

China's Policy of a String of Pearls around India

April 11, 2023

China has succeeded in ensuring that India's borders remain insecure, with powers, which are inimical to India on all sides.

- On 15th August 1947, India had Tibet on its northern borders and Tibet was a client State of the British. Today India has China on a long **border of 3,488 Km**. China's defense budget has been about 3-5 times that of India for the last many years. China has grabbed a large area, claimed by India in Ladakh. The entire border is hot and a fight can break out at any time.
- India and Pakistan have **3,310 Km long border** with India. Pakistan is so close to China, many consider it to be a client State. All the text books in Schools teach Pakistan's school kids that India is an enemy state. Moreover Pakistan continues to send trained terrorists to India. It wants to snatch the State of Jammu & Kashmir from India.
- Nepal accepted paramountcy of the British before 15th August 1947. Today Nepal has a communist Government, which is pro-China. It has a **long land border of 1,752 Km** with India.
- Myanmar is ruled by its military and it is on friendly terms with China. With India, the relations are rough since the military regime suspects India has sympathies with its civilian leaders, who are behind bars in Myanmar. The **border is 1,643 Km long**.
- In the seas around India, China has established Naval bases to keep India hamstrung in its area only.

CHINA'S Efforts: China has succeeded in these efforts to encircle India due to various factors, some of which are as follows:

1. India's first Prime Minister Jawahar Lal Nehru was an idealist and pacifist. He had been impressed by the communist philosophy after a tour of Soviet Union during 1930s, before the second world war. He was also influenced by the socialists in UK. He looked down upon Geo-political considerations as Machiavellian and would not consider following the policies, prescribed in the ancient book on political economy by Chanakya's Artha Shastra.

On the other hand, Mao Tse Tung was a realist, who was determined to expand the frontiers of China to include every such areas, which may have been under the control of any of the Chinese princes/ kings even for a brief period.

2. Pakistan was carved out of India by the British on 15th August 1947. Nehru believed that Pakistan will decide on its own to become one with India. So, he was inclined to be friendly to Pakistan and did not pursue the Kashmir war to its logical conclusion. He offered highly liberal terms to Pakistan in Indus Water Treaty.

On the other hand, the leadership in Pakistan visualized itself as the successor to the Mughals, who had ruled over a major part of Northern India for about 200 years. So, the leadership had dreams of putting the entire Indian sub-continent under a non-democratic Muslim rule.

3. When President Nixon met Mao Tse Tung on February 21, 1972, through the good offices of Pakistan, he helped China develop fast and overtake India both in terms of GDP and military strength. The western businessmen and Business Schools, propounding theories of free trade, led the world to a situation, where the Communist Government of China has become a powerful antagonistic country to USA. For India it has become a powerful power, ready to bring together the entire neighbourhood into its orbit to create an environment, which offers severe challenges to India's security.

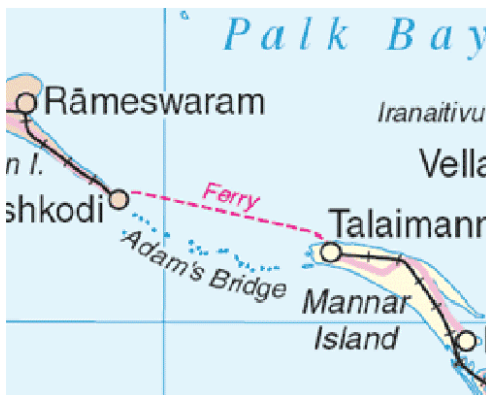


---A BRIEF BACKGROUND of the SOUTH ASIAN region---
including Tibet and Myanmar

South Asia is a land mass, which is interconnected through many age-old roads and routes. Even though Sri Lanka is not directly connected,

Ram Setu, the bridge, between India and Sri Lanka was walkable from time-to-time until about 1480 CE, when a cyclone destroyed parts of it.

The top end of Ram Setu is Dhanushkodi, *Rameswaram(India)* and the bottom end is Talaimannar, *Mannar (Sri Lanka)*.



50 Km long Ram Setu (bridge)



Ram Setu as viewed from space

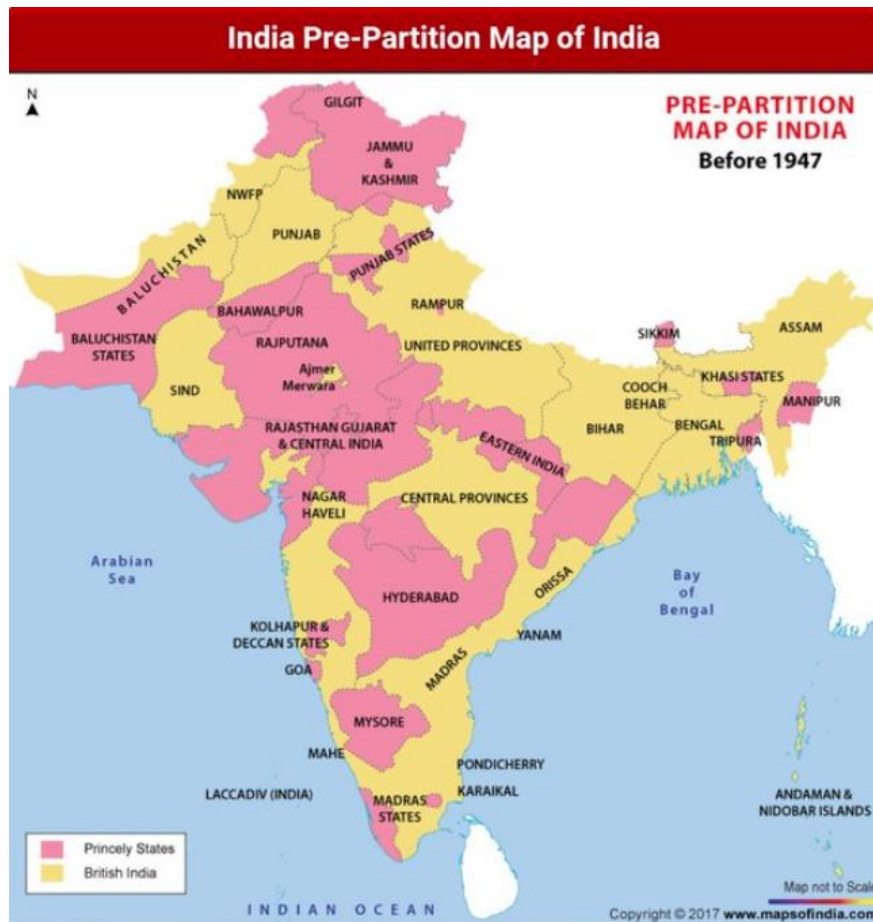
(Ref:<https://earth.esa.int/web/earth-watching/image-of-the-week/content/-/article/adam-s-bridge/index.html>)

For thousands of years, the whole of South Asia, Tibet, Afghanistan, Myanmar and Sri Lanka inter-acted and became culturally homogeneous. People travelled across the entire area for **trade**, for **studying at great Universities like Takshshila and Nalanda** and for **pilgrimage**.

INDEPENDENCE:

- April 1, 1937: Burma formally **split** from India. Archibald Cochrane became its first governor, ending a century of association with Government of India.
- August 15, 1947: The British partitioned India by creating a new country for areas with a majority of Muslims. The new country was named as Pakistan while the remaining part retained the ancient name of India.
- NATIVE STATES: About 40% of area in united India, before 15 Aug 1947, was under 584 Kings, Nabobs etc. All these native States had accepted British suzerainty by treaties. Their external affairs were managed by the British and

within their territories, the British had a Resident, who took care of British interests.



- When the British left their part of India to the two successor countries, India and Pakistan, they released the native States from the treaty obligations with the British and asked the Kings, Nabobs etc to either join India or Pakistan or remain independent. Issues for all the other States, except Jammu & Kashmir, were settled and they joined either India or Pakistan.
- KASHMIR: J & K had about 60% Muslims. The remaining 40% were Hindus, Sikhs and Buddhists. The King was a Hindu. He asked the Governor General Jinnah of Pakistan for time. But in October 1947, Jinnah sent Pakistan's army to take over J&K.

The King decided to merge his State in India. After merger, Indian Army went to J&K and pushed back the Pakistan's Army.

When India army was winning, rather than continuing till the whole of Kashmir been captured, J L Nehru, India's Prime Minister, out of his idealism and his pacifist philosophy, took the issue of Pakistan's attack on Kashmir to the newly formed UNO.

UNO asked Pakistan to withdraw its forces from J&K. After withdrawal by Pakistan, India was required to conduct a plebiscite to determine whether the people wanted to join India or Pakistan. But Pakistan did not withdraw its army.

However, Pakistan wants to take over Kashmir and it has set up itself as an enemy of India. Pakistan has 2,300 Km long land border with India. Another 1,222 Km long border is in J&K State. This entire 3,500 Km long border remains a troublesome area, along which wars in 1965, 1971 and 1999 have taken place. Moreover terrorists, trained in Pakistan continue to infiltrate and create mayhem in India and in J&K, in particular.

- After independence, India's first Prime Minister J L Nehru, an idealist, withdrew Indian Army from Tibet, making the Dalai Lama an effective ruler of Tibet.

March 1959: China sent army and took over the administration of Tibet from Dalai Lama. In March 1959, the 14th Dalai Lama escaped to India and was given asylum in Dharamshala, India.

- Nehru said that Nepal was independent, since India was not interested in having Nepal as a State under its paramountcy. In 1950, Ranas, the effective rulers of Nepal (1846-1951), offered to merge Nepal with India. But Nehru helped King Tribhuvan overthrow Ranas and become the effective ruler of Nepal. The King also offered to have a federation with India. But Nehru wanted Nepal to be a fully independent country, which was friendly with India.

28 May 2008: The Hindu Kingship was abolished by a constituent assembly, elected in early 2008 and a secular Federal Democratic

Republic of Nepal was established, with two communist parties, which are anti-Indian and pro-China, assuming control of the government.

- January 4, 1948: Burma was granted independence by UK.

1948: Nehru agreed to give Coco islands, in Bay of Bengal, just above India's Andaman & Nicobar group of islands, to Burma. In the north of the five islands is situated the Preparis Island, belonging to Myanmar. To the south lies the Landfall Island, belonging to India. The land of the Coco islands was given on lease/ contract for growing food for the British establishment at Andaman and Nicobar.

Burma (now called Myanmar) soon lapsed into military rule after a brief period of democracy. India had to accept the situation, though Indian leaders had sympathies with civilian leaders, who were leading a campaign for democracy in Myanmar. China continued to have close relations with the military leaders of Myanmar and slowly pulled it into its orbit of influence through liberal grant of arms and aid.

In 1994, Burma gave the islands to China on lease. George Fernandes, the Defense Minister of India in 2003, confirmed that China had established a SIGINT intelligence gathering station on the Great Coco Island in 1992 to monitor Indian naval activity in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands of India. The station is said to allow China to monitor the movement of other navies and ships throughout the eastern Indian Ocean, especially in the crucial point for shipping routes between the Bay of Bengal and the Strait of Malacca.

The Coco Islands may also be used to monitor activities at the launch site of the Indian Space Research Organisation at Sriharikota and India's Defence Research and Development Organisation at Chandipur-on-sea. In a 2008 report, it's claimed that the Chinese Army has future plans of building a maritime base on Little Coco Island.

- 1950s and 1962: President Eisenhower in 1950s is reported to have offered to work for getting a permanent seat in Security Council allocated to India. At that time, Taiwan was having that seat as the Republic of China.

After India was attacked by China and some territories in Ladakh were taken over by China, President Kennedy is reported to have offered to permit India to have its own atomic weapons so that India could become the first atomic power in Asia.

However due to a highly idealist and pacifist thinking of India's Prime Minister J L Nehru, these offers were not followed up by him.

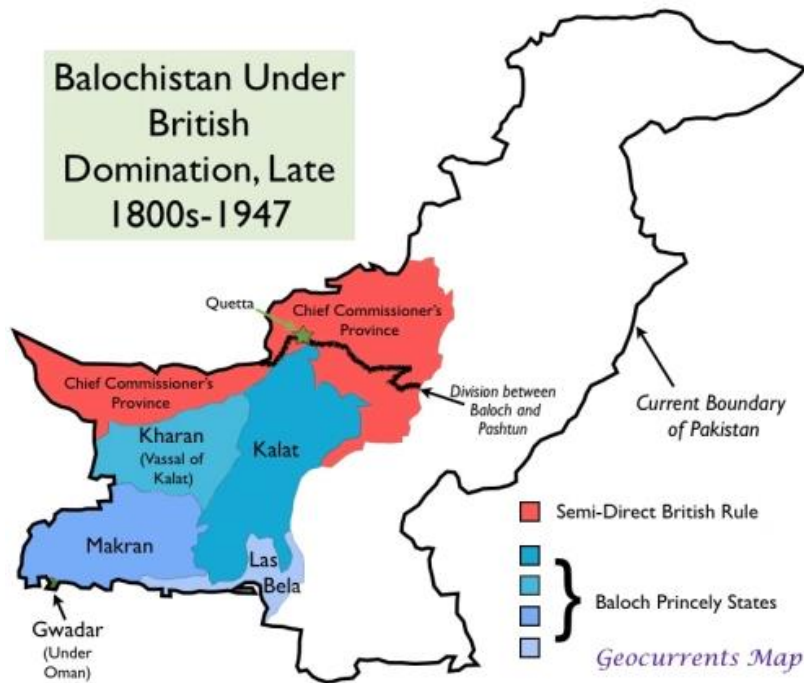
1947: BALOCHISTAN: Before the partition of India and Pakistan, Balochistan consisted of four princely states under the British Raj. These were Kalat, Lasbela, Kharan and Makran. Two of these provinces, Lasbela and Kharan, were fiduciary states placed under Khan of Kalat's rule by the British, as was Makran which was a district of Kalat.

Three months before the formation of Pakistan, Muhammed Ali Jinnah was retained as an Advocate of the Khan of Kalat for arguing his case before the Privy council of UK. Jinnah successfully negotiated the freedom of Baluchistan under Kalat from the British. This resulted in a communique, which stated that: *The Government of Pakistan recognizes Kalat as an independent sovereign state in treaty relations with the British Government with a status different from that of other Indian States. This communique was issued on August 11, 1947, on behalf of the Viceroy, as the Crown's Representative, Jinnah and the Khan of Kalat*

Reference: <https://baluchsarmachar.wordpress.com/2018/03/31/how-balochistan-became-a-part-of-pakistan-a-historical-perspective-2/>

The Khan of Kalat sent an envoy to India's first Prime Minister, J.L.Nehru. He asked the envoy to meet Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Education Minister of India. The envoy is said to have expressed a desire to merge with India. Nehru and Azad refused. It is said that Azad made the information public.

Mir Ahmad Yar Khan, the Khan of Kalat, declared Balochistan's independence on August 12, 1947. The Balochistan parliament rejected merging with West Pakistan on several occasions between December 14, 1947 and February 25, 1948.



However, when Pakistan's troops started massing at its borders, the Khan of Kalat agreed to the accession of Balochistan into West Pakistan on March 27, 1948. Pakistan's Government troops entered Balochistan on April 15, 1948.

Reference: <https://uca.edu/politicalscience/dadm-project/asiapacific-region/pakistanbalochistan-1947-present/>

Today Balochistan forms 44% of Pakistan's area and 3.6% of its population.

1960: PAKISTAN: Field Marshal Ayub Khan, the then President of India wanted to have a Federation of India and Pakistan to be able to face communist China. However, Nehru was socialist and pro-Communist. So, he did not even consider the proposal worth any meaningful talks with President Ayub Khan.

March 1963: Pakistan's Foreign Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto signed the Sino-Pakistan Boundary Agreement on 2 March 1963 for transferring 750 square kilometres of territory from Pakistan-administered Kashmir to Chinese control. India claims this territory as its sovereign territory.

February 1972: Pakistan's Foreign Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, during his visit to Beijing, successfully negotiated an economic and military aid package, worth \$300 million for Pakistan. China also agreed to write off loans amounting to over \$110 million.

Bhutto facilitated the Sino-American diplomatic contacts, leading to President Richard Nixon's visit to Beijing in February 1972. Nixon helped Communist China being recognized as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, in place of Taiwan.

*April 20, 2015: Pakistan and China signed an agreement to commence work on China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), through a \$46 billion agreement, which is roughly 20% of Pakistan's annual GDP. The CPEC connects the western part of China to the Arabian sea and **it passes through areas, which were part of J&K State before 1947. These areas are claimed by India as its sovereign territory.***

April 20, 2017: Pakistan gave TO China Overseas Port Holding Company (COPHC) Gwadar port on a 40-years lease. Under it, the state-owned COPHC will retain over 90 percent of revenue from Gwadar's marine operations, plus 85 percent of the revenue from the management of an adjacent free zone.

Gwadar offers China's navy a convenient base of operations near the Strait of Hormuz.

Sri Lanka: India and Sri Lanka had good relations. However, Sri Lanka wanted to balance India and China in its external relations so that it could maintain maneuverability in its foreign policy. Sri Lanka, with the encouragement of China, took up the ambitious project of developing Hambantota International Port. But the port had to be leased to Chinese state-owned China Merchants Port Holdings Company Limited in 2017 as Sri Lanka struggled to repay its Chinese creditors.

Thus, China has acquired the capability of keeping a watch on Indian naval activity anywhere around India. This policy of China of keeping Indian activities under complete observation is said to be China's policy of STRING OF PEARLS AROUND INDIA.

*April 7, 2023: China plans to set up a radar base in the jungles of **Dondra Bay**, about 155 Km from the west of Hambantota International Port and along the southern coast of Sri Lanka. This permission was given by Sri Lanka in lieu of facility of delay of 2-years in loan re-payments. The Chinese radars will be able to look at the Anglo-British air-base at Diego Garcia also.*

Note: Please read on "Democracy Delivers: Autocracies don't empower people" of April 2, 2023 at <https://diginews360.com/democracy-delivers-autocracies-dont-empower-people/>.