



PRESS RELEASE

1 August, 2018 | New Delhi

Statement Issued by Shri Randeep Singh Surjewala, In-Charge, Communications, AICC

Modi Govt's 'denials', 'half-truths' & 'doublespeak' on Doklam are endangering India's National Security and Strategic Interests

EAM, Smt. Sushma Swaraj's statement on Doklam is covered with a 'sheet of misleading opaqueness' and fails to provide the larger picture of Chinese presence in South Doklam!

As China stares at the 'Siliguri Corridor' – the 'Gateway to India's North East', Modi Govt nearly ducks the 'Doklam question'!

Modi Government hid behind a sheet of misleading opaqueness on Doklam today. EAM, Smt. Sushma Swaraj claimed in Parliament today that the 73 day standoff in Doklam has been “resolved with diplomatic maturity without losing any ground” and “there is no change in the status quo (on the ground). The face off at sight has been resolved on August 28, 2017.”

Modi Govt and Smt. Sushma Swaraj were conspicuously silent on the Chinese military buildup and new road construction in the South Doklam region, overlooking the 'Chicken Neck'. She said nothing about the creation of 'a full-fledged Chinese military complex' at Doklam right upto 10 m from Indian Army Post, reflected in the satellite imagery released earlier by the Congress party, besides media reports.

Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi met this Chinese counterpart Mr. Xi Jinping on July 26, 2018 on the sidelines of the BRICS Summit in South Africa. This was the third bilateral meeting of PM Modi with his Chinese counterpart in the past four months. Disappointingly, Modi Govt could not give a conclusive reaction to the numerous media reports and developments regarding the Doklam stand-off that have compromised India's National Security and endangered its Strategic Interests.

During the July 20th 'No-Confidence' Motion debate in Parliament, PM spewed false political rhetoric but could not provide any clarity on the status of Chinese military and infrastructure build up at North and South Doklam.

Earlier, both Defence Minister, Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman and Foreign Minister, Smt. Sushma Swaraj visited China from 20th-24th April, 2018; but not a word on Doklam came out of those 'agenda-less' visits. Foreign Minister, Smt. Sushma Swaraj's vacuous statement on Doklam in Parliament today speaks volumes about the Modi Govt's uncertain Foreign Policy & continuous 'Flip-Flops' to the Chinese Misadventure in Doklam which is harming India's Strategic Interests.



FACTUAL MATRIX:-

1. On Aug 28, 2017, the Ministry of External Affairs in a statement said that both India and China have agreed on “expeditious disengagement of border personnel at the face-off site at Doklam” and it “is on-going”. A Chinese Foreign Ministry statement had then said that the **“it shall continue to patrol the Doklam area through its Armed Forces”**. The Congress party had then questioned the Government asking them about the details of the Agreement arrived at between India-China-Bhutan under which de-escalation is taking place.
2. On January 18th this year, when the Congress party had raised the issue based on media reports & satellite images that pointed to heavy Chinese military presence in Doklam, the Modi Government through MEA (the next day) had issued a vague statement that initially denied the Chinese military presence in Doklam. Media reports and Satellite Imagery had suggested that the Chinese Army has not only did build Full-Fledged Chinese Military Complex in Doklam; but also occupied the entire Doklam plateau right upto 10m from Indian Army post. The images had shown concrete posts, 7 helipads, new trenches and several dozen armoured vehicles close to the point where the Indian Army and the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) troops were locked in a 72-day confrontation last year.
3. Later after the Chinese Foreign Ministry confirmed the veracity of these satellite images, the Defence Minister, Smt. Nirmla Sitharaman belatedly in a statement in Parliament on March 8, 2018; accepted that PLA **“constructed sentry posts, trenches and helipads in Doklam area to maintain troops during winter”**.
4. On March 27, 2018, it was shockingly brought out that Chinese military had constructed a new road giving access to its troops to the southern part of the Doklam plateau. **It gave Chinese military capability of moving vehicles to South Doklam, thus, giving it easy access to the ‘Jampheri Ridge’ that overlooks the Siliguri Corridor i.e. the strategic ‘Chicken Neck’ which is the ‘Gateway to North East’**. Satellite Imagery is Annexure A1.
5. Despite a non-existent diplomatic relationship, the Chinese Vice-Foreign Minister Kong Xuanyou visited Bhutan on July 25, 2018 and discussed ‘Doklam’ with them, completely blanking out India’s role in the talks. Nothing could have been detrimental to our foreign policy, than these discussions on the tri-junction, in absence of India. Yet, Modi Govt remained mum.

The BJP is utterly consumed in managing headlines for domestic expansion and has completely forgotten the Chinese presence in North & South Doklam. Smt. Sushma’s statement of a ‘resolution of Doklam’ is another dubious ploy to make headlines. It hides more than it reveals.

In National Interest, The Congress party demands PM, Shri Narendra Modi to make a statement and take the nation into confidence by placing the entire spectrum of facts on the floor of the Parliament. PM must tell his Govt’s policy on de-militarizing the Doklam plateau.