

ORDER AT THE BORDER: THE HINDU EDITORIAL ON INDIA-CHINA DISENGAGEMENT AT THE LAC

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: India - China

India and China finally [reaching an agreement on disengagement at Pangong Lake](#), which has been at the heart of the recent LAC tensions, is a promising start towards restoring peace in the border areas. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has said both sides will cease their forward deployments on the north and south banks of the lake in a phased, coordinated, and verified manner. China's Ministry of Defence [announced an agreement](#) "to start synchronised and organised disengagement". Both sides have agreed to a temporary moratorium on patrolling in the disputed areas north and south of the lake. The withdrawal of armoured elements, including tanks that have been in dangerously close proximity, began on Wednesday. All frontline personnel will subsequently be withdrawn over the next two to three weeks. North of the lake, China's troops will return to their base at Sirijap, east of Finger 8, while India's troops will similarly return to their permanent base at Dhan Singh Thapa post, at Finger 3. India previously patrolled on foot up to Finger 8 — there is no motorable road access from India's side to areas east of Finger 4 — while China has dominated up to Finger 4, having already built a road there and enjoying superior logistics. Starting last summer, Chinese troops had prevented India from reaching Finger 8, leading to the crisis. Now, the entire contested area, from 4 to 8, will become a buffer zone and all temporary infrastructure built after [April 2020](#) will be withdrawn. Similarly, both sides will return to their bases south of the lake, where India will vacate the heights it occupied in an effective countermove in late August in the Kailash range, which gave India much needed leverage to negotiate as well as demonstrated its resolve to match China's actions.

The stand-offs on the north and south banks, involving troops and artillery, remained the hardest nut to crack over nine long rounds of talks between military commanders. With this agreement, the only pending problems now are smaller, less concerning stand-offs involving fewer troops in Patrolling Points 15 and 17A in the Gogra-Hot Springs area, which will be taken up 48 hours after disengagement at Pangong Lake is completed over the next few weeks. In the Depsang plains, there is no stand-off situation or heavy deployment of troops, but a long-running dispute over the LAC and blocking of patrols that predates the current crisis and as yet remains unresolved. The success of the new disengagement plan will finally depend on whether it is implemented on the ground in letter and in spirit. The events of last year have left enormous distrust, which remains a hurdle and China's actions on the ground have not always matched its commitments. Both sides should keep in mind what is at stake for the broader relationship between the two most populous countries, which ultimately hinges on peace on the border.

You have reached your limit for free articles this month.

Already have an account ? [Sign in](#)

Start your 14 days free trial. [Sign Up](#)

Find mobile-friendly version of articles from the day's newspaper in one easy-to-read list.

Enjoy reading as many articles as you wish without any limitations.

A select list of articles that match your interests and tastes.

Move smoothly between articles as our pages load instantly.

A one-stop-shop for seeing the latest updates, and managing your preferences.

We brief you on the latest and most important developments, three times a day.

*Our Digital Subscription plans do not currently include the e-paper, crossword and print.

Dear reader,

We have been keeping you up-to-date with information on the developments in India and the world that have a bearing on our health and wellbeing, our lives and livelihoods, during these difficult times. To enable wide dissemination of news that is in public interest, we have increased the number of articles that can be read free, and extended free trial periods. However, we have a request for those who can afford to subscribe: please do. As we fight disinformation and misinformation, and keep apace with the happenings, we need to commit greater resources to news gathering operations. We promise to deliver quality journalism that stays away from vested interest and political propaganda.

Dear subscriber,

Thank you!

Your support for our journalism is invaluable. It's a support for truth and fairness in journalism. It has helped us keep apace with events and happenings.

The Hindu has always stood for journalism that is in the public interest. At this difficult time, it becomes even more important that we have access to information that has a bearing on our health and well-being, our lives, and livelihoods. As a subscriber, you are not only a beneficiary of our work but also its enabler.

We also reiterate here the promise that our team of reporters, copy editors, fact-checkers, designers, and photographers will deliver quality journalism that stays away from vested interest and political propaganda.

Suresh Nambath

Please enter a valid email address.

From the abrogation of the special status of Jammu and Kashmir, to the landmark Ayodhya verdict, 2019 proved to be an eventful year.

Subscribe to The Hindu now and get unlimited access.

Already have an account? [Sign In](#)

Start your 14 days free trial [Sign Up](#)

You can support quality journalism by turning off ad blocker or purchase a subscription for unlimited access to The Hindu.

[Sign up for a 30 day free trial.](#)

END

CrackIAS.com