

INDIA STRENGTHENS TROOP PRESENCE IN NORTHERN LADAKH, HEAVY TANKS DEPLOYED

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In response to China's deployment of over 17,000 troops, armoured vehicles opposite Daulat Beg Oldi and Depsang plains in Ladakh, India has made heavy deployment of troops, tank regiments in the area to counter any misadventure by the PLA

NEW DELHI : In response to China's deployment of more than 17,000 troops and armoured vehicles opposite Daulat Beg Oldi (DBO) and Depsang plains in Ladakh, India has made heavy deployment of troops and tank regiments in the area to counter any misadventure by the People's Liberation Army (PLA) there.

"We have done a very heavy deployment of troops and tanks in the DBO and Depsang plains area including the T-90 regiments which are part of an armoured division," government sources told ANI.

The deployments have been made from the Patrolling Point 1 near the Karakoram Pass (PP-3) to the Depsang plains where the Chinese have amassed more than 17,000 troops since April-May time frame and have been blocking Indian patrols from PP-10 to PP-13, sources said.

The armoured deployment is such that the Chinese would find it difficult to operate there, in case, they try out any misadventure, they said.

Before the Chinese started build-up opposite the DBO and Depsang, the entire area was looked after by a mountain brigade and an armoured brigade but today more than 15,000 troops and several tank regiments have been moved there both by road and by air to tackle the threat from China, sources said.

One of the major intentions of the Chinese in this area has been to build a road from its TWD battalion headquarters opposite the DBO sector to the Karakoram pass area and connect the battalion there.

The connectivity plan, which has been foiled in the past, will allow the two Chinese units to reach other in a matter of a couple of hours against the 15-hour drive through the Highway G219 in their territory, sources said.

A small bridge was put up by the Chinese inside Indian territory on a nala (drain) near PP-7 and PP-8 but it was broken by Indian soldiers a few years ago, sources said.

At present, India and China are engaged in a dialogue focusing on disengagement from Finger area and other friction points but Chinese build up along the LAC in Depsang plains and DBO area has not yet been taken up in the military talks.

At present, we are in a position of strength in the Depsang Plains and DBO area now and we are not in a hurry to discuss that with the Chinese. Let the disengagement first take place and then we can talk about de-escalation there also, sources said.

On Sunday, India and China held Corps Commander-level talks at Moldo on the Chinese side of LAC to discuss disengagement.

The Chinese had earlier agreed for complete disengagement at Galwan valley, PP-15, Hot Springs and Gogra along with Finger area near Pangong Tso lake.

However, China stopped honouring their commitment after initial disengagement in Finger area and is now wanting to build an observation post at Finger 5. This has been rejected by India which has clearly stated that it will have to disengage completely and restore the status quoted existing in April/May 2020.

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