



INDIA CHINA RELATIONS

India's External Affairs Minister held a **ministerial-level meeting with China's** Foreign Minister in Delhi, the first since the LAC disengagement in November 2024. The discussions focused on consolidating peace, advancing economic cooperation, and addressing strategic challenges.

Key Takeaways from the Meeting

- ⌘ **De-escalation & Stability:** India reiterated its 3Ds approach: disengagement, de-escalation, and de-induction.
- ⌘ **↑ Economic & Trade Links:** China agreed to supply fertilizers, rare earths, and tunnel-boring machines. Resumption of border trade via Lipulekh, Shipki La, and Nathu La + Visa facilitation for tourists, businesses, and media.
- ⌘ **Cultural & People-to-People Ties:** Resumed the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra, restored tourist visas.
- ⌘ **Security and Global Engagement:** India raised concerns about Pakistan-backed terrorism in J&K. ↑ Cooperation via SCO, BRICS, and bilateral platforms.

Key Areas of Cooperation

- ⌘ **Cultural, Educational & People-to-People Ties:** Shared civilizational links (Xuanzang; Bodhidharma), academic collaborations, and China's growing interest in Ayurveda, Yoga, and Indian classical arts.
- ⌘ **Capital Flows and Technology Sharing:** Chinese investments in Indian Unicorns and China's expertise in infrastructure and high-speed rail benefit India's growth.
- ⌘ **Multilateral Cooperation:** Collaboration via **BRICS, SCO, G20, AIIB & NDB**, promoting Global South solidarity and climate diplomacy. China also supports India's **ISA**.
- ⌘ **Climate Justice and South-South Cooperation:** Joint stance on climate justice and opposition to EU's Carbon Border Tax at COP29.

Key Challenges in India-China Relations

- ⌘ **Border Disputes:** The LAC remains undefined, with ongoing incursions. China occupies Aksai Chin and claims Arunachal Pradesh as South Tibet. Doklam and Galwan clashes highlight the persistent volatility along the border.
- ⌘ **Economic Asymmetry:** India faces a trade deficit of USD 85 billion with China (2023-24), relying on Chinese imports in sensitive sectors like APIs, electronics, and solar panels. Low-value exports but high-value imports.
- ⌘ **Strategic & Security Concerns:** CPEC through PoK and Pak-China military ties threaten India's security. China hinders India's NSG membership and UNSC permanent seat aspirations.
- ⌘ **Hydrological & Environmental Concerns:** China's upstream control of rivers (Brahmaputra, Sutlej) and Medog and Zangmu dam projects threaten India's water security.
- ⌘ **Competition for Regional Leadership:** China's Maritime Silk Road and presence in key ports (Hambantota and Kyaukpyu) challenge India's regional influence.

Measures to Strengthen Bilateral Engagement

- ⌘ **Deepening Strategic Dialogue:** Continue talks under Special Representatives (SR) and WMCC to resolve border tensions, enhance Confidence Building Measures, and establish demilitarized buffer zones.
- ⌘ **Economic & Trade Rebalancing:** India to pursue selective economic engagement, expanding imports of capital goods, while reducing over-dependence on strategic sectors.
- ⌘ **Managing Water & Environmental Concerns:** Resume hydrological data-sharing; long-term water-sharing frameworks; joint mechanism for sustainable dam management, flood forecasting etc.
- ⌘ **Leveraging Multilateral Cooperation:** Collaborate on global issues – financial reforms, South-South cooperation, and sustainable development financing.
- ⌘ **Long-Term Trust Building:** Initiatives in pandemic preparedness, disaster relief cooperation, and student exchanges can act as low-cost, high-impact trust multipliers – small, verifiable steps to gradually expand trust.

HONOUR KILLINGS IN INDIA

Honour killings are increasing in India, reinforcing caste hierarchies, with recent incidents highlighting the role of families and communities in legitimizing such violence.

Role of Law in Addressing Honour Killings

- Constitutional Safeguards:** Articles 14 (Equality), 15 (Non-discrimination), 19 (Freedom), & 21 (Right to Life)
- BNS:** Honour killings are classified as murder
- Laws Supporting Inter-caste Marriages:** Special Marriage Act (1954), Hindu Marriage Act (1955)
- Supreme Court Rulings:**
 - ♦ **Lata Singh vs. State of U.P. (2006):** Legalized inter-caste marriages; mandated police protection
 - ♦ **Arumugam Servai vs. State of Tamil Nadu (2011):** Declared Khap Panchayats illegal; rejected decrees against inter-caste marriages
 - ♦ **Vikas Yadav vs. State of U.P. (2016):** Affirmed women’s right to choose partners
 - ♦ **Shakti Vahini vs. Union of India (2018):** Expanded honour crimes definition, upheld individual choice as dignity, and directed safe houses and monitoring
 - ♦ **Shafin Jahan vs. Asokan K.M. (2018):** Upheld the right to marry a person of choice under Article 21

Factor Driving Honour Killings	Explanation	Corresponding Measure to Combat	Explanation
C - Community Enforcement	Local bodies like Khap Panchayats enforce caste norms and may condone violence	A - Act for Abolition	Create a separate law for honour killings
A - Attitudes (Internalized Caste Norms)	People grow up with caste boundaries, shaping their view of "honour" and marriage	C - Community Awareness	Educate communities about the dangers of honour-based violence
S - Social Pressure	Peer and family pressure to follow caste rules often leads to violence for defying them	T - Training & Sensitization	Equip authorities (police and judges) with the skills to handle caste-based and honour violence
T - Tension Between Public and Private Attitudes	Public opposition to caste violence may exist, but private attitudes and digital platforms often glorify caste-based control	O - Outreach via Digital Platforms	Use social media to spread positive messages about equality and inter-caste unions
E - Empowerment of Marginalized Groups	As Dalits and marginalized groups gain power, inter-caste relationships challenge caste hierarchies, leading to violence	N - National Shelter Homes	Establish shelters for victims, especially in rural areas

JAL JEEVAN MISSION

6th anniversary of JJM (launched on 15th August 2019).

⌘ **Implemented by:** Ministry of Jal Shakti.

Objectives – TAP



Target Every Rural Household
Provide Functional Household Tap Connection (FHTC) by 2028



Areas of Priority
Quality-affected, drought prone, desert regions, & SAGY villages



Public Places
Taps in schools Anganwadis, & community buildings

Components of JJM

Tap Water Supply

Providing tap water connections to rural households

Water Quality

Ensuring safe drinking water to reduce ailments

Source Sustainability

Promoting groundwater recharge and conservation

Greywater Management

Reusing and recycling wastewater



Key Challenges – GAPS



→ **Gaps in Data:** Unreliable data affecting water supply (over 12,000 rural habitations face contamination from iron, salinity, and heavy metals)



→ **Absence of Infrastructure Quality:** Poor restoration post-pipeline.



→ **Poor Maintenance Planning:** Only 20 states have repair policies.



→ **Sluggish Execution:** Slow implementation of projects.



Bottom-up Planning

Community involvement in planning and implementation

Women Empowerment

Active participation of women in decision-making

Skill Development & Employment Generation

Training locals in water supply systems

Focus on Future Generations

Ensuring tap water for schools and centers

Actions to Enhance Functioning – REPAIR

- **Revise Infrastructure Quality:** Ensure high-quality, accountable infrastructure (link contractor payments to verified quality).
- **Ensure Data Authenticity:** Third-party audits, geotagging, public dashboards.
- **Performance-based Funding:** Link funding to state progress.
- **Awareness & Testing:** Ensure safe water and mandatory testing.
- **Integrate Financial Reforms:** Link JJM with other water initiatives (SBM-G, ABY).
- **Repair & Maintenance Planning:** Nationwide repair policy for sustainability.

MINES AND MINERALS (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2025

Parliament passed the **MMDR Amendment Bill, 2025** to boost **critical mineral** production and advance the **National Critical Mineral Mission (NCMM)** via sustainable, zero-waste mining.

MMDR Bill: Key Provisions

- ⌘ **Critical Minerals Push:** Amends the **1957 MMDR Act** to allow leaseholders to add critical and strategic minerals to existing leases without extra royalty.
- ⌘ **Institutional Reforms:** Empowers govt to establish mineral exchanges.
 - ❖ Renames NMET to NMEDT (National Mineral Exploration and Development Trust ; royalty ↑ from 2% to 3% to fund exploration and mine development.
- ⌘ **Exploration & Production:** Sustainable, zero-waste, deep-seated, and offshore mining; removed 50% sale cap on captive mines; allowed one-time extension of lease areas for deep-seated minerals.

Sl. No.	Critical Mineral	Percentage (2020)	Major Import Sources (2020)
1.	Lithium	100%	Chile, Russia, China, Ireland, Belgium
2.	Cobalt	100%	China, Belgium, Netherlands, US, Japan
3.	Nickel	100%	Sweden, China, Indonesia, Japan, Philippines
4.	Vanadium	100%	Kuwait, Germany, South Africa, Brazil, Thailand
5.	Niobium	100%	Brazil, Australia, Canada, South Africa, Indonesia
6.	Germanium	100%	China, South Africa, Australia, France, US
7.	Rhenium	100%	Russia, UK, Netherlands, South Africa, China
8.	Beryllium	100%	Russia, UK, Netherlands, South Africa, China
9.	Tantalum	100%	Australia, Indonesia, South Africa, Malaysia, US
10.	Strontium	100%	China, US, Russia, Estonia, Slovenia
11.	Zirconium(zircon)	80%	Australia, Indonesia, South Africa, Malaysia, US
12.	Graphite(natural)	60%	China, Madagascar, Mozambique, Vietnam, Tanzania
13.	Manganese	50%	South Africa, Gabon, Australia, Brazil, China
14.	Chromium	2.5%	South Africa, Mozambique, Oman, Switzerland, Turkey
15.	Silicon	<1%	China, Malaysia, Norway, Bhutan, Netherlands

Table.1 The net import reliance for critical minerals of India (2020) (Source: A report on 'Unlocking Australia-India Critical Minerals Partnership Potential' by Australian Trade and Investment Commission, July 2021)

Critical Minerals and India

- ⌘ India has identified 30 critical minerals; largely import dependent.
- ⌘ Global mineral diplomacy: Partnership with **IEA**, and countries like Argentina, Australia and Zambia via **KABIL**.
- ⌘ Authority to auction their mining leases and licences: **Central govt (exclusively)**.

Applications of Critical Minerals

Solar Panels	Wind Turbines	EV batteries
Silicon, tellurium, indium, gallium	Dysprosium, neodymium	Lithium, nickel, cobalt

National Critical Mineral Mission (NCMM)

- ⌘ **Launch: 2025 (Ministry of Mines).**
- ⌘ **Aim: Secure India's critical mineral supply chain;** ensure availability from **domestic and foreign sources**.
- ⌘ **Key Point: Whole-of-government approach; fast-track approvals; development of stockpiles; international partnerships.** Also supports startups/MSMEs via **PRISM**.

SABHASAAR AI TOOL

Ministry of Panchayati Raj launched the tool to automate the process of generating Minutes of Meeting from Gram Sabha videos and audio recordings. Integrated with **Bhashini**, it offers multilingual transcription and translation in 13 Indian languages.

Bhashini (BHASHa Interface for India) (MeitY, 2022), is an AI-powered language translation platform developed under the National Language Translation Mission.

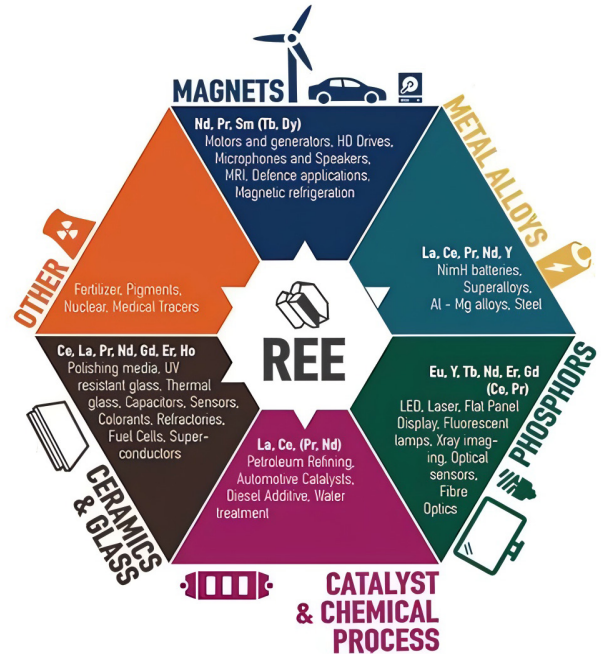
Key Initiatives Related to Gram Panchayats

→ Panchayat NIRNAY: Real-time monitoring portal for regular & transparent Gram Sabha meetings.	→ eGramSwaraj: Portal for planning, finances, reporting, and asset tracking.
→ Gram Manchitra: A GIS-based tool to help Panchayats visualize and map village assets and infra for planning and efficient resource allocation.	→ Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA): Strengthening the governance capabilities of Panchayati Raj Institutions.
→ AuditOnline: Digital audits of Panchayat accounts.	→ SVAMITVA Scheme: Provides legal ownership to rural landholders.

RARE EARTH MAGNET

China has lifted restrictions on rare earth magnet exports to India, benefiting sectors like automobiles, renewable energy, defense, and healthcare.

- ✂ Rare earth magnets, **made from elements like neodymium and dysprosium**, are known for their strength and resistance to demagnetisation.
- ✂ **China dominates the global market**, producing 70% of rare earth metals and 90% of magnets.
- ✂ **India is working to develop domestic production in 3–5 years** while importing short-term supplies from countries like Vietnam and Brazil.



BHARATIYA ANTARIKSH STATION

India plans to establish a fully operational Bharatiya Antariksh Station by 2035 and launch an Indian crewed mission to the Moon by 2040, ahead of the vision of 'Viksit Bharat' by 2047.

BAS

- ✂ Planned similar to the **ISS**, it will orbit **400–450 km above Earth** to support **scientific research**.
- ✂ **Components: 5 modules built in phases; Base Module scheduled for 2028.**

Significance:

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| ✂ Earth observation for disaster monitoring | ✂ ↑ Microgravity research, int'l collaborations in biotech and materials science |
| ✂ Support long-duration human space missions | ✂ ↑ Space economy while inspiring STEM talent |

PLACE IN NEWS: LIPULEKH PASS

India rejected Nepal's objections to the resumption of India-China border trade through the Lipulekh Pass which Nepal claims as part of its territory.

- ✂ **Location:** Kumaon region, Uttarakhand; trijunction of India, Nepal, and China.
- ✂ **Historical Importance:** Ancient trade route connecting the Indian subcontinent with the Tibetan plateau.
- ✂ **Border Trade:** First Indian border post opened for trade with China in 1992 (Shipki La in 1994; Nathu La in 2006).

