is a perception that monasteries in Mongolia, Bhutan and Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh would be the places where the post-Dalai Lama possibilities might emerge. This has made Chinese command more paranoid as there is a belief that with the demise of Dalai Lama, the Tibetan Government in Exile would not be able to provide the



moral and religious support to the Tibetan independence. Therefore, as a part of strategy, China would be making more inroads and adventures near those areas where seats of Tibetan Buddhism exist. The second element of these incursions is that given the increasing activism of the Indian Army and India procuring heavy lift aircrafts as well as upgrading the advanced landing strips along the border has to a large extent addressed the issue of logistical support at times of need. The tactical advantage that China had in terms of mobilising troops has somewhat been addressed and China witnessed it during the Depsang valley crisis when an unexpected number of Indian troops arrived to jostle with the Chinese soldiers. Thirdly, the Chinese soldiers who are deputed at the India-China border are relatively less experienced than those who are posted in other areas. Given the age profile of the soldiers, it is but natural for these young recruits to go overboard at times to show their commitment to the nation and advertise their nationalism. Further, lately it has been seen that many Chinese commentators have mushroomed who have supported this chest thumping by Chinese soldiers and have reflected their individual stance with full support from Chinese newspapers such as Global Times and Xinhua. As a result of which the issue has escalated from both sides.

### **Eastern Economic Corridors**

One other angle of this trans-border adventures of Chinese

military have to do with the need to put pressure on India to start work on the Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar (BCIM) Corridor project. This has been the dream which was sold to Chinese provinces having no direct access to the seashore that this project would open new markets for them in South Asia as well as provide an opening to the Indian Ocean through ports in Bangladesh. Scholars and even administrators

non-subscription to the One Belt One Road (OBOR) Project and also launching a counter initiative in the form of Project Mausam and the Mekong India Economic Corridor which has been supported and advocated by both US and Japan has raised hackles in China.

Evaluating the compulsions and the need to sustain its economic superiority in the region when



*Zhou Enlai, Indira Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru in China in October 1954.*

in Southern provinces of China have expressed that Beijing has given them step-motherly treatment. Prime Minister Modi, during his visit to Beijing in 2015, had enlisted BCIM as one of the projects in which India and China could work together but given the political dissonance between the West Bengal government and the Central government, the future of this project is in limbo. Further, India is not sure about the benefits that would accrue to the country given the highly skewed balance of trade with China. In such a context, China is compelled to resolve the border issue at the earliest to reap the benefits of trade. India's

China is facing inflation and the decelerating economic growth, these adventures across the border have provided the necessary national fervour and the fodder for Xi Jinping coterie to project their leader as the greatest of all times. In future, there is likely to be more incursions along the border but the underlying fact is that Chinese would target those areas where there is less accessibility from Indian side and the border patrols from Indian side are few and at long intervals. The need of the hour is to develop infrastructure, sensitise and train locals to act as the second line of defence. 