

Nepal-China Humla Segment Border: A Geo-Political Discourse

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Key words: border; inhabitants; strip-map; watershed; verification

SUMMARY

This Abstract has been submitted in relation to FIG Commission-1 Professional Standards and Practice (International Boundary Settlement and Demarcation, WG-1.3), Chair Timothy Burch.

Non-peer review

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- Buddhi Narayan Shrestha*

Abstract

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Nepal-China boundary is 1439 kilometre long. There are fifteen districts of Nepal that adjoins with Tibetan China. Humla is one of them, located at almost north-western corner of Nepal. Local inhabitants of Humla Limi-Namkha area raised an issue that Nepali frontier has been encroached by China, constructing eleven buildings. In the meantime, major opposition Nepali Congress political party local leader Jeevan Bahadur Shahi visited the border area and said, border pillar number-11 is not found and pillar 12 seems to be newly constructed. So the border alignment has been changed.

The objective of this paper is to analyze whether the frontier has been encroached. On this matter, Foreign Minister said on September 24, 2020 that 'buildings built in the Nepal-China border region of Namkha municipality are located in the territory of China. Similar news had come in the year 2017. We sent a team for the field visit and study. According to the report presented by the team, the buildings were built by China within a kilometre on their side of the

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border.’

One day earlier, Chinese Embassy in Kathmandu spokesperson Wang Xiaolong had said, ‘China has not encroached Nepali frontier. It is proved that the construction is located within Chinese territory. Nepalese side can make a verification.’

On this issue, I studied the Nepal-China strip-map of 1962, Boundary Protocol-1963, consisting of the border pillar 11 and 12 and its co-ordinates. It was adopted the ‘watershed principle’ to demarcate the boundary line. The maps show that, the border line follows the water parting ridge from pillar number-11 to pillar-12.

As I made a study and verified with the secondary information, including the photographs published by the media that the border line from pillar number-11 (5202 metre) runs a little north-east to Kumalappche (5301), Kangboche (5595), Manepemango (5836), Kangje (5914), Kandumbu (6219), and the Nalkankar ridge to a further 6395 metre. Then the border line comes down at a height of 6062, and it runs to Lalung hillock (5309) to the Pannamu Hill (5240), finally, it reaches to Lapcha Pass where there is the pillar number-12 (5018 metre).

Conclusion of this paper is that Nepal government should call a geo-political discourse with the Chinese authorities to form a joint technical field team to resolve the issue. This joint team should go to the Limi Namkha area. They should verify the strip-maps, showing the pillar co-ordinates in presence of local inhabitants, representatives of local authorities, district political leaders and district administration personnel of both frontiers. They have to verify the location of border pillar number-11 on the map to ground. Side by side, they should show the watershed ridge following various hill-tops and passes, ultimately to pillar-12 at Lapcha pass. With this process, the joint team must resolve the issue satisfying the local inhabitants of both the frontiers to maintain Nepal-China people to people friendly relation. (497 Words)

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