



India's Appointment of the 14th Corps Commander

OE Watch Commentary: The government of India has been carrying out diplomatic efforts to avoid another incident on its border with China following the standoff in Doklam from June to August last year, while at the same time strengthening its forces along the border (see: “The India Government’s Efforts to Avoid Another Doklam Standoff,” *OE Watch*, June 2018). The accompanying excerpted article reports on another step the Indian government is taking to improve the capabilities of its forces along the border with the appointment of Lieutenant General Yogesh Kumar Joshi as commander of the 14th Corps of the Army.

The article, from *The Print*, focuses on General Joshi’s background and notes how he is well respected for his service in the 1999 Kargil War and more specifically, for how he “is an expert on India’s eastern neighbour.” The article mentions General Joshi’s previous commands of “a brigade and a division in the (14th Corps) area,” his time as “Defence Attache to China (2005-2008)” as well as other efforts and positions in the army related to China. It is worth noting that the 14th Corps is under the Indian Army’s Northern Command, not the Eastern Command where the Doklam standoff took place.

The article also notes “a recent joint patrol by Chinese and Pakistani armies in the vicinity of the Khunjerab Pass” (on the China-Pakistan border, north of the 14th Corps headquarters) and that a source quoted in the article believes General Joshi’s appointment is a way to deal with the “complexities of China-Pak relations.” Indian military leadership has stated in the past year that it sees China as much of a threat as Pakistan. Lastly, the article mentions how General Joshi’s time in command might be short, as he could be in consideration as the next army chief “after General Bipin Rawat’s scheduled tenure ends in December 2019.” While there are political considerations for this to ultimately take place, the appointment of General Joshi as commander of the 14th Corps demonstrates what measures the Indian government continues to take to strengthen its northern border. **End OE Watch Commentary (Stein)**

“The uniqueness that Joshi brings to his office is not only his knowledge of the Chinese language. He also commanded a brigade and a division in the (14th Corps) area.”

Source: Sujan Dutta, “Why Modi govt & Army picked this general to protect borders with China & Pakistan,” *The Print*, 3 September 2018. <https://theprint.in/security/new-appointee-lt-gen-joshi-is-the-perfect-man-to-lead-armys-fire-and-fury-corps/110370/>

Soldier-diplomat Lt Gen. Yogesh Kumar Joshi assumed charge of a crucial Army corps covering borders with both China and Pakistan over the weekend – a selection that indicates the importance the Modi government attaches to the sensitive region less than a year before general elections.

All choices for corps commanders are carefully studied before the appointments are made.

Yet, in choosing Joshi to command the 14 Corps, Army Headquarters and the government have selected an officer of outstanding merit who was not only a hero in the 1999 Kargil war but who also went on to deal with China in subsequent tenures, and is an expert on India’s eastern neighbour...

The uniqueness that Joshi brings to his office is not only his knowledge of the Chinese language. He also commanded a brigade and a division in the (14th Corps) area...Joshi was Defence Attache to China (2005-2008) and negotiated the technicalities of the first India-China joint exercise “Hand-in-Hand” in Kunming in 2007...He handled two sensitive positions on the China desk at the Directorate-General of Military Operations subsequently, cutting through patrolling disputes in Chumar and Demchok and Daulat Beg Oldi in Eastern Ladakh, and then giving inputs to resolve last year’s 72-day Doklam stand-off...

*“Be assured that General Joshi is being specially appointed keeping the complexities of China-Pak relations in Ladakh and his experience and success with both of them,” a source in the defence ministry told *ThePrint*. One of these complexities is a recent joint patrol by Chinese and Pakistani armies in the vicinity of the Khunjerab Pass; the other is that the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) that overrides Indian interests passing through territories claimed by New Delhi, is now getting into an intensive phase with more Chinese deployments in territories under Pakistani control...*

Joshi could be in the reckoning as the Army chief after General Bipin Rawat’s scheduled tenure ends in December 2019. But, as Rawat’s appointment has shown, the Centre does not go by seniority or by mere convention in choosing service heads. The Modi government executes its political prerogative to make senior appointments.

Reconnaissance-in-Force Russian Style

By Lester W. Grau

“Integrated fires, rapid detect-destroy systems and the controlled, merciless onslaught of smaller robot tanks and assault vehicles may rip through robust defenses to determine the true nature of the defense and prepare the main attack to totally dismantle it. To the Russian way of thinking, the reconnaissance-in-force remains a viable method of tactical intelligence. Learning how to employ it optimally is the current challenge.”

This paper was originally published in *Armor* journal’s Winter-Spring 2018 edition.

<https://community.apan.org/wg/tradoc-g2/fmso/m/fmso-monographs/230764>

