

Updated Value Addition Material 2024

INTERNAL SECURITY

**SECURITY CHALLENGES
AND THEIR MANAGEMENT
IN BORDER AREAS**



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1. Introduction

India has 15,106.7 km of land border and a coastline of 7,516.6 km including island territories. Securing the country's borders against interests hostile to the country and putting in place systems that are able to interdict such elements while facilitating legitimate trade and commerce are among the principal objectives of border management. The proper management of borders, which is vitally important for national security, presents many challenges and includes coordination and concerted action by administrative, diplomatic, security, intelligence, legal, regulatory and economic agencies of the country to secure the frontiers and subserve its best interests.

1.1. What is Border Management

While **Border Security Approach** deals only with defending the borders, the **Border management** is a broader term which involves not only defending the borders but also the protection of interests of the country in aligning borders.

The **Department of Border Management** in the Ministry of Home Affairs focuses on management of the international land & coastal borders, strengthening of border policing & guarding, creation of infrastructure such as roads, fencing & flood lighting of the borders and implementation of the Border Area Development Programme (BADP).

Some **problems currently afflicting** the management of our borders including maritime boundaries are:




- ▶ Hostile elements have access to latest **technology**, unprecedented use of **money power, organisational strength, maneuverability**, wide choice available for **selecting theatre of action** for surprise strikes and **strategic alliances** with other like-minded groups.
- ▶ **No proper demarcation of maritime and land borders** at many places leading to conflicts.
- ▶ **Artificial boundaries having difficult terrains like deserts, swampy marshes etc. which are not based on natural features** thus making them extremely porous and easy to infiltrate.
- ▶ **Multiplicity of forces** on the same borders leading to problems of coordination, command and control. For example, the LAC along China is guarded by Vikas Battalions in some parts of Western and Middle

sector which reports to the Cabinet Secretariat while the ITBP which mans most of the Chinese border is under Ministry of Home Affairs, making coordination difficult.

- Border Guarding Forces like Border Security Force etc. **lack infrastructure**. They need to be appropriately strengthened both in terms of equipment and manpower.
- **Problems faced by local people** due to tough measures taken during anti-terrorism and anti-insurgency operations generate discontent which should be addressed prudently otherwise hostile elements try to leverage this discontent to their benefit.
- **Cross-border terrorism** targeted to destabilise India.
- **Illegal migration** in eastern region causing socio-economic stress as well as demographic changes.
- Sporadic aggression on the **border** with China, especially in the Western and Eastern sectors.
- Cross border **safe houses** for insurgent in north eastern neighbours.
- **Smuggling** of arms and explosives, narcotics and counterfeit currency.
- Enhanced instances of **smuggling, piracy, breach of coastal security**.







In light of above stated problems, there is need for utmost vigilance on the borders and strengthening of the border guarding forces. However, it should also be taken care that the security of borders does not impede cross-border interactions and is beneficial to mutual economic and cultural relationship.



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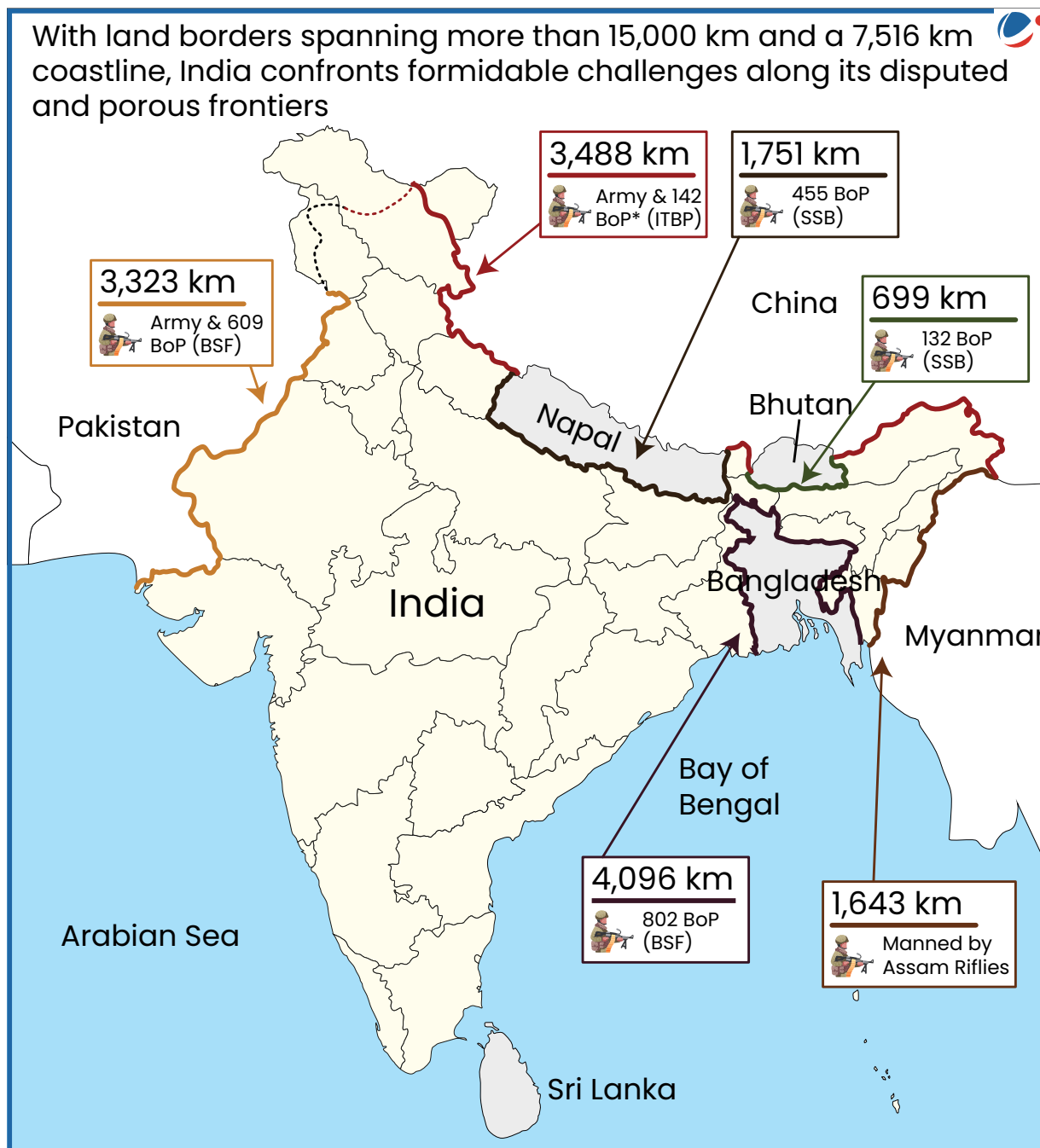
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2. Indo-China Border

India and China share a 3,488 km long boundary that runs along the states of Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh. Unfortunately, the entire boundary, called the McMahon line, is disputed. The Indo-Tibetan Border Police Force (ITBP) guards Indo-China border. India and China had never shared a common boundary till China "liberated" or occupied Tibet in 1950. It was then that the hitherto India Tibet boundary was transformed into India-China boundary. Since 1954, China started claiming large tracts of territory along the entire border such as Aksai Chin in Jammu and Kashmir, some areas in Uttarakhand and the entire Arunachal Pradesh.



2.1. Challenges Along the China Border

► **Smuggling:** Large scale smuggling of Chinese electronic and other consumer goods take place through these border points.

► **Inadequate infrastructure:** The area is characterized by high altitude terrain and thick habitation. While China has built massive rail road linkage on its side, Indian side of border was lacking robust infrastructure till recent times.

► **Border Disputes:**

■ **Western Sector - Aksai Chin**

In 1865, **Johnson line** which put Aksai Chin in Jammu and Kashmir but China at that time did not control Xinjiang so it was not presented to them. By 1890, China re-established control over Xinjiang and claimed Aksai Chin. Then, **Macartney-Macdonald line** was agreed to by the British government on the proposal by Chinese. However, Chinese government did not respond to the note to this effect in 1899 and the British took that as Chinese acquiescence.

After 1947, India used the **Johnson Line** as the basis for its official boundary but in 1950s China built a road falling south of this line in the Aksai Chin region. Intermittent clashes along the border culminated into Indo-China war in 1962 which resulted into existing line which is known as **Line of Actual Control (LAC)**. The region also witnessed stand-off between India and China in **Daulat Beg Oldie sector in 2013**.

■ **Eastern Sector - Arunachal Pradesh**

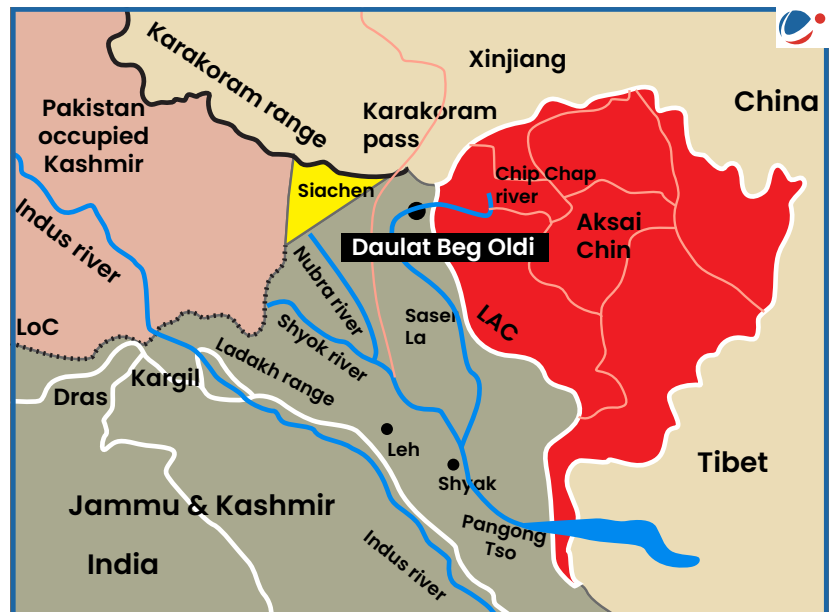
In **Shimla Accord (1913-14)**, boundary between Tibet and British India was defined by negotiations between British India, China and Tibet. This boundary named as MacMohan Line is disputed by China. However, interestingly, China accepts MacMohan line as its boundary with Myanmar provided by the same agreement.

■ In the **Middle Sector** (Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand), the dispute is a minor one. Here LAC is the least controversial except for the precise alignment to be followed in the Barahoti plains. India and China have exchanged maps on which they broadly agree.

► Indian side of border is being guarded by **different agencies** which include ITBP, Special Frontier Forces, Assam Rifles, Indian Army and proposed Sikkim Scouts leading to **lack of coordination** among these agencies. On the other hand, on the Tibetan side, the entire LAC is managed by Border Guards divisions of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) under a single PLA commander of the Tibet Autonomous Region.

► **China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC):** China's CPEC passes through parts of Jammu & Kashmir illegally occupied by Pakistan. China can use CPEC to mobilize troops in case of conflict and also will provide some cushion against choking of Strait of Malacca by India in case of conflict.

► **Water disputes:** China recently cut off the flow of a tributary of the Brahmaputra River, the lifeline of Bangladesh and northern India, to build a dam as part of a major hydroelectric project in Tibet. And the country is working to dam another Brahmaputra tributary, in order to create a series of artificial lakes. China has also built six mega-dams on the Mekong River, which flows into Southeast Asia, where



the downstream impact is already visible. Yet, instead of curbing its dam-building, China is building several more Mekong dams.

2.1.1. Recent Border Tensions between India and China

The most serious recent episodes of conflict between the Indian and the Chinese soldiers were in Galwan Valley in Ladakh in 2020 and in Tawang in **Arunachal Pradesh in 2022**.

The Galwan Valley battle - fought with sticks and clubs, not guns - was the first fatal confrontation between the two sides since 1975.

Another face-off in January 2021 at Naku La in north Sikkim left troops on both sides injured.

Reasons for the these standoffs include:

- **Issues of border demarcation:** The border between India and China is not clearly demarcated throughout and there is no mutually agreed Line of Actual Control (LAC) along certain stretches.
- **Territorial Claims:** Both countries have competing territorial claims in several regions along their border, including the Aksai Chin region in the western sector and the Arunachal Pradesh region in the eastern sector
- **Strategic gains:** Control over border regions provides strategic advantages such as access to natural resources, strategic military positioning, and geopolitical influence.

 - The disputed territories are often rugged and remote, but they hold significant strategic importance for both countries, especially in terms of border security and territorial integrity.
- **Infrastructure build-up,** particularly in Tibet including roads, airstrips, and military installations.

 - This infrastructure development by both countries exacerbates tensions by increasing the presence and capabilities of military forces in disputed areas, heightening the risk of confrontation and escalation.
- **Reorganisation of Jammu and Kashmir:** China had earlier also protested against the formation of new Union Territory of Ladakh and accused India of trying to transform the LAC unilaterally.
- **Growing India-US bonhomie:** In recent few years India has moved closer towards the US. On the other hand, China is engaged in a trade war with US and facing US's opposition over its actions in South China Sea, Hong Kong, and current COVID-19.

2020 Chinese incursion in Galwan valley
15-16 June: 20 Indian soldiers and 40+ Chinese soldiers killed
The two sides agreed to disengage from the disputed area in September 2022

2022
Indian and Chinese troops clashed in Arunachal Pradesh's Tawang sector on Dec 9, beating each other up with clubs and sticks, injuries.
The clash took place after more than 300 Chinese soldiers approached the contested border to target an Indian Army Post and were physically stopped from crossing.

In a broader context, the recent confrontations are continuation of the earlier Dapsang plains (Ladakh) skirmishes of 2013-14 and the 2017 China-India standoff at Doklam (Bhutan). India's strong opposition had prevented China from extending a track in the contested area at the tri-junction of India- China- Bhutan

2.2. Initiatives Taken for Effective Border Management

› Border talks:

- The rapprochement in 1976 after 1962 war between the two countries led to initiation of High Level border talks in 1981 which broke down in 1987.
- In 1988, following PM Rajiv Gandhi's visit to China, the Joint Working Group (JWG) was set up to look into border problem. (Refer to the box for series of five Border Dispute Settlement Mechanism)
- In 2003, two **special representatives** (one each from India and China) were appointed to find a political solution to the border dispute.
- Till 2009, these two special representatives had held 17 rounds of talks, but it seems they have not made much headway.
- Recently, NSA Ajit Doval was appointed as Special Envoy for talks.

Unfortunately, despite several rounds of talks, disagreement on actual border continues and both the sides regularly send patrols to LAC as per their perception and leave markers in the form of burjis (piles of stones), biscuit, cigarette packets etc. to lay stake to territory and assert their claim. These patrols often lead to physical confrontation.

› Construction of roads along India-China border

In the past decade, India has worked hard to strengthen its position on the border and its presence along the LAC. India is close to completing a major upgrade of border roads, including a strategic military-use road that connects an airfield at Dalut Beg Oldie in the northern tip of the western sector with the villages of Shyok and Darbuk toward the south.

Completed in 2019, this "DS-DBO road" greatly facilitates the lateral movement of Indian forces along the western sector, reducing travel time by 40%.

- › **Spy Cam Project** - Putting up cameras with 20-25 km range at 50 locations in Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Sikkim and Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh after 21-day face-off with the People's Liberation Army (PLA) of China at Depsang Valley in the Ladakh region in 2013. But project failed since weather is not favourable there as high-velocity winds and frost tend to blur the images.

Border Dispute Settlement Mechanism

A series of five agreements signed between India and China to address disputes arising over the LAC:

- › **1993 Agreement** on the Maintenance of Peace and Tranquility along the LAC.
- › **1996 Agreement on Confidence-Building Measures** in the Military Field along the LAC.
- › **2005 Protocol** on Modalities for the Implementation of Confidence-Building Measures in the Military Field along the LAC.
- › **2012 Agreement** on the Establishment of a Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination on India-China Border Affairs.

› 2013 Border Defense Cooperation Agreement.

These agreements provide a modus operandi for diplomatic engagement at the military and political levels, as well as a set of "status quo" commitments both sides can return to in case of escalation.

Confidence Building Measures

- › Regular interaction between the Army Headquarters and Field Commands of the two sides.
- › Additional border personnel meeting points.
- › More telecommunication linkages between their forward posts at mutually agreed locations.

2.3. Way Forward

The settlement of the India–China border dispute appears most unlikely in the foreseeable future. So, we should ensure following:

- Our troops should be **battle ready** which could well entail delivering massive artillery fire in a minimal time–span should the security needs at the local level so require
- There should be a well-established **logistics organisation** that can effectively support the existing deployments and any tactical operations that we may need to undertake in the areas.
- The responsibility for the security and surveillance of the IB and the defence of the border zones along the entire length of the India–China border needs to be **transferred to the Ministry of Defence** which should be designated as the ‘nodal-agency’ and the responsibilities in the field thence be assumed by the army.
- **ITBP**, a force specifically trained for border guarding duties on the India–China border, should not be used by the home Ministry for internal security duties in the naxalite-infested areas of Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Orissa. This **diversion** leads to disturbing the balance and coherence in our deployments.
- **Water Disputes**
 - There is need of improving diplomatic communication, more transparency by way of all-year hydrological sharing of data and exchange of information regarding infrastructural development in the area and developing effective and innovative frameworks of resource management including all stakeholders
 - It also needs to de-emphasize China’s role for the time being and re-strengthen its relationship with lower riparian countries including Bangladesh and restore its image as a responsible upper riparian.



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3. Indo-Pakistan

India shares 3323 km long boundary with Pakistan. The border spreads across extreme climatic conditions as the boundary runs from the hot Thar Desert in Rajasthan to the cold Himalayas in Jammu and Kashmir. Thus, the India-Pakistan boundary can be categorized under three different heads.

- **First** – It is 2308 km long and stretches from Gujarat to parts of Jammu district in Jammu and Kashmir. It is known as the **'Radcliff line'**.
- **Second** – It is 776 km long, and runs along the districts of Jammu (some parts), Rajouri, Poonch, Baramulla, Kupwara, Kargil and some portions of Leh. It is the **Line of control** (LoC), or the Cease Fire Line, which came into existence after the 1948 and 1971 wars between India and Pakistan.
- **Third** – It is 110 km long and extends from NJ 9842 to Indira Col in the North (Siachin Glacier). It is the **actual ground position line** (AGPL).

3.1. Challenges Along the Border

3.1.1. Sir Creek Dispute

Sir Creek is a 96 km tidal estuary which opens up into the Arabian Sea and divides the Gujarat state of India from the Sindh province of Pakistan. The Sir Creek got its name from the British representative who negotiated the original dispute between the local rulers.

Pakistan's Position

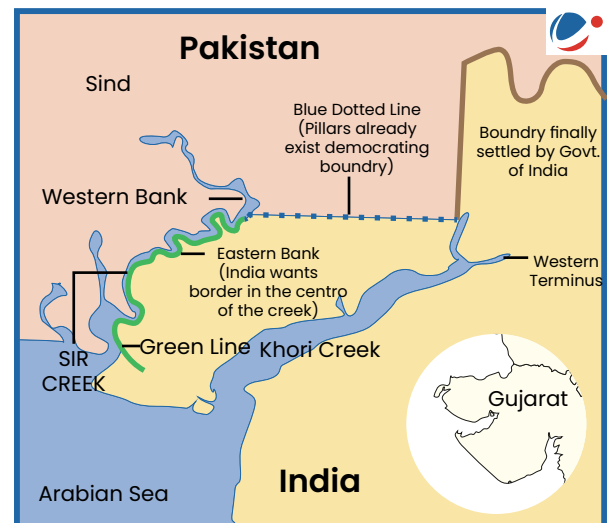
- Pakistan claims the entire Sir Creek, with its eastern bank defined by a **"green line"** and represented on a 1914 map belongs to it.
- Accepting Pakistan's premise on the "green line" would mean loss of about 250 square miles of EEZ for India.

India's Position

- India says that the green line is an indicative line and felt the boundary should be defined by the **"mid-channel"** of the Creek as shown on a map dated 1925.
- India supports its stance by citing the **Thalweg doctrine** in international law. It states that river boundaries between two states may be, if the two states agree, divided by the mid-channel.
- Pakistan maintains that the doctrine is not applicable in this case as it most commonly applies to non-tidal rivers, and Sir Creek is a tidal estuary.

Significance of Sir Creek

- **EEZ** – Accepting Pakistan's premise on the "green line" would mean loss of about 250 square miles of EEZ for India.



- **Energy resource** - Much of the region is rich in oil and gas below the sea bed.
- **Fisherman misery:** The Sir Creek area is also a great fishing destination for hundreds of fishermen from both India and Pakistan.
- **Drug syndicate / Smuggling:** Over the year this region has become main route to smuggle drugs, arms and petroleum product to India.
- **Terror design:** Terrorists are using disputed area to cross over Indian side. In 26/11 terror attack, terrorists captured an Indian fishing vessel, Kuber, off Sir Creek to enter Mumbai.

Way Forward

- It may be designated as a zone of disengagement or a jointly administered maritime park. Alternatively, given the creek's ecological sensitivity, both countries could designate the area a maritime sensitive zone.
- A transboundary management approach to Sir Creek can address the plight of poor fishermen, who routinely get detained across the border if they drift across the disputed demarcation.

Timeline of Sir Creek Dispute:

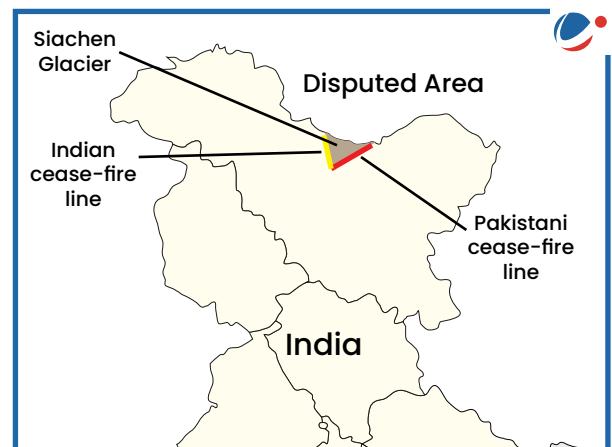
- 1908: Dispute arises between the Rao (ruler) of Kutch and the Sindh government over the collection of firewood from the creek area.
- 1914: The government of Bombay Province took up the resolution and gave award. Paragraph 9 of the 1914 resolution indicates that the boundary in Sir Creek is the green band on the eastern bank of the Creek.
- However, paragraph 10 of the same resolution talks about the centre of the navigable channel being the boundary, incidentally as per the internationally accepted 'Rule of Thalweg'.
- 1925: The land boundary in the horizontal sector was demarcated by Sindh and Kutch in 1924-25 through a placement of 67 pillars.
- 1968: India-Pakistan Tribunal on Kutch border gives its award which upholds 90% of India's claim but it does not cover Sir Creek. The tribunal award relates to the area to the east of sir creek.

3.1.2. Siachen Dispute

Siachen is a triangular bit of land between Pakistan occupied Kashmir and the part ceded by Pakistan to China.

Reason of Dispute:

- **Ambiguous wording** that exists in the Karanchi ceasefire agreement of 1949 following 1947-48 war.
- The Agreement did not delineate beyond grid reference NJ 9842, which falls south of the Siachen glacier and indicated that the border from NJ9842 runs "thence North to the glaciers".
- Pakistan argues that this means that the line should go from NJ 9842 straight to the Karakoram pass on the Sino-Indian border. India, however, insists that the line should proceed north from NJ 9842 along the Saltoro range to the border with China.



Significance of Siachen

- Siachen sits at a very **strategic location** with Pakistan on the left and China on the right. So Pakistan **re-interpreted the Ceasefire agreement** to claim the area beyond the Saltoro Ridge and beyond Siachen as its own.

- This would give Pakistan **direct connectivity to China** as well as a strategic oversight over the Ladakh region and on to the crucial Leh-Srinagar highway posing a serious threat to India.

Operation Meghdoot

- In 1983, Pakistan tried to use its troops to lay claim to Siachen.
- To pre-empt Pakistan's attempt, India launched **Operation Meghdoot** and occupied the high points of the glacier.
- India currently controls the whole glacier and all three main passes of the Salto Ridge namely-Sia La, Bilafond La and Gyond La.

3.1.3. River disputes

➤ Kishanganga Hydroelectric Plant

The Kishanganga Hydroelectric Plant is a run-of-the-river project designed to divert water from the Kishanganga river to a power plant in the Jhelum River basin. In 2010, Pakistan appealed to the Hague's Permanent Court of Arbitration (CoA) against the project under **the Indus Water Treaty**.

The International Court of Arbitration in its "final award" in 2013 allowed India to complete construction of the Kishanganga dam with condition that 9 m³/s of natural flow of water must be maintained in Kishanganga river at all times to maintain the environment downstream.

About Indus Water Treaty -1960

The Indus Waters Treaty is a **water-distribution treaty** between India and Pakistan, brokered by the **World Bank**. The treaty was signed in Karachi on September 19, 1960 by Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and President of Pakistan Ayub Khan. It provided for:

- Control over the three **"eastern"** rivers—the Beas, Ravi and Sutlej—was given to India and the three **"western"** rivers—the Indus, Chenab and Jhelum—to Pakistan.
- Exchange of data and co-operation in matters related to its provisions. For this, it establishes a **Permanent Indus Commission (PIC)** with each country having one commissioner in it.

Review of Indus Water Treaty

In the wake of the **Uri attack**, several experts have demanded that India withdraw from the Indus Waters Treaty whose terms are considered generous to Pakistan. However, officials made it clear that the IWT will hold, at least for the moment. Instead, the Centre drew up a list of measures to optimize use of the Indus waters that India has so far failed to do. Thus, following decisions were taken by the government

- Set-up an inter-ministerial committee to study India's further options.
- Build more run-of-the-river hydropower projects on western rivers, to exploit the full potential of 18,600 MW (current projects come to 11,406 MW).
- Review restarting the Tulbul navigation project that India had suspended after Pakistan's objections in 1987.

Revoking is not the right way forward as it may threaten regional stability and India's credibility globally. Stopping the waters of the Indus rivers can be counterproductive also. India has water-sharing arrangements with other neighbours and not honouring the Indus Treaty would make them uneasy and distrustful. India would lose her voice if China, decides to do something similar.

The IWT turned 60 in September and it is cited as an example of peaceful coexistence that exists despite the troubled relationship between India and Pakistan. The role of India, as a responsible upper riparian abiding by the provisions of the treaty, has been remarkable but the country, of late, is under pressure to rethink the extent to which it can remain committed to the provisions, as its overall political relations with Pakistan becomes intractable.

3.1.4. Gilgit Baltistan Issue

India had opposed Pakistan's order to integrate the region of Gilgit-Baltistan into the federal structure of the country.

In 2018, the executive order from Pakistan's Prime Minister intended to begin legislative, judicial and administrative measures to integrate Gilgit-Baltistan with the rest of the federal structure of Pakistan. This announcement has sparked several protests in the region. In 2020, as per reports, Pakistan has decided to elevate Gilgit-Baltistan's status to that of a full-fledged province.

What is the dispute over Gilgit-Baltistan?

- After the first Indo-Pak war over Kashmir, the UN resolutions created a temporary ceasefire line separating the state into Indian and Pakistani administered regions pending a referendum.
- India, Pakistan and China all claim partial or complete ownership of Kashmir.
 - **India-controlled:** One state, called Jammu and Kashmir, makes up the southern and eastern portions of the region, totaling about 45% of Kashmir.
 - **Pakistan-controlled:** Three areas called Azad Kashmir(AJK), Gilgit and Baltistan make up the northern and western portions of the region, totaling about 35% of Kashmir.
 - **China-controlled:** One area called Aksai Chin in the north-eastern part of the region, equaling 20% of Kashmir.

Significance of Gilgit Baltistan Order

- The order aims to alleviate China's concerns about the unsettled status of Gilgit-Baltistan considering China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) passes through the disputed region.
- The order has also spread discontent in pro Indian and some other sections of people of Gilgit-Baltistan which want an independent republic in accordance with UN resolutions on Jammu and Kashmir which require Pakistan to withdraw from Gilgit-Baltistan and transfer control to local powers.
- Further such a measure also aims to hide the grave human rights violations, exploitation and denial of freedom to the people residing in Pakistan occupied territories.

➤ Hitherto Pakistan's federal institutions had maintained that Gilgit-Baltistan is a UN declared disputed area and her residents cannot be declared citizens of Pakistan until India and Pakistan resolve the issue of accession of Jammu and Kashmir.

➤ India, unlike Pakistan, claims Gilgit-Baltistan as a constitutional part of the country and declares the people of Gilgit-Baltistan as her citizens. In 1994, both houses of the Indian Parliament passed a unanimous resolution reiterating that Pakistani controlled parts of AJK and Gilgit-Baltistan are integral parts of India.

3.1.5. Other issues along the border

- **Cross border firing, border skirmishes and constant tension.**
- **Repeated Infiltration by Pakistan supported terrorists into India as a way of proxy war.**
- **Illegal activities like smuggling, drugs and arm trafficking, infiltration due to porous borders** which runs through diverse terrain including deserts, marshes, plains, snow-clad mountains, and winds its way through villages, houses and agricultural lands.

Challenges faced by border population

- Dearth of jobs
- Lack of proper healthcare services
- Damage to crops in large tracts by waterlogging
- Sometimes border infrastructure violates privacy or hampers their normal life
- Legal and litigation issues of land acquisition while setting up security infrastructure

3.2. Initiatives Taken by Government

- **Fencing** - By 2011, almost all of the border along J&K, Punjab, Rajasthan and Gujarat – was double-row fenced on the LoC.
- **Use of technology**- The Centre approved a **five-layer elaborate plan** to stop infiltration on the 2,900-km western border with Pakistan.
 - Close Circuit Television cameras, thermal imagers and NVDs, BFSRs, underground monitoring sensors, and laser barriers will be placed along the border to track all movement from the other side.
 - The integrated setup will ensure that in the event of a transgression, if one device fails to work, another will alert the control room.
 - Laser barriers will cover 130 unfenced sections, including riverine and mountain terrain from Jammu and Kashmir to Gujarat, which are often used by infiltrators.
 - The border has been electrified, connected to a range of sensors and strewn with landmines.
 - The entire border is also lit up with strong floodlights installed on more than 50,000 poles. As a result, the Indo-Pak border can actually be seen from space at night.
- **Outposts** - There are about 700 border out posts, one Integrated Check post is there at Attari, Amritsar.
- A program for **Optimal Utilization of Waters of Eastern Rivers of Indus River System** has also been started.

Madhukar Gupta Committee

- It was tasked give recommendations for strengthening border protection and addressing the issue of gaps and vulnerability in border fencing along India-Pakistan Border.
- It was constituted three months after the terror attack on Pathankot IAF base in January 2016 by Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) terrorists from Pakistan
- Recommended the use of scientific technology in border management. For example, use of laser fencing, ground sensors and thermal imaging where physical fencing is not feasible due to difficult terrain.
- It gave separate recommendations for four states as each of them has different topography and problems.

Way Forward

- Prompt and **appropriate compensation** to border population to stem dissatisfaction among local people.
- **Study the pattern of illegal activities** like money laundering and checking them.
- The government also established a Task Force on border management under the Chairmanship of **Madhav Godbole**. The report observed that the country's borders could not be effectively managed because of certain **inherent problems** such as their disputed status, artificiality, porosity etc. which give rise to multiple other problems including illegal migration, smuggling, drugs trafficking, and trans-border movement of insurgents.

Its recommendations are:

- Pending border disputes with neighbouring countries should be resolved.
- The border-guarding force **should not be deployed for other internal security duties**.
- A **Marine police force** should be established along with the strengthening of the Indian Coast Guard and setting up of an apex institution for coordinating various maritime issues.
- Accelerated **development of infrastructure** along the border should be taken up, especially to wean the border population from illegal activities.



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4. Indo-Nepal

As per MHA, India shares a 1751 Km long border with Nepal. Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal and Sikkim are the states, which share the border with Nepal. Bihar shares the largest border and Sikkim the smallest with Nepal.

The border with Nepal is an **open border** and was virtually unattended till very recently as Nepalese citizens have free access to live and working India under a **1950 treaty** between the two countries. Nepal is a **landlocked country** and its closest access to the sea is through India. As a result, most of its imports pass through India. Keeping this in consideration, India has granted Nepal 15 transit and 22 trading points along the border.

4.1. Challenges Along the Border

- **Pakistan is using the open borders to carry out anti-India activities including pushing of terrorists and fake Indian currency.**
- **Fear of spread of Maoist insurgency** and links with Maoists groups in India
- **Issue of land grabbing** - Allegations of excesses such as intimidation, and forcible grabbing of land by either side along the disputed border also surface from time to time.
- **Easy escape & illegal activities** - Insurgents, terrorists, many hard-core criminals pursued by Indian and Nepalese security forces escape across the open border

4.1.1. Recent Border Dispute

Recently, Nepal unveiled a new political map that claimed strategically important land **Kalapani, Limpiyadhura and Lipulekh** of Uttarakhand as part of its sovereign territory. Nepal considers the 1816 **Treaty of Sugauli** (signed between Gurkha rulers of Kathmandu and the East India Company) as the only authentic document on boundary delineation.

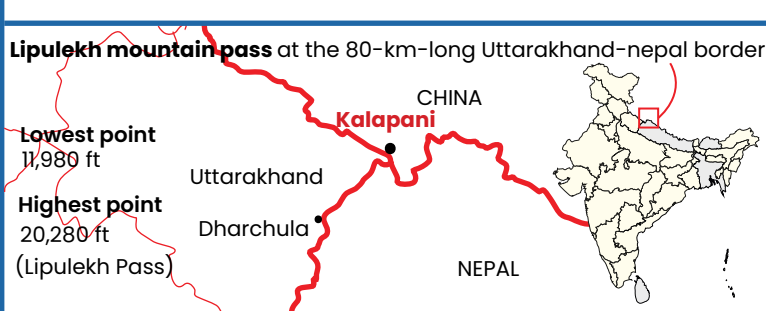
- Under the provisions of the Sugauli Treaty, Nepal lost Sikkim, Kumaon, Garhwal and Western Terai (Flat) area. River Mechi became the eastern border with India while the river Kali (called Mahakali in Nepal) was demarcated as the north-western border. The Treaty of Sagauli also defined Gandak as the international boundary between India and Nepal.
- Nepal considers the source of Kali river near Limpiyadhura, which is higher in altitude than the rest of the river's flow. Thus, all the three areas Limpiyadhura, Lipulekh and Kalapani are considered to the east of the river Kali.

India on the other hand says the border begins at Kalapani which India says is where the river begins.



- Kali originates in springs well below the Lipulekh pass, and the Sugauli treaty does not demarcate the area north of these streams.
- Administrative and revenue records going back to the nineteenth century show that Kalapani was on the Indian side, and counted as part of Pithoragarh district, now in Uttarakhand.
- India has controlled this territory since 1950s and built other infrastructure here before, besides conducting its administration and deploying military forces up to the border pass with China.
- China in 2015 statement also recognised India's sovereignty over the area by agreeing to expand trade through the Lipulekh pass.

Tri-Junction Trouble



Lipulekh mountain pass at the 80-km-long Uttarakhand-nepal border

Lowest point 11,980 ft

Highest point 20,280 ft (Lipulekh Pass)

CHINA

Uttarakhand

Dharchula

NEPAL

- Nepal has two tri-junctions with India and China
- The one in dispute now is Lipulekh in Kalapani, at the border of Uttarakhand with Nepal
- In 1816, the Sugauli Treaty signed by Nepal and British India identified Kali river as Nepal's boundary with India
- Nepal claims the river to Kalapani's west is the main Kali, and thus Nepal has territorial rights to it
- India holds that a ridgeline to Kalapani's east is the border, thus Kalapani falls within its territory

4.2. Initiatives Taken for Effective Border Management

- 25 batallions of **Shashastra Seema Bal under Ministry of Home Affairs** have been **deployed**.
- **Bilateral talks** - Bilateral mechanisms in the form of **Home Secretary-level talks and Joint Working Group** at the level of Joint Secretaries exist between the two countries.
- **Border District Coordination Committee** - At the level of district officials of the two countries- has been established as platforms for discussing issues of mutual concern.
- **Construction of Indo-Nepal border roads** - The Government of India has approved construction of 1377 km of roads along Nepal border in the States of Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh & Bihar.

4.3. Way Forward

- Security agencies of both countries should **coordinate** more closely and effectively for better monitoring of the border. An increased use of technology in monitoring border movement can also help to secure the open border.
- A **Joint Boundary Demarcation Committee** could be appointed by both the countries to scientifically study the Maps and come to a conclusion diplomatically.

5. Indo-Bhutan

Indo-Bhutan border is demarcated except along the tri-junction with China. The process of demarcation of the India-Bhutan border started in 1961 and was completed in 2006. This border is defined by foothills, unlike the complex topography of dense forests, rivers and populations that defines India's borders with Nepal and Bangladesh.

India has a **Friendship treaty with Bhutan** which was re-negotiated in 2007 under which India has a huge stake in safeguarding interests of Bhutan.

The two countries share warm bilateral ties and strong border coordination. For Bhutan, issues of **hydropower and trade** within the region impinge on its border cooperation. Other issues such as rupee trade and banking facilities on both sides of the border are also important.

5.1. Challenges Along the Border

5.1.1. Border Dispute

The border is not demarcated in tri-junction area. Thus, the conflict arises such as recent Doklam issue.

5.1.1.1. Doklam Issue

Doklam plateau is a part of Bhutan disputed by China which can provide China leverage to choke India's **"Chicken Neck"** - the narrow Siliguri corridor which links the north-east with the rest of India. In 2017, India successfully deployed its troops to counter Chinese design to build a road in Doklam which could have serious implication for India's security and would have also signaled to Bhutan that India can no longer protect its interests. So, Indian troops intervened to block the path of Chinese People's Liberation Army soldiers engaged in building road-works on this plateau. **This is the first time that India used troops to protect Bhutan's territorial interests.**



5.1.2. Other Issues

- **'Operation All Clear'** by Royal Bhutanese Army drove out the Bodo and ULFA insurgents from its territory some years ago. The border has been relatively quiet. But still fears are persistent about criminal and militant activity.
- **Smuggling** - Chinese made goods, Bhutanese cannabis, liquor and forest products are major items smuggled into India. Livestock, grocery items and fruits are smuggled out of India to Bhutan.
- **Free movement of people & vehicles** - Bhutan wants free movement of its citizens and vehicles once they enter Indian territory. During the Gorkhaland movement in West Bengal vehicles belonging to Bhutanese nationals were destroyed. From internal security perspective, illicit establishment of camps by militant outfits in the dense jungles of south-east Bhutan is a cause of concern for both the nations.
- **Migration** - As areas bordering Bhutan are largely underdeveloped, many Indians work as manual labour in construction sites in that country, where they manage to earn more decent wages. This migration has provoked concerns of altering demographics in both countries.

- **Environmental concerns** - Migrants and infiltrators are also accused of deforestation, poaching, and wildlife smuggling.

5.2. Initiatives Taken

- **Deployment of forces** - Sashastra Seema Bal (**SSB**) is the main border guarding force with some help from BSF.
- **Bilateral cooperation** - A Secretary level bilateral mechanism in the shape of an **India-Bhutan Group on Border Management and Security** is in existence. This mechanism has proved to be very useful in assessing threat perception of the two countries from groups attempting to take advantage of this open border and in discussing ways of improving the security environment in border areas.
- There is also a **Border District Coordination Meeting (BDCM) Mechanism** between the bordering States and the Royal Government of Bhutan (RGoB) to facilitate coordination on border management and other related matters.
- **Road construction** - The Government of India has approved construction of 313 km. road in Assam along Indo-Bhutan border. About 60,000 Indian nationals live in Bhutan, employed mostly in the hydro-electric power construction and road industry.
- The Union environment ministry has given a **"general approval"** for the diversion of forest land for major border infrastructure projects along the eastern border with Bhutan, Myanmar and Nepal.

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6. Indo-Bangladesh

The Indian side of the Indo-Bangladesh border passes **through 5 Indian states**- West Bengal, Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram. The entire stretch consists of plains, riverine belts, hills and jungles. The area is heavily populated and is cultivated right upto the border. India and Bangladesh share 54 trans-boundary rivers.

India and Bangladesh have been able to solve some contentious issues through negotiations which experts consider as the **best example of border management such as:**

- India and Bangladesh successfully resolved issue of enclaves through mutual agreement and India enacting **100th Constitutional Amendment Act to this effect.**
- Sharing of Ganga water through a **1996 Agreement** between the two countries. However, Bangladesh has expressed concerns over **Farakka Barrage** which diverts water to the Hooghly river claiming that it does not get a fair share in dry season and gets flooded when India releases water.
- **Maritime disputes:** In 2009, Bangladesh instituted arbitral proceedings for the delimitation of the maritime boundary with India under UNCLOS, the verdict of which settled the dispute in 2014.

Outstanding Issues between the two neighbours:

- **Teesta River Water Dispute:** Teesta River originates from the Pahunri (or Teesta Kangse) glacier in Sikkim, flows through the northern parts of West Bengal before entering Bangladesh. It merges with the Brahmaputra River (or Jamuna in Bangladesh). The river is a major source of irrigation to the paddy growing greater Rangpur region of Bangladesh.
 - In 1983, an ad hoc arrangement on sharing water was made, according to which Bangladesh got 36% and India 39% of the waters, while the remaining 25% remained unallocated. The transient agreement could not be implemented.
 - Bangladesh has sought an equitable distribution of Teesta waters, on the lines of Ganga Water Treaty of 1996.
 - In 2011 India and Bangladesh finalized an arrangement, by which India would get 42.5% and Bangladesh 37.5% while remaining 20% would flow unhindered in order to maintain a minimum water flow of the river. This agreement was not signed due to opposition from chief minister of West Bengal.
- **Tipaimukh Hydro-Electric Power Project** on the **Barak River**- Bangladesh is opposing the project as it says that the dam will disrupt the seasonal rhythm of the river and have an adverse effect on downstream agriculture, fisheries and ecology of the region. Indian government has assured Bangladesh that it will **not take any unilateral decision** on the Project which may adversely affect Bangladesh.
- Due to high degree of **porosity** of Indo-Bangladesh Border, millions of Bangladeshi immigrant mostly illegal have poured into India.
- **Border fencing issue** - There have been some problems in construction of fencing in certain stretches on this border due to:
 - Riverine/ low-lying areas,
 - Population residing within 150 yards of the border,
 - Pending land acquisition cases and
 - Protests by border population, which has led to delay in completion of the project.

- **Unauthorised cross-border trade in goods** such as jamdani sarees, rice, salt and diesel has flourished, despite the presence of strict trade regulations and barriers. Although India and Bangladesh officially trade goods worth \$7 billion, illegal trade between the two countries is estimated to be double the figure.
- **Cattle smuggling and killing of smugglers** - Cattle confiscated on border alone are around **one lakh annually** thus a loss of revenue of around 10000 crore annually for the government. A large number of Bangladeshi nationals who are caught smuggling cattle across the border are killed. While the number of recorded deaths has **reduced significantly** after India introduced a **new policy** of having only non-lethal weapons for BSF's use, the measure has emboldened criminals and led to an increase in attacks on BSF personnel.
- **Increasing radicalisation:** Presence of groups like Harkat-al-Jihad-al-Islami (HUJI) and Jamaat-e-Islami fuel Anti-India sentiments in Bangladesh. Their propaganda could spill across border.

Comprehensive Integrated Border Management System (CIBMS)

- The CIBMS is a robust and integrated system that is capable of addressing the gaps in the present system of border security by seamlessly integrating human resources, weapons, and high-tech surveillance equipment along India's International borders with Pakistan and Bangladesh.
- CIBMS is being implemented since 2016, after the Pathankot terrorist attack.
- The purpose of the CIBMS is to eventually replace manual surveillance/patrolling of the international borders by electronic surveillance to enhance detection and interception capabilities.
- CIBMS has three components which are using a number of different devices for surveillance, efficient and dedicated communication network and data storage for a composite picture. Sensors like Thermal Imager, Unattended Ground Sensor(UGS), Fiber Optical Sensors, Radar, Sonar, satellite imagery are used in CIBMS.

6.1. Initiatives Taken

- **Deployment of force** - The BSF and BGB have also been raising awareness among the locals regarding crime prevention in the border area.
- In January 2018, Information and Technology Wing of BSF undertook the project **BOLD-QIT (Border Electronically Dominated QRT Interception Technique)** to install technical systems which enable BSF to equip Indo-Bangla borders with different kind of sensors in the unfenced riverine area of the Brahmaputra and its tributaries.
- Government has announced the establishment of **Border Protection Grid (BPG)** with Indo- Bangladesh Border States.
- A crime-free stretch has been established between the BSF border posts at Gunarmath and Kalyani and the BGB (Border Guards Bangladesh) border posts at Putkhali and Daulatpur.
- **Fencing** - India has constructed a barbed-wire fence and improved lighting along the border to prevent illegal immigrant and other anti-national activities.

Drone Technology for Defense in India



LAKSHYA and NISHANT:
Unmanned Aerial Systems developed by DRDO.



Black Kite, Golden Hawk, and Pushpak: Micro & Mini UAVs developed by DRDO.



DRDO NETRA: Light-weight, autonomous UAV for surveillance and reconnaissance operations.

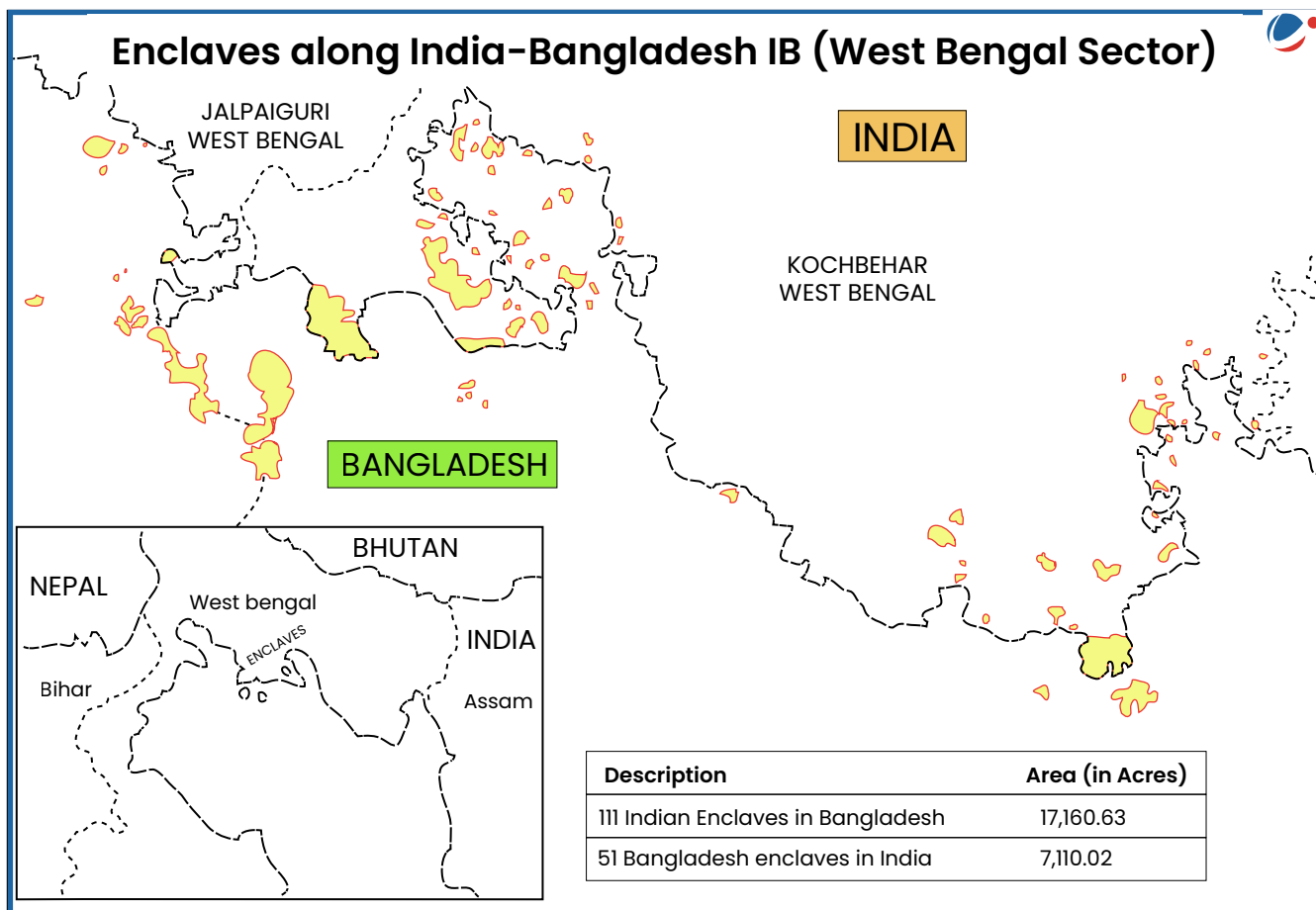


DRDO Rustom: Medium Altitude Long Endurance UAV developed for Armed forces.



Counter-drone system:
Developed by DRDO.

- **Road construction** - In addition, 3,585.53 km of border patrol roads have been constructed out of a sanctioned length of 4,407.11 km. A border management department has also been setup **to oversee developmental work** in the bordering areas and upgraded infrastructure at major entry and exit points.
- **Strengthening vigilance and regulation** - Steps have been taken to strengthen border vigil through enhancement of border guards. India is also **establishing integrated check posts (ICP)** at its land borders which will house, under one roof all regulatory activities such as immigration, security and customs. For e.g. Sutarkandi in Assam, Ghojadanga in West Bengal- integrated check posts along Bangladesh border.
- Installation of **Border surveillance devices** such as closed-circuit cameras, searchlights, thermal imaging devices and **drones** to keep a tight vigil.
- **Bilateral cooperation** - India and Bangladesh have both signed a border management plan that envisions **joint patrols and information-sharing**. India and Bangladesh have also established **border haats** to deal with illegal or unauthorised trade. Two MoUs - one on **Bilateral Cooperation for Prevention of Human Trafficking, Smuggling and Circulation of Fake Currency Notes** and second on cooperation between the **Coast Guards of India and Bangladesh: to prevent crimes at sea** - have been signed. Border forces of two countries also undertake joint exercise such as **Sundarban Moitry (Sundarbans Alliance)**.
- **Land Boundary Agreement, 2015:** The 2015 LBA implements the unresolved issues stemming from the un-demarcated land boundary—approximately 6.1-km long—in three sectors, viz. Daikhata-56 (West Bengal), Muhuri River–Belonia (Tripura) and Lathitila–Dumabari (Assam); exchange of enclaves; and adverse possessions, which were first addressed in the 2011 Protocol. It is important to note that in the land swap, Bangladesh gained more territory than India did.



7. Indo-Myanmar

India shares 1,643 km long border with Myanmar. Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram are the four States, which share the border with Myanmar. India and Myanmar used to permit a Free **Movement Regime (FMR)**, formalized in 2018 as part of India's Act East Policy, for tribes residing along the border to travel upto 16 km across the border. But FMR has been **scrapped in 2024**.

FMR regime conceptualized due to following reasons-

- **Strong ethnic and familial ties across the border:** The border demarcated by the British in 1826 effectively divided people of the same ethnicity and culture into two nations without their consent.
- **Local trade and business:** The region has a long history of trans-border commerce through customs and border haats. Given the low-income economy, such exchanges were vital for the sustenance of local livelihoods.

Reasons for scrapping Free Movement Regime

- **Illegal immigration:** Uncontrolled immigration of Chin people from Myanmar leading to demographic changes in the region
- **Ethnic violence and insurgency:** Meitei community attributed 2023 Manipur tensions to the perceived illegal migration of tribal Kuki-Chin communities.
- **Entry of soldiers from Myanmar:** Exodus of junta soldiers seeking sanctuary in Mizoram which has serious security implications in India's northeast.
- **Surge in narcotics production in Myanmar:** A report by UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) linked Myanmar's political turmoil under military junta to surge in flow of narcotics in the region

7.1. Challenges at Indo-Myanmar border

Though the boundary is properly demarcated, there are a few pockets that are disputed. The major issues along the border are as follows:

- **Rugged terrain** – It makes movement and the overall development of the area difficult.
- **Weak vigilance** – There is lack of **physical barrier** along the border either in the form of fences or border outposts and roads to ensure strict vigil.
- **Insurgency** – Insurgents make use of the **poorly guarded border** and flee across when pursued by Indian security forces. Close ethnic ties among the tribes such as Nagas, Kukis, Chin, etc., who live astride the border help these insurgents in finding safe haven in Myanmar. These **cross-border ethnic ties** have facilitated in creation of safe havens for various northeast insurgent groups in Myanmar.
- **Drugs menace** – The location of the boundary at the edge of the **"Drugs golden triangle"** facilitates the unrestricted illegal flows of drugs into Indian territory. Heroin is the main item of drug trafficking. The bulk of heroin enters India through the border town of Moreh in Manipur. It is reported that the local insurgent groups are actively involved in drugs and arms trafficking. Smuggling of **ephedrine** and **pseudo-ephedrine and trafficking of women and children** from the Northeast to Myanmar and further to Southeast Asia are also rampant along the border.
- **Boundary dispute** – Even though the international boundary between the two countries had been formally delimited and demarcated following the 1967 Boundary agreement, the boundary has not crystallised on the ground as lines separating two sovereign countries.

- **Lack of attention** – The policymakers in Delhi have not given adequate attention to the India-Myanmar border and as a result it continues to be poorly managed.
- **Lack of support from military Junta Govt. in Myanmar:** India's patchy engagement with the military junta in Myanmar and its initial support to the democratic movement in that country have been largely responsible for Myanmar's reluctance to cooperate with India.

7.2. Steps taken by government

- **Deployment of force** – Assam Rifles mans this border since 2002 with some help from Indian Army. However, Assam Rifles has deployed 31 of its 46 battalions for counter insurgency operations and only 15 battalions for guarding the border thus functioning more like a counter insurgency force rather than a border guarding force.
- **Scrapping free movement regime** – The decision was taken by the central government in 2024 in view of the continued Manipur violence and to stop insurgents like NSCN-K from misusing FMR for receiving training in arms, establish safe havens and re-enter India to carry out subversive attacks.
- Cabinet recently proposed to set up **13 new Integrated Check Posts (ICPs)** to encourage India's engagement with SAARC countries along with Thailand and Myanmar. ICP is able to interdict such elements while facilitating legitimate trade and commerce.

7.3. Way Ahead

Given that the vulnerability of the India-Myanmar border is posing a serious challenge to the internal security of the country, the Government of India should pay immediate attention to effectively manage this border.

- It should first strengthen the security of the border by either **giving the Assam Rifles the single mandate** of guarding the border or deploying another border guarding force such as the Border Security Force (BSF).
- The **construction of the ICP** along with other infrastructure should be expedited.
- Finally, India should endeavour to meaningfully engage with Myanmar and solicit its cooperation in resolving all outstanding issues and better manage their mutual border.

8. Indo-Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka shares maritime border with India and is a very important country strategically placed in Indian ocean for India's security.

8.1. Challenges along the border

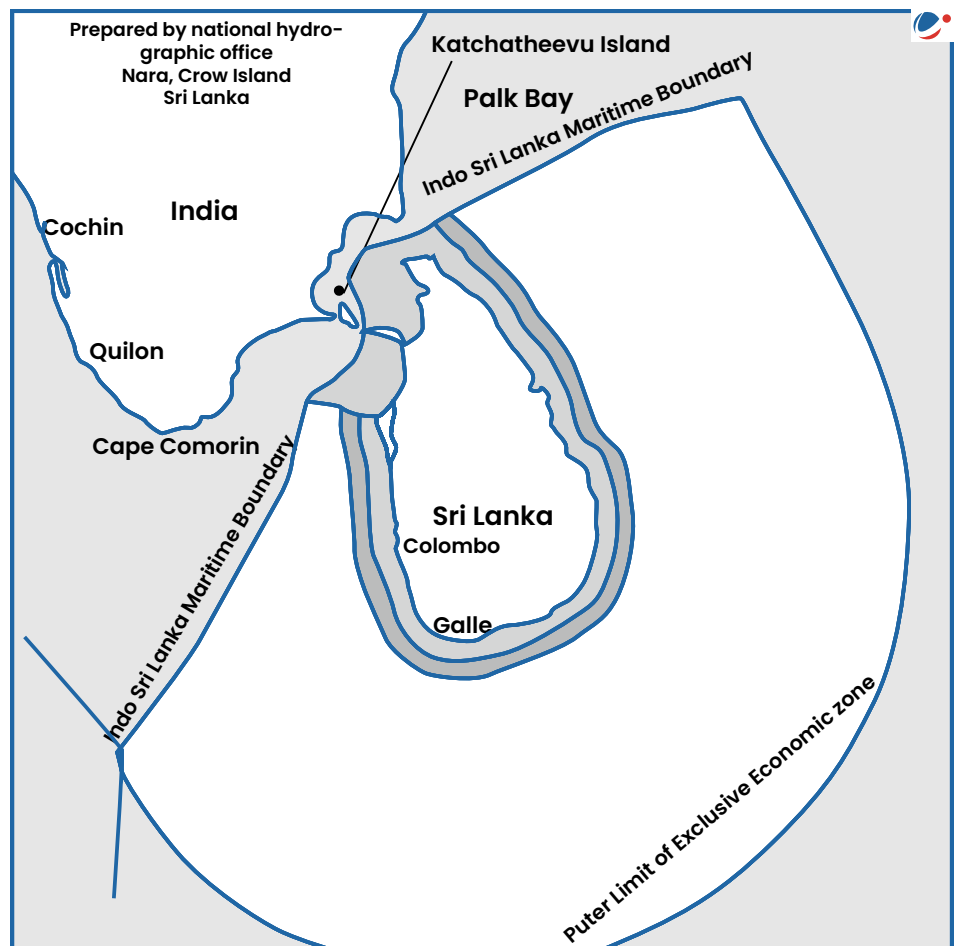
8.1.1. Katchatheevu Island

India ceded the uninhabited island to its southern neighbour in 1974 under a **conditional accord**. However, Indian fishermen considered it to be their traditional fishing area and want Katchatheevu to be used as fishing grounds for India as well.

8.1.2. Fishermen Issue

Trespassing by Indian fishermen in Sri Lankan waters takes place regularly. Here, the issue is not of an **unsettled maritime boundary** but the refusal of Indian fishermen to recognise the maritime boundary between India and Sri Lanka, especially in the **Palk Bay**. The Palk Bay has traditionally been a common fishing ground for fishermen on both the sides. However, the **delineation of the maritime boundary** has divided the Palk Bay, and stipulates that Indian fishermen cannot fish beyond the international boundary. In recent years, Sri Lanka has introduced tougher laws banning bottom-trawling and put heavy fines for trespassing foreign vessels.

Fishing in each other's waters by the fishermen of India and Sri Lanka has strained bilateral ties. Every time an Indian fisherman is arrested by Sri Lankan authorities, Tamil Nadu puts pressure on the Indian government to lodge a formal protest with the Sri Lankan government.



8.2. Initiatives Taken

Regarding fishermen issue

- Steps have been taken to ensure the safety of fishermen, and to prevent the undetected entry of any fishing trawler in the coastal waters. For this purpose, all big fishing trawlers (20 meters and above) are being installed with AIS transponders. As for small fishing vessels, a proposal to fit them with the Radio Frequency Identification Device (RFID) is under consideration.
- Besides, all fishing vessels are also being registered under a **uniform registration system**, and the data is being updated online. **Colour codes** are being assigned to them for easy identification at sea. The colour codes are different for different coastal states.
- Furthermore, **Distress Alert Transmitters** (DATs) are being provided to fisher men so that they can alert the ICG if they are in distress at sea. For the safety of fishermen at sea, the government has implemented a scheme of providing a subsidised kit to the fisher men which includes a Global Positioning System (GPS), communication equipment, echo-sounder and a search and rescue beacon.
- **Coastal security helpline numbers** 1554 (ICG) and 1093 (Marine Police) have also been operationalized for fishermen to communicate any information to these agencies.

8.3. Way Forward

The following steps can be considered to resolve the disputes and challenges between the two countries:

- **Sustainable fishing and alternate livelihood** – There is a glaring need for institutionalisation of fishing in Indian waters by the government of India so that alternative means of livelihood are provided. Government will have to mark up a **comprehensive plan** to reduce the dependence of Indian fishermen on catch from Palk Bay and the use of bottom trawlers from Tamil Nadu, India. Through incentives and persuasion, fishermen from the Palk Bay could be encouraged to switch over to deep-sea fishing in the Indian exclusive economic zone and in international waters.
- **Institutional mechanism** – Last year, the two countries agreed on establishing a Joint Working Group (JWG) on fisheries to help resolve the dispute, setting up a hotline between the Coast Guards of India and Sri Lanka, convening of the JWG once in three months, and meetings of the fisheries ministers every half-year were the components of the mechanism to be put in place.
- **Indian Navy or Coast Guard** should join the **Sri Lankan Navy** in jointly patrolling the international boundary to prevent trespassing.



9. General Recommendations for Better Border Management

Despite several para-military forces guarding borders, the army's commitment for border management amounts to six divisions along the LAC, the LoC and the Actual Ground Position Line (AGPL) in J&K and five divisions along the LAC and the Myanmar border in the eastern sector. This is a **massive commitment** that is costly in terms of manpower as well as funds. According to the availability of funds for modernization, the following steps may be considered:

- **Use of advanced technology** for surveillance particularly satellite and aerial imagery, can help to maintain a constant vigil along the LAC and make it possible to reduce physical deployment.
- **Aerial surveillance** through a **larger number of helicopter units** will enhance the quality and the ability to move troops to quickly occupy defensive positions when it becomes necessary.

Other general recommendations for border management are:

- The **BSF** should be responsible for all settled borders while the responsibility for unsettled and disputed borders, such as the LoC in J&K and the LAC on the Indo-Tibetan border, should be that of the Indian Army.
- **Effective control** - The principle of **'single point control' or one-force-one-border principle** must be followed.
- There should be **comprehensive long term planning** for deployment of central police organizations (CPOs) which is currently characterized by **ad-hoc decisions** and **knee-jerk reactions** to emerging threats and challenges. Security strategies should be designed for **'fire prevention' or proactive approach** rather than 'firefighting' approach.
- **Enhancing operational effectiveness** by making all para-military forces managing unsettled borders operate directly under the control of the army.
- **Developing Infrastructure** - Accelerated development of infrastructure along the border, especially to wean the border population from illegal activities.
- **Use of advanced technology** - The advances in surveillance technology, particularly satellite and aerial imagery, can help to maintain a constant vigil along the LAC and make it possible to reduce physical deployment.
- **Up-gradation of intelligence network** and co-ordination with sister agencies, conduct of special operations along the border.
- **Raising the issues of infiltration** from across the border during various meeting with counterpart countries.



10. Government Initiatives for Border Management

10.1. Border Area Development Programme

The Department of Border Management, Ministry of Home Affairs has been implementing a Border Area Development Programme (BADP) through the State Governments as part of a comprehensive approach to Border Management. Its aim is **to meet the special developmental needs** of the people living in remote and inaccessible areas situated near the international border and to saturate the border areas with essential infrastructure through convergence of **Central/State/BADP/Local schemes** and **participatory approach** and to promote a sense of security and well-being among the border population.

- ▶ BADP covers all the villages which are located within the **0-10 Km** of the International Border.
- ▶ Funds are provided to the States as a **non-lapsable Special Central Assistance** (SCA) for execution of projects relating to infrastructure, livelihood, education, health, agriculture and allied sectors.
 - BADP covers specific planned socioeconomic and infrastructure development in areas such as: Road connectivity, Water and Power supply, Social Infrastructure including Health & Education, Sports activities, Agriculture & allied sectors, Skill development etc.

10.2. Development of Integrated Check Posts (ICPs)

Border Out Posts (BOPs) are designated **entry and exit points** on the international border of the country through which cross border movement of persons, goods and traffic takes place. Inter-alia, the BOPs are meant to provide appropriate show of force to deter trans-border criminals, infiltrators and the hostile elements from indulging in the activities of intrusion / encroachment and border violations. Each BOP is provided with the **necessary infrastructure** for accommodation, logistic supports and combat functions. It also facilitates trade & commerce.

Existing infrastructure available with Customs, Immigration and other regulatory agencies at these points on our land borders needs to be upgraded. **Support facilities** like warehouses, parking lots, banks, hotels, etc. needs to be increased in numbers.

A Statutory Authority called '**Land Ports Authority of India**' (LPAI) has been set up to oversee and regulate the construction, management and maintenance of the ICPs.

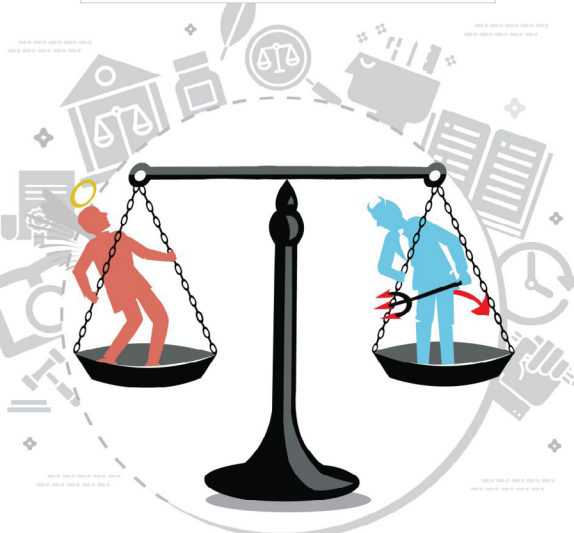
The LPAI has been envisaged as a **lean, oversight body** aimed at providing better administration and cohesive management of cross-border movement of people and goods. It would be vested with powers on the lines of similar bodies like the Airports Authority of India.

10.3. Recent initiatives

- ▶ **Vibrant Villages Programme:** A Centrally Sponsored Scheme introduced in 2022 Budget, which aims to develop the essential infrastructure and creation of livelihood opportunities in certain districts and border blocks of 4 states and 1 UT namely Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh and Ladakh.

- **Border Infrastructure and Management (BIM):** A Central Sector Umbrella Scheme (2021-22 to 2025-26) which aims to provide better roads, electricity, and communication infrastructure along the border areas.
- **Comprehensive Integrated Border Management System (CIBMS):** An integrated system that utilises high-tech surveillance devices such as sensors, detectors, cameras, radar systems to address the gaps in the present system of border security.
- **Village Defence Guards (VDG):** Earlier known as Village Defence Committees (VDC) in J&K. These function under SP/SSP with an aim to provide residents of remote hilly villages with weapons and give them arms training to defend themselves.


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11. Coastal Security

India's coastline runs through **nine States** viz. Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha and West Bengal and **four** Union Territories viz. Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu, Lakshadweep, Puducherry and Andaman & Nicobar Islands, situated on the coast.

India's 7516 km long coast line presents a variety of security concerns that include landing of arms and explosives at isolated spots on the coast, infiltration/ex-filtration of anti-national elements, use of the sea and off shore islands for criminal activities, smuggling of consumer and intermediate goods through sea routes etc. Absence of physical barriers on the coast and presence of vital industrial and defence installations near the coast also enhance the vulnerability of the coasts to illegal cross border activities. Some instances of vulnerability of country's coasts being exploited are:

- The **smuggling of explosives** through the Raigad coast in Maharashtra and their use in the 1993 serial blasts in Mumbai, and
- The infiltration of the ten Pakistani terrorists through the sea route who carried out the multiple coordinated attacks in Mumbai on November 26, 2008

Broadly, **coastal security** is understood as a **subset of maritime security** that involves securing the country's coasts by guarding its maritime approaches against any threat or challenge that originates from the sea.

11.1. Challenges

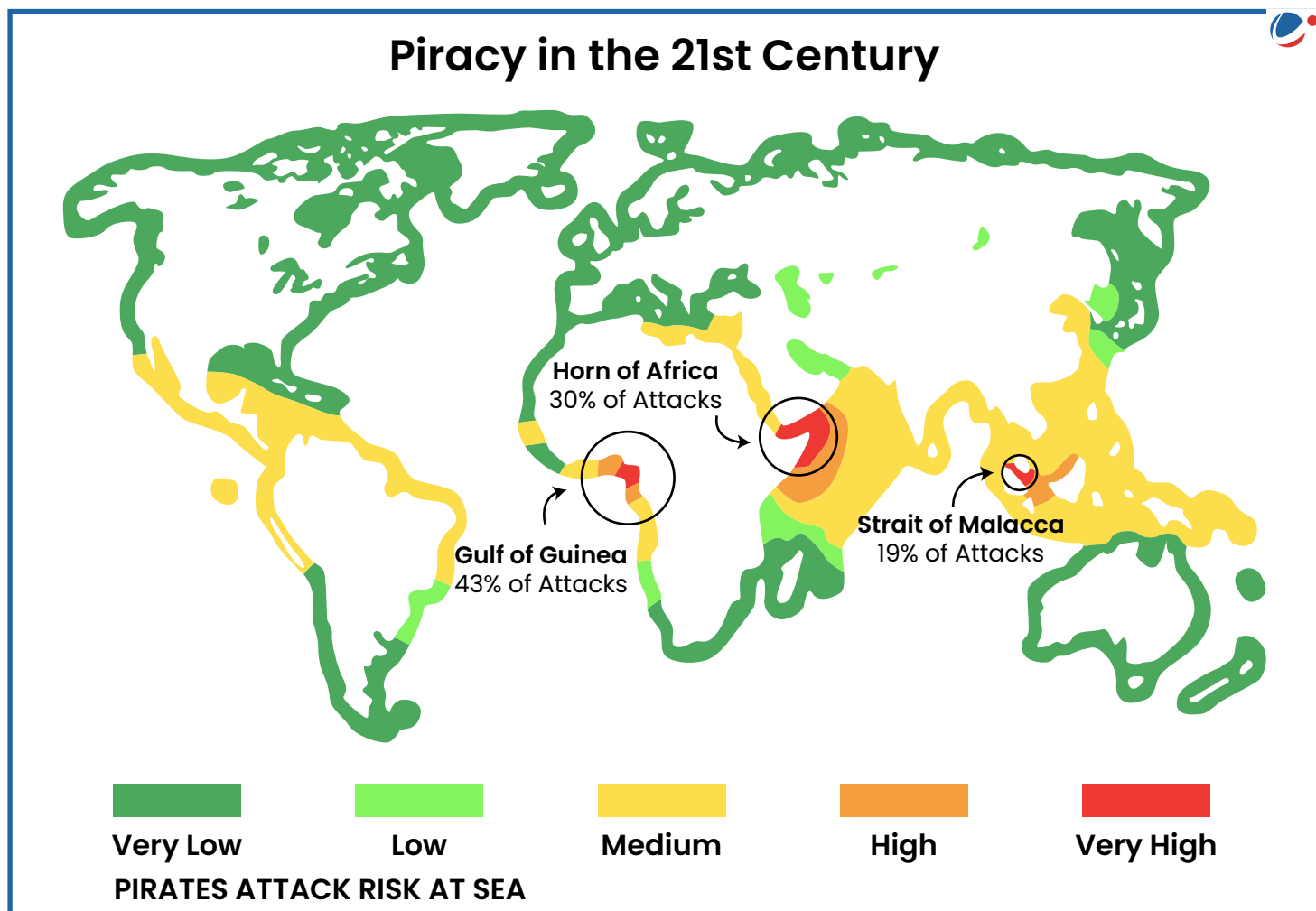
- India's coasts are characterised by a **diverse range of topography** such as creeks, small bays, back waters, rivulets, lagoons, estuaries, swamps, mudflats, as well as hills, rocky outcrops, sandbars, beaches and small islands (inhabited as well as uninhabited).
- The **physical proximity of India's coasts** to politically volatile, economically depressed and unfriendly countries such as Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Gulf countries adds to its vulnerability.
- **Unsettled maritime boundaries** not only pose serious security challenges but also hinder offshore development such as India's maritime boundaries with Pakistan (Sir Creek) and Bangladesh are not delineated because of overlapping claims.

11.2. Maritime Security & Threats

India faces a number of threats and challenges that originate from the sea and which are mainly sub-conventional in nature. These threats and challenges can be categorised under five broad categories:

- 1. Maritime terrorism:** It is defined as '...the undertaking of terrorist acts and activities within the maritime environment, using or against vessels or fixed platforms at sea or in port, or against any one of their passengers or personnel, against coastal facilities or settlements, including tourist resorts, port areas and port towns or cities'.
- 2. Piracy and armed robbery:** Piracy by definition takes place on the high seas and, therefore, does not fall under the ambit of coastal security. However, in the case of India, the shallow waters of the Sunderbans have been witnessing '**acts of violence and detention**' by gangs of criminals that are akin to piracy.

3. **Smuggling and trafficking:** Indian coasts have been susceptible to smuggling and trafficking. Gold, electronic goods, narcotics and arms have been smuggled through the sea for a long time. Indian coasts have been susceptible to smuggling. Gold, electronic goods, narcotics and arms have been smuggled through the sea for a long time.
4. **Infiltration, illegal migration and refugee influx:** India's land boundaries have always been porous to infiltration by terrorists/militants and large scale illegal migration. These large scale influxes over the decades have resulted in **widespread political turmoil** in the Border States. To prevent infiltration and large scale illegal migration, the Indian government implemented widespread security measures, included maintaining strict vigil along the borders, the erection offences, and the thorough checking of immigrants. The elaborate security arrangements on land forced the terrorists and illegal migrants to look towards the sea where security measures are comparatively lax, enabling them **to 'move, hide and strike'** with relative ease.
5. **The straying of fishermen beyond the maritime boundary:** The frequent straying of fishermen into neighbouring country waters has not only jeopardised the safety of the fishermen but has also raised national security concerns (as discussed in Indo-Sri Lanka).



11.3. The Coastal Security Architecture

One of the earliest challenges to coastal security that India has had to encounter was sea-borne smuggling. Alarmed by the rising graph of **sea-borne smuggling** and mindful of the inadequacies faced by the maritime law enforcement agencies, GoI created two specialized forces within a span of a few years: the Customs Marine Organisation and the Indian Coast Guard.

EVOLUTION OF COASTAL SECURITY ARCHITECTURE	
Year	Developments
1974	▶ Customs Marine Organisation (CMO), was established to conduct anti-smuggling operations.
1977	▶ Indian Coast Guard (ICG), was established to prevent smuggling activities, protecting installations, assisting fishermen and preserving marine environment.
2005	▶ Coastal Security Scheme with a three-layered structure to strengthen patrolling and surveillance.
Post 26/11 attack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Multilayered Surveillance System was strengthened with expansion in roles and duties of Indian Navy, etc ▶ NC31 network and IMAC were established to strengthen maritime domain awareness ▶ Increased cooperation with other countries for information sharing, capacity building etc.
2017	▶ Maritime Theatre Command is proposed to Integrate the assets of Indian Navy Army, IAF and Coast Guard to form a Net-centric Warfare model.
2020	▶ First national maritime security coordinator appointed.

11.3.1. The Customs Marine Organisation (CMO)

CMO was created following the recommendations of the **Nag Chaudhari Committee**. The objective of the committee was to suggest the optimum assets required for anti-smuggling operations as well as recommend ways to curb smuggling through the sea. Once the Indian Coast Guard was formed in 1977, the CMO was merged with the newly created organisation.

11.3.2. The Indian Coast Guard (ICG)

The ICG was established on February 1, 1977 in the naval headquarters, and placed under the **Ministry of Defence (MoD)**. On August 18, 1978, with the enactment of **the Coast Guard Act**, the organisation formally came into being as **the fourth armed force of India**. The Act stipulates that the ICG as an armed force would ensure the security of the maritime zones of India, and protect its maritime and national interests in such zones.

11.3.3. The Marine Police Force

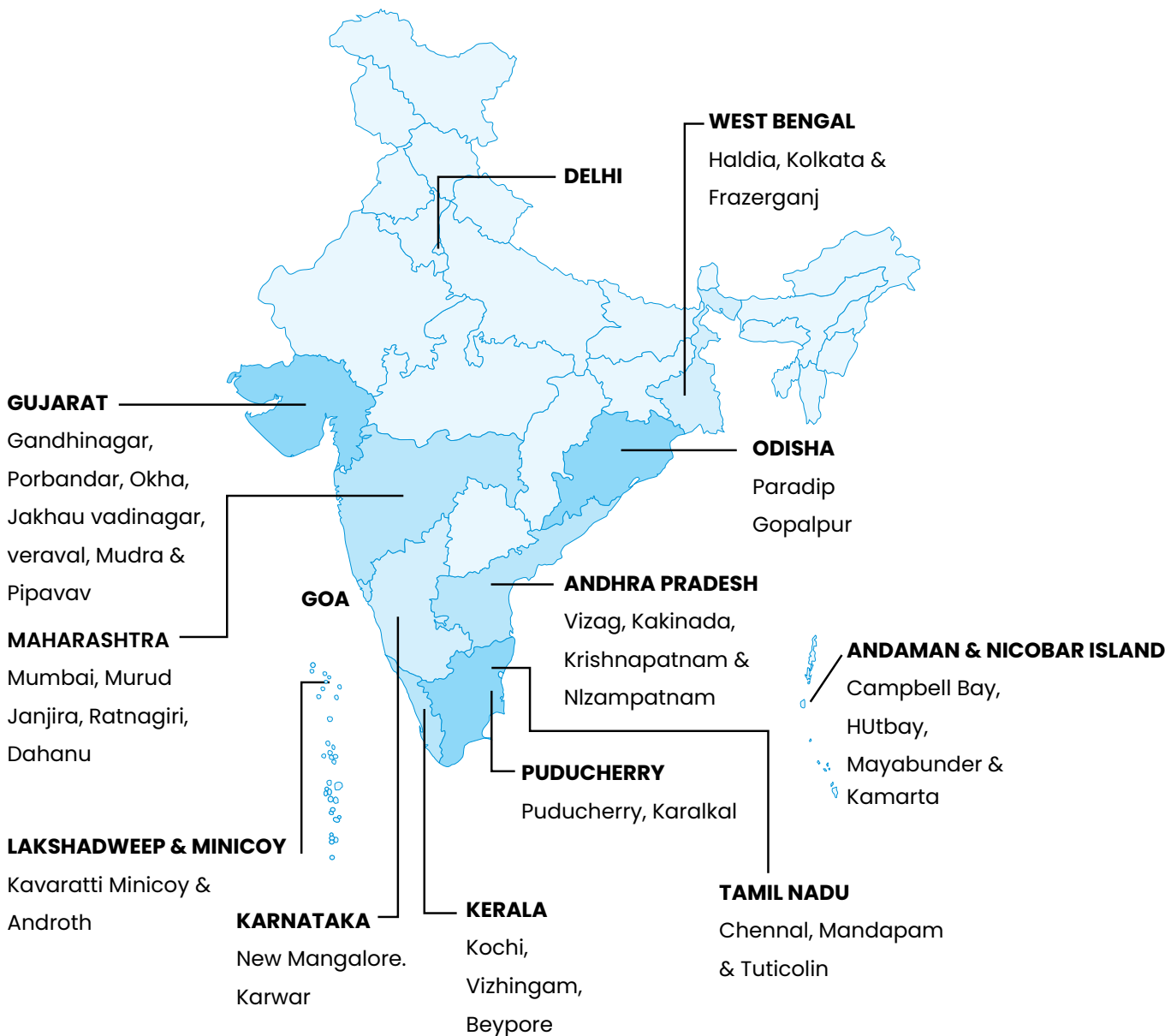
The marine police force was created under the **Coastal Security Scheme (CSS)** that was launched in 2005. The aim of the CSS was to **strengthen infrastructure for patrolling and the surveillance of the coastal areas**, particularly the shallow areas close to the coast.

The marine police force was required to work closely with the ICG under the **'hub-and-spoke' concept**, the 'hub' being the ICG station and the 'spokes' being the coastal police stations. The marine police was mandated to patrol the territorial waters (12 nautical miles into the sea) and pursue legal cases pertaining to their area of responsibility according to specified Acts.

ORGANISATIONAL COVER

Maritime zones are divided into 5 coast guard regions: northwest (HQ Gandhinagar), west (HQ Mumbai), east (HQ Chennai), northeast (HQ Kolkata) and Andaman & Nicobar (HQ Port Blair). Each region has 14 districts, where CG stations are housed:

COAST GUARD STATIONS



11.3.4. Present Coastal Security System

There is a multi-tier arrangement for protection and maritime security of the country involving the Indian Navy, Coast Guard and Marine Police of the coastal States and Union Territories.

- ▶ The surveillance on the **high seas** is carried out along the limits of EEZ (exclusive economic zone) by the **Navy** and the **Coast Guard**.
- ▶ In the **territorial waters**, the **Coast Guards** protect the Indian interests with vessels and through aerial surveillance.
- ▶ Close coastal patrolling is done by **State Marine Police**.

The State's jurisdiction extends **up to 12 nautical miles** in the shallow territorial waters.

11.4. Initiatives in Coastal Security Architecture

The mind-set that coastal security is not an essential component of national security eventually changed post 26/11 terrorist attacks in Mumbai on November 26, 2008.

Since 2008, coastal and maritime security has been strengthened substantially by successful implementation of technical, organisational and procedural initiatives, by all maritime security agencies. Plugging gaps, where identified, is **continuous process** that is being addressed appropriately. The Indian Navy has been the lead agency in this regard and is assisted in this task by the Indian Coast Guard, Marine Police and other Central and state agencies. Steps taken are:

- ▶ **Indian Maritime Security Strategy (IMSS) 2015 of Indian Navy:** It envisages greater coordination between different maritime agencies; securing Indian Ocean sea lines of communication (SLOCs); Maritime Security Operations for contemporary assessments of maritime terrorism, piracy etc.; multilateral maritime engagement, local capacity building, technical cooperation etc.
- ▶ **Coastal Security Scheme (CSS)** is being implemented to strengthen security infrastructure of Marine Police Force in coastal states/UTs. It aims to strengthen **Surveillance through Automatic Identification System (AIS) receivers** and a chain of overlapping coastal radars, for gapless cover along the entire coast.
- ▶ **Coordination-** At the apex level the **National Committee for Strengthening Maritime and Coastal Security (NCSMCS)**, headed by the Cabinet Secretary, coordinates all matters related to Maritime and Coastal Security. Inter-agency coordination, between nearly 15 national and state agencies has improved dramatically, only due to regular "exercises" conducted by the Navy in all the coastal states.
- ▶ **Joint Operations Centres (JOCs)-** are set up by the Navy as command and control hubs for coastal security at Mumbai, Visakhapatnam, Kochi and Port Blair are fully operational. These JOCs are manned 24×7 jointly by the Indian Navy, Indian Coast Guard and Marine Police.
- ▶ **Coastal Surveillance Network**, comprising of static sensors along coasts, automatic identification systems (AIS), long range tracking, day-night cameras and communication devices has been put in place. **Vessel Traffic Management System (VTMS) radars** are installed on all major & minor ports to facilitate surveillance.
- ▶ **Enhance Maritime Domain Awareness:** through National Command Control Communication and Intelligence Network (NC3I), an over-arching coastal security network which collates and disseminates data about all ships, dhows, fishing boats and all other vessels operating near our coast.

- **Activities in maritime zones are now more regulated:** (i) Multi-purpose ID issued to all fishermen, sea ferrying services and coastal villages (ii) Uniform licensing of fishing boats (iii) GPS and transponders for tracking.
- **Operation Sagar Kavach** was put in operation post 26/11 to improve coordination between security agencies including Indian Navy, Coast Guard and the local police.
- **Indian Ocean Naval Symposium** (IONS; 25 Members & 09 Observers) was conceived by Indian Navy in 2008. It is a voluntary initiative that seeks to increase maritime co-operation among navies of the littoral states of the Indian Ocean Region.
- The Indian navy also raised a specialised force called the **Sagar Prahari Bal** in 2009 for protecting its bases and adjacent vulnerable areas and vulnerable points.
- **Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR)**
 - It is a regional maritime security centre hosted by the Indian Navy, established in 2018 in Gurugram.
 - Objective: To enhance maritime domain awareness and share information on vessels of interest.
 - Region covered: Indian Ocean Region and adjoining Seas.
 - Significance: Enhancing global efforts to combat maritime security threats including Piracy & Armed Robbery, Contraband (illegal goods) Smuggling, IUU (Illegal Unregulated and Unreported) Fishing, etc.
 - Currently, the IFC-IOR has International Liaison Officers (ILO) from 12 partner nations.
 - » Australia, France, Italy, Japan, Mauritius, Myanmar, Seychelles, Singapore, Sri Lanka, United Kingdom, United States.
- **Training** – The Navy and Coast Guard have also provided periodic maritime training to marine police in all coastal states. In order to have a permanent police training facility, Marine Police training institutes in Tamil Nadu and Gujarat have been approved by the Government.
- Involving fishermen in surveillance & intelligence gathering: **Fishermen groups**, referred to as the ‘ears and eyes’ of coastal security, are created comprising of trained volunteers who monitor the seas and coastal waters.
- **Electronic Surveillance** to provide near gapless surveillance of the entire coastline as well as prevent the intrusion of undetected vessels under the **coastal surveillance network project**. The network comprises the Coastal Radar Chain, the Automatic Identification System (AIS), and VTMS.
- **Harbour Defense And Surveillance System** – Indian Navy has installed Integrated Underwater Harbour Defense and Surveillance (IUHDSS) at Mumbai and Vishakhapatnam naval harbour. Designed by Israeli Aerospace Industry called ELTA, it comprises of Coastal Surveillance Radars, High Power Underwater Sensors and Diver Detection Sonars.
 - It is capable of **detecting, identifying, tracking and generating warnings** for all types of surface and subsurface Threats to harbor security. This integrated system (already installed at Kochi and Visakhapatnam) will enhance the security of naval dockyard of Mumbai by providing the comprehensive real-time images for monitoring and analysis.



Anti-Maritime Piracy Act, 2022

- The Act defines piracy as “any illegal act of violence or detention or any act of depredation committed for private ends by any person or by the crew or any passenger of a private ship and directed on the high seas against another ship or any person or property on board such ship”.
- The Act will apply to high seas which includes EEZ and all waters beyond the jurisdiction of any other state
- The accused can be transferred to any country for prosecution with which India has signed an extradition treaty.
- Central Government, in consultation with the Chief Justice of the concerned High Court, will specify certain courts as Designated Courts for speedy trial of offences of piracy.
- Only authorized personnel are allowed to carry out arrest and seizure of the Pirate ships.
- Ship or property seized will be disposed of only by a Court order.

Significance of Anti-Piracy Act

- India being a signatory to the United Nations Convention on Laws of Seas (UNCLOS), is expected to cooperate in controlling the menace of Piracy all around the world.
- Growing menace of Piracy along the Gulf of Aden, which is the major gateway connecting Asia, Europe and East coast of Africa.
- India does not have a specific law or legal provision in Indian Penal Code or Criminal Procedure Code for piracy.
- Need to provide maritime security as more than 90 percent of India’s trade is through sea routes and more than 80% of our hydrocarbon requirement is ferried through sea route.

11.5. Way forward

Being a coastal nation, India has been witnessing a range of maritime activities taking place along its coasts and adjacent waters over the ages. However, activities such as the smuggling of precious metals and items, trafficking of arms and drugs and the infiltration of terrorists have adversely impacted the country’s economy as well as its security.

- The Coast Guard should be designated as the single authority responsible for coastal security.
- Strengthening of the Coast Guard (CG): The CG must be strengthened by removing all ambiguities from the Coast Guard Act. There should be a clear command chain and defined standard operating procedures with reference to coastal security.
- Stronger involvement of coastal police: State police agencies may be integrated in the detection and capture of criminals at sea leveraging their unique access to fishermen and local communities, facilitating the flow of vital human intelligence.
- The MHA should concentrate on the issue of training the marine police (developed under the coastal security scheme (CSS) in 2005-06) as its next step. It should set up specialised marine training institutes in the country, which will provide a comprehensive and uniform course in sea-faring, sea-policing, sea-navigation as well as laws and regulations pertaining to crimes at sea.
- The Indian navy should be eased out from coastal security responsibilities and allowed to concentrate on developing its blue water capabilities and defending the country during times of war.

12. Conclusion

The proper management of borders, which is vitally important for national security, presents many challenges and includes coordination and concerted action by administrative, diplomatic, security, intelligence, legal, regulatory and economic agencies of the country to secure the frontiers and sub serve its best interests.

On the lines of many developed countries, there is a need to adopt a **participative and multi-national integrated border management system** in India. People oriented measures (Involvement of Stakeholders) should be taken such as :

- **Community Participative Border Management, sensitive to the varied cultures.** This would require preventing alienation of border population. **Community policing and Village defence and development committees** would also go a long way in achieving secure borders.
- **Community development by Border Guarding Forces (BGF).** This would help earn the goodwill of people. For example, In 2004, as part of **Operation Sadbhavana**, projects were undertaken to electrify remote rural villages and hamlets with solar panels and windmills and provide job opportunities to the poor people of backward areas of Jammu and Kashmir.
- **Enhancement of border trade** with neighbouring countries for the benefit of the people. Flourishing border trade will promote peaceful borders in the long run.
- **Employment opportunities locally:** It will prevent the pull towards illegal activities like drug or arms trafficking.

The **Madhukar Gupta Committee** recommendations to strengthen border protection along Indo-Pakistan Border also need to be considered. It suggests measures such as replacing “linear security” by **“grid border protection”**; better coordination by BGF with local police and Intelligence generation.

The concept of **Village Volunteer Forces (VVF)** helping in border management has a great deal to commend itself and has worked with a good degree of success in areas where it has been tried so far. India should promote it further.



13. UPSC Mains Previous Years Questions

1. What are the maritime security challenges in India? Discuss the organisational, technical and procedural initiatives taken to improve the maritime security. (2022)
2. Analyze internal security threats and transborder crimes along Myanmar, Bangladesh and Pakistan borders including Line of Control (LoC). Also discuss the role played by various security forces in this regard. (2020)
3. Cross-border movement of insurgents is only one of the several security challenges facing the policing of the border in North-East India. Examine the various challenges currently emanating across the India-Myanmar border. Also discuss the steps to counter the challenges. (2019).
4. Border management is a complex task due to difficult terrain and hostile relations with some countries. Elucidate the challenges and strategies for effective border management. (2016)
5. How does illegal transborder migration pose a threat to India's security? Discuss the strategies to curb this, bring out the factors which give impetus to such migration. (2014)
6. How far are India's internal security challenges linked with border management, particularly in view of the long porous borders with most countries of South Asia and Myanmar? (2013)

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14. Vision IAS Mains Previous Years' Questions

1. Examine the implications of illegal migration on India's internal security. Discuss the measures currently in place to mitigate the associated security challenges.

Approach:

- Define illegal migrants and highlight the increasing trend of illegal migration in the recent years.
- Examine the implications of illegal migration on India's internal security.
- Discuss the legal measures in force to tackle this issue.
- Conclude accordingly.

Answer:

As per the Citizenship Act, 1955, an **illegal migrant** is a **foreigner who enters the country without valid travel documents**, or who enters with valid documents but **overstays the permitted time period**.

In the recent years, ethnic violence against Rohingyas in Myanmar, religious persecution of minorities in Pakistan and Afghanistan, and a porous border with Bangladesh have led to increasing concerns about the influx of illegal migration into India.

The entry of illegal migrants into India poses the following security threats:

- **Changing demographics:** Large-scale illegal migration risks altering the demographic balance, potentially leading to the **destabilization of a region**.
 - For example, the communal violence in Bodo areas of Assam and demand for Bodoland highlight the issue of changing demographics of the region due to illegal migrant influx.
- **Risk of radicalization and terrorism:** Social and economic marginalization of migrant communities can create a fertile ground for extremist ideologies to take root and be used for terrorist activities.
 - For example, suspected linkages of Rohingya migrants with Pakistan-based terror organisations such as Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed.
- **Smuggling and human trafficking:** Illegal migration has created hotspots in areas bordering Myanmar, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, leading to an increase in smuggling of arms and drugs, as well as increase in human trafficking.
 - For example, arms smuggling via Myanmar and Pakistan borders and trafficking of women from Nepal into India.
- **Proxy for external actors:** Illegal migrants can serve as conduits for information and support to hostile external groups.
 - For example, ISI's alleged use of illegal migrants in the Indian territory for operations in India.

Existing measures to tackle illegal migration are:

- **Border management and fencing:**
 - The government has launched the **Comprehensive Integrated Border Management System** to control cross border crimes like illegal infiltration, cross border terrorism, etc. Moreover, border fencing has been erected on the Indo-Pakistan border and Indo-Bangladesh border.
 - **Integrated check posts** have been constructed on India-Bangladesh, India-Nepal borders, etc. to check the influx of illegal migration and prevent human trafficking.

- **Legal framework:** The government has taken various legal measures to address the issue of illegal migrants. For example:
 - **The National Register of Citizens (NRC)** process initiated in Assam aims to identify and exclude illegal immigrants. It was updated in 2019 to identify illegal migrants.
 - **The Foreigners Act, 1946** enables the government to form tribunals with the authority to decide whether a person is a foreigner or not.
- **Intelligence sharing:** India collaborates with intelligence agencies from neighbouring countries to track and apprehend illegal migrants.
 - For example, **regular exchange of information between India's and Bangladesh's security agencies to track activities of extremist groups.**

Illegal migration significantly impacts India's internal security by posing threats to national security, law and order, and social stability. Addressing this issue requires a comprehensive approach that includes **strengthening border controls, enhancing surveillance, and implementing effective measures to regulate migration.**

2. What is the role played by the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) in safeguarding the maritime security of India?

Approach:

- Introduce by providing a brief account of the Indian Coast Guard (ICG).
- Highlight the role of ICG in safeguarding India's maritime security.
- Conclude appropriately.

Answer:

India is primarily a maritime nation with a long coastal boundary of 7516 km. Owing to its strategic location in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR), the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) was formally established under the **Coast Guard Act, 1978** with a mission of protecting offshore resources, assisting mariners in distress, enforcing maritime laws against poaching, smuggling, and narcotics, etc.

Role of ICG in safeguarding the maritime security of India

- **Maritime patrol and surveillance:** The ICG utilizes its extensive surveillance capabilities to monitor India's maritime borders. It employs advanced technologies like the **Coastal Surveillance Network (CSN)** and **Automatic Identification System** to detect and deter potential threats effectively.
 - For example, ICG was designated for **coastal security post-Mumbai attacks in 2008**, including the task of coordinating between central and state agencies. It implements CSN for effective surveillance and response.
- **Maritime law enforcement:** As a maritime law enforcement agency, the ICG actively combats criminal activities through interception and apprehension of offenders.
 - For example, ICG, in carrying out anti-smuggling and Narcotics control at sea, has **seized contraband worth Rs. 15343 crores** (including Rs 478 crores in 2023).
- **Cooperation with regional partners:** The ICG collaborates closely with regional Coast Guard agencies through joint exercises, patrols, and information-sharing mechanisms.
 - For example, India regularly conducts joint exercises with its neighbours to strengthen the **"SAGAR" and "Neighbourhood First" policies** of the Indian Government.
- **Enhance maritime domain awareness:** By closely monitoring vessel movements, the ICG enhances maritime domain awareness, enabling timely detection and deterrence of potential non-traditional security threats such as illegal fishing, piracy, and illicit trafficking.

- For example, the ICG **prevents illegal fishing** by foreign vessels within **India's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)**.
- **Ensures comprehensive security matrix:** The security matrix of ICG enables it to address coastal security, offshore security, anti-terrorism, anti-piracy and port security. The ICG also provides support to the Indian Navy to ensure the maritime security of the country.

Given the increasing significance of IOR and the need for a greater presence of India in this region, the importance of ICG has seen further enhancement. The government of India in this regard is making efforts to strengthen its capability and reach to make it a critical pillar of India's maritime security and economic development.

3. An unmanaged border accentuates threats from unconventional sources by providing easy points of ingress and egress. Discuss in the context of India's international border along the north eastern states.

Approach:

- Give a very brief account of vulnerability to North Eastern Region to unconventional threats.
- Second part should discuss in detail the border management in the NE region.

Answer:

The NE Region of India is vulnerable due to its

- peculiar geo-strategic location,
- hostile elements inhabiting the region, and
- porous borders with neighboring countries.

The porous nature of these borders, which pass through difficult terrain of forest, rivers and mountains, make the task of guarding all the more challenging.

The NE borders with our neighbors poses different challenge owing to varying nature of our relations. In an increasingly interconnected world it is the unconventional sources that present a greater threat. These threats are:

- **Militancy:** The presence of militant outfits in most of the North Eastern States and their ability to indulge in hit and run operations across borders is detrimental to both inter-state and intra-state relations.
- **Drug Trafficking:** Due to their proximity to the "Golden Triangle" (Drug haven in Southeast Asia) has led to growing incidence of substance abuse and drug trafficking in the NE states.
- **Smuggling:** While the issue of human, cattle smuggling and counterfeit currency in Indo-Bangladesh border is the main threat, it is illegal arms and narcotics that passes through porous Indo- Myanmar border and destabilize the whole region.
- **Illegal Migration and human trafficking:** Improperly managed borders have led to unhindered migration from neighboring countries, severely impacting the demography of the region. Further, there have been cases of human trafficking from across the border.

The Indian government started fencing of Bangladesh border from 1985 onwards to curb illegal migration. Simultaneously, efforts have been done in collaboration with the Myanmar government to conduct joint operation for destroying safe havens and militant training camps.

The Government has taken the following measures:

- **Increased cooperation with some neighbouring countries:** For example, “Operation All Clear” of 2003 by the Bhutanese Army flushed ULFA’s cadres out and India’s borders with Bhutan are more or less secure today. The Land Boundary Agreement with Bangladesh is another example.
- **Strengthening of the Department of Border Management:** The department has been entrusted with the task of fencing of the borders in NE region on priority. The Border Area Development Programme has been expanded to cover the border blocks of the 8 North Eastern states as well.
- **Setting up of Integrated Border Check Posts:** India and Bangladesh are in the process of setting up integrated check posts, along with the development of the regional economy. This is expected to reduce anti-India activities.

Challenges to effective border management

- Geographical reason – Difficult terrain, marshes, rivers, etc.
- Infrastructural gap in the eastern region
- Stability of relation with neighbors is affected by the change of regimes and/or stability with the adjoining states. For example: Bangladesh government changes, Junta rule in Myanmar have a prominent effect on our relationship and consequently effects border management also.
- Manpower and Funding.
- Land acquisition (in Meghalaya and Tripura) and environmental clearance (Mizoram) delays
- Lack of economically integrated with the rest of country.
- Border demarcation especially along China border.

Suggestions

- Flood light system along the fence. Floating fences across river streams.
- There is a need to settle friendly population along the fencing as a second line of defence.
- Friendly relations with neighboring countries, as far as sound border management is concerned, have to be vigorously pursued.

Since India’s international borders in the North East present an interesting mix of both friendly and unfriendly neighbours, a far greater effort needs to be put into the entire strategy of border management. While India’s North East stands to gain from a cooperative framework in the region, important issues of security and development can only be addressed through effective border management.

4. Discuss the security threats present in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR), which have a direct bearing on India’s maritime border interests. Suggest a robust strategy to deal with these threats.

Approach:

- Write about the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) in introduction.
- Discuss the maritime security concerns that India faces in the IOR.
- Write about persistent efforts and a robust strategy needed to address the concerns.
- Conclude accordingly.

Answer:

The Indian Ocean Region (IOR) extends from the eastern coast of Africa to the western coast of Australia, and accounts for one-fifth of the water on Earth’s surface. India has a long coastline of more than 7500

km in the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea and sits at the head of the Indian Ocean. Indian Ocean Region is of prime importance for India but it is replete with security concerns as given below:

- ▶ **Choke Points:** Transit routes in the region are connected through important choke points, such as the Straits of Malacca, Straits of Hormuz, Bab el Mandeb, etc. and they raise concern as they increase the vulnerability of supply chain disruption.
- ▶ **Maritime Piracy:** The concentration of piracy activity around major maritime passages such as the Straits of Hormuz and the Gulf of Aden illustrates the risks associated with geographically constrained transit points in terms of blockades and hijacking of ships, thus posing security threats to international trade.
- ▶ **Drug Trafficking:** The Indian Ocean Region is in near proximity to areas of drug production, the Golden Crescent and the Golden Triangle, which makes it susceptible to illicit activities like drug trafficking.
- ▶ **Illegal criminal activities:** Criminal activity, such as illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUUF), trafficking in persons, smuggling of migrants etc. often takes place in the Indian Ocean Region, thus raising security concerns for India.
- ▶ **Growing Chinese Presence:** The expanding Chinese Navy through its Maritime Silk Road has acquired many ports, naval bases such as Djibouti; Gwadar etc. which reflects the growing military ambitions of China in the otherwise peaceful Indian Ocean region.

In order to address these security concerns, which have direct bearing on India's maritime border interests, persistent efforts and a robust strategy is required as given below:

- ▶ **Bolster regional maritime security framework:** India can work towards strengthening the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), and creating inherent linkages with Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) to ensure effective implementation of actions for strengthening maritime security.
- ▶ **Foster strategic relations at choke points:** It is important to build strategic relationships with littoral nations in such regions to address India's Maritime Security concerns and ensure unhindered and unimpeded flow of Indian trade and shipping for continued economic progress.
- ▶ **Intelligence Sharing:** Mechanisms and protocols for exchange of tactically important information and intelligence need to be put in place for interdiction and prosecution of vessels and persons engaged in illegal activities.
- ▶ **Coordinated Patrols and maritime exchanges:** In the absence of regional or sub-regional security architecture, bilateral and multilateral exchanges like the MILAN series of exercises, in all spheres of the maritime security domain between concerned agencies of various littoral nations of IOR can be promoted.
- ▶ **Anti-Piracy efforts:** India needs to take the lead in establishing a sub-regional mechanism for the North-Eastern IOR with the participation of Bangladesh and Myanmar to curb piracy.

India being the largest nation in the IOR has the responsibility to drive the security apparatus in the region tempered with the current geopolitical realities and the aspirations of the other states. In this regard, India has taken key steps such as **Security and Growth for all in the Region (SAGAR)**, **Information Fusion Centre for Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR)** etc. which plays a vital role in enhancing regional collaboration for addressing the maritime security challenges.

5. Why is ensuring maritime security considered the key to safeguarding India's strategic and economic well-being? What is the significance of the Maritime Anti-Piracy Act in this regard?

Approach:

- ▶ Discuss the importance of maritime security for India.

- Highlight the significance of the Maritime Anti-Piracy Act in this context.
- Conclude accordingly.

Answer:

India has a coastline of over 7500 km, which makes maritime security an important aspect of national security. **Ensuring maritime security is the key to safeguarding India's strategic and economic well-being due to the following reasons:**

- **Maintaining balance of power:** The unchallenged rise of authoritarian China casts a serious shadow on security dynamics of India and in this context, maritime power plays a vital role in ensuring geo-political stability and progression of geo-economics.
- **Safeguarding strategic choke points:** Ensuring maritime security is necessary to secure sea lines of communications, to secure choke points, thus leading to freedom of navigation and resolving conflicts peacefully.
- **Trade and energy security:** Ensuring maritime security is necessary, as more than 90 percent of India's trade and more than 80 percent of hydrocarbon requirement is ferried through sea routes.
- **Ensuring zone of peace:** India's vast coastline presents numerous security challenges like piracy, illegal landing of arms and explosives, infiltration, drug and human trafficking and smuggling. Ensuring maritime security is vital to address these challenges and ensure peace in the region.
- **Ensuring sustainable use of resources:** Maritime security is necessary to protect the resource wealth of the ocean and ensure its use in a sustainable manner.

In this context, The **Maritime Anti-Piracy Act, 2022, which received the President's assent in 2023** is a key step and has the following **significance:**

- **Maritime security:** The Act seeks to enhance the existing maritime security operations in the Indian Ocean region. It will help tackle the growing menace of piracy along the Gulf of Aden, which is the major gateway connecting Asia, Europe and East coast of Africa.
- **Compliance with UNCLOS:** It is believed that the Act will strengthen international cooperation and regional partnerships to combat piracy in the region, ensuring proper compliance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).
- **Specific law:** This Act represents India's first piece of domestic legislation specifically written to criminalise maritime piracy on the high seas and allows Indian authorities to respond.
- **Wide coverage:** It applies to the high seas, which under the Act includes the Exclusive Economic Zone and all waters beyond the jurisdiction of any other State.
- **Provision of punishment:** Committing an act of piracy is punishable with life imprisonment; or death, if the act of piracy causes or seeks to cause death, thus providing provision of stringent punishment under the law.

Ensuring maritime security is a key to safeguard India's overall security, as having a piracy-free Indian Ocean region is essential for the growth of maritime trade in the region and this will help India establish its regional supremacy.

6. India needs a smart border management system to balance legitimate cross border flows with national security interests. Discuss. Also, highlight the initiatives taken by the government in this regard.

Approach:

- Briefly define smart border management for India.

- Mention the need for a robust smart border management system.
- Highlight the steps taken by the government in this regard.
- Conclude with a way forward.

Answer:

Smart border management calls for a **balanced use of humans and technology** to **facilitate the movement of people and goods across borders, while controlling and preventing malicious acts such as infiltration, cross-border terrorism, illegal immigration and smuggling**. It entails a **coordinated and focused approach** by the country's leadership, bureaucracy, security forces and economic agencies of the nation.

Need for a smart border management system in India:

- **Long borders:** India has a long land and coastal borders of approximately 15000 Km and 7500 km respectively. Thus, managing the border in itself is a very complex task.
- **Unsettled boundaries:** The conflicts with China (Aksai Chin); Nepal (Kalapani dispute), etc. indicate the need for a robust and smart border management.
- **Difficult and diverse terrain:** Indian borders run through plains, hills and mountains, deserts, riverine territories and marshes, which make manual supervision and surveillance a tedious task.
- **Poor connectivity to hinterland:** This creates a major challenge, especially in case of standoff as seen in the recent past. It becomes very difficult to ensure the supply of important articles to remote border areas due to absence of infrastructure.
- **Illegal migration:** Several of India's neighbours are undergoing political and economic instability, which has increased the inflow of migrants. This leads to an altered demographic ratio and communal tensions within the society.
- **Crimes and syndicates:** There is rampant smuggling of contrabands, arms and ammunition drugs etc. in the border areas.

Countries in India's neighbourhood share a common history with it. There is a socio-cultural connection between the people of India and many of these countries. Thus, smart border management will ensure proper security while enhancing the cross-border movement of not only people but also of goods and services. In this regard, the government has undertaken following initiatives:

- **Comprehensive Integrated Border Management system (CIBMS)** has been employed.
 - It is a five-layer security system with the objective of implementing the **D4R2 (deter, detect, discriminate, delay, response, recover)** principle on the border.
 - The CIBMS uses low-light CCTV cameras, thermal imaging, night-vision devices (NVDs), surveillance radars, laser beams and underground monitoring sensors to detect infiltration via land, underwater, air and tunnels.
 - It includes the **integration of manpower, sensors, networks, intelligence** and command & control solutions to improve situational awareness at different levels of the hierarchy in the border guarding forces to facilitate prompt and informed decision making and quick response to emerging situations.
- **Perimeter Intrusion Detection System (PIDS)** comprising multiple types of sensors and/or Long-Range Reconnaissance and Observation Systems (LORROs) have been installed or are in the process of deployment in strategically crucial regions. These have proven to be effective in the detection, identification, classification and recognition of intruders or other threats.

- The Department of Border Management (DoBM) is implementing the **Coastal Security Scheme (CSS)** in phases with the objective of strengthening the infrastructure and capabilities of Coastal Police for the patrol and surveillance of coastal areas, particularly shallow areas close to the coast.
- To address the issue of poor connectivity of the border areas, the government has undertaken **phase-wise construction of road links** along the border with the involvement of BRO, CPWD, PWD, etc.

The Government has taken necessary steps in this direction, yet there is a need to ensure that all the stakeholders work in close coordination with each other. Any lapse in border management can lead to major security issues as found out during the Mumbai attacks of 2008.

7. India's border with Bangladesh is particularly notorious for its porosity which has led to illegal migration. Comment. Also discuss the challenges in identifying illegal immigrants in the region and deporting them. Critically analyse the feasibility of sealing the border with Bangladesh to solve this problem.

Approach:

- Introduce with illegal migration from Bangladesh and consequently emerging problems.
- Discuss the challenges in identifying illegal immigrants in the region and deporting them.
- Critically analyse feasibility of sealing the border with Bangladesh to solve this problem.
- Conclude suitably.

Answer:

Migration from Bangladesh to bordering Indian states is not a new problem and is in continuation since independence. This issue had been raised by these state governments but nothing much could be done to solve the accompanying problems which surfaced up with time which are:

- Changing demography of the region.
- Burden on scarce resource present in the region.
- Illegal trade which is being carried out by these migrants.
- Social problems arising due to different ethnicity, religions etc. of the migrants.

This issue is not heading towards an end because of following problems in identification of these migrants such as:

- These migrants speak the same language and share same ethnicity which makes it hard to identify them.
- They have acquired documents like Ration Card and have become regular beneficiary of these services which is another problem.
- These migrants do not live in the same area for longer and keep on roaming and today they are present from Kashmir to Kanyakumari.
- Political sensitivity of the matter does not allow the government to take tough steps and they are seen as vote bank.

According to the Assam Accord of 1985, illegal migrants who had entered Assam from Bangladesh after March 25, 1971, were to be detected and deported. The issues w.r.t. deportation are:

- Bangladesh may not accept illegal migrants as its citizen.
- Even if they are deported, porous border allows them to re-enter India again.

- Some of the states see them as their vote bank and are not ready to deport them at all.
- Lack of any mutual agreement between governments and lack in India's persuasive power is another reason.
- People have families living on both sides of the border and they visit BORDER HAATs hence deporting them is a challenge.

Since it is known attempts after attempts to solve this issue are ending up in failure, sealing the border and maintaining strict vigil along the border may offer a feasible solution.

However, at places, India has a riverine border with Bangladesh with the river Brahmaputra shifting its course very often. This makes border fencing a challenge. Secondly the area is densely populated and people on both sides live in close proximity to the border. Thus physical barrier may be easily destroyed by humans or due to riverine action.. Digital fencing through laser beams, Night vision cameras etc. offer an alternative. At the same time it is important that talks must go on from both sides to solve the issue in the long run. Efficient verification mechanism within a proper legal framework is also required, not only to stop illegal immigration, but also to promote greater regional integration.

However, fencing should be seen as a short term measure and should pave way for greater connectivity and development of collaborative infrastructure like border roads and Haats along the border areas. This will not only improve ties with Bangladesh, but will offer greater trade and employment opportunities for N-E and Bangladeshi population.

8. Enumerate the problems faced by the Indian security forces in securing our border with Pakistan. Is complete sealing of the India-Pakistan border the solution to these problems? Comment in light of the recommendations of the Madhukar Gupta Committee.

Approach:

- Describe the challenges that India has faced on its western frontier.
- Go into the merits and demerits of the idea of sealing borders with walls or fences. One may take examples of borders of other countries.
- Bolster your argument with the recommendation of the committee.

Answer:

India's border with Pakistan is nearly 3323 km long from Gujarat to Jammu & Kashmir, the characteristics of which create the following challenges in border management:

➤ **Challenges from across the border:**

- Recurrent ceasefire violations by the Pakistani forces.
- Numerous infiltration attempts by terrorists from across the border.
- Illegal activities such as drug trade and smuggling.

➤ **Physical challenges:**

- Gaps in existing fence caused by snowfall, torrential rains and overflowing rivers and shifting sand dunes.
- Varying geography of the border from high snowy mountains of Himalayas to scorching desert of Thar.

➤ **Challenges of legal basis of border management:**

- The **India Pakistan Ground Rules**, 1960-61 for the management of the International Border remains unsigned by the two sides.

- The **Ceasefire Agreement** of 2003 remains unwritten and informal.
- Adding to the wow of multiplicity of agreements is the **Karachi Agreement** over which the two governments continue to have differences.

➤ **Challenges of the Border Guarding Forces:**

- The personnel are inadequate in numbers, which leads to hardships and low morale consequently.

After the report submitted by Committee on Security and Border Protection (Madhukar Gupta Committee), the Union Minister of Home Affairs announced the complete fencing of the Indo-Pak border by 2018. This will include a border security grid with a provision for real-time monitoring of the entire length of the border and capability for intervention.

While the step will help tackle many of the challenges mentioned above, there are other issues which cannot be addressed in this manner, such as

- The legal basis of border management and issues within the Border Guarding Forces remains to be addressed.
- Given the length of the border, the terrain conditions and socio-economic milieu in the border regions as well as the engineering efforts involved would make the border sealing exercise a stupendous task.
- In particular areas, such as the marshes of the Rann of Kutchh, fencing will not be possible.
- The sealing of the border will impact of trade and intercourse in the border areas.
- Heavy snows especially in north Kashmir destroy fences annually because of avalanches.
- Pakistan employs heavy cross-border firing to assist the infiltration and terrorists uses explosives to make gaps in the fencing or dig holes under the fence.
- Use of radars, as done along US – Mexico border to detect smugglers, has the danger of giving away the electronic signatures of the equipment to enemy.

Certainly, sealing of the border with fences is not the complete solution; it needs to be augmented with various technologies such as CCTV cameras, thermal image and night-vision devices, battlefield surveillance radar, UAVs, underground monitoring sensors and laser barriers. In this context, the Comprehensive Integrated Border Management System (CIBMS), as 5 layered surveillance system, must be expedited throughout the border length.

We need smart border management where vulnerabilities are tackled in a comprehensive manner by resolving all legal challenges, utilising state-of-art technologies, and deploying adequately trained man power with high morale.

9. Although open borders facilitate cultural continuity and greater interaction, their security implications cannot be undermined. Discuss the statement in context of India's open border policy with Nepal and Bhutan.

Approach:

- Give a brief overview of India's open border policies with Bhutan and Nepal
- Briefly state the positive outcomes of the open border policies
- State its implications on India's security
- Suggest way forward.

Answer:

Treaty of Peace and Friendship, 1950 facilitates free movement of people and goods between India and Nepal. Similarly, the India- Bhutan Friendship Treaty, 2007 has similar provisions. It is not mandatory for Indian citizens to have a visa to cross borders and vice-versa for the nationals of Nepal and Bhutan. Despite the presence of boundary demarcating pillars along the 699-km long Indo-Bhutan border and the 1,751km-long Indo-Nepal border, the border remains unfenced.

Benefits

- ▶ Enhanced cultural connectivity and tourism.
- ▶ Promotion of close ties between communities and border trade, thus promoting mutual gain.
- ▶ Efficient use of human capital: in Sikkim, Nepalese manpower has contributed significantly to the economic development of the area by providing seasonal agricultural labour.
- ▶ Strengthens diplomatic ties and helps India extend its soft power as Nepal and Bhutan are landlocked countries with small market and fewer economic opportunities.

Concerns

- ▶ Increased instances of human trafficking, smuggling of contraband goods, fake Indian currencies, arms and drugs.
- ▶ Guarding the open, porous international borders poses a challenge to the security forces. An open border allows easy egress to terrorists and insurgents. In the late 1980s, terrorist elements involved in Punjab and Kashmir sneaked into India via Nepal.
- ▶ Many insurgent groups from the North East, such as the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA), the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB), and the Kamtapur Liberation Organization (KLO), also misused the open border.
- ▶ Apart from insurgents and terrorists, many criminals pursued by Indian and Nepalese security forces escape across the open border.
- ▶ Inexpensive products made in China and elsewhere being supplied through this border.
- ▶ While all entry and exit points allow citizens of Nepal and Bhutan to enter India freely, there is no system to verify citizenship or registration of the people or vehicles entering through international entry points.

Measures such as identity check of people and vehicles crossing the borders and increased coordination with security forces of Bhutan and Nepal should be taken to address the emerging issues. Similarly, empowering and modernizing the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) guarding these borders is the need of the hour. Any decision about a change in the border administration should take into account the imperatives of Globalization and the interests of people on both side of the border.

10. Highlighting the role of space technology in border management, enumerate the steps taken so far in this regard.

Approach:

- ▶ Giving a brief scenario of difficulty in border management, discuss the role of space technology in border management in context of India.
- ▶ Enumerate the steps that have been taken in this regard.
- ▶ Highlight the various challenges associated with them.

- Conclude on the basis of the above points.

Answer:

India shares 15,200 km long land frontier with its surrounding countries, some of them being hostile neighbours like Pakistan and China. So, sealing the entire border becomes a major imperative. But variations in the terrain and topography are a huge challenge in achieving this task. So, utilising space technology is often touted as an effective way to overcome this challenge.

Role of space technology in border management:

- **Timely Information:** The information received through various satellites is used by various agencies including the security establishment. For instance, weather satellites can provide timely information about topographic features and weather conditions, which are critical to military and para-military operations.
- **Intelligence inputs and Surveillance:** Remote sensing satellites, radar satellites and satellites with synthetic aperture radar (SAR) sensors are capable of providing day and night all-terrain and all-weather inputs. Earth observation satellites provide detailed images of hot spots where border crossings peak. India uses the RISAT and Cartosat spacecraft to capture still images as well as high-resolution video of the nation's disputed borders.
- **Checking infiltration:** Deployment of Medium Altitude Long Endurance and High Altitude Long Endurance Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), along with use of low orbit surveillance satellites can check infiltration and improve India's surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities
- **Coordination between agencies:** Border forces depend on intelligence shared by central agencies like IB, RAW and National Technical Research Organisation. They also face poor communication issues in areas like Ladakh, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh and Kashmir Valley. With satellite technology border security authorities can exchange information or access critical data from headquarters, border checkpoints or on the-move border patrol units.

Steps taken in this regard:

- A Space and Tech cell, within Home Ministry's Border Management Division is planned to be set-up to improve border management and help in operations.
- Navigation for use in border management by Indian Armed Forces is planned to be governed by indigenously developed NAVIC (IRNSS), reducing dependence on GPS.
- Communication: India has developed various satellites for communication purposes in military sphere, such as:
 - **GSAT-7 or INSAT-4F**, a multi-band military communications satellite developed by ISRO will enable Indian Navy to extend its blue water capabilities and stop relying on foreign satellites communication systems like Inmarsat.
 - **GSAT-7A**, which will augment Indian Air Force's existing satellite based communication capabilities.
- Satellite imagery for border management: The defense forces require specific scene-spot imagery according to the military's area of interest to help them track developments along India's land borders. The Cartosat series is made for this purpose itself. Similarly, Geo-Imaging Satellite (GISAT) will provide live, real-time images of large areas of India.

Also, **report of Task Force** created by Ministry of Home Affairs identifies areas of use of space technology in improving border management. Further such interventions should also address challenges like lack of effective deployment of manpower and non-timely execution of projects. Also, steps should be taken encourage private sector as well. Knowledge exchange and experience sharing with other countries should be stepped up as well

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