Face-off Between India and China

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.

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<tr>
<th>McMahon Line</th>
<th>Line of Actual Control</th>
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<td>The <strong>890-km</strong> McMahon Line separating <strong>British India and Tibet</strong> was drawn by Sir Henry McMahon at the <strong>China-Tibet-Britain Simla Convention (1914)</strong>.</td>
<td>The Line of Actual Control (LAC) is the effective border between India and China.</td>
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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**.
• **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*