



Face-off Between India and China

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Why in News

Recently, Indian and Chinese troops engaged in a **temporary and short duration face-off** along the **Line of Actual Control (LAC)** at **Naku La (Sikkim)** and **near Pangong Tso Lake (Eastern Ladakh)**.

Naku La

- Naku La sector is a pass at a height of more than 5,000 metres above Mean Sea Level (MSL) in the state of Sikkim.
It is located ahead of Muguthang or **Cho Lhamu (source of River Teesta)**.
- At Muguthang, the road on the Chinese side is motorable, and on the Indian side, it is a remote area.
- The other passes located in the state of Sikkim are **Nathu La Pass and Jelep La Pass**.

Pangong Tso Lake

- Pangong Lake is located in the **Union Territory of Ladakh**.
- It is situated at a height of almost 4,350m and is the **world's highest saltwater lake**.
- Extending to almost 160km, **one-third** of the Pangong Lake lies in **India** and the other **two-thirds in China**.

Key Points

- The temporary and brief face-offs occur because the **unresolved and undemarcated boundary issues**.
The **India-China border shares the 3,488-km-long Line of Actual Control**.
- Both countries have differing perceptions owing to the **undemarcated boundary**, which lead to transgressions and face-offs as each side patrols up to the areas.

- Any such issue is resolved through the **mutually established protocols** to maintain peace and tranquillity on the border. The resolving mechanism also involves the local **Border Personnel Meeting (BPM)**.
 These protocols with China have been established to resolve issues amicably at the local formation commander level.
- The recent clash happened three years after the **Doklam stand-off between India and China (2017)**, which was also experienced across the border in Sikkim.
 - Doklam, or Donglang in Chinese, is an area spread over less than a **100 sq km** comprising a plateau and a valley at the **trijunction** between **India, Bhutan and China**.
 - The Doklam issue was discussed in the **Wuhan Summit (2018)** and two nations decided to issue "**strategic guidance**" to their militaries **to strengthen communications** so that they can build trust and understanding.

McMahon Line

Line of Actual Control

The **890-km** McMahon Line separating **British India and Tibet** was drawn by Sir Henry McMahon at the **China-Tibet-Britain Simla Convention (1914)**.

The Line of Actual Control (LAC) is the effective border between India and China.

The line **marked out** previously unclaimed/undefined borders between Britain and Tibet. Also the Line put Tawang (a region of the present Arunachal Pradesh) in the British empire.

LAC was supposed to **divide areas under Indian and Chinese** control since the **end of the Sino-Indian War of 1962**.

The line was forgotten until the British government published the documents in **1937**. Subsequently, **China refused to accept the line**.

Unlike the LoC (between India and Pakistan), the LAC was **not mutually agreed upon**. This was because the war ended with a **unilateral ceasefire by China**.

Global Examples of Aggressive Diplomacy by China

- **Covid-19 Origin:**

China has been engaged in **aggressive diplomacy** with western countries, which have sought clarity on the origins of the **Covid-19 pandemic** that has crippled the world economy, and led to almost four million people across the globe falling ill.

- **South China Sea:**

- It has also reported that China has established new administrative districts for the **Spratly and Paracel archipelagos** in the South China Sea.
- China has also named 80 islands and other geographical features in the sea, claiming sovereignty over underwater features in the contested region.

Source:IE