



Geneva Conventions

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Why in News

After the **Galwan (India-China) clash** in Ladakh in June 2020, the **International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC)** urged both the Indian and Chinese governments that they observe the Geneva Conventions to which both countries are signatories.

Key Points

- The **Geneva Conventions (1949)** and their **Additional Protocols** are international **treaties** that contain the most important rules **limiting the barbarity of war**.
- They **protect people who do not take part in the fighting** (civilians, medics, aid workers) and those **who can no longer fight** (wounded, sick and shipwrecked troops, prisoners of war).
 - The **first Geneva Convention** protects wounded and sick soldiers on land during war.
 - The **second Geneva Convention** protects wounded, sick and shipwrecked military personnel at sea during war.
 - The **third Geneva Convention** applies to **prisoners of war**.
 - The **fourth Geneva Convention** affords protection to civilians, including in occupied territory.
- **Article 3**, common to the four Geneva Conventions, covers **situations of non-international armed conflicts**. They include traditional civil wars, internal armed conflicts that spill over into other States or internal conflicts in which a third State or a multinational force intervenes alongside the government.
- **Two Protocols of 1977**: Additional to the four 1949 Geneva Conventions were adopted in **1977**. They strengthen the protection of victims of international (Protocol I) and non-international (Protocol II) armed conflicts and place limits on the way wars are fought.
- In **2005**, a **third Additional Protocol** was adopted creating an additional emblem, the Red Crystal, which has the same international status as the Red Cross and Red Crescent emblems.

- The **International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC)**, an international humanitarian organisation, has the mandate to monitor that signatories follow the rules in situations of conflict.
 - Established in **1863**, the ICRC operates worldwide, helping people affected by conflict and armed violence and promoting the laws that protect victims of war.
 - An **independent and neutral organization**, based in **Geneva, Switzerland**.
 - The ICRC is **funded** mainly by voluntary donations from governments and from National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

Source: IE