

'CHINA USING NON-MILITARY TACTICS TO EXPAND INFLUENCE'

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: India - China

Flexing muscles: PLA soldiers taking part in a training session at the Pamir mountains in Kashgar, in this file photo. AFPSTR

An annual report from the U.S. Department of Defense to Congress describes Chinese leaders' use of tactics short of armed conflict to further the country's objectives, citing border conflicts with India and Bhutan among the examples. The report also says China is trying to establish stronger bases outside the country so the People's Liberation Army (PLA) can project military power at greater distances.

Other key conclusions the U.S. presents include the notion that China's military is at least as advanced as the U.S. in several military modernisation areas such as shipbuilding, land-based conventional ballistic and cruise missiles and integrated air defence systems. China also uses multilateral organisations to limit criticism of its initiatives, as per the report.

The report describes Non-War Military Activities (NWMA) as one of two kinds of military operations (the other is war) used by the PLA.

"NWMA can be conducted internationally or domestically and encompass activities in multiple domains. NWMA can notably include operations in which the PLA uses coercive threats and/or violence below the level of armed conflict against states and other actors to safeguard the PRC's sovereignty and national interests," the report says.

"China calibrates its coercive activities to fall below the threshold of provoking armed conflict with the United States, its allies and partners, or others in the Indo-Pacific region," the DOD China Military Power Report for 2020 says.

"These tactics are particularly evident in China's pursuit of its territorial and maritime claims in the South and East China Seas as well as along its border with India and Bhutan... China also employs non-military tools coercively, including economic tools during periods of political tensions with countries that China accuses of harming its national interests," said the report, which is in its 20th year of production.

The report cites the role of the People's Armed Forces Maritime Militia (PAFMM), which plays a major role in coercive operations including, in 2009, "the harassment of USNS Impeccable conducting normal operations" and the 2012 Scarborough Reef standoff.

Overseas bases

On overseas military bases, the report says that beyond the base in Djibouti, China is "very likely already considering and planning for" additional military logistics facilities to support ground, air and naval forces. Locations in the following countries have likely been considered for use, as per the report: Myanmar, Thailand, Singapore, Indonesia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, UAE, Kenya, Seychelles, Tanzania, Angola, and Tajikistan. It also says the PLA's military logistics network could interfere with U.S. operations and help support offensive operations against America.

The Belt and Road Initiative [which the report refers to by its former name, the One Belt, One

Road initiative, or OBOR] will result in a greater overseas military presence for China, the report says.

“The PRC’s [China] overseas development and security interests under OBOR will drive the PRC towards expanding its overseas military footprint to protect those interests.” China uses the economic influence it gets via the project to get participating countries to support it on a range of other issues, the report says.

Since the report is retrospective and looks at 2019, this year’s clashes and tension along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) are not discussed.

Instead, the report says: “ Chinese and Indian forces both continued construction and patrols in contested regions along the disputed border, but generally kept tensions from escalating in 2019.” It describes the October meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping in Chennai and the August 2019 “early harvest” border proposals that China submitted to India.

“Although India was not pleased with the proposals, the 22nd meeting of the Special Representatives of India and China occurred in December 2019 and reinforced both sides’ shared intent to manage tensions in the border region,” the report says.

Limiting criticism

On multilateral forums and international organisations, the report says China uses these “to generate new opportunities to expand its influence, strengthen its political influence, promotes strategic messaging that portrays it as a responsible global actor, advance its development interests, and limit outside interference in and criticism of its initiatives.”

The Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa (BRICS) grouping and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization are among those cited as examples of this alleged phenomenon.

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

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, iPhone, iPad mobile applications and print. Our plans enhance your reading experience.

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

Downloaded from **crackIAS.com**

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

CrackIAS.com