India China - Doklam Plateau Standoff

What is the issue?

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- Indian troops intervened to block the path of Chinese soldiers engaged in building road-works on the **Doklam plateau** of Bhutan's territory that Beijing laid claim.
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- Beijing responded by closing access to Indian pilgrims seeking to proceed through the Nathu La pass on to Kailash-Mansarovar.
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What is the source of the conflict?

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- Doklam plateau is a 269-sq km plateau in Bhutan, which overlooks the strategic Chumbi Valley.
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- The plateau is claimed by China.
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- Bhutan has a written agreement with China that pending the final resolution of the boundary issue, peace and tranquility should be maintained.
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- Now the construction of road raised concerns between Bhutan and China.
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Why China is interested in the region?

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- The road, which passes through Bhutan's territory, has significantly

enhanced China’s military logistics in the region.
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- China aims to promote the development of the Yadong region, which is connected to Lhasa with a highway.
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- China is also aiming to establish formal ties with Bhutan..
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- It was reported to have Pressured Bhutan by saying it would not agree to a border deal until Bhutan allowed it to open a diplomatic mission in that country.
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- It would also like to adopt a military posture in the area to ensure that it can defeat India in any military contest.
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- At the same time it is seeking to check India’s efforts to help Bhutan.
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How India and China relation is affected by it?

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- China accused Indian border guards of crossing into its territory to stop the construction of the road.
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- Chinese are using it to send various political messages.
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- India boycotted the Belt and Road Initiative jamboree in Shanghai in May.
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- It’s unclear if its $50-billion China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) will be viable if India doesn’t join.
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- China’s riled at India’s growing US tilt in what Beijing sees as an anti-China alliance that includes Japan and Australia.
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- Chinese also wants to signal that China has consolidated its position on the global stage.
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What are India’s interests?

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- Indian Army regards the Doklam plain as strategically crucial because it opens a path to the Siliguri Corridor which links the northeast to the rest of India.
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- India also can’t afford to abandon its diplomatic ties with Bhutan
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What should be done?

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- India needs to make some kind of economic concessions to china.
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- While we stay out of CPEC, we should offer to join BRI.
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- At the same time we need to ensure that we aren’t side lined to smaller stage by the global giant next door.
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Source: Business Line

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