

'CHINA DISREGARDING HISTORIC COMMITMENTS ON NAKU LA'

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: India - China

On guard: A file photo of Army personnel patrolling the LAC.

The skirmishes and the stand-off between Indian and Chinese troops at Naku La in Sikkim last month, in an area of the Line of Actual Control (LAC) that is considered settled, may be Beijing's way of attempting a new claim, said defence sources, highlighting the historic Sikkim-Tibet Convention of 1890 as proof of India's ownership of the territory.

Referring to a major scuffle that took place at Naku La on May 9, the sources said it was unusual for Chinese troops to open up a part of the LAC that has not been in contention before.

According to the Convention, the boundary in the area is based on the watershed principles.

Its Article 1 states, "The boundary of Sikkim and Tibet shall be the crest of the mountain range separating the waters flowing into the Sikkim Teesta and its affluents from waters flowing into the Tibetan Mochu and northwards into other rivers of Tibet. ...follows the above mentioned water-parting to the point where it meets Nipal Territory."

The Gazetteer of Sikkim in 1894, while describing the physical features of Sikkim, also mentions the boundary that runs along Naku la - Chorten Nyima La.

The sources said the geographic alignment of the features were so prominent that it could easily be identified and recognised. Even analysing the available Google images of the pass, the location of Naku La could be discerned by anyone as the watershed parting line in the area was very prominent. "There exists no ambiguity with respect to the location of the pass, since geographic realities cannot be altered," the sources said.

"The clearly orchestrated actions on an otherwise dormant area masks a hidden agenda, which is far removed from Naku La," the sources noted referring to the Chinese push at several points along the LAC and also the ongoing Chinese aggression in the South China Sea and Taiwan Straits.

Diplomatic experts point out that China may also be opening up a front in Sikkim due to the ambiguous official position of the boundary.

Undemarcated boundary

Although meetings between former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao in 2003 and maps exchanged subsequently indicated that India recognised the Tibetan Autonomous Region as a part of China, and Beijing recognised Sikkim as a State of the Indian Union, the boundary at Sikkim while undisputed, remains undemarcated on the ground.

In 2017, after the Doklam stand-off near the India-Bhutan-China trijunction, then Foreign Secretary S. Jaishankar informed the Parliamentary Standing Committee that "there are still steps to be covered before the boundary is finalised."

He said India accepted the 1890 treaty as "the basis for alignment", but the treaty had only been

“partially implemented on the ground”. “Certainly the segments India is talking about, the Batang La segment, etc. was not there and there is nothing to show that that was actually delineated or demarcated or agreed upon.”

Subscribe to The Hindu digital to get unlimited access to Today's paper

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

Start your 14 days trial now. [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, iPhone, iPad mobile applications and print. Our plans enhance your reading experience.

To continue enjoying The Hindu, You can turn off your ad blocker or [Subscribe to The Hindu](#).

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

END

Downloaded from [crackIAS.com](#)

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

Crack