



HOTLINE TO CHINA IN NEW BORDER PACT

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Troops of India and China will not tail each other's patrols and, during face-off situations, both sides will exercise maximum self-restraint. These are two major points of the key agreement India and China inked Wednesday to establish peace on their 4,000-km disputed border. The Border Defence Cooperation Agreement (BDCA), signed after talks between Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Chinese Premier Li Keqiang, also envisages a hot line between the headquarters of the two armies, right to ask for clarifications about the other side's troop activity and getting the troops into "more friendly" interactions with each other.

The BDCA was signed by Indian Defence Secretary R.K. Mathur and China's People's Liberation Army deputy chief Lt.Gen. Sun Jianguo. It contains 10 clauses that seek to maintain peace, tranquillity and stability along the 4,000-km long Line of Actual Control. It reiterates that "neither side shall use its military capability against the other side and their respective military strengths shall not be used to attack the other side". The agreement basically puts together the past mechanisms for establishing peace along their disputed boundary that has seen frequent intrusions, especially by Chinese troops, causing concern in India.

The agreement will facilitate exchange of information on military exercises, on unmarked mines, on aircraft and also in the non-military field on activities related to smuggling of wildlife and other contraband. Both sides are also to respond to natural disasters and work with each other. According to Indian Ambassador S. Jaishankar, there

would be an increase in the frequency and the level of meetings – from the border level between military personnel, to the command level and at the level of their respective defence ministries. Both sides would also continue with their existing mechanisms – the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination on India-China Border Affairs and the Meetings of the India-China Annual Defence Dialogue, he said. Both sides are to establish personnel meetings between their border troops “in all sectors”.

Earlier, there was contact between personnel only at one point along the boundary. Now there would be contact on the hotline between their military headquarters, which would be “more structured”. Both sides would “get the troops more comfortable with each other”, through joint celebrations and joint exercises. One major clause is that “they shall not follow or tail patrols of the other side in areas where there is no common understanding of the Line of Actual Control in the India-China border areas”. In case the troops “encounter doubtful situations, each side is to seek clarifications” and in case of a face-to-face situations “both will exercise maximum self-restraint”, said the ambassador. The BDCA would “become operational institution to forces on the ground” and help to avert incidents when forces encounter each other on the border, said Jaishankar, who is due to take over soon as India’s ambassador to the US.

There were in total nine agreements signed during Prime Minister Manmohan Singh’s official visit to China on 23 Oct 2013 ; The details of agreements signed are as follows:

1. Agreement on Border Defence Cooperation

Indian Signatory: Shri R.K. Mathur, Defence Secretary

Chinese Signatory: Lt. Gen. Sun Jianguo, Deputy Chief of General Staff, PLA

Gist of Agreement / MOU: An additional confidence building measure to ensure peace and tranquility on the border.

2. MoU on Nalanda University

Indian Signatory: Smt. Sujatha Singh, Foreign Secretary

Chinese Signatory: Mr. Wei Wei, Ambassador of China to India

Gist of Agreement / MOU: Cooperation on Nalanda as part of East Asia Summit process.

3. MOU to Strengthen Cooperation on Trans-Border Rivers

Indian Signatory: Dr. S. Jaishankar, Ambassador of India to China

Chinese Signatory: Mr. Chen Lei, Minister, Ministry of Water Resources

Gist of Agreement / MOU: Provides for expanded cooperation on trans-border rivers.

4. Cultural Exchange Programme 2013-15

Indian Signatory : Dr. S. Jaishankar, Ambassador of India to China

Chinese Signatory : Mr. Yang Zhijin, Vice Minister, Ministry of Culture

Gist of Agreement / MOU : A listing of cultural exchanges till 2015.

5. MoU on Cooperation in Road Transport and Highways

Indian Signatory : Dr. S. Jaishankar, Ambassador of India to China

Chinese Signatory : Mr. Yang Chuantong, Minister, Ministry of Transport

Gist of Agreement / MOU : A listing of cultural exchanges till 2015.

6. MoU on Power Equipment Service Centres in India

Indian Signatory: Dr. S. Jaishankar, Ambassador of India to China

Chinese Signatory: Mr. Wu Xinxiong, Administrator, National Energy Administration

Gist of Agreement / MOU: Provides for establishment in India of Chinese power equipment service centres.

7. Agreement between Delhi-Beijing on Establishment of Sister City Relationship

Indian Signatory: Dr. S. Jaishankar, Ambassador of India to China

Chinese Signatory: Mr. Li Shixiang, Vice Mayor, Beijing Municipality

Gist of Agreement / MOU: Establishes sister city relations between Delhi and Beijing.

8. Agreement between Bengaluru - Chengdu on Establishment of Sister City Relationship

Indian Signatory: Dr. S. Jaishankar, Ambassador of India to China

Chinese Signatory: Mr. Ge Honglin, Mayor of Chengdu

Gist of Agreement / MOU: Establishes sister city relations between Bengaluru and Chengdu.

9. Agreement between Kolkata - Kunming on Establishment of Sister City Relationship

Indian Signatory: Dr. S. Jaishankar, Ambassador of India to China

Chinese Signatory: Mr. Li Wenrong, Mayor of Kunming

Gist of Agreement / MOU: Establishes sister city relations between Kolkata and Kunming.

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