

Chinese Army can defeat 'all invading enemies', says Xi Jinping

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Beijing: Chinese President Xi Jinping today claimed that the People's Liberation Army (PLA) has the confidence and capability to defeat all invading enemies as he inspected a massive military parade at the country's largest military base to mark the 90th founding anniversary of the 2.3-million strong army.

Chinese Army can defeat all invading enemies, says Xi Jinping

President Xi also said that the People's Liberation Army should strictly follow the absolute leadership of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and "march to wherever the Party points to."

"I firmly believe that our gallant military has both confidence and ability to defeat all invading enemies," said Xi Jinping, who heads the Central Military Commission, which holds the overall command of the People's Liberation Army or PLA - the world's largest army.

While there was no reference in his speech to over a month-long India-China military standoff at Doklam in the Sikkim sector, his remarks came in the midst of shrill official media campaign and assertions by the Foreign and Defence Ministries in Beijing accusing Indian troops of "trespassing" into what China claims is part of its territory - a stand that Bhutan and India do not consider valid.

Clad in a camouflage military suit, 64-year-old Xi Jinping said that the Chinese military has the confidence and ability to safeguard national sovereignty, security and development interests. "Our military has the confidence and ability to write a new chapter in building of a strong military and make new contributions to towards realisation of the Chinese dream of great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation and safeguarding world peace," Mr Xi said in his about 10-minute address - an event aired live on state television and radio.

Earlier, Xi Jinping inspected the military parade at China's largest military base in Zhurihe in Inner Mongolia - the biggest parade since 2015 in which the army and air force displayed some of the most modern weapons including a new tank which reportedly held exercises in the high-altitude along the Indian border.

The other weapons included long range nuclear and conventional missiles, the new J-15 - the new aircraft based carrier.

In his address, President Xi asked the military to further improve its combativeness and modernise the national defence and armed forces. The Chinese military has the world's second largest defence budget totaling US \$152 billion.

The People's Liberation Army was founded on August 1, 1927 when the ruling Communist Party of China under the leadership of Mao Zedong carried on with his national liberation movement. It is one of the rare national armies which still continues to function under the leadership of the Communist Party of China and not the Chinese government.

"Officers and soldiers, you must unswervingly stick to the fundamental principle and system of the Party's absolute leadership over the army, always listen to and follow the Party's orders, and march to wherever the Party points to," said Xi Jinping, the general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee.

People's Liberation Army officers and soldiers should firmly adhere to the fundamental goal of serving the people wholeheartedly, and always stand together with the people, Mr Xi said. He also said China needs a strong army more

than ever, urging the building of the PLA into a world-class military force.

Enjoying peace is a bliss for the people while protecting peace is the responsibility of the people's army, he said. "The world is not all at peace, and peace must be safeguarded," said Mr Xi, who is expected to get a second five-year term at the key meeting of the Communist Party of China later this year.

"Today, we are closer to the goal of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation than any other time in history, and we need to build a strong people's military more than any other time in history," he said.

He urged the People's Liberation Army to fully implement the Communist Party of China's thoughts on building a strong military, follow the path of strengthening the army with Chinese characteristics, strive for the CPC's target on strengthening the People's Liberation Army under the new circumstances, and build the heroic PLA into a world-class military.

About 12,000 troops took part in the parade in which 129 aircraft and 571 pieces of equipment were on display.

Dongfeng missiles which include short, long and medium range of rockets, variety of armoury including light tanks, drones were also deployed. Helicopter borne troops demonstrated in quick landing and taking combat positions.

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