

# Strategic Roads at China Border

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China's border with India has been a contentious issue, creating disputes in the regions of Ladakh, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh. In an attempt to consolidate their positions, both the countries have been improving the infrastructure and connectivity at the border areas.

## China's Border with India

India and China share a **3,488-km-long border running along Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh and Ladakh.**



## Recent Developments

India is all set to ramp up its infrastructure along the international border with China and complete work on as many as 42 strategic Indo-China Border Roads (ICBRs) before 2022. The Centre had identified **73 strategic roads along the China border, 28 of which were made operational, 33 are still under construction while the work on remaining are in the initial stages.**

Border Roads Organisation (BRO) has engaged a large number of porters and labourers from several border villages for construction of roads in Durbok, Shayok and Daulat Beg Oldie areas along the LAC. The development of these roads would **enhance accessibility to border areas** where the border infrastructure and forward connectivity are lacking. Besides roads, the strategic infrastructure includes mobile towers, strategic railway lines and border outposts (BOPs).

The latest troop build-up by Indian Army and PLA at multiple

locations on Galwan valley was due to Chinese objection to **Darbuk-Shyok-Daulat Beg Oldi (DSDBO) Road in Ladakh, which provides access to Depsang plain, Galwan valley and Karakoram pass** (which separates China's Xinjiang Autonomous Region from Ladakh). The road is opposite to the Aksai Chin plateau, which is under the occupation of China. Running almost parallel to the LAC, the DSDBO road, meandering through elevations ranging between 13,000 ft and 16,000 ft, took India's Border Roads Organisation (BRO) almost two decades to construct. **Galwan river, which is a 1962 flashpoint** that saw Chinese aggression, has once again become a flashpoint between the two sides.

Chinese incursions and build-up in Galwan Valley, Pangong Tso and now in DBO have forced the BRO to take rapid measures to construct or realign crucial roads leading to these strategic areas along the LAC and store essentials and weaponry.

**[China borders 14 countries with a total land border length of 22,116 km** (more than halfway round the planet): Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar, Bhutan, Nepal, India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Russia, Mongolia, North Korea].