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Central Intelligence Agency



Washington, D.C. 20505

DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

9 October 1987

India-China: Gandhi's View of the Relationship [redacted]

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Summary

Gandhi can take some credit for defusing tension along the Sino-Indian border late this summer and for the scheduling of bilateral border talks in mid-November. Indian troops have avoided engaging Chinese patrols crossing the disputed border--on strict orders from Gandhi--and the Indian foreign minister stopped in Beijing in June to signal New Delhi's willingness to talk. Nonetheless, we believe Gandhi is unlikely to offer or expect substantive concessions at the November round of border talks. Indian and Chinese troops are prepared to stay in forward positions through the winter--prolonging the military confrontation. There is no evidence that New Delhi has interfered in Tibet, but Chinese suspicions regarding Indian involvement and continuing unrest in Tibet will add to tension.

[redacted]

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Gandhi has continued New Delhi's efforts to reclaim territory in northeastern India overrun by China in the 1962 Sino-Indian war. The Indians have used a variety of means including military patrols,

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This memorandum was prepared by [redacted] Office of Near Eastern and South Asian Analysis, at the request of the National Security Council. Information as of 8 October 1987 was used in its preparation. Comments and queries are welcome and may be directed to Chief, South Asia Division, NESAs [redacted]

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construction of outposts, and civilian settlements to accomplish their goals. Gandhi signed a bill late last year granting statehood to Arunachal Pradesh that seemed to foreclose any major Indian concessions. Beijing vigorously protested New Delhi's move. By spring 1987 both sides had several thousand troops within 100 kilometers of one another along the border. [redacted]

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Since then Gandhi has ordered Indian troops to pull back rather than engage Chinese patrols crossing the contested border. [redacted]

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[redacted] He also sent then Foreign Minister Tiwari to Beijing in June to say that New Delhi wanted to avoid clashes and was willing to talk. [redacted]

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[redacted]

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New Delhi and Beijing have agreed to hold the eighth round of border talks on 16-17 November. Neither side is likely to offer or expect major substantive concessions that could settle the territorial dispute. [redacted]

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[redacted] Beijing will send its delegation on 13 November and this may indicate that talks on these additional issues will take place ahead of time. [redacted]

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New Delhi probably will try to avoid antagonizing Beijing over the current unrest in Tibet. We have no evidence that New Delhi has assisted the Tibetan exile community in its activities in China. Nonetheless India is home for the Dalai Lama and New Delhi has not restricted the Dalai Lama's public statements on return from the United States or refused permits for Tibetan exile demonstrations in India. [redacted]

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