



Indian Defense Chief Sees Collusion Between China and Pakistan

OE Watch Commentary: Indian Media conglomerate *NDTV* recently posted partial transcripts and analysis of a two-day (6-7 November) virtual seminar given by India's Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), General Bipin Rawat, and organized by India's National Defence College. Although Rawat admitted that India faced a variety of threats, much of the general's address was focused on tensions with China. According to the excerpted article, Rawat reiterated the oft-stated Indian position on Chinese actions near the Line of Actual Control (LAC) where violent clashes took place in June 2020. Rawat reemphasized India's heroic and dedicated moves to counter what the Indians see as China's aggressive efforts to challenge the existing disputed border, stating that India "will not accept any shifting of the LAC."

According to the published transcripts, the defense chief also accused China and Pakistan of conspiring against India saying, "'increasing collusion' poses an 'omnipresent danger' of regional strategic instability and threatens India's territorial integrity."

It is no mystery that India has been engaged in a decades long struggle against Pakistan. It is also a fact that the disputed LAC between India and China is located in territory that Pakistan claims. According to Rawat, a proxy war "unleashed by Pakistan in [India-administered] Jammu and Kashmir accompanied by a 'vicious' anti-India rhetoric on social media and efforts to create social disharmony within India have taken Indo-Pak relations to a new low."

Rawat stated that Pakistan will remain the epicenter of armed insurgency and terrorism while continuing to claim that Pakistan considers Kashmir "unfinished business." However, beyond those statements, Rawat shared no specific evidence regarding China-Pakistan collusion. He did, however, continue lump them together in a dual-threat scenario: "This gets further compounded by the phenomenal economic and military rise of China and the unique hybrid capabilities of Pakistan."

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Both Pakistan and China have territorial claims against India. Pakistan and China also enjoy a fairly harmonious relationship since the Sino-Soviet Split in 1959, which drove India closer to Russia as a move to balance power in the region. These political dynamics of the 1950s-1960s created a Pakistan-China axis and an India-Russia axis, both of which continue to be relevant today, especially along the disputed India/Kashmir-China frontier [see: "The Limit of Russia-Pakistan Security Cooperation," OE Watch, December 2020]. **End OE Watch Commentary (Billingsley)**



Map of Disputed Kashmir Region.

Source: CIA, https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/3/36/Kashmir_Region_%282020_skirmish_locations%29.jpg, Public Domain

“The constant friction with two of our nuclear-armed neighbours with whom India has fought wars, with both increasingly acting in collusion, poses an omnipresent danger of regional strategic instability with potential for escalation, threatening our territorial integrity and strategic cohesion.”



Continued: Indian Defense Chief Sees Collusion Between China and Pakistan

Source: Chinese Army Facing “Unanticipated Consequences” For Misadventure: Defence Chief, NDTV, 7 November 2020. <https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/chinese-army-facing-unanticipated-consequences-for-misadventure-defence-chief-bipin-rawat-2321909>

China’s People’s Liberation Army (PLA) is facing “unanticipated consequences” for its misadventure in eastern Ladakh because of the “firm and strong” responses by the Indian armed forces and the possibility of transgressions and confrontations on the Line of Actual Control spiraling into a larger conflict cannot be ruled out, Chief of Defence Staff General Bipin Rawat said on Friday.

In an address at a virtual seminar, General Rawat said the situation along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh remained tense and that India’s posturing to deal with it has been “unambiguous”, adding the country will not accept any shifting of the LAC.

Talking about myriad external security challenges facing the nation, Gen Rawat also referred to “increasing collusion” between Pakistan and China and said it poses an “omnipresent danger” of regional strategic instability and threatens India’s territorial integrity.

“The situation along the LAC in eastern Ladakh remains tense. The PLA is facing unanticipated consequences of its misadventure in Ladakh because of the Indian defence force’s firm and strong response. Our posturing is unambiguous and we will not accept any shifting of the LAC,” he said “In the overall security calculus, border confrontations, transgressions and unprovoked tactical military actions spiraling into a larger conflict cannot, therefore, be discounted,” the Chief of Defence Staff(CDS) said at the seminar organised by the National Defence College.

“The constant friction with two of our nuclear-armed neighbours with whom India has fought wars, with both increasingly acting in collusion, poses an omnipresent danger of regional strategic instability with potential for escalation, threatening our territorial integrity and strategic cohesion.”

The Chief of Defence Staff said the “unabated proxy war” unleashed by Pakistan in Jammu and Kashmir accompanied by a “vicious” anti-India rhetoric on social media and efforts to create social disharmony within India have taken Indo-Pak relations to a new low.

“The surgical strikes post Uri terror attack and the Balakot air strikes have delivered a strong message to Pakistan that it no longer enjoys the impunity of pushing terrorists across the Line of Control under the nuclear bogey,” he said.

“The new Indian template has injected ambiguity and uncertainty in Pakistan, evident in its media reports, about Indian Armed Forces reaction, if Pakistan sponsored terrorists cross the threshold of tolerance,” Gen Rawat added.

The Defence Chief said despite internal problems, failing economy, international isolation and vitiated civil-military relations, Pakistan will continue to “profess” that Kashmir is their “unfinished agenda”.

“And its Army will continue to raise the bogey of an existential threat from India to justify its disproportionately large strength and need for funds to maintain its war fighting capabilities,” he said.

Gen Rawat said Pakistan has continued to remain the epicenter of armed insurgency and terrorism.

“For three decades now, the Pakistan Army and the ISI - known as the ‘Deep State’ have been waging a proxy war in Jammu and Kashmir and are now increasingly resorting to non kinetic means by launching vicious anti India rhetoric on social media and propagating false communal narratives to create social disharmony within India,” he said.

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Referring to evolving geo-political situation, the Defence Chief said China, with its ambition of emerging as a global power, is already making inroads into South Asia, Indian Ocean Region (IOR) and especially East Africa through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

“Chinese aspirations are evident in the ever-expanding Chinese military maritime footprints in the Indo-Pacific, huge investments in the IOR littorals, and entering into strategic partnerships with a number of countries in the region like South Africa, Egypt, Pakistan and the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN),” he said.

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“For India the challenges have manifested with military flare-ups along the LAC. In the coming years we are likely to witness aggressive pursuit of hegemonic interests by China manifesting through economic exploitation of weaker nations.”

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“This gets further compounded by the phenomenal economic and military rise of China and the unique hybrid capabilities of Pakistan and machinations of its Deep State.

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He said it has raised a ‘Strategic Support Force; that is acquiring capabilities in space, cyber and electronic warfare domain to conduct an “intelligentised” form of warfare.

(Except for the headline, this story has not been edited by NDTV staff and is published from a syndicated feed.)



Continued: Indian Defense Chief Sees Collusion Between China and Pakistan

Source: “Larger Conflict Can’t Be Discounted,” General Bipin Rawat Warns On China, *NDTV*, 6 November 2020. <https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/general-bipin-rawat-chief-of-defence-staff-border-confrontations-unprovoked-actions-spiraling-into-larger-conflict-cant-be-discounted-news-agency-puti-2321463>

Chief of Defence Staff General Bipin Rawat warned today that a “larger conflict” with China cannot be ruled out if border confrontations and unprovoked military actions spiraled. General Rawat also said China and Pakistan acting in collusion meant an omnipresent danger of regional instability with potential for escalation.

While the General indicated that a full scale conflict with China is low on probability, he cautioned: “In the overall security calculus, border confrontation, transgressions and unprovoked tactical military actions spiralling into a larger conflict cannot be discounted.” These are the most direct remarks made by anyone in the government on China and the possibility of the crisis festering in Ladakh since May spinning out of control.

Referring to China’s ambitions as an aggressive pursuit of hegemonic interests, General Rawat said the situation along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) - the de facto border between the two countries - remained tense amid transgressions and belligerent action by the Chinese.

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Referring to the China-Pakistan nexus, General Rawat said: “Constant friction with two of our nuclear-armed neighbours with whom India has fought wars increasingly acting in collusion, poses an omnipresent danger of regional strategic instability with potential for escalation, threatening our territorial integrity and strategic cohesion.”

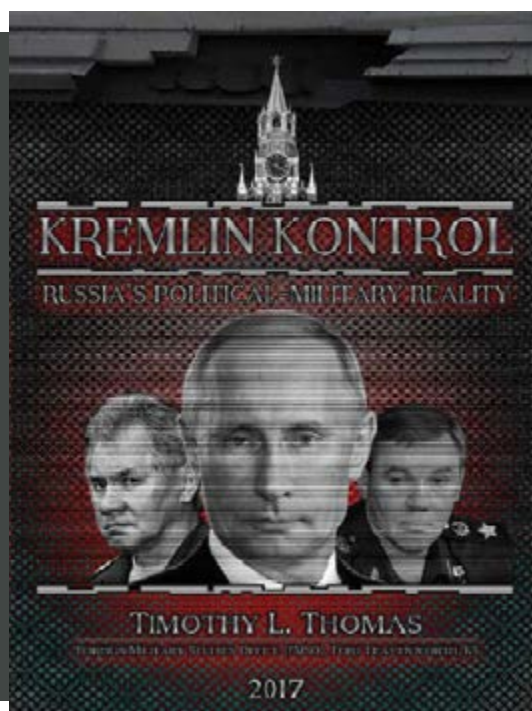
India and China have held seven rounds of military talks to resolve the standoff in Eastern Ladakh that started in May and saw unprecedented escalation in June when 20 Indian soldiers died for the country in a physical clash with Chinese troops at Galwan Valley.

General Rawat’s remarks came as India and China began their eighth round of talks to discuss de-escalation and disengagement by both sides from all points of friction. There has been very little progress so far in these talks.

In August, Chinese soldiers tried to close in on Indian troops who reclaimed key heights at the northern and southern banks of Pangong Tso overlooking Chinese posts, and there was firing in the air for the first time in decades.

“The persisting boundary dispute, China’s support to Pakistan, its increasing influence in south Asia through the Belt and Road Initiative and an unbalanced economic relationship is likely to ensure that in the near future, the Sino-Indian relationship will remain a fundamental competitive one,” General Rawat said.

On Pakistan, he said the “new Indian template to deal with terror” had injected ambiguity and uncertainty in the country, which was continuing its proxy war through cross-border terror. “Unabated proxy war in Jammu and Kashmir unleashed by Pakistan, a vicious anti-India rhetoric on social media and efforts to create disharmony within India have taken India-Pakistan ties to a new low,” he said.



In 2016, Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chief of the General Staff Valery Gerasimov instituted sweeping changes that have reorganized the country’s security forces and reestablished the nation’s military prowess. This study, *Kremlin Kontrol*, aims to describe how control over the security services and the military have hastened those changes.

<https://community.apan.org/wg/tradoc-g2/fmso/m/fmso-books/197266/download>