

## Impact of China's New Border Law

### What is the issue?

China has issued a new land border law for which India has raised several concerns.

### What is the new law?

- It was proposed in March 2021 during the crisis along the Line of Actual Control
- The law, which took effect on January 1, 2022, lists various responsibilities for civilian and military authorities in China to take steps to safeguard national sovereignty.
- The law has 62 articles in 7 chapters, covering delineation and border defence to immigration, border management and trade.
- The issuing of new names comes under Article 7, which calls for promoting border education at all levels of government.
- Article 22 calls for the Chinese military to carry out border drills and to resolutely prevent, stop and combat what it calls invasions, encroachments and provocations.

### What is reason behind the move?

- In the new law China's Ministry of Civil Affairs had issued standardised names for 15 places in the Indian State of Arunachal Pradesh.
- In 2017, Chinese authorities first issued six "official" names for places in Arunachal Pradesh.
- That move was seen at the time as a retaliatory measure after the Dalai Lama visited the State.
- Now the new list is more extensive. It has 15 names, including 8 towns, 4 mountains, 2 rivers and 1 mountain pass, covering 11 districts in Arunachal from Tawang in the west to Anjaw in the east.
- These names are to be used henceforth on all official Chinese documents and maps. It shows Arunachal as "south Tibet".
- The move indicates a broader new Chinese approach to territorial disputes.
- China views it important to **safeguard their national sovereignty**, better maintain national security and manage border-related matters
- It gives a legal level amid regional tensions, including frictions with India.

### How has India responded?

- India responded to the move saying that assigning invented names will not alter the status on the ground and Arunachal Pradesh is an integral part of India.
- The naming is a largely symbolic gesture.
- It will not change facts on the ground.

### How China's move will affect India-China relations?

- The new law will give legal cover and formalise the Chinese military's transgressions across the LAC in 2020.

- It would give fresh impetus to carry out the construction of infrastructure.
- This includes frontier villages in border areas, including some in disputed territories along the border with India and Bhutan
- Under the border village construction plan, launched in 2017, China is building “first line and second line villages” in border areas.
- It also moves residents mainly herders to live in the new dwellings along the borders with India, Bhutan and Nepal as well.
- In November 2021, satellite images surfaced showing a second Chinese cluster of 60 newly built dwellings.
- India claims these as its territory in Arunachal Pradesh, around 100 km east of another village built in late 2020.
- The territory in question has been under Chinese control since 1959 and previously had Chinese military installations there
- But the civilian constructions were seen as further bolstering Chinese claims essentially in a land that is still disputed and under negotiation by the two sides.
- India expressed concern saying that such unilateral decision can have implications on the existing bilateral arrangements on border management.

## Reference

1. <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/explained-what-will-be-the-impact-of-chinas-border-law/article38089888.ece>

