

## USINDOPACOM J06/SJA TACAID SERIES

# TOPIC: The PRC's Land Borders Law

## BLUF



- On 23 October 2021, the People's Republic of China's (PRC) National People's Congress (NPC) passed a Land and State Boundary Law [hereinafter Land Borders Law].
- The Land Borders Law could be used by the PRC as an **instrument to disrupt peace and security in the region if cited as a legal pretext to advance territorial ambitions** reflected in the PRC's 2023 "standard" map.<sup>1</sup>
- Like the PRC's Coast Guard Law and Maritime Traffic Safety Law, which were also enacted in 2021, the Land Borders Law uses **vague language** in an apparent attempt to strengthen and legitimize the PRC's disputed claims.
- The Land Borders Law exemplifies the PRC's **use of domestic law as an instrument** in conjunction with other tools of national power to advance its claims to sovereignty in contested areas.
- This TACAID focuses specifically on the Land Borders Law and its potential implications on disputed land borders between the PRC and India and the PRC and Bhutan, respectively.

## WHY THIS MATTERS



- The PRC's claims over Taiwan and much of the South and East China Seas are widely studied, but less is known about territorial disputes across the PRC's 22,000-kilometer land border with 14 neighboring countries.<sup>2</sup>
- The deadly June 2020 Galwan Valley clash along the Line of Actual Control between the PRC and India exemplifies the risk of tensions at the borders boiling over into violence that could threaten peace and security in the region.<sup>3</sup>
- Like other PRC domestic laws, the Land Borders Law contains vague language, which affords flexibility for instrumental use in a manner that could threaten peace and security in the land border regions.
- Identifying and publicizing concerns with the Land Borders Law is an important step to ensuring the law is not used as a pretext for actions that threaten peace and security in contravention of international law.
- **Exposing and opposing the potential for misuse of domestic law as a vehicle to acquire territory by force or coercion supports broader efforts to deter conflict and uphold the rules-based international order.**

## DETAILED DISCUSSION

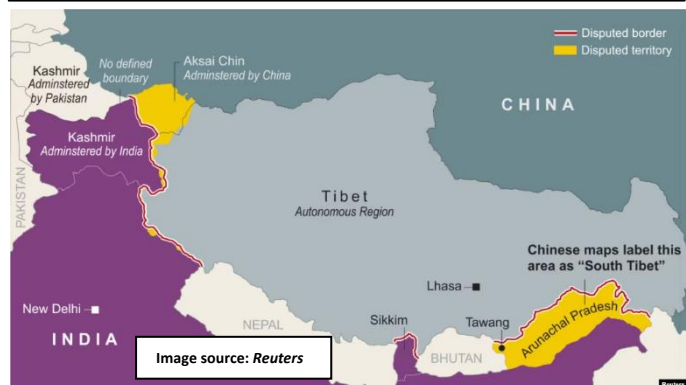
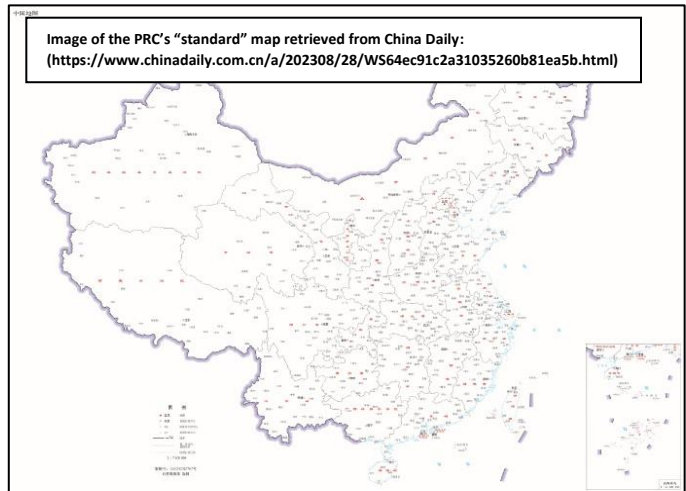


### 1. Background

- The PRC claims vast swaths of disputed waters and territory.
- The PRC's 2023 "standard" map depicts many of these disputed areas within the boundaries of the PRC.
- India, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan, and Vietnam all promptly rejected the PRC's "standard" map as having no basis in international law. Even Russia – the PRC's "no limits" partner – objected to the map because a Russian-claimed island is presented as PRC territory.<sup>4</sup>
- The legally baseless dashed-line in the PRC's "standard" map rightfully receives attention, but there is less scrutiny paid to the PRC's contested claims along its land border, which are also in the ambit of the "standard" map.
- Much like how the PRC uses domestic laws to advance contested claims within the dashed-line, **the Land Borders Law provides a domestic legal pretext to advance contested claims in the land border regions**, to include boundary disputes with India along the line of actual control (LAC) and with Bhutan over Doklam.
- The PRC has publicly proclaimed that it "always pursues friendship and partnership with its neighbors, seeks to bring amity, security, and common prosperity, and works hard to ensure that its development brings benefits to all other countries in Asia,"<sup>5</sup> but its actions in the border regions tell a different story.

## 2. Summary of Key Land Border Disputes

- The LAC has been a de facto border between the PRC and India since their 1962 war, but the two sides disagree over where it lies in at least 13 locations.<sup>6</sup> As the name implies, the LAC is meant to reflect “actual” control rather than an agreed upon demarcation of territory.<sup>7</sup>
- Simmering tensions at the LAC occasionally flare into violence as concerns about regarding PRC encroachment into India-controlled territory.*** Some analysts contend that the PRC has “stealthily occupied” key areas in Ladakh,<sup>8</sup> and Indian authorities have at various times accused the PRC of taking upwards of 15,000 square miles of Indian land in the Aksai Chin Plateau in Ladakh.<sup>9</sup>
- In 2020, a clash between People’s Liberation Army (PLA) forces and Indian troops near the LAC in Galwan Valley resulted in the death of over twenty soldiers.<sup>10</sup> India’s former ambassador to the PRC noted following the Galwan Valley clash that “Chinese behavior this time ‘has been very different from what we have seen in the past’ with ‘China occupying spaces which it never occupied before along the LAC.’”<sup>11</sup>
- Subsequent confrontations along the LAC in January 2021 and December 2022 resulted in injuries.<sup>12</sup>
- The PRC is also locked in a protracted border dispute with Bhutan over Doklam, which sits on a strategic plateau near the tri-junction of Bhutan, India, and the PRC.
- In 2017, PLA forces entered Doklam to construct a road, which prompted a response from Indian forces in support of Bhutan. An ensuing stand-off lasted more than two months until both sides agreed to withdraw.
- Nevertheless, in April 2023, reports surfaced that the PRC constructed villages in Doklam.<sup>13</sup>
- Such actions by the PRC seem to conflict with a 1998 agreement with Bhutan in which the PRC “recognize[d] Bhutan’s sovereignty and its territorial integrity and agree[d] that ‘no unilateral action will be taken to change the status quo on the border.’”<sup>14</sup>
- The construction of villages in Doklam may also be inconsistent with a 2021 memorandum of understanding wherein the PRC and Bhutan agreed to a roadmap for expediting boundary negotiations.<sup>15</sup>
- As tensions remain high, both the PRC and India are ramping up their military presence in the border region.
- The PLA has reportedly “more than doubl[ed] its total number of air bases, air defense positions, and heliports” on the LAC since the 2017 Doklam crisis.<sup>16</sup>
- Likewise, the U.S. Department of Defense’s 2022 China Military Power Report says that the PLA has “maintained continuous force presence and continued infrastructure buildup along the LAC” since the Galwan Valley clash.
- Publicly available imagery shows what appears to be a division-level headquarters at Pangong Lake<sup>17</sup> as well as barracks and other new infrastructure in the Galwan Valley.<sup>18</sup>
- These new sites portend an increasingly permanent PLA presence along the border.
- For its part, India has reportedly redirected troops to the LAC where the Indian Air Force also remains operationally deployed. This force increase is bolstered by infrastructure projects, such as plans to construct 73



strategic roads<sup>19</sup> along the LAC, including nearly 1,430 miles of road in the Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh where the December 2022 clashes happened and which Beijing claims as “Southern Tibet.”<sup>20</sup>

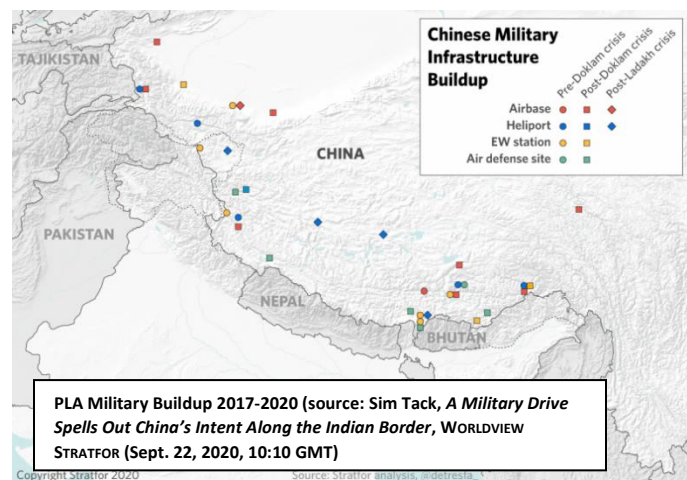
- The Indian government also launched a “Vibrant Villages” campaign to build infrastructure in villages on its side of the contested border.<sup>21</sup>
- As of August 2023, PLA and Indian military commanders issued a joint statement at the 19th round of border talks agreeing “to maintain the peace and tranquility on the ground in the border areas” as the states continue negotiations to resolve the border dispute.<sup>22</sup>
- One analyst noted, however, that “there is no indication that either side is willing to offer concessions.”<sup>23</sup>

### 3. Text of the Land Borders Law

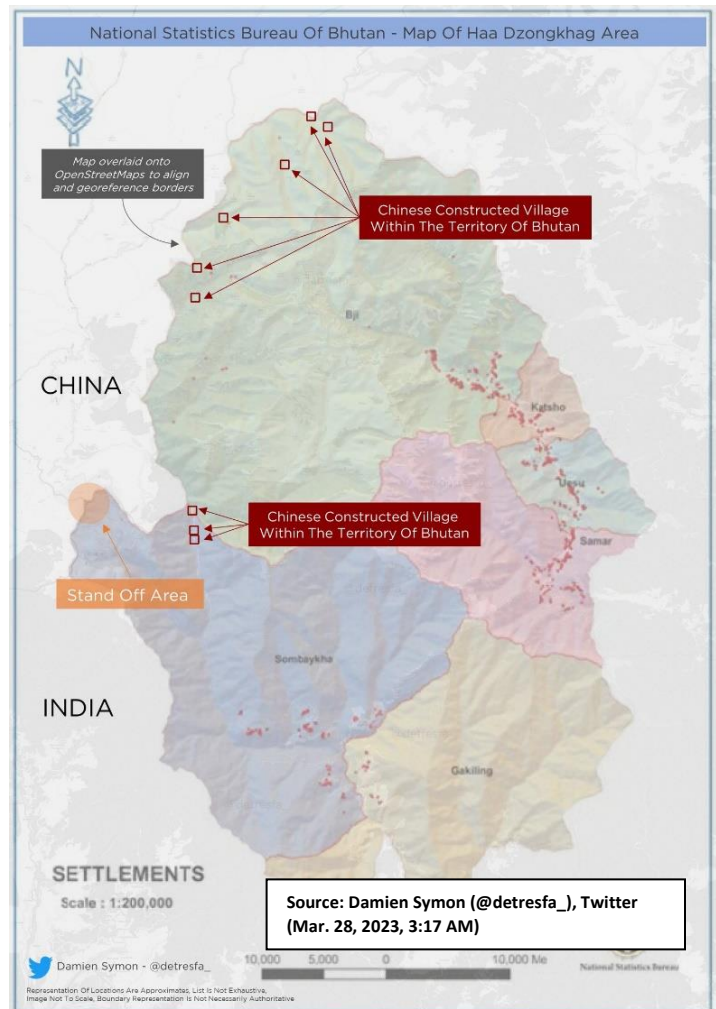
- Enacted in 2021 amid heightened tensions with India, the Land Borders Law purports “to standardize and strengthen” border control and protection under the auspices of “good-neighborliness, friendship, exchanges, and cooperation between [the PRC] and land neighbors.”<sup>24</sup>
- The Land Borders Law resolves that the PRC will “resolutely defend territorial sovereignty and land border security” while continuing to seek to settle disputes through negotiations.
- In addition to various statements about improving local public service and infrastructure, advancing socioeconomic development, trade, tourism, and ecological protection, the Land Borders Law establishes conditions that can prompt border shutdown, port closure, or other undefined “emergency measures.”
- The PLA and the paramilitary People’s Armed Police (PAP), both under the command of the Central Military Commission, are assigned the bulk of responsibility for border defense.
- PLA and PAP personnel are empowered to use weapons against “intruders who resort to violence in resisting detention and threaten the safety of life and property of other people.”
- Consistent with the PRC’s civil-military fusion strategy,<sup>25</sup> the Land Borders Law requires local governments to resource “mass defense groups” composed of local residents tasked to support border defense missions.
- The Land Borders Law prohibits the construction of permanent facilities along the border without permission from PRC authorities.
- The Land Borders Law codifies the PRC’s intent to “forge a consciousness of the common identity of the Chinese nation,” which some analysts have criticized as a euphemism for coercive ethnic assimilation.<sup>26</sup>

### 4. Concerning Implications of the Land Borders Law

- ***The Land Borders Law appears to leave significant discretion in the PLA, PAP, and civilian “mass defense groups” to respond to border crossings, potentially with the use of force.*** How these groups exercise that discretion toward individuals perceived as illegally crossing a disputed border could be a friction point.<sup>27</sup>
- ***The Land Borders Law’s vague prohibition on border construction without permission could be interpreted by PRC authorities to include both sides of the border*** (or at least disputed areas claimed by the PRC), which creates the potential for hostilities as both the PRC and India build infrastructure along the LAC.<sup>28</sup>



- **The Land Borders Law's emphasis on development of border towns and the role of civilian groups in border defense raises questions about whether the PRC intends to expand or accelerate settlement in disputed areas.** Reports and imagery of PRC construction in disputed areas appear to corroborate these concerns.<sup>29</sup>
- **The PRC's reported build-up in disputed areas evokes the same "salami-slicing"<sup>30</sup> tactics used by the PRC to advance its disputed maritime claims.<sup>31</sup>** In Chinese, the term for salami-slicing is *can shi*, or 'nibbling like a silkworm'.<sup>32</sup>
- By **surreptitiously establishing effective control through construction or occupation**, the PRC can then invoke international law as a pretext for defending its citizens and protecting sovereignty and territorial integrity.<sup>33</sup>
- **Effective control of disputed areas also ensures that the PRC can negotiate from a position of strength** under the seemingly benevolent auspices of the Land Borders Law – i.e., the PRC can point to its visible entrenchment in disputed areas as evidence of the primacy of its claims.<sup>34</sup>
- In parallel, **effective control of disputed areas may also embolden the PRC** to assert that disputed areas are no longer in dispute, such as it did by releasing the "standard" map.<sup>35</sup>
- The Russian Federation relied on similar – albeit more blatantly hostile – land-grab tactics in Ukraine as a way to establish a false legal pretext for exercising self-defense and to coerce dispute resolution on favorable terms.<sup>36</sup>
- The criticisms levied against the Indian government for supposedly ceding "1000 square kilometers of territory to China without a fight" during land border negotiations in September 2022 suggest that the PRC appears adept at negotiating land border disputes once it achieves a position of strength.<sup>37</sup>
- Analysts have also raised concerns that **Bhutan could be vulnerable to PRC coercion during land border negotiations** given the uneven balance of power and the PRC's insistence that talks remain bilateral.<sup>38</sup>
- **A new Foreign Relations Law enacted by the PRC in July 2023 codifies the PRC's position** insofar as land border agreements must "not harm national sovereignty or security or the societal public interest."<sup>39</sup>
- Taken together, the Land Borders Law and the Foreign Relations Law ensure that disputed territory, once occupied, remains in PRC control.<sup>40</sup>



# PROPOSED COUNTER-LAWFARE APPROACH

\*\* This section offers suggested language for incorporation into communications strategies \*\*

- The Land Borders Law could threaten peace, security, and prosperity in the region if used as a legal pretext to advance territorial ambitions reflected in the PRC's 2023 "standard" map.
- Like other PRC domestic laws, the Land Borders Law uses vague language in an apparent attempt to strengthen and legitimize the PRC's disputed claims.
- Exposing and opposing efforts to acquire disputed land territory through force or coercion is essential to preserving the rules-based international order.
- Upholding international law is necessary to maintain peace, security, and prosperity around the globe, particularly in areas with disputed land borders.
- The PRC increasingly posits itself as an arbiter of mutual aid and international peace,<sup>41</sup> but the Land Borders Law, taken in context with its actions in the South China Sea and other international fora, demonstrates how the PRC will use its domestic law and public narrative to seize strategic advantages on an international scale.
- The Land Borders Law exemplifies the PRC's use of domestic law as an instrument in conjunction with other tools of national power to advance its interests in contested areas.
- USINDOPACOM supports combined efforts with allies and partners to uphold international law and norms.
- USINDOPACOM closely monitors the destabilizing effects of border encroachments in the region and stands ready to cooperate with allies and partners to deescalate tensions and pursue peaceful dispute resolution in accordance with fundamental principles of international law.

<sup>1</sup> See Jill Goldenziel, *How to Decode China's Imperial Map —and Stop It from Becoming Reality*, FORBES (Sept. 5, 2023, 2:11 AM EDT), <https://www.forbes.com/sites/jillgoldenziel/2023/09/05/how-to-decode-chinas-imperial-map--and-stop-it-from-becoming-reality/?sh=639dc6ef5a2d> (discussing the 2023 standard map of China and its inclusion of the "Nine-Dash Line" among other controversial features); see also *India Rejects China's Renaming of Places Along Disputed Border*, REUTERS (Apr. 4, 2023, 3:08 AM CDT), <https://www.reuters.com/world/india/india-says-it-rejects-attempts-by-china-rename-places-eastern-state-2023-04-04/> (describing India's unequivocal rejection of PRC's notice that it "standardized" the names of 11 places" that exist in disputed territory between India and the PRC); see also David Brunnstrom & Michael Martina, *Xi Denies China Turning Artificial Islands into Military Bases*, REUTERS (Sept. 25, 2015, 9:46 AM), <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-china-pacific/xi-denies-china-turning-artificial-islands-into-military-bases-idUSKCNORP1ZH20150925> (describing the PRC's creation and militarization sea features in the SCS).

<sup>2</sup> See, e.g. Aakasha Hassan, *Indian Government Accused of Ceding Land in Himalayas to China*, THE GUARDIAN (Sept. 19, 2022), <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/sep/19/indian-people-living-near-border-accuse-government-of-ceding-land-to-china> (noting that residents in or near the taken property had "concerns not only for their security but the consequences the loss of land to Chinese troops was having on their livelihoods"), <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/chinas-land-border-law-a-preliminary-assessment/> Brookings (noting that while China might see a legitimate need for a legal framework to manage a more than 22,000-kilometer land border with 14 neighboring countries).

<sup>3</sup> See, e.g. Soutik Biswas, *India-China Clash: An Extraordinary Escalation 'with Rocks and Clubs'*, BBC NEWS (Jun. 16, 2020), <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-53071913> (calling one area of conflict between the PRC and India "the world's longest unsettled land border" and highlighting that "[t]he two nuclear armed neighbours have a chequered history of face-offs"); see, e.g. Tariq Mir, *What Was the Deadly India-China Border Clash Really About?*, ALJAZEERA (Jul. 5, 2020), <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2020/7/5/what-was-the-deadly-india-china-border-clash-really-about> (warning of the "never-before-seen military confrontation between three nuclear powers – China, India and Pakistan – and the terrifying prospect of a whole region descending into the hellish vortex of war, mass suffering and widespread economic chaos").

<sup>4</sup> Goldenziel, *supra* note 1 (noting that the map "includes land that China disputes with India—and even some Russian territory" and arguing that it is "part of a series of recent aggressions against its neighbors' sovereignty and the rule of law in the region").

<sup>5</sup> *New Approach for Asian Security Cooperation*, (Dec. 13, 2021), [http://en.npc.gov.cn.cdurl.cn/2021-12/13/c\\_688429.htm](http://en.npc.gov.cn.cdurl.cn/2021-12/13/c_688429.htm); see generally Eric Hyer, *China's Policy of Conciliation and Reduction (Sanhe Yishao) and Its Impact on Boundary Negotiations and Settlements in the Early 1960s*, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 16 (Dec. 2017), [https://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/publication/cwihp\\_wp\\_85\\_hyer\\_china\\_boundary\\_negotiations\\_1960s.pdf](https://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/publication/cwihp_wp_85_hyer_china_boundary_negotiations_1960s.pdf) (describing Chinese attitudes in late 1959 when negotiating its borders with India wherein Chinese leaders wished to be seen as having a "consistent policy of respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual equality, mutual understanding and mutual compromise, and solving boundary disputes peacefully through friendly consultations").

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2020/06/02/why-are-china-india-skirmishing-their-border-heres-4-things-know/>.

<sup>7</sup> *India and China Pledge to Maintain 'Peace and Tranquility' Along Disputed Border Despite Tensions*, ASSOCIATED PRESS (Aug. 16, 2023, 3:05 AM CDT), <https://apnews.com/article/china-india-disputed-border-talks-tensions-ad3b53da1007b73f9c79b48bee938019> (noting that "according to India, the de facto border is . . . 2,167 miles[] long, but China promotes a considerably shorter figure").

<sup>8</sup> Brahma Chellaney, *China's Himalayan Salami Tactics*, PROJECT SYNDICATE (Mar. 9, 2021), <https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/xi-jinping-salami-tactics-himalayas-south-china-sea-by-brahma-chellaney-2021-03>.

<sup>9</sup> Biswas, *supra* note 3; see *India and China Pledge to Maintain 'Peace and Tranquility' Along Disputed Border Despite Tensions*, *supra* note 7.

<sup>10</sup> See *supra* note 26 (placing the death toll "as high as 38"); see *India and China Pledge to Maintain 'Peace and Tranquility' Along Disputed Border Despite Tensions*, *supra* note 7.

<sup>11</sup> Biswas, *supra* note 3 (quoting Shivshankar Menon, "a China expert and a former national security advisor . . . who served as India's ambassador to China").

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.usip.org/publications/2023/05/why-we-should-all-worry-about-china-india-border-dispute>.

- <sup>13</sup> Sushant Singh, *What Bhutan is Telling India via Doklam*, TIMES OF INDIA (Apr. 2, 2023, 10:48 IST), <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.in/c om/india/the-message-from-bhutan-is-india-ready-for-this-reset/articleshow/99167186.cms> (highlighting that “[s]atellite imagery has confirmed” the PRC villages are “2.5km inside Bhutan” and “close to Doklam”); see generally The World Factbook Field Listing: Disputes-International, CIA, <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/field/disputes-international/> (listing that the PRC and Bhutan maintain “substantial cartographic discrepancies, the most contentious of which lie in Bhutan’s west along China’s Chumbi salient”); see also Nachiket Deuskar, *Explained: China’s ‘Package Deal’ for Bhutan that Worries India*, SCROLL.IN, (Apr. 3, 2023, 6:30 AM), <https://scroll.in/article/1046685/explained-chinas-package-deal-for-bhutan-that-worries-india> (noting that in contrast to the Bhutanese Prime Minister’s comment in April 2023 that PRC incursions are “not in Bhutan,” Professor Robert Barnett argues that “at least 10 Chinese villages show up within what Bhutan’s own maps mark as its borders”); but see Anbarasan Ethirajan, *Bhutan Wants a Border Deal with China: Will India Accept?*, BBC News (Apr. 26, 2023), <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-65396384> (noting that “Bhutan and China claim the region and India supports Thimphu’s position”).
- <sup>14</sup> See Robert Barnett, *Nibble Like a Silkworm, Swallow Like a Whale*, FOREIGN POLICY (May 7, 2021, 4:02 PM), <https://foreignpolicy.com /2021/05/07/china-bhutan-border-villages-security-forces/>.
- <sup>15</sup> *China Passes New Land Border Law Amid Military Standoff with India*, THE ECONOMIC TIMES (Oct. 24, 2021, 11:53 IST), [https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/china-passes-new-land-border-law-amid-military-standoff-with-india/articleshow/87235778.cms?utm\\_source=contentofinterest&utm\\_medium=text&utm\\_campaign=cppst](https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/china-passes-new-land-border-law-amid-military-standoff-with-india/articleshow/87235778.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst).
- <sup>16</sup> Sim Tack, *A Military Drive Spells Out China’s Intent Along the Indian Border*, WORLDVIEW STRATFOR (Sept. 22, 2020, 10:10 GMT), <https://worldview.stratfor.com/article/military-drive-spells-out-chinas-intent-along-indian-border>.
- <sup>17</sup> <https://chinapower.csis.org/analysis/china-satellite-imagery-military-pangong-tso/>
- <sup>18</sup> [https://earth.google.com/web/search/34+45+06N+78+14+20E/@34.7516667,78.2388889,4278.86193672a,265.65459787d,35y,159.92756131h,0t,0r/data=ClcalRInGQL\\_Sp02YEFAlSc4q\\_RJj1NAKhMzNCAONSAwNk4gNzggMTQgMjBFGAlgASlmcIQJOGVAMIDcNEARNGVAMIDcNMAZO81T0AhL\\_sccfEhRMA](https://earth.google.com/web/search/34+45+06N+78+14+20E/@34.7516667,78.2388889,4278.86193672a,265.65459787d,35y,159.92756131h,0t,0r/data=ClcalRInGQL_Sp02YEFAlSc4q_RJj1NAKhMzNCAONSAwNk4gNzggMTQgMjBFGAlgASlmcIQJOGVAMIDcNEARNGVAMIDcNMAZO81T0AhL_sccfEhRMA)
- <sup>19</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-53171124>.
- <sup>20</sup> <https://theprint.in/defence/how-arunachal-is-front-centre-in-modi-govts-massive-border-infra-push-to-counter-china/1249813/>
- <sup>21</sup> <https://www.ft.com/content/c83f531d-fa06-48ae-ad23-2b8edc9d2009>.
- <sup>22</sup> Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India (Aug. 15, 2023), [https://www.mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl/37010/19th\\_Ro und\\_of\\_India\\_China\\_Corps\\_Commander\\_Level\\_Meeting](https://www.mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl/37010/19th_Ro und_of_India_China_Corps_Commander_Level_Meeting).
- <sup>23</sup> *India and China Pledge to Maintain ‘Peace and Tranquility’ Along Disputed Border Despite Tensions*, *supra* note 7.
- <sup>24</sup> Land and State Boundary Law of the People’s Republic of China (中华人民共和国陆地国界法), ch. I, art.1, <http://www.npc.gov.cn/npc/c30834/202110/5a3d27747cc542f8bcde9030a83218e2.shtml> (*translated with Google translate*) [hereinafter Land Borders Law].
- <sup>25</sup> [www.gov.cn/zhengce/content/2017-06/06/content\\_5200277.htm](http://www.gov.cn/zhengce/content/2017-06/06/content_5200277.htm).
- <sup>26</sup> <https://jamestown.org/program/the-ccp-extends-its-policies-of-forced-ethnic-assimilation-to-inner-mongolia/>.
- <sup>27</sup> Shuxian Luo, *China’s Land Border Law: A Preliminary Assessment*, BROOKINGS (Nov. 4, 2021), <https://www.brookings.edu/articles /chinas-land-border-law-a-preliminary-assessment/>.
- <sup>28</sup> <https://warontherocks.com/2020/06/chinas-strategic-assessment-of-the-ladakh-clash/>.
- <sup>29</sup> [https://www.voanews.com/a/east-asia-pacific\\_voa-news-china\\_chinese-border-villages-disputed-territory-put-india-alert/6204062.html](https://www.voanews.com/a/east-asia-pacific_voa-news-china_chinese-border-villages-disputed-territory-put-india-alert/6204062.html).
- <sup>30</sup> <https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/xi-jinping-salami-tactics-himalayas-south-china-sea-by-brahma-chellaney-2021-03>.
- <sup>31</sup> [https://csis-website-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/legacy\\_files/files/attachments/ts140114\\_glaser.pdf](https://csis-website-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/legacy_files/files/attachments/ts140114_glaser.pdf).
- <sup>32</sup> See Robert Barnett, *Nibble Like a Silkworm, Swallow Like a Whale*, FOREIGN POLICY (May 7, 2021, 4:02 PM), <https://foreignpolicy.com /2021/05/07/china-bhutan-border-villages-security-forces/> (discussing the PRC’s term, “can shi, or ‘nibbling like a silkworm,’” a tactic of “slowly cutting off piece by piece of other nations’ territory”). Barnett, *supra* note 14 (noting that “[i]n Chinese, the term for so-called salami-slicing tactics—slowly cutting off piece by piece of other nations’ territory—is *can shi*, or ‘nibbling like a silkworm’”), (Chellaney, *supra* note 30 (positing that the PRC was “[e]mboldened by its cost-free expansion in the South China Sea,” which resulted in using similar tactics in land-based territorial expansion).
- <sup>33</sup> See, e.g. *id.* (arguing that “[b]y building new border villages and relocating people there, China can now invoke international law in support of its claims” through having effective control of the areas); see also Deuskar, *supra* note 13 (noting that “satellite imagery shows that China has since built military installations in the area” of Doklam); see also Barnett, *supra* note 14 (noting that “in the Beyul” disputed region with Bhutan, the PRC built a “compound” that has “a characteristic pattern of Chinese barracks” and speculating that it “is likely to hold troops from China’s Second Border Defense Regiment”).
- <sup>34</sup> Chellaney, *supra* note 30 (positing that the PRC was “[e]mboldened by its cost-free expansion in the South China Sea,” which resulted in using similar tactics in land-based territorial expansion).
- <sup>35</sup> Goldenziel, *supra* note 1 (noting that the map “includes land that China disputes with India—and even some Russian territory” and arguing that it is “part of a series of recent aggressions against its neighbors’ sovereignty and the rule of law in the region”).
- <sup>36</sup> <https://www.cfr.org/article/how-russias-invasion-ukraine-violates-international-law>
- <sup>37</sup> @RahulGhandi (e.g. @RahulGhandi, Twitter (Sep. 27, 2023), [https://twitter.com/RahulGhandi?ref\\_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor](https://twitter.com/RahulGhandi?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor).
- <sup>38</sup> Singh, *supra* note 13 (noting that in PRC/Bhutan negotiations, “Beijing would concede territories in the east that are important for the Bhutanese royal family in lieu of Thimpu conceding the Doklam plateau to China” which is “highly detrimental to India’s security”).
- <sup>39</sup> *Drum Tower: A, B, Xi*, THE ECONOMIST, at 36:08-36:45 (July 25, 2023) (downloaded using Apple Podcasts).
- <sup>40</sup> *Id.*
- <sup>41</sup> See Timothy R. Heath, Derek Grossman & Asha Clark, *China’s Quest for Global Primacy*, RAND, xvi (2021), [https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research\\_reports/RRA400/RRA447-1/RAND\\_RRA447-1.pdf](https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RRA400/RRA447-1/RAND_RRA447-1.pdf) (highlighting “Chinese success in establishing itself as a principal arbiter in Middle Eastern affairs, as the main sponsor of Africa’s economic development”); see also Jo Inge Bekkevold, *China’s ‘Peace Plan’ for Ukraine Isn’t About Peace*, FOREIGN POLICY (Apr. 4, 2023, 5:29 AM), <https://foreignpolicy.com/2023/04/04/chi-na-xi-ukraine-russia-peace-plan-diplomacy-global-south/>(arguing that “Beijing has recently launched a number of foreign-policy initiatives. The most prominent of these is the so-called peace proposal on Ukraine, with which China aims to strengthen its position vis-à-vis the United States among three specific audiences: the global south, Europe, and postwar Ukraine”).