



## India-China Village Development Programs in the Eastern Borderland as Geopolitical Strategy

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### Abstract

Geopolitical strategies are changing, as India and China compete to secure and safeguard their three disputed areas. Both countries are now more advanced than in the past decades, although China's rapid growth is not matching India's developing strategies. China is more focused, as always, to have control over its claimed areas; it has been building up villages near the disputed border areas with Indian territory. They always keep an eye on the entire state of Arunachal Pradesh and the famous Chicken Neck in Sikkim. Their robust infrastructure development programs are well-connected to the border-area villages. They also launched the Xiakang program.

In contrast, although India is not strong enough and can not reach the same level as China, it is. But the present government has launched many such infrastructure development projects, especially the Vibrant Village Programme. To secure the eastern sector's borders, villages have been giving local people the opportunity to create tourist attractions. In this competition, although China has been producing its village construction, India is also in a race to protect the eastern sector from Chinese incursions. This paper focuses on changes in India's and China's geopolitical strategies to secure their disputed border villages. In this paper, a theoretical framework based on neo-realism has been used.

**Keywords:** India, China, Geopolitical strategies, Infrastructure development projects, Village Program.

### Introduction:

India and China have had unique relations since ancient times, and relations between the two emerged in the 2nd century B.C. The connection began with the introduction of Buddhism from India into China. Chinese travellers like Fa Xian and Xuanzang, and, on the side, Indian travellers like Bodhidharma, helped exchange cultural influences between the two nations. In the early mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, the British colonial government began formulating its geopolitical strategy in the Himalayan region. In an effort to secure the northern border, British authorities formalised several treaties and agreements, the most notable being the Shimla Convention of 1914, which established the McMahon Line. This line demarcates the eastern sector of the India-China border, running from the easternmost point to the Talu Pass in the eastern Himalayas. Presented by the British as an official boundary between British India and Tibet, the line aimed to consolidate colonial control and serve as a defensive buffer. Britain's historical perspective on border management emphasised the strategic role of infrastructure and military outposts in asserting sovereignty and managing power dynamics

in the Himalayas. British officials prioritised building roads, telegraph lines, and rest houses in key frontier areas to enhance connectivity and troop movement.<sup>1</sup>

## Research Questions:

- What are the major geopolitical changes due to the village development programs near the eastern sector?
- How have China enhanced their border villages near the disputed border areas with India?
- What are the major initiatives taken by the Indian government in response to Chinese aggression on village development programs?
- How are India and China competing with each other to prevent war?

## Research Objectives:

- To analyse the major geopolitical changes resulting from the village development programs in the eastern sector.
- To examine China's enhanced border villages near the disputed border areas with India.
- To assess the major initiatives taken by the Indian government in response to Chinese aggression on village development programs.
- To evaluate whether India and China are competing with each other in the prevention of war

## Research Methodology:

This paper's research methodology is based on a qualitative descriptive approach. This research method would define India and China's rapid infrastructure development competition to secure their territory. In this research, secondary data has been used, including books, journals, articles, newspaper reports, and government reports.

## Literature Review:

**"The India-China Relationship Rivalry and Engagement"** by *Francine R. Frankel and Harry Harding*— authors observed that India and China have gradually evolved over the past couple of decades from a policy of conflict and confrontation by linking with the sub-regions. In this book, the authors describe India-China relations, rivalry, and engagement, but they do not discuss their changing strategy properly.

**"Understanding India –China Border"** by *Manoj Joshi* discusses how India and China share unique relations, with their border issues stemming from 3 sectors. They have been trying to solve their issues through cooperation, confrontation, and understanding connectivity. But in this book, the author did not elaborate after 2014.

**"India-China relations politics of resources, identity and authority in a multipolar world order"** by *Jaganath P Panda* -In this book, the authors explain how not only India – China relations since 1962 to the present scenario have emerged based on theoretical perspectives from idealism to realism and realism to constructivism. Basically, the author explains how India-China relations have shifted from cooperation to competition, conflict, collaboration, and coexistence.

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<sup>1</sup> Vishal Singh Bhadauriya, "The Colonial Strategy and India-China Conflict: Past, Present, and Future", Georgetown Journal of International Affairs, 18th January, 2025, Source- [https://gjia.georgetown.edu/2025/01/18/the-colonial-strategy-and-india-china-conflict-past-present-and-future/#\\_edn1](https://gjia.georgetown.edu/2025/01/18/the-colonial-strategy-and-india-china-conflict-past-present-and-future/#_edn1)

*“Sino-Indian Boundary Dispute and Indo-Centric Reflections on China’s Military Capabilities, Thoughts and Options in the Near Future” by Major General V.K. Shrivastava-* In this book, the author explains that after independence, boundary disputes between the two have become the biggest issue. Because of China’s priorities and compulsions, it cannot settle the boundary dispute. The author did not describe China’s military enforcement in light of changing dynamics.

*‘Indo-China trade relationships: present trends and prospects’ by Salahuddin Ayyub-* In that article, the author talks about India and China’s bilateral relations, especially economic relations. India and China both know that they cannot grow fast without each other’s support. Basically, in this article, the future relationship between India and China is not elaborated on.

## **India-China Emerging Era from the late 1950’s to 2020:**

After several challenges, both countries emerged as strong, independent, and the most powerful nations in Asia. Whereas India became an independent nation in 1947, on October 1, 1949, Mao Zedong declared the formation of the People’s Republic of China. From the beginning, Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru sought to establish friendship with China. Still, China had multiple issues with areas it felt had been occupied by India since the British Empire. China did not respond positively to Jawaharlal Nehru’s slogan “Hindi –Hindi -Chini-Bhai-Bhai” and an agenda of peace.

On April 29, 1954, India and China signed the 'Panchsheel Agreement', formally recognising China’s sovereignty over Tibet. The five principles of peaceful coexistence were outlined. They include-

- Mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty
- Mutual non-aggression
- Mutual non-interference
- Equal and mutual benefit
- Peaceful coexistence<sup>2</sup>

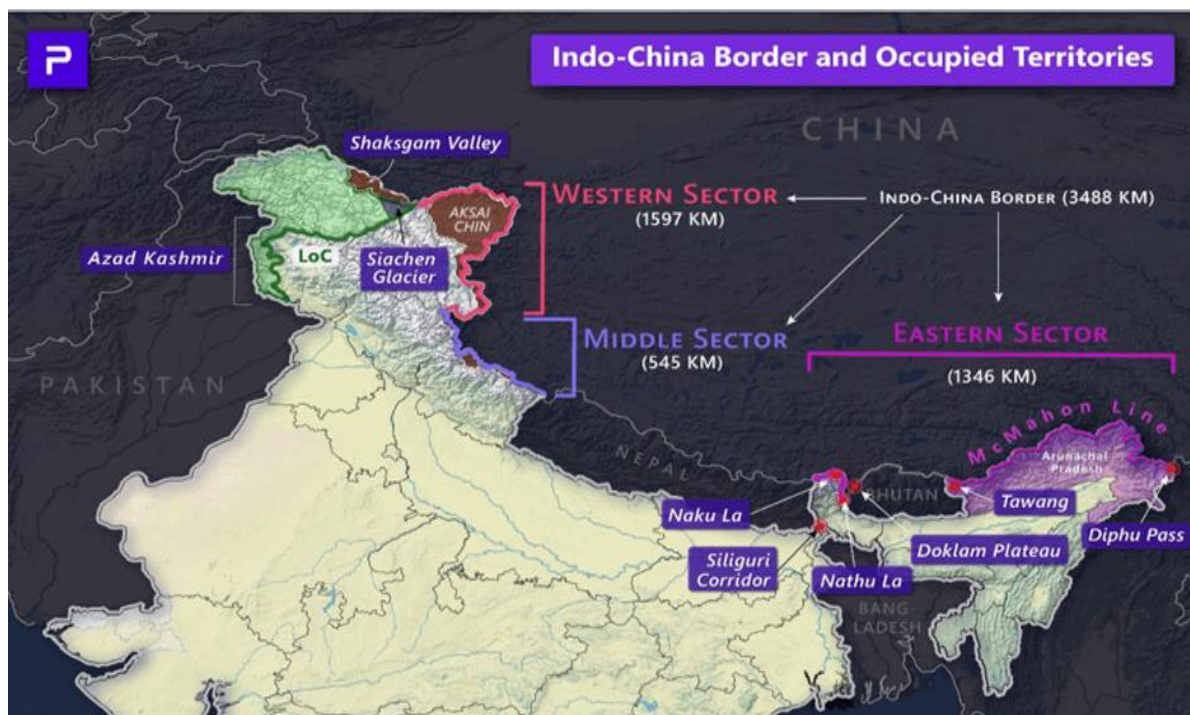
Despite early goodwill, unresolved border issues led to the 1962 Sino-Indian War, which erupted over disputed borders in Ladakh( western sector) and Arunachal Pradesh (eastern sector). , resulting in strained relations and territorial adjustments. China advanced but declared a unilateral ceasefire on November 21, holding its claimed lines. Around 1,383 Indian soldiers were killed during the war, with both sides suffering significant losses.

In 1967, the Nathu La clashes transpired when the People's Liberation Army (PLA) initiated an attack on Indian posts situated at Nathu La, which is located along the border of Sikkim, then a protectorate of India. According to independent sources, Indian forces gained a decisive tactical advantage, successfully repelling Chinese forces and demolishing several PLA fortifications. The subsequent decades experienced additional skirmishes, including the Sumdorong Chu standoff in 1987, thereby intensifying tensions.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> 1959 revolt in Tibet is dealt with a later section (Quoted in V K Khanna, “Foreign Policy of India”, Seventh Edition, Vikash Publication House Pvt ltd, 2018)

<sup>3</sup> Anushka Sharma, “Chronicle of Conflict: The India-China border dispute from 1950 to 2024” CNBC TV 18, October 21, 2024, Source - <https://www.cnbc18.com/india/chronicle-of-conflict-the-india-china-border-dispute-from-1950-to-2024-19496332.htm/amp>



India-China Disputed and occupied territories, Source - <https://search.app/GVqdcEjszACaLNBQ9>

These conflicts merely marked the beginning for both nations. Despite persistent efforts to resolve border disputes, mutual trust issues have impeded progress. In 1989, India established a Joint Working Group dedicated to Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) and mutually agreed to settle all border disagreements amicably. Subsequently, in 2003, India and China signed a Declaration on Principles for Relations and Comprehensive Cooperation, along with a mutual decision to appoint Special Representatives to explore the framework for a boundary settlement from a political perspective. The bilateral relationship experienced a significant enhancement in 2003, notably with China recognizing India's sovereignty over Sikkim. This recognition was complemented by the development of a framework comprising guiding principles and political parameters aimed at improving bilateral ties. A three-step approach was proposed to resolve border disputes:

- Establishing a bilateral agreement based on predefined principles.
- Engaging in an exchange of maps between the two countries.
- Finalizing the demarcation of borders once both parties are satisfied with the markings.

Another standoff occurred on June 16, 2017, at Doklam when Chinese troops commenced construction of a road, prompting India to initiate Operation Juniper on June 18 in support of Bhutan. The confrontation persisted for over two months, culminating in the withdrawal of troops by both nations on August 28, 2017. Chinese military advances toward disputed territories have continually heightened tensions. President Xi Jinping appears to follow Mao's perspective regarding Tibet as a strategic stronghold, extending influence through five strategic fingers—Nepal, Bhutan, and the three Indian territories of Ladakh, Sikkim, and Arunachal Pradesh—which China aims to 'liberate'.<sup>6</sup> The 2020 Galwan Valley clash was precipitated by objections to India's infrastructure developments; China perceived these initiatives as threats to its territorial claims in the region. In December 2022, further clashes occurred in Arunachal Pradesh's Tawang sector, resulting in minor injuries.<sup>7</sup> To enhance infrastructure development, including roads, railways, and airfields, both nations

<sup>4</sup>"India-China Border Disputes-What is the Doklam Issue?", ClearIAS, October 17, 2024, Source - <https://search.app/pb1My1oA1iDvH6YF6>

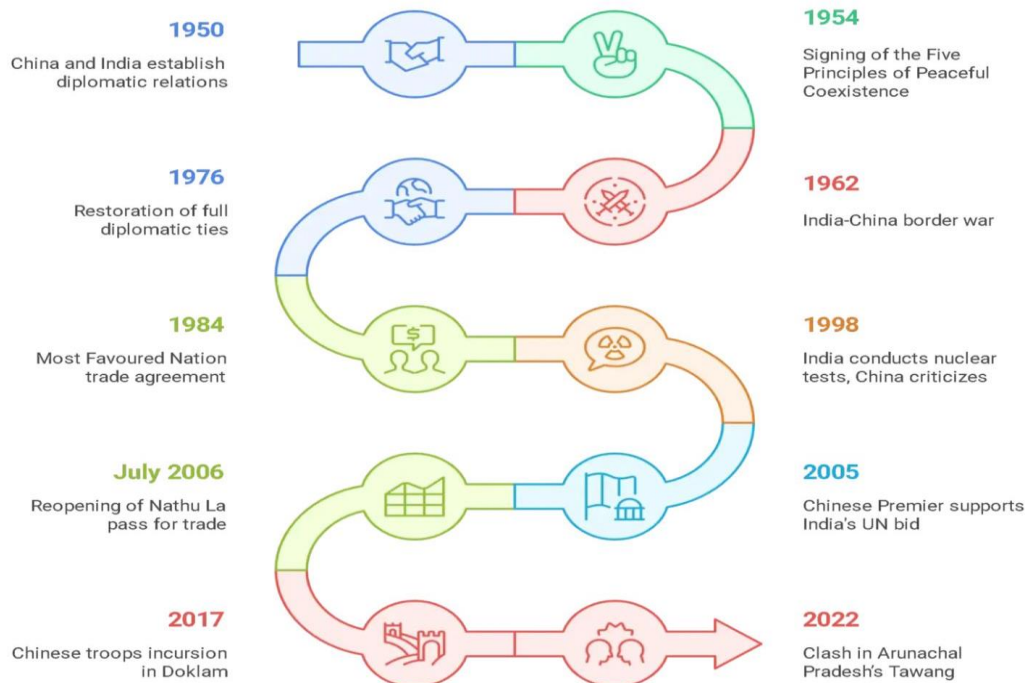
<sup>5</sup>"India- China Relations, History, Timeline, Challenges", op.cit, Source - <https://search.app/nXX96x85bUAgTsiq9>

<sup>6</sup> Brahma Chellaney, "China's five-finger Punch", THE STRATEGIST, July 22, 2020, Source - <https://search.app/u9xvCTWXQMcJNB7>

<sup>7</sup>"India-China border dispute explained: Revisiting the 2020 Galwan clash amid latest patrolling agreement", The Economic Times, October 21, 2024, Source - <https://search.app/7GDftYyNWWnUkNW6>

have initiated various projects. China began constructing border Xiaokang villages to secure connectivity and assert territorial claims. In response, India launched its Border Area Development Projects, including village construction, which gained momentum following the Vibrant Village initiative. Recognizing the importance of securing connectivity with border regions, India has increasingly prioritized infrastructure development in these areas.

Key Events in India-China Relations: A Historical Timeline



Source - <https://search.app/nXX96x85bUAgTsiq9>

## China's structured village developments near the disputed border area of eastern sector:

Since the 1950s, China has maintained control over Tibet, which it views as its own vital part. When the People's Liberation Army invaded the region in 1951, connect between Tibet and mainland China was quiet irregular. Today, a sophisticated network of highways, railroads and air routes connects it to the rest of the world. In addition to recent PLA reforms, this dual-use infrastructure developed by China facilitates it to manage the threats posed by its unresolved border with India. Due to large part to well-coordinated civil-military fusion, the construction of dual-use civilian infrastructure and recent military upgrades, China has gained an operational edge along its border with India. In addition to communication channels, China's three main arteries, oil pipelines, internet and power connectivity as well as more recent 'well-off communities in border areas' have all aided in development and protection its border areas.<sup>8</sup>

In eastern sector, the LAC is disputed in Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh. Basically, in China's perception to gain full authority on Arunachal Pradesh or Zangong or South Tibet it's important to connect those areas for their claim territories. China has officially added statement that these regions were officially part of their territory since the ancient times. On the matter of these disputed territories Xi Jinping retained that "China would not allow any people, organization or political

<sup>8</sup>Col Vivek Singh,"China's Infrastructure Development Along The Line of Actual Control (LAC) and Implications for India, Centre for Joint Warfare Studies, January 29, 2024, Source- <https://search.app/jSBpaegFBVhqD2TL9>

# *The Global Journal of Contextual Thought*

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party to split any part of Chinese territory from the country at any time, in any form".<sup>9</sup>For this aggressive nature and intention to occupy their claimed areas recently clash happened at Tawang(2022). It seems as a aggressive attempt to revive, legitimize and reinforce its sovereignty claims in general and over the Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh.

Chinese Border Settlement (CBS) commonly known as Model Villages/ Xiaokang villages are the group housing schemes being developed by the Communist Party of China (CPC) for community living its disputed border areas especially in the areas of Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), opposite India. By developing these areas, China aims to strengthen its territorial claims and establish administrative control thereby enhancing stability and quelling dissent among local people.

The Chinese Communist Party's infrastructure initiatives in Tibet established the "Xiaokang" or "well-off villages" program (2017), targeting 628 villages along the Indian border, including 427 first-line and 201 second-line villages. These span from Ngari Prefecture, bordering Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh, to Nyingchi, bordering Arunachal Pradesh. Of these, 354 villages are located along borders with Bhutan, Nepal, and Arunachal Pradesh, across 21 Himalayan border counties, with a total of 62,160 households expected to house approximately 62,000 inhabitants.

These villages, primarily inhabited by supporters of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), are presumably intended to serve as a buffer zone between China and India, thereby enhancing Beijing's authority over these remote territories. According to Chinese officials, the construction of these border communities aims to ensure border cohesion and security. China's strategic approach has historically involved exploiting civilian resources, such as herders, farmers, and fishermen, to advance military objectives on land and at sea. The People's Liberation Army (PLA) has long employed nomadic tribes and herders to access grazing pastures, thereby supporting territorial claims.<sup>10</sup>Although the specific purposes remain unclear, these infrastructure projects are understood to be dual-use, capable of serving both civilian and military functions. The military utilization of such infrastructure has raised concerns from a defense perspective, with the strategic community viewing it as a means to assert Chinese claims over certain areas along the Line of Actual Control (LAC). Furthermore, a new law concerning China's land borders was enacted effective January 1, 2022, following its passage in 2021, to facilitate the "protection and exploitation of the country's land border areas."<sup>11</sup>This law assigns responsibility to the PLA and police for maintaining border security, while also requiring Chinese citizens to actively participate in defending border regions. The residents of these border villages act as the eyes and ears of the authorities.<sup>12</sup>

To enhance interconnectivity with the disputed border area villages, Chinese government has been constructing villages to succeed their policies. They have been developing connectivity with domestic, socio-economic and political goals, one of the village development project is xiaokang. Rural revitalization by Chinese government made Communist Party of China's (CPC) more accurate and also has increased interest of Tibetan population of border areas and commercialization of agro-pastoral products. By their aggressive infrastructure development projects and its help in making military movements easier, as they can always patrolling near the border areas. It represents the success of their international policies in xiaokang villages in four counties of Ngari prefecture (Ali diqu) in western TAR and in Droma county (Yadongxian) in Shigatse city (Xigaze/Rikazeshi) in southern TAR. According to the report these 44 xiaokang villages has captured by the satellite images, which are located in Ruthog, Tsamda, Gar and Purang counties in Ngari prefecture and in Droma county in Shigatse city.<sup>13</sup> Another news came on January 2021, by NDTV, they reported that Chinese government constructed village near Tsari Chu river in the Long ju area of Arunachal Pradesh. According to this article in this village they have built approximately 100 houses. They also reported that this village is approximately 4.5 km inside Indian territory. This region is officially part of Indian territory but Chinese government has control that area since the last six decades.

As Chinese government has intention to occupy the entire Arunachal Pradesh, rather they feel that they have the authority on these regions. From the newspaper report another village presence has captured through the satellite image. This village located in the Shi-Yomi district of Arunachal Pradesh, the satellite captured Chinese flag from the rooftop of one of the

<sup>9</sup> "China loves peace, but never compromises on sovereignty: Xi", Xinhua, August 01, 2017, Source - <https://search.app/bzDzo5wnb2YQ2DEE7>

<sup>10</sup> Col Vivek Singh, op.cit, source - <https://search.app/jSBpaegFBVhqD2TL9>

<sup>11</sup> "China's Xiaokang Border Defence Villages Along The Line of Actual Control (LAC), PWonlyIAS, February 16, 2024, Source - <https://search.app/VW2njD3yPSXbLD1U>

<sup>12</sup> Col Neeraj Kumar Singh, op.cit, Source - <https://search.app/4sDcYPZiwwSR07y66>

<sup>13</sup> Kaur, Japneet, Devendra kumar, Jabin T. Jacob, "Beyond the Military Prism: China's Development Objectives in Xiaokang Villages in Tibet Autonomous Region", Occasional Paper, February, 2025, Source - <https://search.app/QOyVV6eQof1xwRX57>

houses of that village. Although, Indian army denied their presence at that area. But it's got highlighted on November, 2021 when from the US Department of Defence reported that in these regions Chinese military has authority to patrolling these areas as Chinese built villages and Indian military also know about their movements since their presence at the eastern sector. It created more complications and emerged tensions of these Chinese activities in the question of securing the border areas especially in the eastern sector. In this matter Chinese government stated that they had full rights to do these activities and they didn't recognise Arunachal Pradesh as a part of Indian territory. Hence they had full authority to undertake these village construction work for the better connectivity with this region. They have been working on such projects where these villages are spread from the Rutok prefecture in the west to Rima in the Lohit valley in the east.<sup>14</sup>

They have also been expanding their Xiaokang model villages in Arunachal Pradesh's Upper Subansiri district.<sup>15</sup> For Indian government it's a high alert time, as they have been spreading *Xiaokang border village program* near Tawang and in the Chumbi Valley region near the Siliguri Corridor. It raised concerns for Indian territorial security and safety of the Indian citizens. Hence, by their continues infrastructure development projects near the eastern sector have generated their policies. They have eventually been engaged with people. By their presence and development works, in these villages have enhanced tensions for Indian government. By these movements and enhanced military capacity, Chinese have been volatile their agreement to prevent peace and tranquillity. By this advanced work at the border villages created serious issues along the Line of Actual Control (LAC).<sup>16</sup>

### **Geo-Political Implications on Indian Territory:**

Chinese government always have issues regarding territorial matter with Indian border. For maintain peace and security they engaged with Indian government for the border settlement projects. Chinese are not fruitfully maintain the peace and break their agreements and enter forcefully to occupy their claimed regions. Basically the border area between India and China is represented as a buffer areas. Chinese military engagement with border areas villages make more critical situation. Hence, China's geo-political strategy is always same, to regain their claimed regions. Maximum time India and China brake their agreements and involved into the war, recent war was the Galwan Valley Clash. It leads to more complications of their diplomatic and bilateral relationship.<sup>17</sup>

### **India's response against Chinese government Xiaokang program by their own enlarged village development program at the eastern sector:**

To enhanced International border security and safety with China, Indian government took initiatives to prevent their aggressive movements. Indian government passed many infrastructure development projects for securing their own regions. They have been engaging to build up highways, airports, better railway connectivity. Most importantly to in the war like situation and to prevent Chinese incursions through their border villages, they introduced Vibrant Village Program (VVP). It is one of the strongest strategies by government. Rather, by this development project Indian government easily reach out to these regions to secure their frontier regions, make better connections with the local people of border area.<sup>18</sup>

To extend and make Vibrant Village Programme (VVP) successful, Arunachal Pradesh state government also wanted that central government should take more initiatives and fruitful decision for not only focusing on the

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<sup>14</sup>Shivam Shekhawat, "China's Xiaokang Villages Why Should India Be Concerned?", Organisation for Research on China and Asia, January 9, 2022, Source- <https://search.app/fiKByyogqepRPmaY>

<sup>15</sup>Amrit Jash, "The Clash at Tawang: Tensions Rise on the China-India Border", The Jamestown Foundation Global Research and Analysis, China Brief, January 19, 2023, Source - <https://search.app/tW73rsRR6yxPkNjq8>

<sup>16</sup>Sibani Choudhury, "Deciphering Xiaokang Along the India-China Border", India Council of World Affairs, June 21, 2024, Source- <https://search.app/BJ3DKp2ZCfQF1p6BA>

<sup>17</sup>Atul Kumar, "The Vibrant Villages Programme: A response to PLA's Salami Slicing through Xiaokang (小康) villages, ORF, July 19, 2024, Source – <https://search.app/LqGnTBgQhd7fun1B6>

<sup>18</sup>Atul Kumar, *ibid*, Source – <https://search.app/LqGnTBgQhd7fun1B6>

border areas with China but also focus on their internal security. On 10<sup>th</sup> April, from the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) the Vibrant Village Programme took place on behalf of the earlier Border Area Development Programme (BADP). This project mainly focused to prioritise border villages along India's northern frontier. By developing this programme first phase, 455 villages across 11 districts of Arunachal Pradesh were being constructed. As per the report, Central government has sanctioned Rs 2,205 crore for constructing 105 roads spanning 1,022 km, which would improve connectivity to 125 villages.<sup>19</sup> It's definitely different phase of developing work from Chinese Xiaokang village program. Rather, Indian government have been trying to engage with people and to enhanced their quality of life. Union Minister Amit Shah launched India's first Vibrant Village Programme at kibithoo in Arunachal Pradesh's eastern Anjaw district on April 10, 2023.<sup>20</sup> Some other villages are present at the states of eastern sectors are- in Sikkim those villages are Lacheng, Lachung, Gnathang and in Arunachal Pradesh those villages are Zemithang, Taksing, Chayangtajo, Tuting etc.<sup>21</sup>

Indian government has been working on their VVP project to accomplish. Although, there are many objections from the options but present government is more active in completing these projects. To maintain its commitment to the VVP, ensuring it does not succumb to bureaucratic inefficiencies. Often, ineffective monitoring and lack of accountability lead to fund diversion and consequent slow or lack of progress in development schemes in far-flung regions. Even in 2024, some villages along the India-Tibet border still require days of travel on foot or by pony to reach. Therefore, the VVP's effective implementation will help these Indian villages connect to the national mainstream, participate in India's growing economy and, in return, enhance security for the state. Repopulated villages along the border can become the most important sustenance factor for Indian troops deployed along harsh mountainous t

The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has sanctioned the Vibrant Villages Programme-II (VVP-II) as a Central Sector Scheme aimed at enhancing the security and vibrancy of land borders. The scheme will facilitate comprehensive development in villages located in the blocks adjacent to international land borders (ILBs), excluding those already addressed under VVP-I along the northern border. With an allocated budget of Rs. 6,839 crore, the initiative will be implemented in selected strategic villages across the states and Union Territories of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Gujarat, Jammu and Kashmir (Union Territory), Ladakh (Union Territory), Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tripura, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal until the fiscal year 2028-29.

The scheme seeks to improve living conditions and foster sustainable livelihood opportunities to secure and develop prosperous borders, curb trans-border crime, and promote integration of border populations with the nation—a vital element of internal security. It will allocate funding for infrastructure development within individual villages or clusters of villages, promotion of value chains through cooperatives and self-help groups, border-specific outreach initiatives, educational infrastructure such as SMART classrooms, tourism circuit development, and projects aimed at generating diverse and sustainable livelihoods in border regions. Interventions will be customized according to specific border contexts, states, and villages, based on collaboratively formulated Village Action Plans.

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<sup>19</sup>Vansh Gupta, "Beyond China Frontier, Arunachal Pradesh Seeks Vibrant Village Expansion To Myanmar And Bhutan Border Regions", SWARAJYA, March 11, 2025, Source - <https://search.app/oHuiuXiXTpwZs99W>

<sup>20</sup>Jaideep Mazumdar, "What Is The 'Vibrant Village Programme' That Amit Shah Will Flag Off In Arunachal Pradesh", SWARAJYA, April 09, 2023, Source - <https://search.app/tkctoZcCJT2MiT9Q7>

<sup>21</sup>Sreeparna Chakrabarty, "Under Vibrant Villages programme, 17 border villages to be developed as tourist destinations", The Hindu, April 30, 2023, Source - <https://search.app/H3jdvKz3bmaueewu7>

All-weather road connectivity for these villages shall be pursued under the already approved Pradhan Mantri Gramin Sadak Yojana-IV (PMGSY-IV) under the Ministry of Rural Development. A High-Powered Committee, chaired by the Cabinet Secretary, shall consider appropriate relaxations in schematic guidelines to facilitate effective implementation of schemes in border areas. The initiative aims for full saturation of existing individual and household welfare schemes within the designated villages through convergence, in accordance with scheme norms. Additionally, it aims to achieve comprehensive coverage of all villages within such blocks in four thematic domains: all-weather road connectivity, telecommunications, television connectivity, and electrification, through convergence under existing scheme norms.

The programme emphasizes increasing vibrancy in these villages by organizing activities including fairs and festivals, awareness camps, celebration of National Days, regular visits by ministers and senior government officials from the Central and State/Union Territory Governments, as well as overnight stays in these villages. This strategy is intended to enhance tourism potential and promote local culture and heritage. Technology, including information databases such as PM Gati Shakti, will be leveraged for effective project implementation. VVP-II, alongside VVP-I, represents a transformative effort to foster self-reliance and vibrancy among border villages.<sup>22</sup> Notably, the villages of Tirap, Changlang, and Longding in Arunachal Pradesh have been included in the Vibrant Villages Programme – II.<sup>23</sup>

## **Geopolitical Implications:**

### **Strengthening Border Security:**

The program's focus on connectivity (roads, telecom, etc.), development of basic facilities, and promotion of local industries enhances the economic viability and stability of border villages, thereby reducing the incentive for populations to migrate.<sup>24</sup>

### **Enhancing National Pride and Unity:**

By celebrating the cultural heritage and identity of border communities, the program fosters a sense of national pride and unity, reinforcing the idea that these regions are integral parts of India's national identity.<sup>25</sup>

### **Promoting Economic Growth:**

The program encourages social entrepreneurship, skill development, and the use of local resources to create economic opportunities in border areas. This can attract investments, boost local economies, and reduce reliance on government assistance.<sup>26</sup>

### **Supporting the Military:**

The improved infrastructure and increased population in border villages can support the deployment and sustainment of Indian troops in these regions, enhancing the military's ability to respond to potential threats.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>“Cabinet approves “Vibrant Villages Programme-II (VVP-II) for financial years 2024-25 to 2028-29”, Ministry of Home Affairs, April 04, 2025, Source - <https://search.app/WNonAHwVXbocPU2f9>

<sup>23</sup>“Arunachal: Tirap, Changlang&Longding Villages Included In VVP-II; CM Expresses Gratitude To PM, HM”, Northeast Today, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025, Source - <https://search.app/DMM5tUAemT5nE4SL9>

<sup>24</sup> Atul Kumar, op.cit, Source - <https://search.app/LqGnTBgQhd7fun1B6>

<sup>25</sup> “Viksit Vibrant Villages Program to Take Place From 15th to 30th May 2025; Registrations on MY Bharat Platform Started from 23rd April”, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, April 25, 2025, Source - <https://search.app/tNyBk6SHSb5gHzET6>

<sup>26</sup>“Vibrant Village Programme”, Government of India, April 04, 2025, Source - [https://search.app/?link=https%3A%2F%2Fschemes%2Evikaspedia%2Ein%2Fviewcontent%2Fschemesall%2Fschemes%2Dfor%2Dfarmers%2Fvibrant%2Dvillages%2Dprogramme%3Flgn%3Den&utm\\_campaign=share%2Dsd1%2Diga%2D3p&utm\\_source=igad1%2Cigatpd1%2Csh%2Ffx%2Fgs%2Fm2%2F5](https://search.app/?link=https%3A%2F%2Fschemes%2Evikaspedia%2Ein%2Fviewcontent%2Fschemesall%2Fschemes%2Dfor%2Dfarmers%2Fvibrant%2Dvillages%2Dprogramme%3Flgn%3Den&utm_campaign=share%2Dsd1%2Diga%2D3p&utm_source=igad1%2Cigatpd1%2Csh%2Ffx%2Fgs%2Fm2%2F5)

<sup>27</sup> Atul Kumar, op.cit, Source - <https://search.app/LqGnTBgQhd7fun1B6>

## Addressing Displacement and Migration:

By improving living conditions and economic opportunities, the program aims to curb migration from border areas and encourage people to return and re-establish their homes, thus strengthening the border regions' demographic and social fabric.<sup>28</sup>

## Conclusion:

India- China's relationship has been changed geopolitically, as both nations are powerful; they know their each other strength. To protect their disputed border areas they are aware and concern for infrastructure development projects for protecting themselves in war like situation. Whereas, China has been trying to follow salami slicing technique, accrue incremental gains in its boundary disputes with India for getting advantageous position in their resolution. The step towards inhabiting the villages is aimed at establishing sovereignty through the presence of civilians in a territory. China observed that somehow India couldn't establish the connection with eastern sector means at Arunachal Pradesh and with the Siliguri corridor at Sikkim and they took that opportunity. They have been constructing border villages and improving military strategies in close proximity to the LAC, Tawang, and Siliguri Corridor, and disputed areas, China has acted in a way that poses a threat to India's security. On the other side Indian government have been starting their infrastructure development programmes at the eastern sector, as they face backlashes from China. To secure those regions, it's necessary for India to take hard step and improve local living standards and improve military capabilities. By the Vibrant Village Program, Indian government is now constructing villages under their program for better connectivity with the neglected people of those regions. As China's main target to occupy Arunachal Pradesh and build up connectivity with the Sikkim from there they can easily enter into theregion. By countering, Indian government strongly objected those steps. Recently, Chinese government tried to renaming 30 villages at Arunachal Pradesh, in the response Indian government rejected such attempts. They specified by the official announcements that creative naming would not be altering undeniable reality that Arunachal Pradesh was, is and will always remain an integral and inalienable part of India.<sup>29</sup>

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