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1. NIRF Rankings 2020

- Universities in Ancient India
- Why don't Indian universities figure in Top World Rankings?

The National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF)

- The National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) was launched by the MHRD on 29th September 2015.
- This framework outlines a methodology to rank institutions across the country.
- The methodology draws from the overall recommendations arrived at by a Core Committee set up by MHRD, to identify the broad parameters for ranking various universities and institutions.
- The parameters broadly cover “Teaching, Learning and Resources,” “Research and Professional Practices,” “Graduation Outcomes,” “Outreach and Inclusivity,” and “Perception”.

Important Facts:

- Open Universities and Affiliating Universities (whether State or Centre approved/funded) will not normally be registered for ranking.
- However, if these universities have a teaching or research campus of their own, they are welcome to participate with data pertaining only to their physical campuses.
- E.g Delhi University and Panjab University

The Parameters

Parameter	Marks	Weightage
Teaching, Learning & Resources	100	30
Research and Professional Practice	100	30
Graduation Outcomes	100	20
Outreach and Inclusivity	100	10
Perception	100	10

Overall Parameters

- Teaching, Learning & Resources (TLR)
 - ✓ Student Strength including Doctoral Students (SS)
 - ✓ Faculty-student ratio with emphasis on permanent faculty (FSR)
- Research and Professional Practice (RP)
 - ✓ Combined metric for Publications (PU)
 - ✓ Combined metric for Quality of Publications (QP)

- ✓ IPR and Patents: Published and Granted (IPR)
- Graduation Outcomes (GO)
 - ✓ Metric for Number of Ph.D. Students Graduated (GPHD)
- Outreach and Inclusivity (OI)
 - ✓ Percentage of Students from Other States/Countries (Region Diversity RD)
 - ✓ Percentage of Women (Women Diversity WD)
 - ✓ Economically and Socially Challenged Students (ESCS)
 - ✓ Facilities for Physically Challenged Students (PCS)
- Peer Perception
 - ✓ Academic Peers and Employers (PR)

Top Rankers – Overall

Name of Institute	Rank No.
Indian Institute of Technology Madras	1
Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru	2
Indian Institute of Technology Delhi	3
Indian Institute of Technology Bombay	4
Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur	5

Top Rankers

<p style="text-align: center;">Universities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indian Institute of Science • Jawaharlal Nehru University • Banaras Hindu University <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham • Jadavpur University 	<p style="text-align: center;">Engineering</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indian Institute of Technology Madras 	<p style="text-align: center;">Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad 	<p style="text-align: center;">Pharmacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jamia Hamdard
	<p style="text-align: center;">College</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Miranda House • Lady Shri Ram 	<p style="text-align: center;">Medical</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AIIMS 	<p style="text-align: center;">Law</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NLSIU Bangalore

India's Global Standing

QS Top University Ranking 2020

- Indian Institute of Technology (Bombay) – 152
- Indian Institute of Technology (Delhi) – 182
- Indian Institute of Science – 184
- Indian Institute of Technology (Madras) – 271
- Indian Institute of Technology (Kharagpur) – 281

- Indian Institute of Technology (Kanpur) – 291
- University of Delhi – 474
- Indian Institute of Technology (Guwahati) – 491
- The QS World University Rankings measures institutes on 6 factors reputation, faculty/student ratio, citations per faculty, employer reputation, international faculty ratio, and student ratio.

Why no Indian University in Top Universities?

- International Faculty and International Students as factors
- In the University of Oxford, the top university, 38% population is of Indian students. On the contrary, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore has only 1% population of International students.
- Research Volume and Citations as other factor
- Most of the premier institutes in our country cater to one particular stream such as engineering or management etc. which evidently reduces the volume and variety of research.
- Since the intake of students and corresponding faculty is also smaller in comparison to the top ranking universities of the world, the number of research citations is comparatively less too.

India's Educational Heritage

Nalanda University

- Nalanda was an ancient Mahavihara, which also served as a renowned centre of learning, in the Rajgriha, capital of ancient kingdom of Magadha.
- Nalanda's datable history begins with Guptas and is attributed to monarch named Shakraditya.
- Both the Chinese pilgrim Xuanzang and a Korean pilgrim named Prajnyavarman attribute the foundation of the sangharama at the site to the 5th-century CE Gupta emperor, Kumaragupta I.

Taxila University

- By some accounts, the University of Ancient Taxila was considered to be one of the earliest universities in the world.
- The university was at the city of Taxila, then capital of the Achaemenid territories in northwestern ancient Indian subcontinent following the Achaemenid conquest of the Indus Valley around 515 BCE.
- The renowned University of Taxila became the greatest learning centre in the region and is associated with a number of personalities:
 - ✓ Charaka, the Indian "father of medicine" and one of the leading authorities in Ayurveda.
 - ✓ The great 5th century BCE grammarian Pāṇini
 - ✓ Kautilya, the influential Prime Minister of the founder of the Mauryan Empire, Chandragupta Maurya

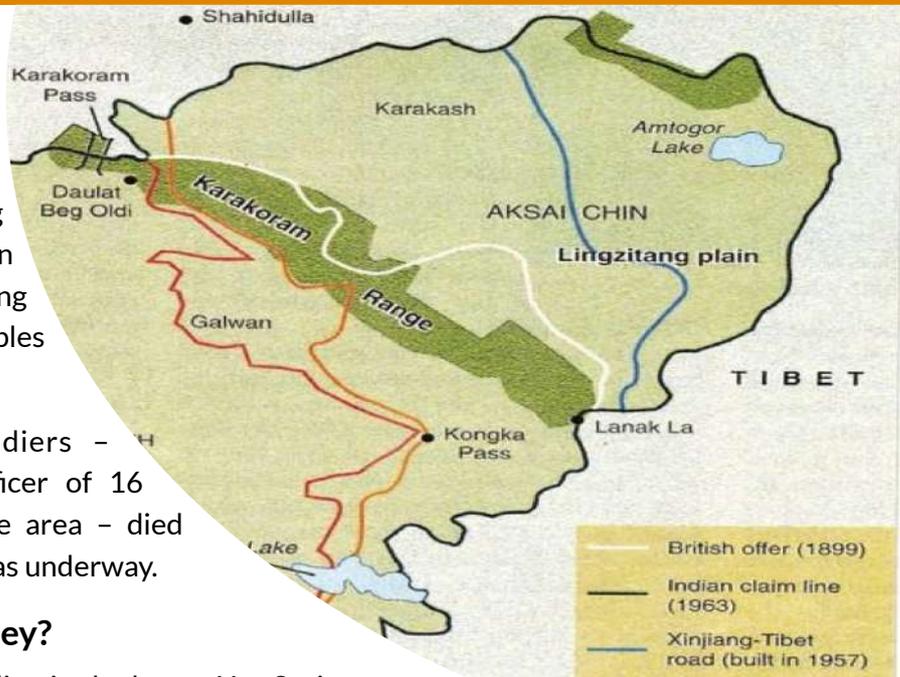
Vikramashila

- Vikramashila was one of the two most important centres of learning in India during the Pala Empire, along with Nalanda. Its location is now the site of Antichak village, Bhagalpur district in Bihar.
- It was established by the Pala emperor Dharmapala (783 to 820 CE) in response to a supposed decline in the quality of scholarship at Nalanda.
- It prospered for about four centuries before it was destroyed by Bakhtiyar Khilji along with the other major centres of Buddhism in India around 1193.
- Vikramashila is known to us mainly through Tibetan sources, especially the writings of Tāranātha, the Tibetan monk historian of the 16th–17th centuries. Vikramaśīla was a centre for Vajrayana and employed Tantric preceptors.

2. Galwan Valley: Chinese Brinkmanship and the Great Game

Violence in Galwan Valley:

- Tensions on the China border have spiked to the highest since 1962 after over 20 troops, including an Indian commanding officer, were killed at the Galwan valley that has seen a six-week long standoff underway with the Peoples Liberation Army.
- The Army said that the soldiers – including the Commanding Officer of 16 Bihar regiment in charge of the area – died while a 'de-escalation process' was underway.



What happened at Galwan Valley?

- In May, crossed the Indian claim line in the larger Hot Spring area by about 3 km. The transgressions have taken place near Patrol Point 15 and Patrol Point 17, also known as the Gogra post. After five rounds of military dialogue, India hailed the results as de-escalation coupled with disengagement from points of intrusion – patrolling points 14, 15 and 17 in GRV; North Bank Pangong; and Chushul. The Chinese maintained a studied silence on troop relocation, except to say both sides are taking action to ease tensions.
- General Ashok Mehta writes that occupants of intrusion can disengage, deinduct, withdraw or pull back till the intrusion is vacated in its entirety, beyond the LAC. De-escalation defines reduction in tension. The disengagement described by General Naravane refers to troops and military material thinning out without vacating the intrusion.
- During the de-escalation process underway in the Galwan Valley, a violent face-off took place night of 15th June 2020 with casualties. Initially, the army said one officer (Col. Santosh Babu) and two soldiers (Havalgars K. Palani and Sunil Kumar) were killed.

- Later in the night, an army statement said 17 more soldiers who "were were critically injured in the line of duty at the stand off location and exposed to sub-zero temperatures in the high altitude terrain have succumbed to their injuries, taking the total that were killed in action to 20.

Strategic History of Galwan Valley

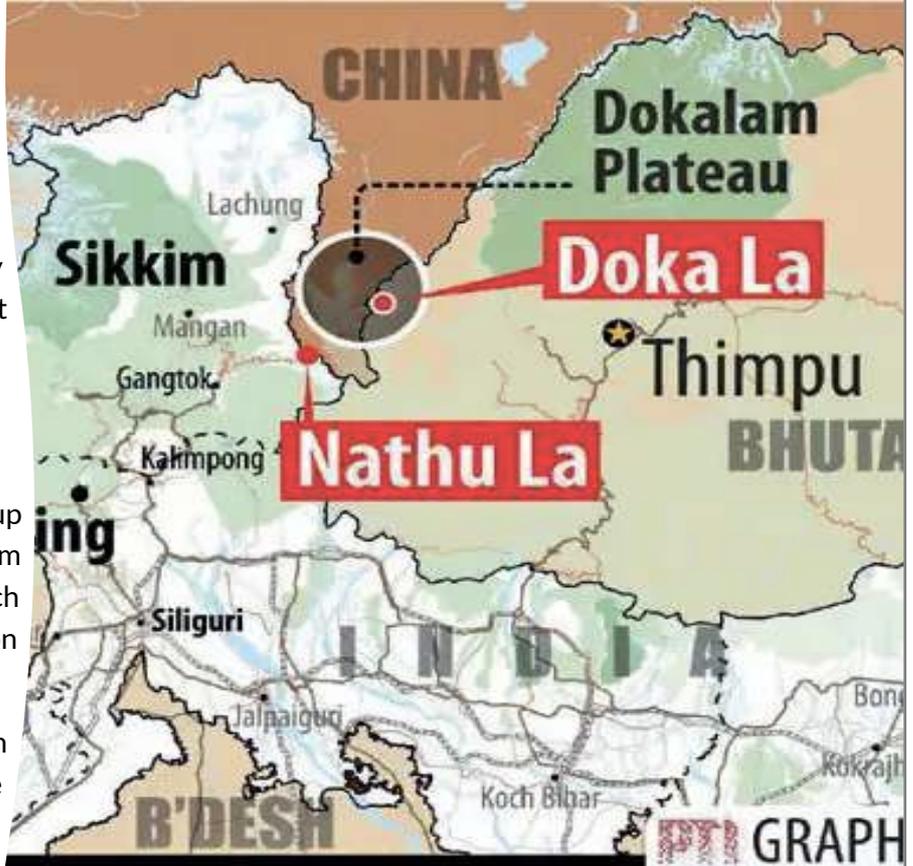
- The most important thing that stands out about the Galwan sector is that for the first time since 1962, there has been tension in this particular area. And that too when the LAC here is clearly defined and accepted by both India and China.
- One of the main triggers for the 1962 war was the construction of a road between Xinjiang and Tibet. This highway today is known as G219, and about 179 km of this road passes through Aksai Chin, which is Indian territory. After having constructed the road without taking Indian consent, the Chinese went about claiming this area as theirs.
- The main reason for the standoff in this region was India's construction of a road to Daulat Beg Oldie (DBO) in the Galwan Valley along the LAC. The Durbuk-Shyok-DBO road was under construction for more than 15 years and China didn't raise any objections.



- The 255 km road runs almost parallel- at places very close- to the LAC and extends up to the base of the Karakoram pass, which when complete, will reduce the travel time from Leh to DBO from the present two days to just six hours and blocks PLA from moving west towards areas between Chushul and DBO..
- The Galwan valley connects with Shyok on the road under construction and lies between DBO and Chushul to the south near Pangon Tso, another hot spot, providing convenient access to Shyok and the areas beyond. Control of the ridgeline along the valley also allows domination of the road. Looking eastwards, control of the Galwan valley gives access to the Aksai Chin plateau, through which part of the Xinjiang-Tibet highway passes.
- The river is known as ghulam rasool Galwan, a Ladakhi explorer from Leh, who first explored the course of the river. In 1899, he was part of a British expedition team that was exploring the areas to the north of the Chang Chenmo valley, when he is said to have run into this previously unknown river valley.
- The Galwan river is to the west of China's 1956 claim line in Aksai Chin. However, in 1960 China advanced its claim line to the west of the river along the mountain ridge adjoining the Shyok river valley. India had established some military posts in this sector.



- During the 1962 Sino-Indian conflict, Indian posts in the Galwan Sector were attacked and overwhelmed by the Chinese, resulting in casualties and some prisoners-of-war. After the war, this sector largely remained dormant till the recent face-offs.



Cartographic Imperialism by China in Recent Times

- In 2002, during the Expert Group meetings, China showed a claim line in the western sector which was different from what existed on the ground since 1962.
- Again in 2007, China’s perception of the border in Depsang in the Ladakh sector, in Sikkim, and in many other places appeared to change.
- In 2017, China wanted to unilaterally change the boundary and the trijunction with Bhutan and India, which sparked the Doklam standoff.
- A surge in defence infra along the LAC since 2006 especially on the Chinese side.

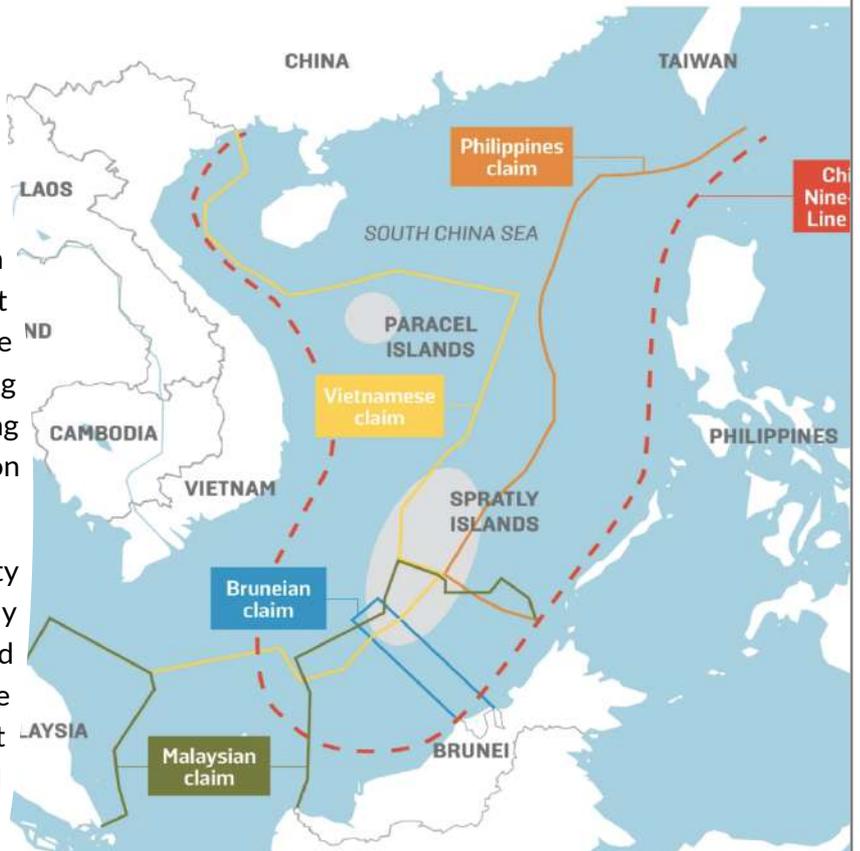
Figure 1: The Game of Chicken

		Driver 2	
		Swerve	Straight
Driver 1	Swerve	Tie, Tie	Lose, Win
	Straight	Win, Lose	Crash, Crash

Is this Chinese Chicken Game/Brinkmanship?

- “Cold war politics have been likened, by Bertrand Russell and others to the game of “chicken.” As China aims to be a world super power from a regional one, its rise has been accompanied by increased geo-political chicken games on its Eastern frontier as well as in the South China Sea.
- Brinkmanship is the ostensible escalation of threats to achieve one's aims. The word was probably coined by Adlai Stevenson in his criticism of the philosophy described as "going to the brink" in an interview with Secretary of State John Foster Dulles under the Eisenhower administration, during the Cold War.
- Throughout the coronavirus pandemic, China has been quietly taking paramilitary and political-legal actions in the South China Sea that could be game-changing for the region.
- Beijing seeks to impose its so-called nine-dash line, an unrecognized boundary it has drawn around 85 percent of the South China Sea, almost all of it in international waters, and through which \$3.4 trillion in shipped goods pass each year—freely, at least for now.

- The current intensification of tension between China and India can be another example of Chinese brinkmanship. Prof. Mohammed Ayooob argues in this context that external adventurism, when cloaked in the garb of ultra-nationalism, can shore up a regime's legitimacy at home, especially when faced with the Covid 19 pandemic, dropping economic growth and protests in Hong Kong against law allowing extradition to mainland.
- This is a sign that the Communist Party of China (CPC) feels increasingly threatened both domestically and externally. China's relations with the U.S. have been going downhill almost since the beginning of the Donald Trump presidency. Washington has periodically imposed economic sanctions on China and has significantly increased support to Taiwan with arms sales.
- This is being viewed as part of a broader Chinese strategy to create its own version of the Monroe Doctrine, the 19th-century policy by which the United States claimed all of North and South America as its rightful area of control at the exclusion of the European powers. Beijing seeks a sphere of decisive influence on both its eastern and western frontiers.
- The India-China face-off in Ladakh could become part of a much larger "great game", with the U.S. trying to preserve the status quo and China attempting to change it to further its objective of regional dominance at the U.S.'s expense.



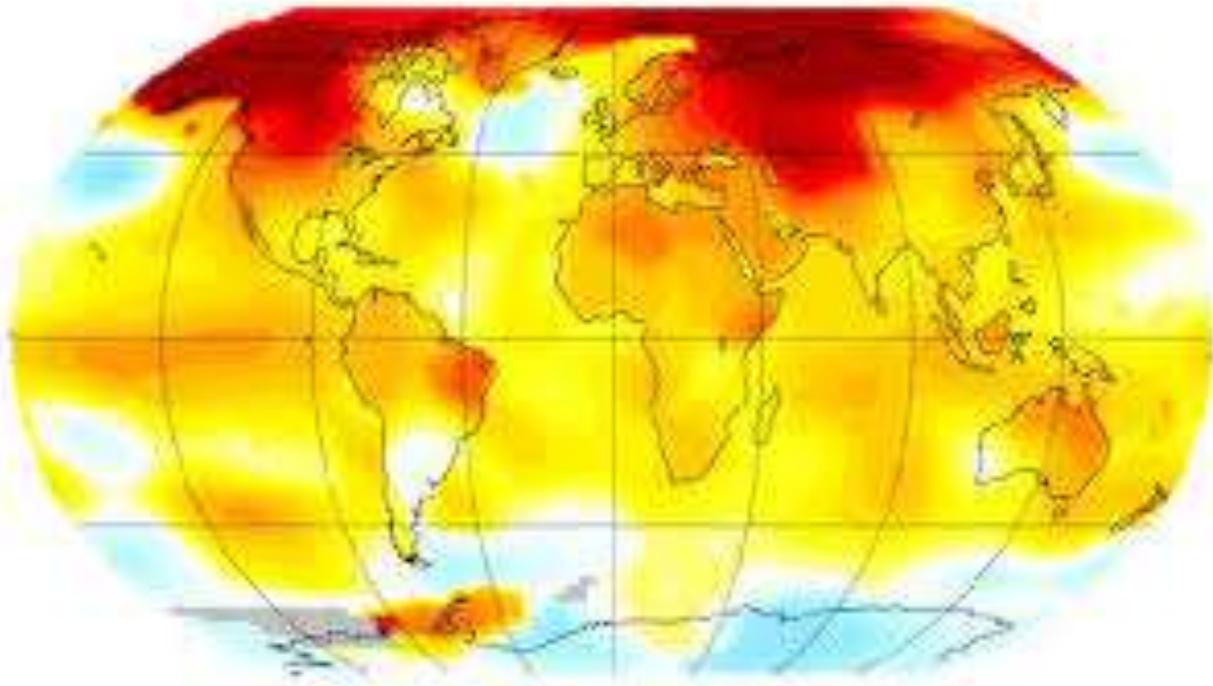
3. Arctic is Burning

What Is The News?

- Reports of record-breaking Arctic heat – registered at more than 100 Fahrenheit (38 Celsius) in the Siberian town of Verkhoyansk .

Point to Remember

- The term "heat wave" is a relative measure. What temperatures count as a heat wave differ depending on the regional climate. So the bar for a heat wave in the Arctic is considerably lower than in lower latitudes.
- India : Recent News : Temperature rises above 45°C-45°C in some isolated pockets of Vidarbha in eastern Maharashtra, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh and Odisha . Rather ; IMD has its own set of criteria for Heat Waves .



Case of Arctic

- In the past, winter heat waves didn't have much of an impact on sea ice. That's because even though the temperature would rise higher than normal, it was still comfortably below freezing most of the time

What Is The Arctic Climate Like?

- The climate of the Arctic is characterized by long, cold winters and short, cool summers.
- Average January temperatures range from about -40 to 0 °C, and winter temperatures can drop below -50 °C over large parts of the Arctic.
- Average July temperatures range from about -10 to 10 °C, with some land areas occasionally exceeding 30 °C in summer.

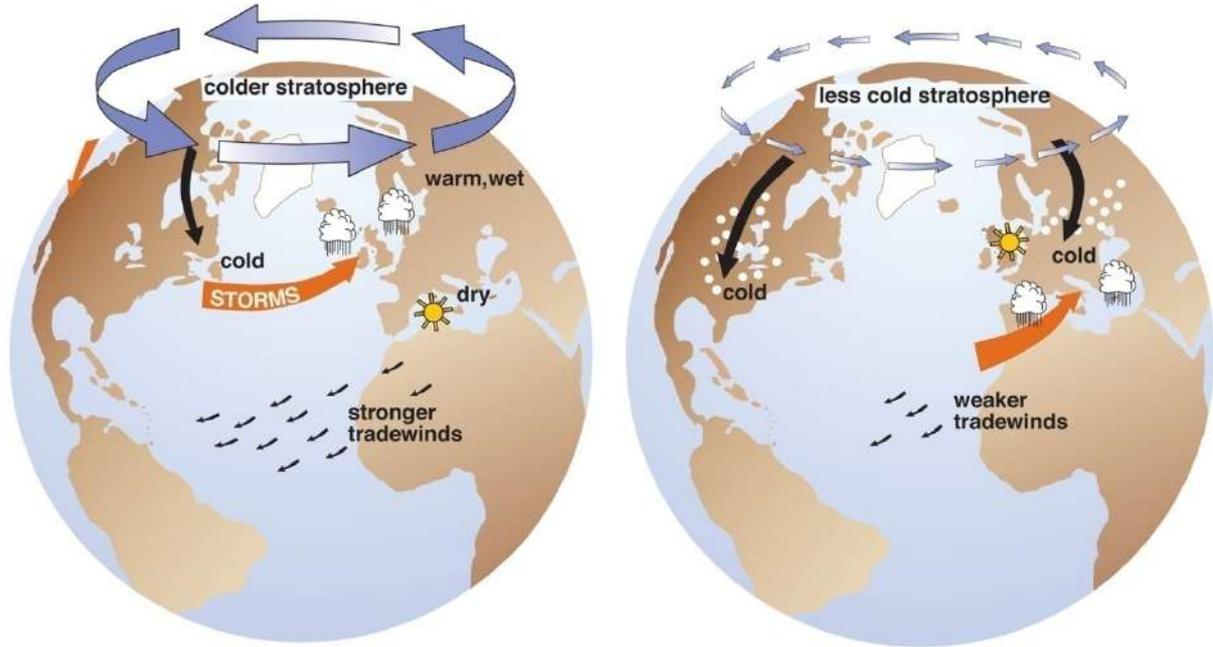
What Is The Reason For Change In Climate?

- The extreme events of recent years are due to a combination of :
 - ✓ natural weather patterns
 - ✓ human-caused climate change.

Why the Change?

- The primary reason for the high temperatures has been the large-scale weather pattern. There has been a strong high pressure system in the upper atmosphere,
- A heat wave begins with high atmospheric pressure building up over an area. A downward-moving air column compresses the air that's closer to the ground, holding it still and heating it up. Over a period of days and weeks, the ground absorbs sunlight, and with stagnant air, heat accumulates and temperatures rise. "There's nothing coming in and nothing going out,"
- However, climate change is also making the high pressure system more intense.

Another View: (Let Us Draw and See)



Why The Change?

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That's the general formula for heat waves around the world. But there are also several unique ingredients contributing to the Arctic one :

- In northern latitudes during the summer, there is near-continuous sunlight – even at night. That allows heat to accumulate faster than in areas that experience sunsets and can cool off in the evening.
- The snow is very reflective of the sunlight. This year, the snow went away earlier, so then you have the bare ground that can absorb more solar energy."
- Another factor this year was the lack of snow. With an unusually warm winter, less snow built up across parts of the Arctic, and with a warm spring, much of it melted away sooner than usual.
- Over the past four decades, sea ice volume has decreased by 50%. The lack of white ice, and corresponding increase in dark ocean and land areas, means less light is reflected and more is absorbed, creating a feedback loop and heating the area disproportionately.
- Siberia also saw massive fires in 2018, 2017, and 2016. Forest fires naturally occur in Siberia and can occasionally spark north of the Arctic circle, often ignited by lightning in dry forests in summer months. But the blazes in recent years were unusually large and close to population centers. The fires burning in the region now could continue to spread as the summer season warms the region further.

- That extreme heat is fanning the unusual extent of wildfires across the remote, boreal forest and tundra that blankets northern Russia. Those blazes have in turn ignited normally waterlogged peatlands.

This Is How a Petalands Looks Like!!

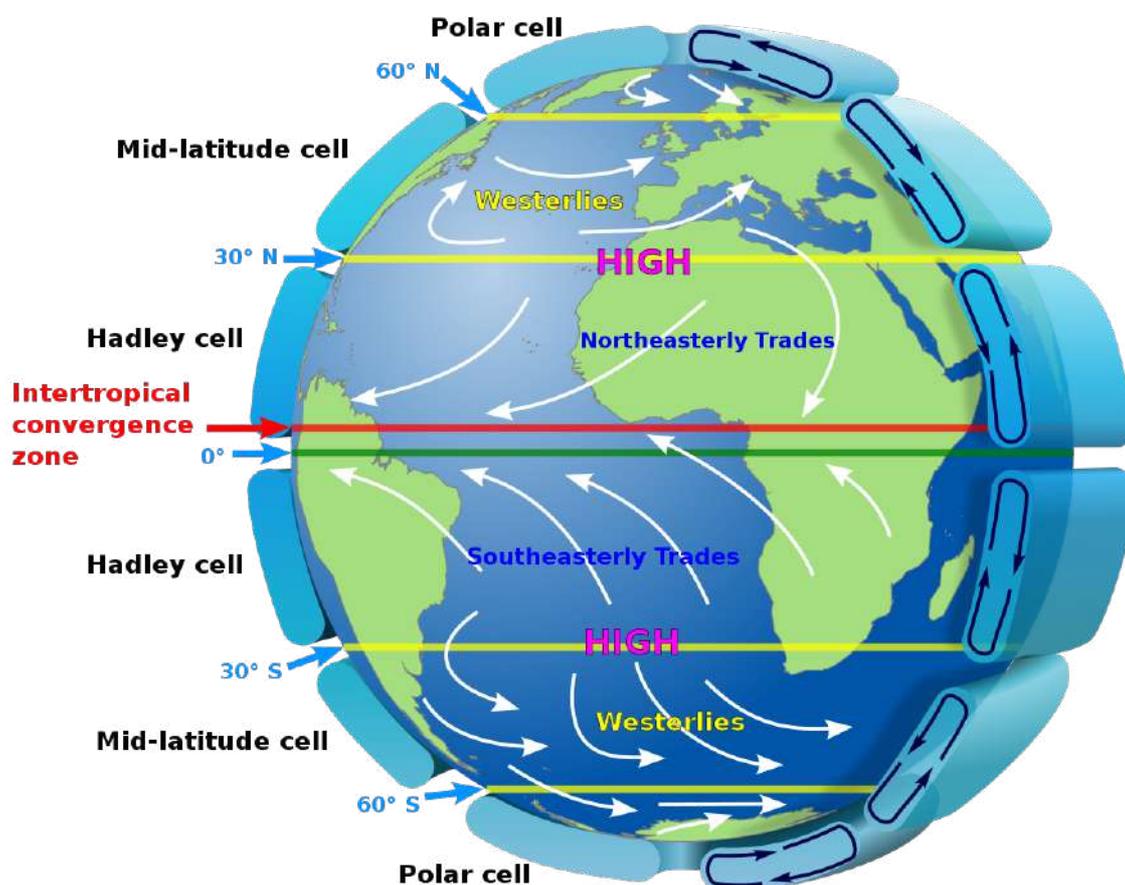


Why the Change

- One of the overarching trends behind the heat wave and the wildfires is climate change. Earth as a whole is warming up due to human emissions of greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide.
- Due to heat trapping greenhouse gases that result from the burning of fossil fuels and feedback loops, the Arctic is warming at more than two times the average rate of the globe. This phenomenon is known as Arctic Amplification.
- The regions like far East Asia, South America, Africa have no Warming in the Arctic is leading to the thawing of once permanently frozen permafrost below ground. This is alarming scientists because as permafrost thaws, carbon dioxide and methane previously locked up below ground is released.
- Thawing of the permafrost – a huge problem because buildings and pipelines are built on them.
- Thawing permafrost also releases more heat-trapping gas and dries out the soil, which increases wildfires
- These greenhouse gases can cause further warming, and further thawing of the permafrost, in a vicious cycle known as positive feedback in the permanent membership of the council.
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- These greenhouse gases can cause further warming, and further thawing of the permafrost, in a vicious cycle known as positive feedback in the permanent membership of the council.
- The higher temperatures also cause land ice in the Arctic to melt at a faster rate, leading to greater run-off into the ocean where it contributes to sea-level rise.
- As the Arctic warms faster than the rest of the world, the temperature difference between the pole and the equator is getting smaller. Since this temperature contrast drives much of the atmospheric circulation in the northern hemisphere, the smaller it gets, the weaker the circulation becomes.
- These atmospheric circulation patterns are responsible for delivering the weather systems that create warm, cold or wet conditions in the northern hemisphere. So, it follows that disrupting the circulation will, in turn, have consequences for the weather.

Atmospheric Circulation



Why the Change

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- The kinetic energy of large-scale weather systems—including cyclones and anticyclones—is closely tied to the overall strength of the jet stream, Coumou says. “If the jet is strong, the wind shear will be strong.” And shear is important in generating “eddies”—cyclonic or anticyclonic swirls of energy—within the overall wind flow. “So if you see a weakening of the jet, it’s logical that you’ll also see a weakening of the kinetic energy of these systems.” In summertime, these systems bring cool and moist air from oceans to continents and have a moderating effect on the continental weather.” In the absence of such storms, he adds, there’s a greater likelihood of drought and lingering heat.
- Daily temperatures in the Arctic this year have been up to 20 C higher than average, scientists are concerned that global warming is eroding the polar vortex (the powerful winds that once insulated the frozen north).

Recent Incidents

- A catastrophic oil spill from a collapsed storage tank last month near the Arctic city of Norilsk was partly blamed on melting permafrost.
- In 2011, part of a residential building in Yakutsk, the biggest city in the Sakha Republic, collapsed due to thawing and subsidence of the ground.

Conclusion

- “What is clear is that the warming Arctic adds fuel to the warming of the whole planet,”

4. US Visas Cancelled

Trump Cancels Visas

- The Trump administration has extended the 60-day ban on immigration and non-immigrant worker visas till the end of 2020.
- Some work visas including the much-coveted H-1B and H-2B visas will remain suspended. Certain categories of H-4, J, and L visas will also remain suspended till the end of the year
- As of April 1, 2020, the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) had received about 2.5 lakh H-1B work visa applications.
- Indians had applied for as many as 1.84 lakh, or 67 per cent of the total H-1B work visas for the current financial year ending March 2021.
- The US government has a cap of 85,000 total H-1B visas for each year.
- Of this, 65,000 H-1B visas are issued to highly skilled foreign workers, while the rest 20,000 can be additionally allotted to highly skilled foreign workers who have a higher education or masters degree from an American university.
- H-1B visas are generally approved for a period of three years for a person, but many visa holders change employers to extend their US stay.
- In November 2017, in a bid to deter Indian and Chinese companies from misusing H-1B visas, the US House Judiciary Committee voted to pass a legislation to increase the minimum annual salary of H-1B visa holders to \$90,000 from \$60,000.

Visa Regime Changes

- Apart from the suspension of these work visas, the executive order signed by Trump has also made sweeping changes to the H-1B visa norms, which will no longer be decided by the currently prevalent lottery system.
- The new norms will now favour highly skilled workers who are paid the highest wages by their respective companies, ensuring that the highest-skilled applicants are admitted. So, the top 85,000 salary offers among the 225,000 or so applicants will get visas.
- The Trump Administration will also close loopholes that have allowed employers in the US to replace American workers with low-cost foreign labour
- It will eliminate competition with Americans, it will reduce American competition in these industries at the entry-level, and will do more to get the best and the brightest
- The visa suspension, which runs to the end of the year, will open up 525,000 jobs for U.S. workers

The Exceptions

- The proclamation exempts those already in the United States, as well as valid visa holders overseas, but they must have an official travel document that permits entry into the United States.
- The measure also exempts food supply chain workers and people whose entry is deemed in the national interest. H-2A visas used to bring in foreign farmworkers were exempt.
- The Optional Practical Training (OPT) that most foreign students are eligible for after they graduate in the US also remains unaffected.
- It offers an exemption for medical workers but includes only people working on coronavirus research and care.

H-1B (specialty occupation)

- An H-1B visa is required if you are coming to the United States to perform services in a pre-arranged professional job.
- To qualify, you must hold a bachelor's or higher degree (or an equivalent degree) in the specific specialty for which you seek employment.
- USCIS will determine whether your employment constitutes a specialty occupation and whether you are qualified to perform the services.

H-2A (seasonal agricultural workers)

- An H-2A visa allows U.S. employers to bring foreign nationals to the United States to fill temporary agricultural jobs for which U.S. workers are not available.
- Indian and Bhutanese passport holders are not eligible for H-2A and H-2B visas.

H-2B visa (skilled and unskilled workers)

- This visa is required if you are coming to the United States to perform a job which is temporary or seasonal in nature and for which there is a shortage of U.S. workers.

L-1 (intra-company transferees)

- An L-1 visa is required if you are the employee of an international company which is temporarily transferring you to a parent branch, affiliate, or subsidiary of the same company in the United States.
- The international company may be either a U.S. or foreign organization.
- To qualify for an L-1 visa, you must be at the managerial or executive level, or have specialized knowledge and be destined to a position within the U.S. company at either of these levels, although not necessarily in the same position as held previously.
- In addition, you must have been employed outside the United States with the international company continuously for one year within the three years preceding your application for admission into the United States.

5. Yulin Dog Meat Festival in China in Times of Corona

Issue of Animal Rights or Cultural Relativism?

What is the Yulin Dog Meat Festival?

- The Yulin “Lychee and Dog Meat” festival is an annual 10 day event which takes place in Yulin, a city in the Guangxi province of China, and runs from the 21 to 30 June.
- The first festival took place in 2009 to mark the summer solstice. Dog eating is traditional in China, and according to folklore eating the meat during the summer months brings luck and good health. Some also believe dog meat can ward off diseases and heighten men’s sexual performance.
- The festival has attracted widespread negative coverage within China and internationally. Activists have reported that animals are slaughtered inhumanely using clubs in public and that hygiene practices at the festival do not fall in line with Chinese regulations.
- There are also complaints that dogs are brought to Yulin from across China in cramped conditions, and festival visitors have reported seeing some animals with collars, indicating they are stolen pets.
- The World Health Organisation has warned that the dog trade spreads rabies and increases the risk of cholera.
- Eating dogs is not illegal in China. Around 10 to 20 million are killed for human consumption every year and although the festival is new the custom can be traced back at least 400 years. But attitudes are changing.
- The Covid-19 outbreak appears to have further reduced the appetite for dog meat after the disease was linked to a wet market in the central city of Wuhan selling animals for food.
- Keeping dogs as pets was banned during the Cultural Revolution, but dog ownership has become popular among China’s growing middle-class. In May 2020, the agriculture ministry reclassified dogs as companion animals, not livestock, though it did not explicitly prohibit eating them.
- Shenzhen and Zhuhai- southern cities not far from Yulin- banned the consumption of dogs in April, 2020 becoming the first cities in China to do so. The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation’s livestock list does not include dogs and said that internationally, dogs are not treated as livestock.

The Festival of Animal Cruelty

- Activists save hundreds of dogs every year by raiding slaughterhouses and intercepting trucks. They say traders steal pets and strays and transport them long distances, mostly to the country's south.
- Some posts on the Chinese social network Weibo called for the festival to be cancelled entirely after COVID-19 and a recent fresh outbreak of the disease in Beijing linked to a wholesale food market. Some media outlets, including tabloids, have alleged that dogs are intentionally tortured or boiled alive to improve the taste of their meat.
- In 2016, 1,000 dogs were rescued from the festival; the previous week 34 animals (21 dogs, eight puppies, and five cats and kittens) were rescued from a slaughter facility in Yulin by Humane Society International. Another 1,000 dogs were saved by Chinese activists in 2017.
- Millions of Chinese in 2016 voted in support of a legislative proposal by Zhen Xiaohe, a deputy to the National People's Congress of China, to ban the dog meat trade. A petition in China at the very same year with 11 million signatures garnered calling to end the festival was presented to Yulin government offices in Beijing.

Is this an issue of animal rights or cultural relativism?

- Cultural relativism is the idea that a person's beliefs, values, and practices should be understood based on that person's own culture, rather than be judged against the criteria of another.
- The idea was explored in the anthropological research by Franz Boas in the first few decades of the 20th century and later popularized by his students. The term itself was coined later by social theorist Alain Locke in 1924.
- This is contrasted against the idea of Ethnocentrism which is the belief that one's culture is superior to all other cultures.





- The practice of eating dog meat is controversial for obvious reasons. In Western societies, dogs are companions, protectors and protectees.
- However, in some countries- even in ones where dogs are kept as pets, eating dog meat has been commonplace for thousands of years. In South Korea, people even distinguish a yellowish dog breed called Nureongi as common “dog meat dogs.”
- Which animals “deserve” our saving, and when is killing an animal deemed “humane”? According to 2018 data from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the U.S. consumes the second-most meat per capita of the countries surveyed. 27.1 kilograms per capita of this comes from beef and veal, often killed brutally.
- Similar issues can also be raised regarding pig slaughter wherein the scientific community agree on the intelligence of pigs, for instance. Like humans, apes and dolphins, pigs can recognise their reflection in the mirror.
- An article in the Huffpost pointed out how discourse of animal rights is too often used as a neo-imperialist stick with which to beat Western normality into the rest of the World.
- There are many other controversial festivals that have been associated with animal cruelty- Gadhimai festival in Nepal was a sacrificial ceremony that was held every 5 years at the Gadhimai Temple of Bariyarpur, in Bara District, Nepal. On July 28, 2015 this festival has been "banned" by India. In 2019, it was reported that the festival and animal sacrifice took place but this time the sacrifice involved goat, rat, chicken, pig and pigeon.
- Concerns regarding animal cruelty also persist about bull fighting in Spain and jallikattu, in India.

Animal Rights in China and India- A comparison

- China has had limited animal protections by international standards, and animal-rights activists have condemned the treatment of animals in the country. Movements towards animal welfare and animal rights are expanding in China, including among homegrown Chinese activists.
- There are currently no nationwide laws in China that explicitly prohibit the mistreatment of animals. However, the World Animal Protection notes that some legislation protecting the welfare of animals exists in certain contexts, especially ones used in research and in zoos.
- In 2014, China received an E out of possible grades A, B, C, D, E, F, G on World Animal Protection's Animal Protection Index.
- There are some rules put forward by the Constitution of India in favour of voiceless animals and to ensure their welfare. Article 48 of DPSPs requires the State shall endeavour to organize agriculture and animal husbandry on modern and scientific lines and shall, in particular, take steps for preserving and improving the breeds, and prohibiting the slaughter, of cows and calves and other milch and draught cattle.
- Similarly Article 48 A requires the State shall endeavour to protect and improve the environment and to safeguard the forests and wildlife of the country. Article 51 A(g) makes it a fundamental duty of every citizen of India to have compassion for all living creatures.
- The 1960 Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act is the legal basis of animal protection in India. Bears, monkeys, tigers, panthers, lions and bulls are prohibited from being trained and used for entertainment purposes, either in circuses or streets. Section 22(ii), PCA Act, 1960.

- Sections 428 and 429 of the Indian Penal Code and the Cruelty to Animals Act of 1960 make it illegal to maim or cause injury to any animal. It is also illegal for vehicles to purposefully injure dogs, cats and cows on the streets.
- Stray dogs are protected under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960, and rules enacted under Section 38 of the act, particularly, the Animal Birth Control (Dogs) Rules, 2001.

6. The makers of India: 100 years of P V Narsimha Rao

Why Discussing him Today

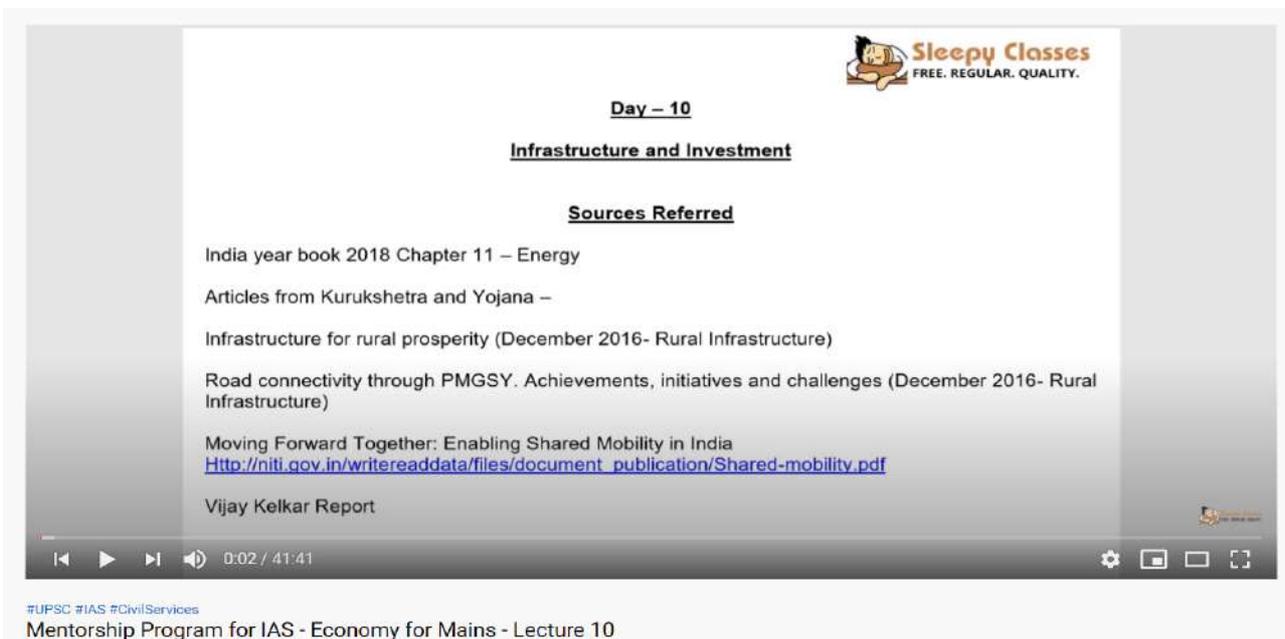
- 100th Birth Yea

Quick Facts and Events associated with him

- The 9th Prime Minister of India from 1991 to 1996
- Often remembered as the "Father of Indian Economic Reforms".
- He was also the Chief minister of Andhra Pradesh (1971)
- Implemented land reforms and land ceiling acts strictly while as CM.
- He was known to speak 17 languages.
- He's the first person outside the Nehru-Gandhi family to serve as Prime Minister for five continuous years.
- Also, the first PM from southern India (the first to hail from the state of Andhra Pradesh).

LPG Reforms

- Often remembered as the "Father of Indian Economic Reforms".
- We did a Video on 25 Years of Reforms too.
- License raj was dismantled



The screenshot shows a video player interface. At the top right, there is a logo for 'Sleepy Classes' with the tagline 'FREE. REGULAR. QUALITY.'. The main content of the slide is as follows:

Day - 10
Infrastructure and Investment
Sources Referred

India year book 2018 Chapter 11 – Energy
Articles from Kurukshetra and Yojana –
Infrastructure for rural prosperity (December 2016- Rural Infrastructure)
Road connectivity through PMGSY. Achievements, initiatives and challenges (December 2016- Rural Infrastructure)
Moving Forward Together: Enabling Shared Mobility in India
[Http://niti.gov.in/writereaddata/files/document_publication/Shared-mobility.pdf](http://niti.gov.in/writereaddata/files/document_publication/Shared-mobility.pdf)
Vijay Kelkar Report

At the bottom of the video player, there is a progress bar showing '0:02 / 41:41' and various control icons. Below the video player, there is a text overlay: '#UPSC #IAS #CivilServices Mentorship Program for IAS - Economy for Mains - Lecture 10'.

Members of Opposition as Government Representatives

- He appointed Subramanian Swamy, an Opposition party member as the Chairman of the Commission on Labour Standards and International Trade (the only instance that an Opposition Party member was given a Cabinet rank post by the ruling party)
- Sent Opposition leader Atal Bihari Vajpayee, to represent India in a UN meeting at Geneva (let's see more on it)

1990s, Pakistani infiltration & Kashmir

- In 1990, Pakistani parliament passed a resolution which rejected the Jammu and Kashmir's accession to India and demanded UN resolution for it.
- 4 Years later, Indian parliament unanimously passed Kashmir Resolution asking Pakistan to vacate PoK
- USA & Organisation of Islamic Countries supported Pakistan
- Pakistan on 27 February 1994, moved to UN Human Rights Commission and tabled the resolution through OIC that condemned India for violation of human rights in Kashmir in Geneva.
- If the resolution would have passed, India would have been put on UNSC economic sanctions.

Selection of Delegates for UNHRC

- He formed a team of delegates all carefully chosen to represent India.
- He chose Atal Bihari Vajpayee, then opposition party leader to represent India at Geneva.
- Also included were Salman Khurshid, E. Ahmad, Farooq Abdullah and Hamid Ansari.
- He also sent Manmohan Singh who was a known figure at UN.
- The idea to include Muslim delegates was later turned out to be effective in dismantling the claims of oppression of Kashmiri Muslims in India.
- He even sent Hurriyat men to UNHRC as non-governmental presence.
- Six influential OIC ambassadors were also taken on board.
- Took Iran in confidence through business deals.
- Took China in confidence on the issue of extremism caused by Uighur East Turkistan Movement.
- Through quick diplomacy Indonesia, Libya, Syria withdrew support to OIC Resolution.
- Pakistan withdrew the resolution by 5 pm that day.

Babri Mosque Demolition

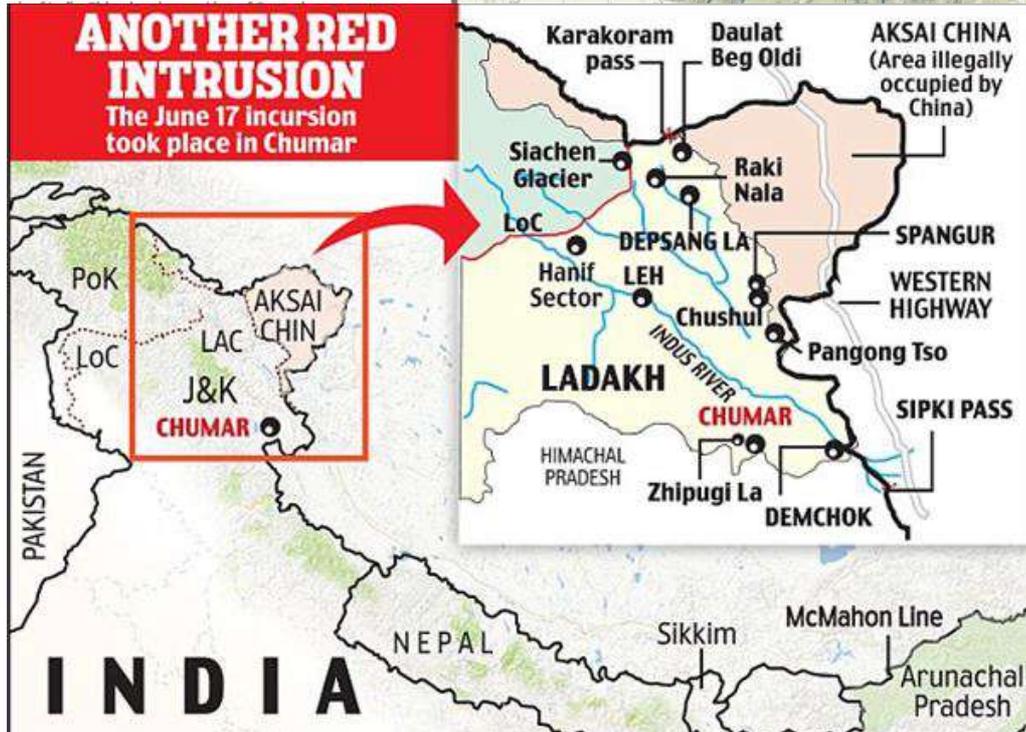
- Babri Mosque was demolished in Ayodhya on 6 December 1992.
- The destruction unleashed large scale communal violence.
- Liberhan Commission was commissioned by the Government of India to investigate the destruction. It after extensive hearing and investigation, cleared PV Narasimha Rao.
- But this incident severely impacted the way people imagined the role of the state in protecting the religious rights and security of common people.

Also important to know

- Gave boost to National nuclear security and ballistic missiles program.
- End of extremism in Punjab.
- Launched the Look East foreign policy, a foreign policy that needed to change after the Soviet Union's collapse.
- The 1992 stock market scandal (Harshad Mehta scam)
- Implemented the Mandal Commission report after judgement in Indra Sawhney case in 1992.

7. China is Coming

India and China share 3,488km-long land border, most of which remain disputed.

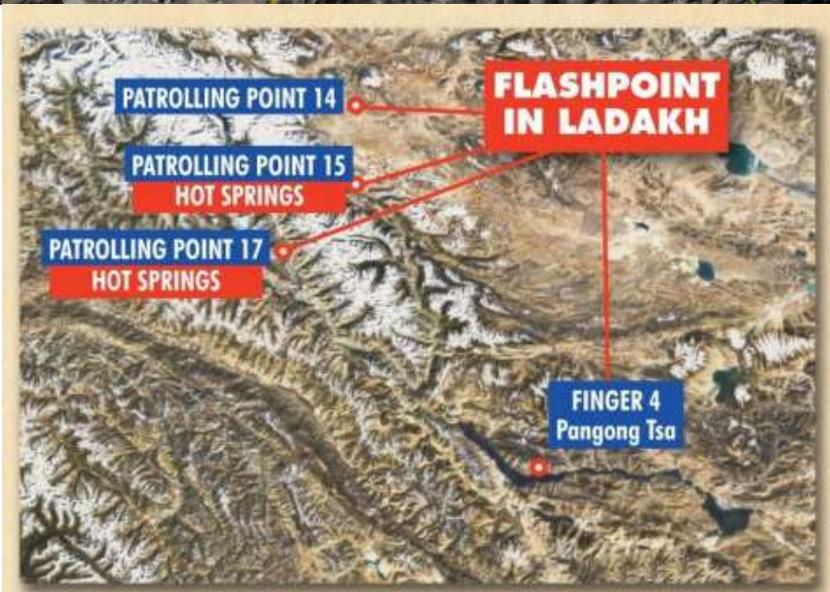
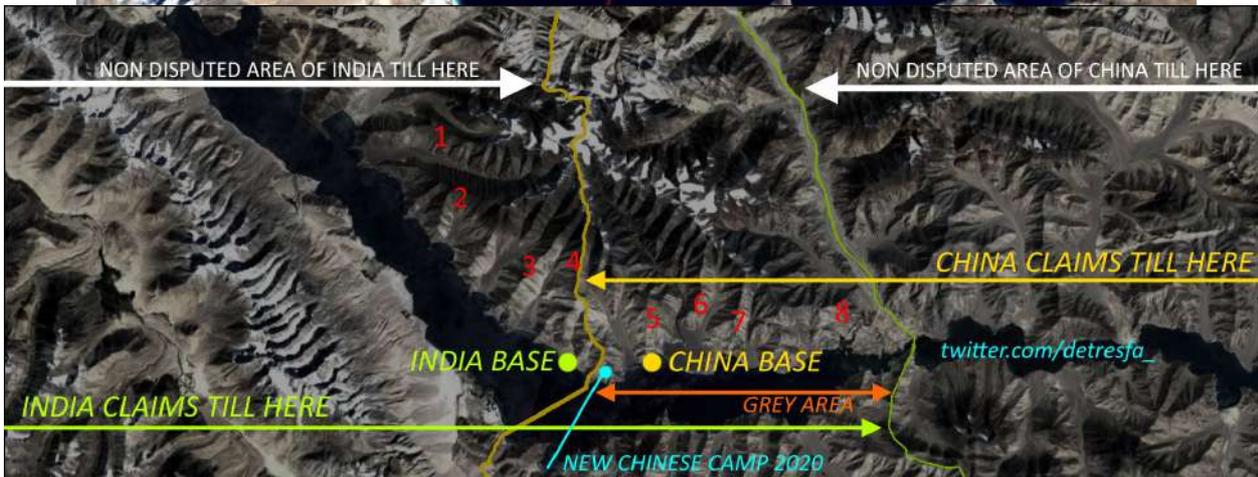


- Since the June 15, 2020 clash, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) has inducted large numbers of troops, armoured vehicles and artillery all along the LAC.

✓ From Depsang and Galwan in northern Ladakh.

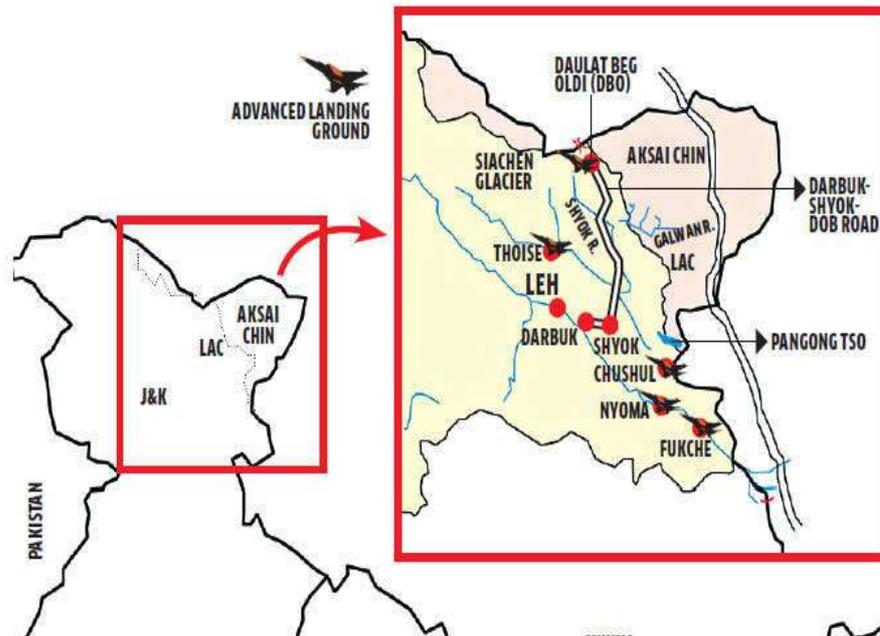
✓ To Hot Springs, Pangong Tso and Chushul in central Ladakh.

✓ To Demchok and Chumar in southern Ladakh.



Dual Threat to Northern Ladakh

- The Chinese move towards the Galwan-Shyok river junction is a pressure point for the Darbuk-Shyok-Daulat Beg Oldi (DSDBO) road
- While the PLA's advance into the Depsang Plain at the Jeevan Nullah and Raki Nullah could choke India's access to Karakoram Pass at two more points.



2 Lines: History of the Issue

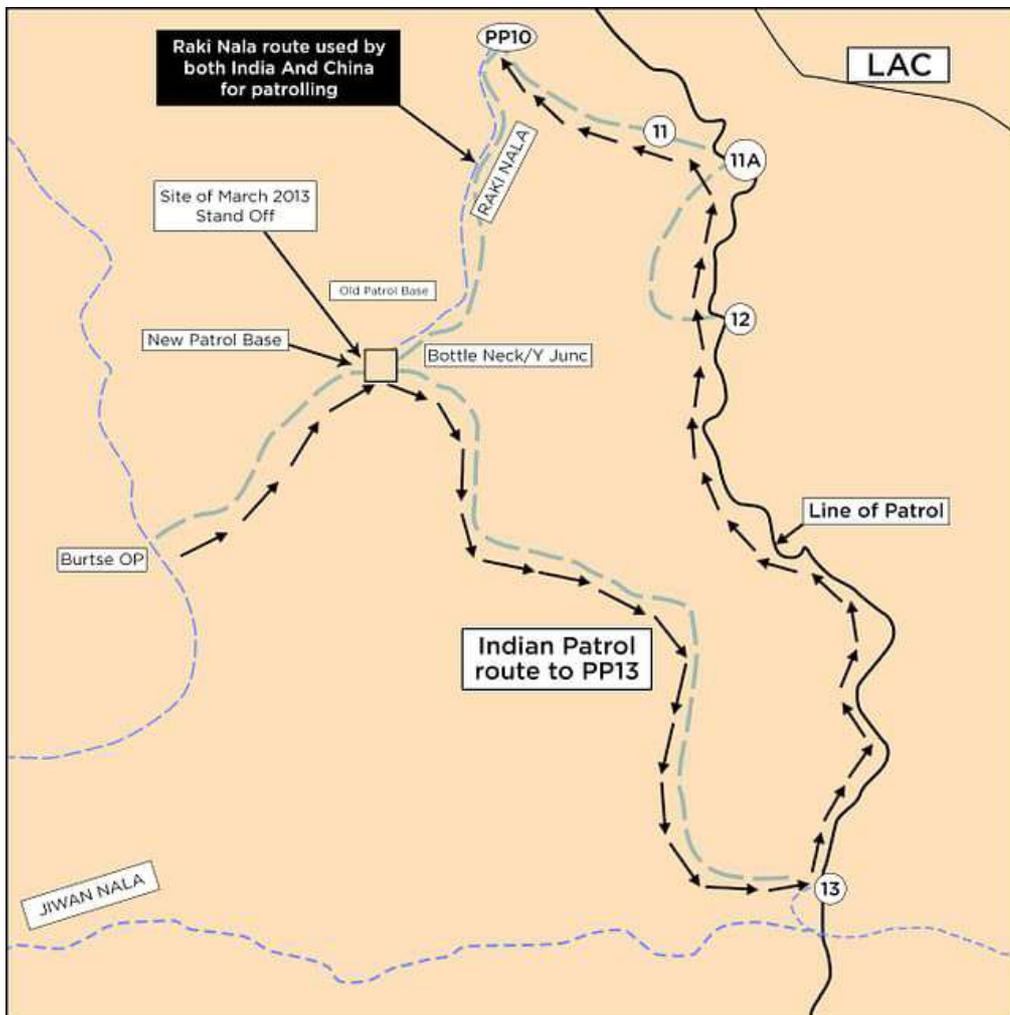
- Historically, in Ladakh, two points in the border remain well defined.
- These are the Karakoram Pass and the Pangong Tso about 200 km further South.
- The Johnson Line of 1865 put the Aksai Chin within India.
- Subsequently, the Macartney-MacDonald Line of 1899 put parts of the Aksai Chin within the Xinjiang province of China.
- British maps used both these lines, but since 1908, the Johnson Line was taken to be the boundary.
- However, the border was not demarcated.
- Today, China is in illegal occupation of the entire Aksai Chin area.
- The Macartney-MacDonald Line generally conforms to the present day LAC in eastern Ladakh.
- In Arunachal Pradesh, the McMahon Line defines the border.
- Here, while there are differing perceptions of the McMahon Line, the Chinese quite inexplicably claim the whole of Arunachal Pradesh.
- We thus have both a border problem as well as a territorial problem with China.



Now: Avoiding Escalation

According to Quint:

- We are not crossing their patrolling parties
- We have changed paths.



8. Chinese Takeover of Indian App Ecosystem

Internet Users in India

- According to Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI), India has around 451 million monthly active internet users at the of financial year 2019. This made India a country with second highest internet users after China
 - ✓ Of the 451 million monthly active users, 385 million are over 12 years and 66 million are in the age bracket of 5 to 11 years
- In terms of absolute numbers, urban India with 192 million users has almost the same number of users as rural India
 - ✓ In terms of percentage or penetration, given the disparity of population distribution in urban and rural India, urban India has a considerably higher penetration level
- There is a clear gender disparity when it comes to internet usage in India. Female internet users' population is half of the 258 million male internet users and the bias is more evident in rural India
- 2/3rd of users are in the age group of 12-29 years and a higher proportion of this age group is seen in rural India

Why India attracts Chinese App-makers

1. Potential large market with very little competition
2. Rapidly swelling next generation of internet users
3. Growing internet phenomenon and a lack of disruption by traditional media
4. China has seen maturity of content apps that are consumed widely there. With many Indians just waking up to digital content on their mobile phones, Chinese have a head start to port their apps to India

Commonality between Indian & Chinese Apps

1. Deep pockets for marketing expense
2. Focus on vernacular India users
3. Addictive user interface
4. Racy content
5. Quick iterations and execution cycles
6. Cheap offerings

Chinese Tech Invasion in India

Lenovo is a heavyweight in computer hardware, Haier is inching up the league table in white goods. Huawei's domination in telecom equipment is strong and its leadership in 5G technology, in particular, is absolute. In auto, 2019 saw a blockbuster entry for MG Motor, with its Hector SUV. A number of major Chinese automakers are now rolling into India

Strategy of the App-Makers

1. Targeting Tier 3-4 towns: Most of the new-to-internet population in India is coming from these places
2. Internet consumption is habit-based. So, there is an opportunity in getting habits created
3. Aggressive marketing lures like providing cash back or enabling users to earn money by spending time on the app to increase downloads and time spent on platforms
4. Attracting and incentivising creators and not just consumers

Chinese Playbook of launching a platform

1. Housing relevant and engaging content: Chinese apps such as TikTok, Helo etc. has focused on user-generated content. This solves the challenge of creating local and relevant content
2. Technology Localisation: Largely focused around improving there performance of the product. "Lite" version of apps for a market like India that is plagued with low bandwidth and sporadic connectivity challenges
3. Partnerships in local market including tie-ups with music and media companies

How Chinese Style different from Silicon Valley

- Chinese companies focus on the scale first and defensibility (value proposition business model of a product) later whereas Valley has the exact opposite approach

Impact

- The success of these apps is, in turn, attracting other Chinese app makers to India as well as prompting Indian start-ups and investors to seek products for users outside the large cities.

Challenges

The challenge that comes along with the growth is to keep a check on means to achieve this growth

1. Content on many of these platforms often crosses the line when it comes to racy versus risqué
 - ✓ Creators miming inappropriate lyrics, Bullying, Body shaming and Crass commentary
2. Traversing the gamut of languages
3. Regulatory shadow over data security concerns: E-commerce police and the draft data protection bill might prove troublesome for these Chinese entrepreneurs
 - ✓ Indian Ministry of Defence ordered Armed Forces to uninstall 42 Chinese apps that it classified as spyware
 - ✓ Google temporarily removed UC Browser from its play store after the app came under Indian government's radar for reported sending data to its servers in China
4. LiveMe, a Chinese app, deleted over 6,00,000 accounts of children under 13 after a TV news channel talked of the dangers of paedophiles exploiting children
5. While the Chinese apps have done well in attracting large user base, they don't make money off them in most cases. Most of the online advertising spending is still being grabbed by Google, followed by Facebook (a distant second)
6. Pubic opinion and commentary focused on the growing dominance by China-centred companies

7. Concerns around national cyber security due to the proximity of large Chinese tech companies to the Communist Party of China

Is it Possible to Boycott China?

- Lack of identification: Yoga guru Swami Ramdev uploaded a video to illustrate uninstalling Chinese apps such as TikTok and instead install Indian apps i.e., Flipkart and Sharechat. Flipkart has 77% of its controlling stake owned by the American retail giant Walmart while Sharechat has received significant funding from a number of Chinese investment firms including <https://assets.pandaily.com/uploads/2019/04/top-chinese-app-india-1.jpg> g Shunwei Capital, Xiaomi and Morningside Ventures.
- Lack of alternatives: Rejection of Chinese apps can be effective only if Indians have good enough alternatives. The ascent for Indian apps on the Play Store and App Store has been very slow
- Chinese ownership and investment: Chinese have injected billions of dollars into India's tech scene and hired many local employees
- Instigating a Trade War: India is a resource-constrained country and it is searching for foreign investment. China's main influence in India lies in trade, not investment. If you are leaning on investment, you are going to be attracting foreign firms. So boycotting or banning foreign products is not going to help

Conclusion

Chinese companies are beginning to dominate in some digital segments as well. ByteDance-owned TikTok is a sensation in India. ByteDance plans to invest \$1 billion in India over the next few years. Alibaba owned UC Browser, too, has significant users in India. Hangzhou-headquartered ecommerce player Club Factory is expanding its reach to tier-2, -3 and smaller cities in India. Investors such as Ant Financials and WeChat owner Tencent have picked up stakes in large digital players such as Paytm and Zomato. PUBG, one of India's most popular mobile games, is owned by Tencent.

This is just the picture on the consumer-facing business. In business-to-business supplies, China is perhaps the most important trading partner for Indian businesses today.

9. China

China-Pakistan

- CPEC
- Metro Train Project
- Energy, infrastructure and port expansion for Gwadar
- Coal projects near Thar coalfield.
- Major nuclear power project in Karachi
- Uyghur Terrorists
- Free Trade Agreements
- Military Equipment

China-Afghanistan

- Badakshan base
- China is Afghanistan's largest foreign investor.
- Afghanistan telecom equipment.
- Aynak Copper mines
- China started extracting oil in the Amu Darya basin.
- East turkestan independence movement
- Train/Air Corridors
- China created a 'mountain brigade' to defend the Afghan-Chinese border
- BRI

China-Nepal

- Railway network
- Rail Road Network
- International airport in Pokhara.
- Transit transport agreement to be reviewed every 10 years
- Solar panels in Nepal's rural areas (China's Climate Fund)
- Access to Ports in China

China-Bangladesh

- Bangladesh is third largest trade partner of China in South Asia. (Wikipedia)
- Under the auspices of the Asia-Pacific Free Trade Agreement (AFTA), China removed tariff barriers to 84 types of commodities imported from Bangladesh and is working to reduce tariffs over the trade of jute and textiles, which are Bangladesh's chief domestic products.
- Offered to construct nuclear power plants
- Direct air transport route between Dhaka and Beijing via Kunming.
- Bangladesh-China Friendship Exhibition Center
- Defence Cooperation Agreement
- Chinese military supplies
- Anti-ship missile launch pad near the Chittagong Port with assistance from China

China-Sri Lanka

- Hambantota International Airport
- Port of Hambantota
- Norocholai Power Station, a fossil fuel power station

- Source of military equipment
- Training of Sri Lankan military personnel.

China-Maldives

- Vellana International Airport
- China's intention to set up military base in Marao.
- Joint Ocean Observation Station (Maritime Observatory)

China-Bhutan

- Kingdom of Bhutan and the People's Republic of China do not maintain official diplomatic relations, and relations are historically tense.
- Doklam Issue

10. Attack on Pakistan Stock Exchange in Karachi by Balochistan Liberation Army





Attack on PSX Building Karachi

Incident

- Four heavily armed militants attacked the busy Pakistan Stock Exchange building in Karachi with guns and grenades
- Explosives, hand grenades and even food supplies were recovered from the bodies of the gunmen, indicating that they had come with a plan for a long siege at the building
- The Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) has claimed responsibility for the attack.
- The attack happened a few days after three low-intensity terror attacks were carried out in Karachi, Ghotki and Larkana in Sindh, leaving four people including two Rangers soldiers dead and a dozen injured.

The Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA)

Origins and influences

- The BLA is an ethnonationalist militant organisation and operates mainly in the province of Balochistan and the bordering areas of Afghanistan.
- The group was initially formed due to anger over the state's perceived monopoly over Balochistan province's mineral resources.
- The group, primarily, seeks independence from Pakistan and wishes to form a separate state of 'Greater Balochistan'.
- It has, however, gradually evolved into a violent armed separatist movement
- Their core grievance is that the Pakistani state has been exploiting resources in Balochistan, without sharing any of the proceeds with the local tribes.
- The province remains Pakistan's most impoverished area despite being rich in gas and coal reserves, as well as copper and gold.

- The BLA has conducted a low-level separatist insurgency against targets in Pakistan for nearly two decades.
- Ethnic Baloch groups have fought a long-running insurgency for a separate homeland and a greater share of resources in Pakistan's Balochistan province.
- The BLA is the largest and the oldest-surviving insurgent group in the region.
- It is the armed wing of the Balochistan separatist movement and while the political leaders of the mainstream Baloch movement are said to be sympathetic to the BLA, they do not publicly acknowledge their support.
- With a cadre of 6,000, the group has been spearheading the insurgency against Pakistan since 2000 and has carried out several violent attacks in the country.
- It is categorised as a terrorist group by Pakistan, the UK and the US.
- While the group reportedly began its operations in 2000, several accounts suggest that the group is a resurgence of past insurgent groups, specifically the “Independent Balochistan Movement” of 1973 to 1977.
- In the past, the BLA was influenced by radical Marxist ideology and this led to the theory that initially, it was propped up by erstwhile Soviet Union's intelligence agency KGB during the 1970s.
- Some of its leaders were also, allegedly, trained in Moscow.

BLA's Attacks in Pakistan

Attacks in Pakistan

- Since the BLA officially launched its operations in 2000, it has conducted many lethal attacks in Pakistan.
- The organisation rose to prominence in May 2003, when it carried out a series of attacks in the province, which led to the deaths of several police personnel and non-native Baloch residents.
 - ✓ Over the next few years, the insurgent group conducted many such attacks in Balochistan, primarily targeting the military.
 - ✓ These attacks targeted Pakistani military locations and personnel using mortar strikes.
 - ✓ The BLA has regularly employed this tactic of small-scale bombing throughout its lifetime
- In 2004, when the BLA conducted an attack against Chinese workers in Balochistan, the Pakistani Army responded by deploying 20,000 additional troops in the province.
- However, despite the deployment, the violent attacks did not cease.
- In 2005, the BLA attacked a federal paramilitary camp in the Kohlu region, while the-then President Pervez Musharraf was visiting it. This attack prompted the Pakistani government to declare the BLA as a terrorist group.
- Following the attack on Musharraf, the government doubled down its counterinsurgency efforts, and began targeting BLA's leadership.
- Between 2006 and 2007, Pakistani security forces killed several BLA leaders.



- These targeted killings severely weakened the BLA, and it was forced to negotiate a settlement with the government, along with other insurgent groups.
- In September 2008, the BLA, the Balochistan Liberation Front, the Baloch Republican Army, and the government of Pakistan declared a ceasefire.
- However, the BLA withdrew from the ceasefire in January 2009 because it was upset that the Pakistani government had made no meaningful attempts to begin negotiations.
- Since then, the BLA has continued its attacks across the country, and is the de facto leader of the violent insurgency.
- Now, with the development of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor, which passes through Balochistan, the BLA has also been accused of targeting Chinese infrastructure and Pakistani forces guarding them.
- For instance, in 2018, the BLA allegedly opened fire on the Chinese consulate in Karachi, which left four people dead.
- In 2019, the BLA attacked a five-star hotel in the port city of Gwadar in Balochistan. The hotel is the centrepiece of a multi-billion-dollar Chinese project and was selected in order to target Chinese and other investors.
- Separatist militants in Balochistan oppose Chinese investment, saying it is of little benefit to local people.

BLA's Links with India

Links with India

- For a long time, the Pakistani political leadership has claimed that the BLA is propped up and supported by the Indian government.
- According to reports, there is evidence to suggest that in the past, BLA leadership had visited and stayed in India to seek medical treatment, often with a fake identity.
- It is known that the Baloch sardars like the late Akbar Bugti and Ghaus Bukhsh Bizenjo maintained warm personal ties with various Indian political figures.

Repression in Balochistan

- Widescale abuses and repression by the Pakistani military have been documented over decades in the province, which is difficult to access by journalists and human rights groups.
- Nearly 1,000 dead bodies of political activists and suspected armed separatists have been found in Pakistan's restive Balochistan province over the past six years
- Activists say the figures point to large-scale extrajudicial killings.
- Thousands of people have disappeared without trace in Balochistan since a separatist insurgency gained momentum in 2007.
- A military-led operation was launched in early 2005 aimed at wiping out the uprising by ethnic Baloch groups, who are fighting for a greater share of the province's resources.

- Most of them were dumped in the regions of Quetta, Qalat, Khuzdar and Makran - areas where the separatist insurgency has its roots.
- The Voice for Baloch Missing Persons (VBMP) says it has recorded 1,200 cases of dumped bodies and there are many more it has not been able to document.

11.All about G4 Ea H1n1: A New Strain of Swine Flu

Is The World Going To Face Another Pandemic Soon?

What is G4 flu virus?

- In a new research, scientists from China – which has the largest population of pigs in the world – have identified a “recently emerged” strain of influenza virus that is infecting Chinese pigs and that has the potential of triggering a pandemic.
- Named G4 EA H1N1, the swine flu strain has genes similar to those in the virus that caused the 2009 flu pandemic. The scientists identified the virus through surveillance of influenza viruses in pigs that they carried out from 2011 to 2018 in ten provinces of China.
- The scientists report that the new strain (G4) has descended from the H1N1 strain that was responsible for the 2009 flu pandemic.

Does it have ‘pandemic potential’?

- They also found that the G4 strain has the capability of binding to human-type receptors (like, the SARS-CoV-2 virus binds to ACE2 receptors in humans), was able to copy itself in human airway epithelial cells, and it showed effective infectivity and aerosol transmission in ferrets.
- The scientists added that pigs are intermediate hosts for the generation of pandemic influenza virus. Thus, systematic surveillance of influenza viruses in pigs is a key measure for pre-warning the emergence of the next pandemic influenza. However, it cannot be said if this new strain, if transmitted from pigs to humans, can transmit from one human to another.
- White House coronavirus advisor Dr. Anthony Fauci said that the new strain of flu carried by pigs in China that has characteristics of the 2009 H1N1 virus and 1918 pandemic flu. He further stated that it is exhibiting “reassortment capabilities”.
- In other words, when you get a brand new virus that turns out to be a pandemic virus it’s either due to mutations and/or the reassortment or exchanges of genes.

What was the 2009 swine flu pandemic?

- The WHO declared the outbreak of type A H1N1 influenza virus a pandemic in 2009 when there were around 30,000 cases globally. The H1N1 swine flu emerged in Mexico in April 2009, infecting 700 million people eventually.
- The US Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines swine flu as, “a respiratory disease of pigs caused by type A influenza viruses that regularly cause outbreaks of influenza in pigs. Essentially, swine flu is a virus that pigs can get infected by.
- While humans typically do not get infected by such a virus that circulates among pigs, when they do, it is called “variant influenza virus”. Human-to-human transmission among variant influenza viruses is limited. As per the CDC, most commonly, humans may get infected by such viruses due to exposure from infected pigs.

- The 2009 pandemic was caused by a strain of the swine flu called the H1N1 virus, which was transmitted from human to human. The symptoms of swine flu include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headaches, chills and fatigue.

12. India Now The 3rd Worst Hit Country By Corona



Why Discussing This Today

- India surpassed Russia to become the third worst-hit nation of COVID-19.

Who all are Ahead

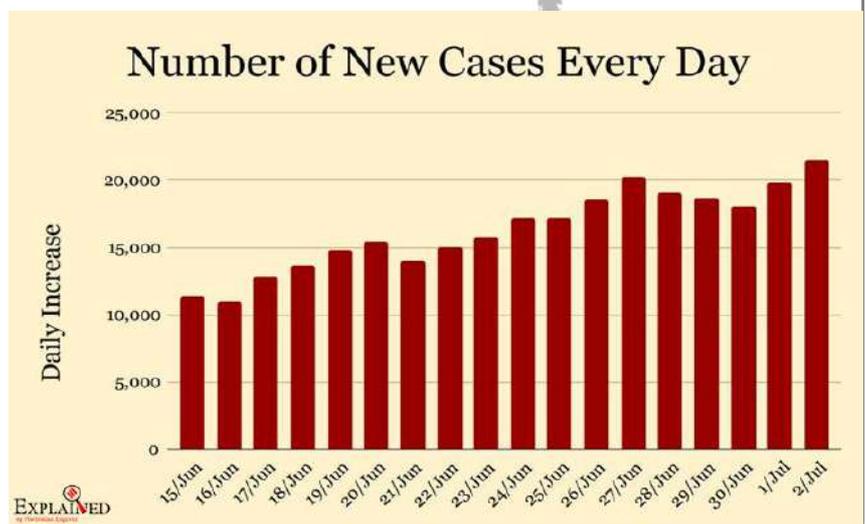
- USA is at the First place.
- Brazil at the Second.

Is situation Grim

- Of course, yes.
- But India's recovery rate is also high.
- India's fatality rate is also low.

What makes the situation fragile?

- Under Testing
- India has one of the lowest Tests/ Million Population
- At the moment, India ranks 138th in terms of tests conducted per million population.



India's Preparation

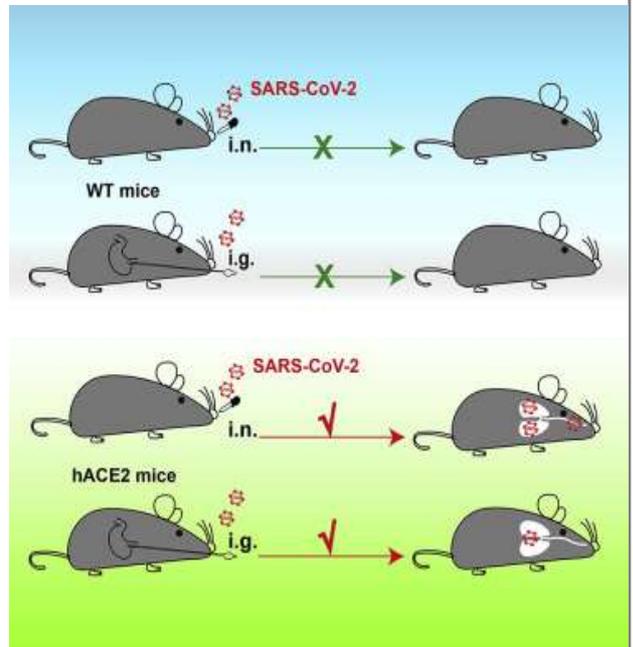
- Apart from observing one of the most stringent lockdowns, India also has prepared itself by converting large swathes of areas into COVID Care Centers.
- For instance, 10,000-bed Sardar Patel COVID care centre in New Delhi, the “largest” of its kind in the world, at the Radha Soami Satsang Beas.
- There are also railway beds available.
- Aarogya Setu App is mandatory
- Wearing Mask is Mandatory
- India is also rapidly developing COVAXINTM.

COVAXINTM

- Bharat Biotech developed it together with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and the National Institute of Virology (NIV), Pune.
- The company had also received permission from the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) to begin human trials.
- Covaxin is an inactivated vaccine developed from an Indian strain of the novel coronavirus isolated by NIV.

Some Concerns about COVAXINTM

- According to The Wire:
 - ✓ ICMR transferred the strain NIV had isolated to Biotech Bharat on May 9.
 - ✓ The company published its press release on June 29.
 - ✓ So there were only 50 days in between, during which time the company should have developed the inactivated vaccine, conducted preclinical animal trials (with mice and hamsters, according to the company), and sent its reports to be evaluated and approved by DCGI.
- Animal trials with mice typically take at least three months to conclude.
- Animal trials for COVID-19 can only be conducted with hACE2 transgenic mice, as ‘normal’ mice can't get infected with the novel coronavirus.
- These mice need to be shipped from the US, Europe or China.



About Bharat Biotech

- Bharat Biotech is a reputed drug manufacturer that delivers four billion doses around the world for infections like rotavirus, hepatitis, Zika, Japanese encephalitis and others.

13.356 Dead Elephants in Botswana-Another Pandemic in Making

Dead Elephants

- Mystery surrounds the "completely unprecedented" deaths of hundreds of elephants in Botswana over the last two months.

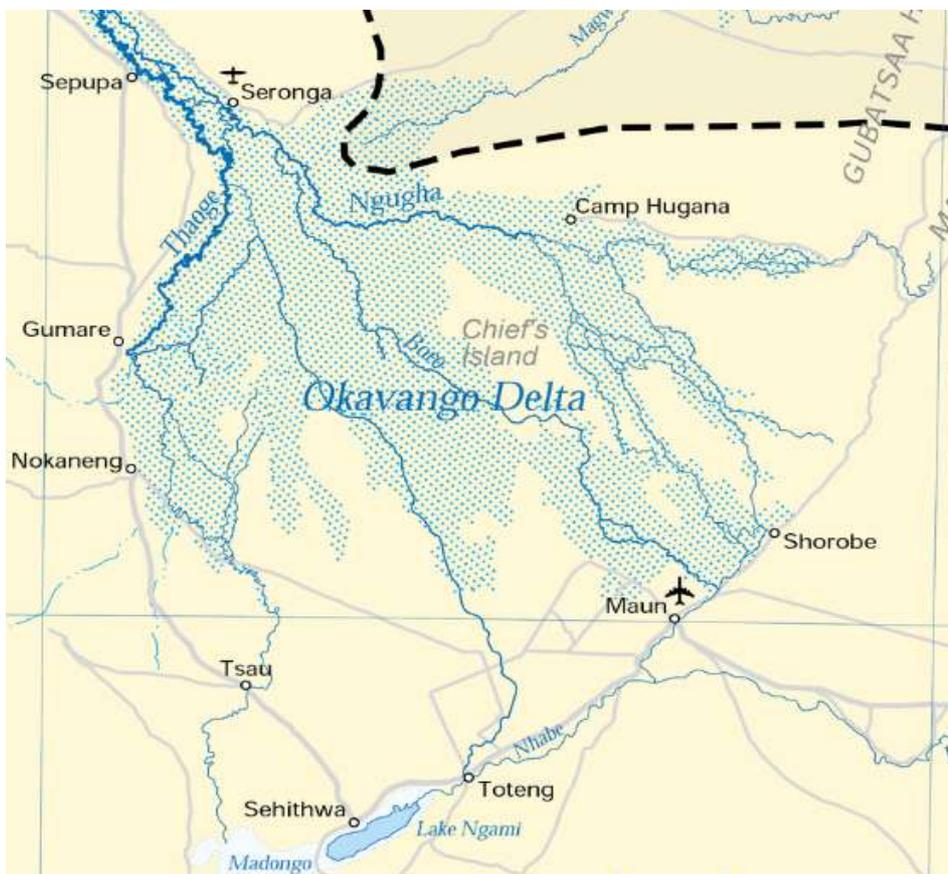
Botswana

- Botswana, a landlocked country in Southern Africa,
- has a landscape defined by the Kalahari Desert and the Okavango Delta, which becomes a lush animal habitat during the seasonal floods
- The massive Central Kalahari Game Reserve, with its fossilized river valleys and undulating grasslands, is home to numerous animals.



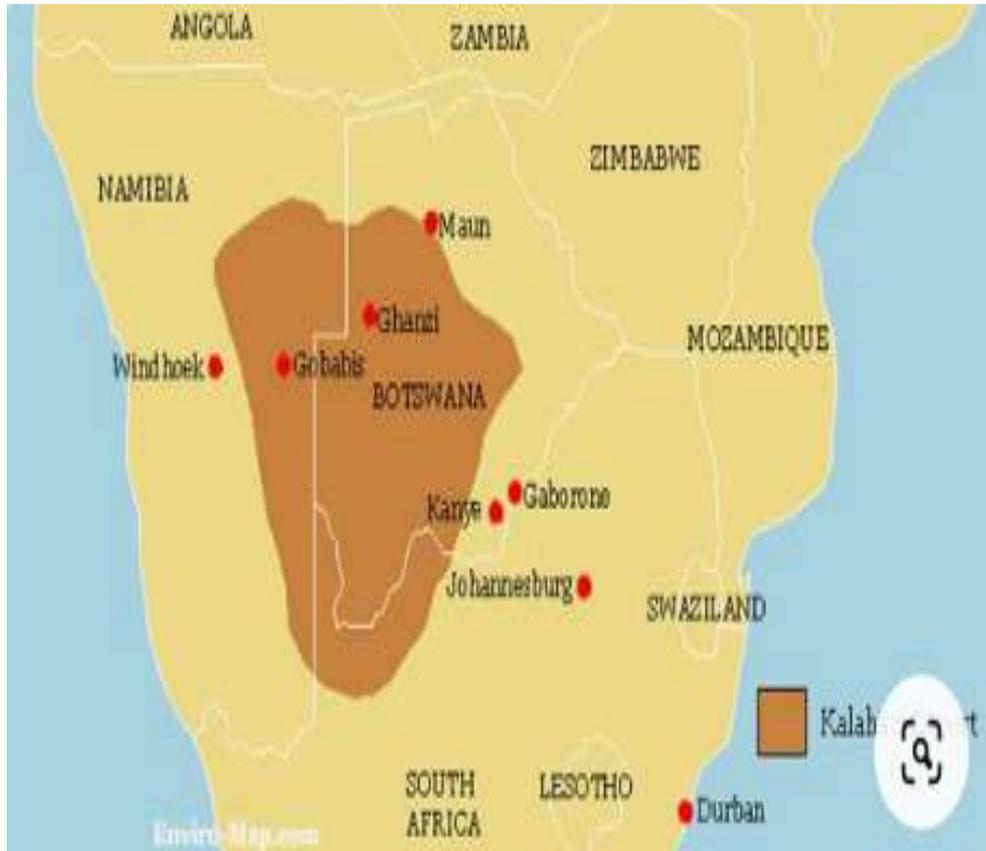
Okavango Delta

- The Okavango Delta (or Okavango Grassland) in Botswana is a swampy inland delta formed where the Okavango River reaches a tectonic trough in the central part of the endorheic basin of the Kalahari.
- 1000th site to be officially inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List.



Kalahari Desert

- The Kalahari Desert is a large semi-arid sandy savannah in Southern Africa extending for 900,000 square kilometres covering much of Botswana, parts of Namibia and regions of South Africa.

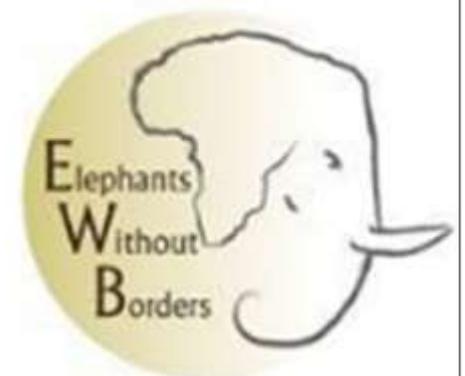


Botswana – Dying Elephants

- Botswana is home to a third of Africa's declining elephant population.
- The African elephant is classified as vulnerable on the International Union for Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) Red List.
- The first Great Elephant Census, a pan-African survey conducted in 2016, revealed that in just seven years between 2007 and 2014 elephant numbers plummeted by at least 30%, or 144,000.
- Botswana has the world's largest elephant population, estimated at 130,000.
- The Delta alone is home to an estimated 15,000 elephants. (10%)

Report

- The latest discoveries were flagged by a wildlife conservation charity, Elephants Without Borders (EWB), whose confidential report referring to the 356 dead elephants was leaked to the media.
- EWB suspects the elephants have been dying in the area for about three months.
- 70 percent of elephant carcasses were considered recent died about a month ago



- 30 percent of the carcasses appeared fresh, ranging from one day to two weeks old.

Reasons Ruled Out

- Drought
 - ✓ This is totally unprecedented in terms of numbers of elephants dying in a single event unrelated to drought.
- Poaching
 - ✓ Botswana scrapped an elephant hunting ban it had in place in 2014.
 - ✓ But Tusks Intact If Cyanide used, other animals would be dead too
- Natural Anthrax Poisoning

Possible Reason

- Neurological Disease
 - ✓ Due to Poisoning or some Elephant Specific Parasite
 - ✓ The way the animals appear to be dying many dropping on their faces and sightings of other elephants walking in circles points to something potentially attacking their neurological systems.
 - ✓ Several live elephants appeared weak, lethargic and emaciated, some showing signs of disorientation, difficulty walking or limping.

Do We Need To Worry

- It is impossible to rule out the possibility of a disease crossing into the human population especially if the cause is in either the water sources or the soil.
- It could also be similar to Covid-19 pandemic, which is believed to have started in animals.

Food For Thought

- Definitely a Conservation Disaster but Is it a Public Health Crisis too??

14. Defence Procurement in India

- 21 MiG-29 fighter jets to be procured from Russia at an estimated cost of Rs 7418 crore
- 12 Su-30 MKi aircraft to be bought from Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL) at an estimated cost of Rs 10730 crore
- Upgrade of the existing 59 MiG-29 aircraft
- 248 ASTRA beyond-visual-range (BVR) air-to-air missile systems
- A significant number of long-range land-attack cruise missile systems with a range of 1,000 km
- Pinaka missile systems and ammunition
- Software-defined radios for the Army
- BMP armament upgrades

ATMANIRBHAR BHARAT PUSH

■ A bulk of clearances – **₹31,130 cr** – have been accorded for indigenously built weaponry

■ HAL will build the Sukhoi-30MKI fighters in Nashik for **₹10,730 cr**

■ The indigenous content in some of these projects is up to **80%** of project cost

■ Indian companies building equipment worth **₹20,400 cr** based on technology transferred to them by DRDO

An Overview

- India is ranked as the world's second largest weapons buyer, after Saudi Arabia
- Russia accounts for 56% of arms supplies followed by Israel at 14% and France at 12%
 - ✓ US became the second-largest arms supplier to India in 2010-14, however, in 2015-19 India continued with its policy of diversification and imports of arms from US were 51% lower
- Despite India diversifying the sources from where it buys its military hardware, an estimated 60% of its arsenal contains Russian origin system, making India depend on Russia for critical spare and upgrades
- India has also features as a exporter of defence equipment (0.2% of global arms market) with clients like Myanmar (46%), Sri Lanka (25%) and Mauritius (14%)

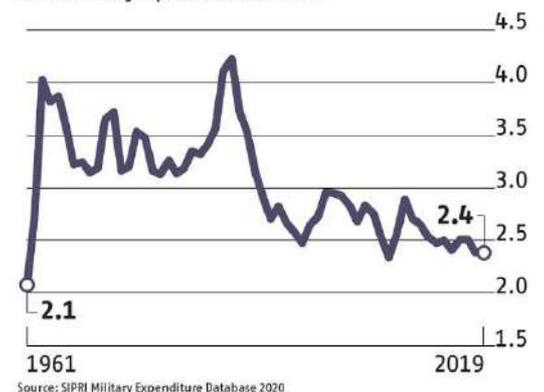
Procurement

- Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) chaired by defence minister is India's highest decision-making body on defence procurement
- FDI limit in the defence manufacturing under automatic route has been raised from 49% to 74%

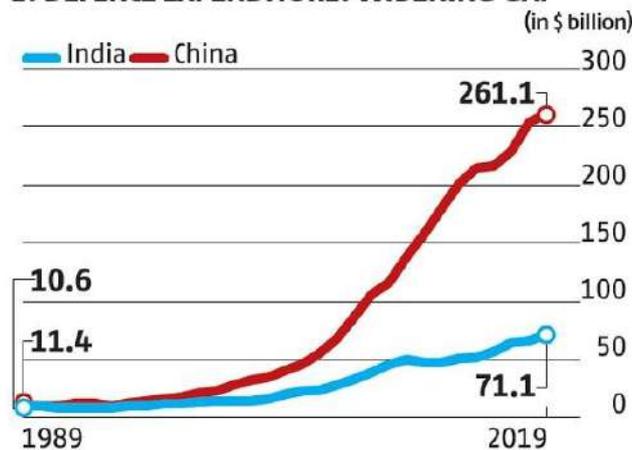
Analysis of India's Spending

- India spent generously on increasing its military capabilities. Spending has since 1962 seen the occasional surge but has largely been trending downwards
- Lower allocations has meant a widening gap between India and China in terms of the absolute amount being spent on meeting military objectives, especially over the past decade or so. China spends over 3.6 times the amount India spends every year now

1: ON THE WANE SINCE 1962
India's military expenditure as % of GDP

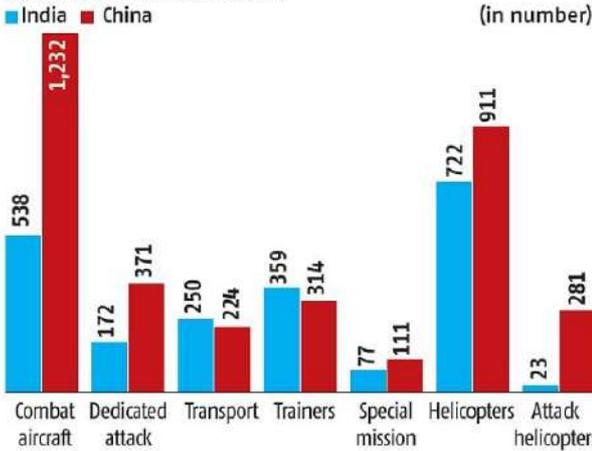


2: DEFENCE EXPENDITURE: WIDENING GAP



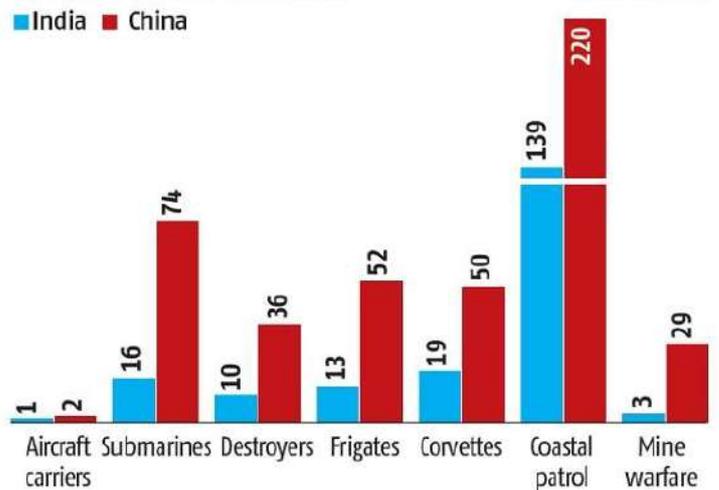
- This has translated into a better-equipped air force as well as rising naval capabilities. India has more people if one includes reserve personnel (3.5 million vs 2.7 million), though China has more in active service. But there is a significant difference in terms of land equipment and weaponry

3: A BIGGER AIR FORCE



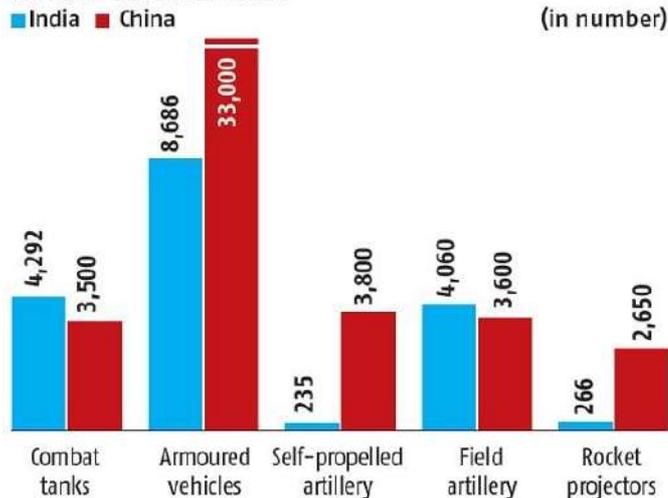
Source: GlobalFirepower.com

4: NAVAL CAPABILITIES ARE SIGNIFICANTLY HIGHER



Source: GlobalFirepower.com

5: GAP ON THE LAND



Source: GlobalFirepower.com

Comparative Analysis of India's Defence Expenditure

- The most recent Indian budgetary figures (revised estimates) put India's defence expenditure for 2019-20 at Rs 4.5 trillion or about \$59.7 billion
 - ✓ This actually puts India at fifth position, behind both Russia and Saudi Arabia
 - ✓ India spends 2.18 per cent of its GDP for defence purposes
- These budgetary figures include all aspects of defence spending, including salaries and defence pensions and civilian establishment of the ministry of defence, Coast Guard and Border Roads Organisation

Comparison with US, China, Russia, UK and Pakistan

- India allocates, by far, the highest percentage of its Defence Budget on personnel costs, with 59% going to salaries and pensions

- ✓ US and UK pay only 38 per cent and 30.6 per cent
- The heavy outgo on personnel costs results in India having the lowest percentage spend on equipment modernisation
 - ✓ India spares no more than 25% of its Defence budget on capital expenditure whereas China and UK spend 41 and 42 per cent on modernisation and even Pakistan spends around 37 per cent
 - ✓ Countries like the UK plan equipment modernisation for a 10-year window, identifying exactly what weapon platforms they need to replace and allocating the funding for procuring replacements
 - ✓ In contrast, India's 15-year Long Term Integrated Perspective Plan (LTIPP) is an endless wish list that the Budget cannot support, since there are no priorities identified, nor alignment of requirements with future budgetary means
 - ✓ India is ahead only of Pakistan in the amount spent on each soldier a year – including salary, equipment and training costs. While the US spends over half a million dollars per soldier and the UK spends \$367,000, India spends a mere \$43,000 per individual. Consequently, the Indian military is a manpower-heavy throng that is poorly armed, equipped, and trained

COMPARATIVE DEFENCE SPENDING

	Defence budget (\$ bn)	Military personnel (millions)	Spending per man (\$1,000)	Spend on personnel (%)	Spend on equipment (%)
USA	732.0	1.4	522	38.0	35
China	261.0	2.03	129	30.8	41
Russia	65.1	0.9	72	35.0	33
India	62.4	1.45	43	59.0	25
UK	51.4	0.14	367	30.6	42
Pakistan	10.3	0.65	16	40.0	37

Source: Multiple non-classified sources

Global Trends

- Global military expenditure growth at 3.6 per cent saw its largest annual spike in a decade in 2019
 - ✓ The total global military expenditure rose to \$1,917 billion in 2019 and its is the largest spending growth since 2010
- The five largest spenders, which accounted for 62 per cent of the total expenditure, were the US, China, India, Russia and Saudi Arabia
- The global military spending in 2019 represented 2.2 per cent of the global gross domestic product (GDP), which equates to approximately \$249 per person

- The military spending by the US grew by 5.3 per cent to a total of \$732 billion in 2019 and accounted for 38 per cent of global military spending. The increase in US spending in 2019 alone was equivalent to the entirety of Germany's military expenditure for that year

Allocation in the Defence Sector

- The allocation for the revenue head continues to be more than the capital expenditure
 - ✓ Revenue allocation is essential for the maintenance of weapons, equipment, transport and ammunition for the smooth function of the armed forces, apart from repairs, overhaul and procurements for the recoument of stores and reserves
 - ✓ It also saw marginal increase from FY 2019-20
- Capital expenditure also saw a marginal increase from FY 2019-20
- The largest increase in terms of budgetary allocation for capital expenditure is for IAF followed by Army
- In the allocation of the capital expenditure, there is an enhanced share of aircraft and aero engines for all the three services apart from their core acquisitions of weapon systems and naval fleet

Way Forward

A two-pronged pragmatic approach could hold the key for meeting our security challenges.

- At the strategic level of international relations – by forging alliances with partners who hold a stake in the Indian sub-continent and the Indian Ocean Region. The Quad in the Indian Ocean Region is one such welcome move, apart from securing naval berths in the friendly nations from Vietnam and Indonesia in the East to Qatar and Seychelles in the West, to counter the growing Chinese influence in the region buttressed by Chinese investments and OBOR.
- The second approach involves a more pragmatic approach to continue modernisation of the Armed Forces by way of greater participation of the private industry through reliance on making in India and also assembling in India.
 - ✓ There need to be more such partnerships of the Public and Private Sector, to meet the shortfalls in the budgetary allocation to fill in the wide gaps of technology, capital and to broad base the defence production in the country.

With the creation of the office of Chief of Defence Staff and the enhanced powers of procurement to the services, it is hoped that the three wings of India's armed forces may operate in synergy in terms of defence spends, both for capital and revenue expenditure. India's security concerns mandate a strong army, navy and air force where the three wings work cohesively for maximum tactical and operational efficiency.