20 Indian soldiers killed in face-off at Galwan

- No firing during confrontation; Colonel among the dead
- Indian patrol team attacked by much larger Chinese group
- Indian Army crossed Line of Actual Control, says PLA
- Defence Minister meets CDS, service chiefs, EAM Jaishankar

Twenty Indian personnel, including a Colonel, were killed in violent clashes with Chinese troops on Monday along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Ladakh, in what is possibly the worst incident between the two countries in decades. The clashes came amid a “de-escalation” process in the Galwan area that was started last week, after a
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<th>S. No</th>
<th>News Articles</th>
<th>Page Number*</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

*C – Chennai; B – Bengaluru; D – Delhi; H – Hyderabad; T – Thiruvananthapuram
In defence of MPLADS

It engaged MPs, catered to the aspirations of local people and ironed out regional imbalances

Raman Unnithan

The Indian Parliament is the nucleus of the republic. It has a legion of functions to perform. Subhash Kashyap, in Our Parliament, has enumerated the multiple functions of Parliament. It includes political and financial control, supervision of administration, elicitation and dissemination of information on the government of the day, grievance ventilation, national integration, legislative and constituent functions and furnishing leadership to the nation. The functions are non-exhaustive and incremental.

Doing away with a vital role

The responsibility of an MP does not end with the supervision of administration and legislation. He has to find solutions to the grievances of the electorate of his constituency and promote their developmental aspirations. As Parliament is a multifunctional institution, an MP is a multifunctional representative. His representative and grievance ventilation functions should not end with petitioning ministers and officials. An MP knows the developmental and welfare issues of his constituency better than anyone else. The Member of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS) has enabled MPs to play a leadership role in the developmental process of his constituency and sort out its day-to-day problems. The suspension of the gramme implementation. The projects are implemented according to the Ministry’s guidelines. Furthermore, the Scheme undergoes an impartial and meticulous auditing. The second instalment of funds is released only when the first instalment is fully utilised with no audit objections. This procedure leaves no place for corruption.

The pork barrel policy of State and Union Governments often leads to skewed development and regional imbalance. The ruling party channels public money to particular constituencies based on political considerations, at the expense of broader public interests. The elected opposition legislators of those constituencies fall victim to this pork barrel politics. MPLADS has been an antidote to this favouritism. The Scheme provided opposition MPs some chance to cater to the developmental needs of their constituency. The suspension of the Scheme has snatched away this limited opportunity.

Aspirations of the marginalised

Of the MPLADS corpus, 15% has been earmarked for the development of Scheduled Castes and 7.5% for the Scheduled Tribes. Around 420 lakh of the MPLADS fund per annum has been allotted for the welfare of differently abled people. Suspension of the MPLADS undermines the developmental aspirations of these marginalised segments.

Part A—Preliminary Examination

Paper I - (200 marks)

- Current events of national and international importance.
- Indian and World Geography—Physical, Social, Economic Geography of India and the World.

Part B—Main Examination

PAPER-III

General Studies—II: Governance, Constitution, Policy, Social Justice and International relations.

- Functions and responsibilities of the Union and the States, issues and challenges pertaining to the federal structure, devolution of powers and finances up to local levels and challenges therein.
- Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections of the population by the Centre and States and the performance of these schemes; mechanisms, laws, institutions and Bodies constituted for the protection and betterment of these vulnerable sections.
Background

• The Central Government has suspended the Member of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS) for two years (from 2020-21 to 2021-22)

MPLADS

• In 1993 Prime Minister announced the MPLADS scheme.
• Initially under the control of the Ministry of Rural Development
• In October 1994 – transferred to the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation
• Objective: To enable MPs to recommend works of developmental nature with emphasis on the creation of durable community assets based on the locally felt needs to be taken up in their constituencies.
• Durable assets of national priorities viz. drinking water, primary education, public health, sanitation and roads, etc.
• Rs. 5 crore per MP from 2011-12.
• Fully funded by the Government of India
• Lok Sabha members can recommend works within their Constituencies.
• Elected members of Rajya Sabha can recommend works in one or more districts in the State from where he/she has been elected
• Nominated members of LS and RS can recommend works anywhere in the country.

**Editorial**

1) Antidote to Pork Barrel Policies of the Government

• Ruling party channels the public money to particular constituencies based on political considerations, at the expense of broader public interests
  ✓ leads to skewed development and regional imbalances
• MPLADS provided opposition MPs some chance to cater to the developmental needs of their constituency.
2) Development aspirations of Marginalised segments

- MPs are to recommend every year, works costing at least 15% for areas inhabited by Scheduled Caste population and 7.5% for areas inhabited by S.T. population
- In case there is insufficient tribal population in the area of Lok Sabha Member, they may recommend this amount for the creation of community assets in tribal areas outside of their constituency but within their State of election

- In case a State does not have S.T. inhabited areas, this amount may be utilized in S.C. inhabited areas and vice-versa
- Around Rs.20 lacs of the MPLADS fund per annum has been allotted for the welfare of the differently abled people.
Way Forward

• MPLADS scheme should be restored as early as possible.
  ✓ To cater to the developmental aspirations of the local people and to iron out the regional imbalances.
India expects to sail through UN Security Council vote

Country stands unopposed as nominee for Asia-Pacific seat; tussle between Canada, Ireland and Norway for Western group

SUHASINI HAI DAR
NEW DELHI

India expects to sail through as the 193-member United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) votes on Wednesday for contenders to five non-permanent seats at the UN Security Council for 2021-22. India is standing unopposed as the nominee for the Asia-Pacific seat and needs two-thirds of UNGA members, or 129 votes, to be confirmed. Mexico is also unopposed in its bid for the Latin American and Caribbean seat, while there is a straight contest between Kenya and late entrant Djibouti for the African seat.

All eyes are, however, on the contest between Canada, Ireland and Norway, who are vying for the two seats allotted to the Western European and Others Group (WEOG), with each making a pitch for India’s vote.

‘Not complacent’

On Friday, Norwegian Foreign Minister Ine Eriksen Soreide held a videoconference with External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar. Eliciting votes for the UNSC was “one of the topics discussed” said Norwegian Ambassador Hans Jacob Frydenlund. “We count on support from a number of friendly countries. We are confident, but not complacent of securing the seat at the UNSC,” he told The Hindu when asked if India had assured Norway its support.

Irish Ambassador to India Brendan Ward would not comment on whether Ireland had specifically offered support. Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke to his Irish counterpart Leo Varadkar on April 22, and had also met him on the sidelines of the UNGA in New York last September.

“Both Ireland and India have the advantage that neither is a member of a military alliance,” Mr. Ward told The Hindu. “India has led the Non Aligned Movement (NAM), while Ireland has a unique position as a member of the European Union that is not a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) alliance,” he added, also alluding to the other “common bond” that Mr. Varadkar is of Indian origin.

Canada in fray

While Ireland announced its candidature in 2005, and Norway in 2007, Canada has been a relatively new entrant in the fray, with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announcing its bid for the UNSC in 2016, shortly after being elected to power.

Mr. Trudeau has pitched Canada’s campaign as a push for multilateralism in the post COVID-19 global recovery, and has reached out personally to many countries, including in a call with Mr. Modi on April 29, to win the vote.

In its own campaign brochure, India had highlighted its commitment to multilateralism, demand for transparency in mandates for UN peacekeeping missions, push for the Indian-led Comprehensive Convention for International Terrorism (CCTI) and joint efforts for UN reform and the expansion of the UNSC.

As a result, some have suggested that Canada’s membership of the “United for Consensus” grouping that includes Pakistan, who oppose the expansion of the permanent members of the UNSC and push for more non-permanent “elected seats”, could hamper its chances of securing India’s votes.

However, former UN envoy Asoke Mukerji says that the decision for India and other countries will be made by balancing “favour” each country does for others within the UN system, and not as much on ideological differences.

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Part A—Preliminary Examination

Paper I - (200 marks)

- Current events of national and international importance.
News: India is likely to be elected as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council (UNSC) for 2021-2022.

United Nations Security Council (UNSC)
- 15 members—5 permanent and 10 non-permanent members.
- Under the UN Charter, the Security Council has primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.
- It calls upon the parties to a dispute to settle it by peaceful means and recommends methods of adjustment.
- It can resort to imposing sanctions/even authorize the use of force to maintain international peace and security.

- Presidency of UNSC: Rotates and changes every month and is held by both permanent and non-permanent members.
- UNSC membership
  ✓ 5 permanent members of the UNSC are- China, France, Russia, United Kingdom and the USA.
  ✓ Out of the 10 non-permanent members, 5 are elected every year by the General Assembly for a two-year term.
  ✓ Elected on the basis of geographic representation— that is 5 from African and Asian States, 1 from Eastern European States, 2 from Latin American States, 2 from Western European and other States.
Demand for reforming UNSC

- Leading countries aspiring a permanent seat in the expanded UNSC are the G4 – namely, India, Japan, Germany and Brazil.

- Opposing this, Italy, Pakistan, Mexico and Egypt formed an interest group called the ‘Coffee Club’.

- Now reinvented into ‘Uniting for Consensus’, with more members like Canada and Columbia.
  - Favour increasing the number of non-permanent members without expanding the permanent members of the UNSC.


- India needs 2/3rd vote of the 193-member in United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), that is 129 votes - to become a non-permanent member.

Present Scenario:
- Mexico is unopposed for the Latin American seat.
- Kenya and Djibouti contest for the African seat.
- Canada, Ireland and Norway contest for Western European and other States seats.

Significance of India’s membership

- Reinstate India’s claim that it is qualified to become a permanent member.
• To push forward agendas—
  ✓ Upholding multilateralism.
  ✓ Demand for transparency in mandates for UN peacekeeping missions.
  ✓ UNSC expansion.
• India will also highlight addressing international terrorism, by pushing India-led Comprehensive Convention for International Terrorism (CCIT).
• India’s overall objective during this tenure will be to achieve NORMS— a New Orientation for a Reformed Multilateral System.
Nepal ties and the Benaras to Bengaluru spectrum

India needs a new prism to view its relationship with its Himalayan neighbour, keeping in mind the past and the future.

Bharatpur is a gateway to the Benaras to Bengaluru spectrum.

India’s anti-China sentiment. Politicians use it for personal gain, and it is deeply ingrained in the bureaucracy, academia, and media.

Today, Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli is cementing his legacy as a nationalist by extending Nepal’s map into Indian territory. The cartographic aggression and the embellishing of the new map in the country’s national emblem and Constitution are untenable and should have been avoided under all circumstances.

But this is not the first time Nepal has thumbed its nose at India, even at the cost of its people’s wellbeing. In 2015, the Nepali Congress government adopted the new Constitution, ignoring India’s concerns.

This instinct to cut off the nose to spite the face is visible in the lack of progress on the game-changing 5,000 MW Pancheshwar hydroelectric project. Nepal’s viable hydro-electricity potential is 40,000 MW; the country generates only 1,000 MW and imports 600 MW from India.

Identity politics with India also visible within the country where Nepali citizens from the Terai (Madhes) feel discriminated against by “Indian.”

Jeffrey Hersh, as churches are a certain cosmopolitanism but without the accompanying metropolitanization.

A link despite diversification Kathmandu has continued its long-standing efforts to spread Nepal’s opinion beyond India. Multilateral development banks are by far the biggest lenders and players in the country’s development efforts. And in fact, one of Nepal’s largest aid donors is the European Union.

India and China are not the only players for big projects either. A long-delayed project to pipe water into Kathmandu was with an Italian company, major investments in the telecom sector are coming from Malaysia, and the largest international carrier in Nepal is Qatar Airways.

The outward movement of students, along with the growth of institutions of higher learning at home, has meant that most young people in Nepal, including emerging contemporary leaders in politics, business, or academia, have not studied in India. This lack of common collegiate roots removes a natural bond of previous generations that had provided for better understanding and even empathy.

India, while most Nepal amends years, as Nepal produces today. Moreover, the peg with the Indian Rupee provides unique stability to the Nepali Rupee.

Nepal’s per capita income is just above $1,000. While the huge remittance economy has brought a semblance of well-being, the country has a long way to go in reaching prosperity.

The relationship with India, with open borders and Nepalis being allowed to live and work freely, provides Nepal a unique advantage and an economic cushion. The latter is particularly important today with COVID-19 causing global contraction positioned to pop the remittance bubble. Neither the Chinese nor any others are likely to write blank cheques.

Focus areas:

- India and its neighborhood relations.
- Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India’s interests.
- Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India’s interests, Indian diaspora.

Part A—Preliminary Examination

Paper I - (200 marks) Duration: Two hours

- Current events of national and international importance.
- Indian and World Geography-Physical, Social, Economic Geography of India and the World.

Part B—Main Examination

PAPER-III

General Studies- II: Governance, Constitution, Polity, Social Justice and International relations.

- India and its neighborhood relations.
- Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India’s interests.
- Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India’s interests, Indian diaspora.
Changing Nepal and its ties with India

1. Benaras – keystone of India-Nepal ties for centuries
   • Many political leaders of Nepal were resident of city
   • Many Nepalese bureaucrats and politicians had studied at Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi.
   • Now Bengaluru is preferred – Nepali programmers work for Indian tech companies in Bengaluru.
      ➢ Kathmandu-Bengaluru sector – one of the most profitable sectors for Nepal Airlines.

2. Nepal – now a democratic republic after 240 years of monarchy.
   • When Nepali government adopted new Constitution – ignored India’s concerns about violent reaction to constitution in Terai.
     ✓ Madhesis and Tharu ethnic minorities had expressed concern – proposed boundaries of new provinces could lead to their political marginalisation.

3. Using anti-India sentiment in the name of nationalism for personal gain.
4. Lack of progress on 5,000 MW Pancheshwar Multipurpose Project.
   - Bi-national hydropower project to be developed in Mahakali River bordering Nepal and India.
   - Game-changer for Nepal – its viable hydro-electricity potential is 40,000 MW, but it generates only 1,000 MW and imports 600 MW from India.

5. Exposure to globalisation.
   a) China has gradually gained influence in Nepal by increasing investments, aid and loans – China considers Nepal as a key partner in Belt and Road Initiative and wants to invest in Nepal’s infrastructure.
   
   b) Post 1990, Nepalis looked for work opportunities globally.
      ✓ West and South-East Asia became major destinations for labour migration.
      ✓ Nearly one-fifth of Nepal’s population were reportedly overseas (2019) – account for estimated $8 billion global remittances – 30% of Nepal’s nominal GDP.
      c) Students began moving to Europe, USA, Australia, Thailand, Japan and South Korea.
         ✓ lack of common collegiate roots among India and Nepal – emerging Nepalese leaders in politics, business or academics, have not studied in India.
d) Multilateral development banks – biggest lenders and players in Nepal’s development efforts.

- India-Nepal linkages remain robust
  - Nepal’s trade with India has grown and continues to account for more than two-thirds of Nepal’s external trade.
  - Advantages of both physical and societal geography.

Suggestions
- India should focus on developing its border areas with Nepal.
- Economic advantage to both sides and will help to keep people-to-people ties strong.
Practice Question – Prelims

Q1. Consider the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fauna</th>
<th>IUCN Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ganges River Dolphin</td>
<td>Endangered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Pangolin</td>
<td>Critically Endangered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leopard</td>
<td>Vulnerable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian Bison</td>
<td>Vulnerable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Which of the given pair(s) is/ are correctly matched?
(a) 1 and 2 only
(b) 2 and 3 only
(c) 1 and 3 only
(d) 1, 2, 3 and 4
With 334 species, Guwahati redefining concept of urban jungle

Assorted creatures, both big and small, share space with an estimated one million humans in Assam's principal city

RAHUL KARMAKAR, GUWAHATI

What is common to the Chinese pangolin, Nepal cricket frog, Bengal monitor lizard, Assamese cat snake, Eurasian moorhen, Asian elephant, Terai cricket frog and Ganges river dolphin?

They share space with an estimated one million humans in Guwahati, Assam’s principal city and the largest in the northeast, along with 336 other species of fauna recorded so far. Very few of them are caged in the Assam State zoo that occupies 30 hectares of the 620-hectare Hengrabari Reserve Forest referred to as the city’s lungs. According to city-based wildlife biologist Jayaditya Purkayastha, Guwahati redefines the term “urban jungle” with 334 and counting free-ranging fauna species living in the green spaces within concrete structures.

The 328-sq km city and its outskirts have 18 hills, eight reserve forests, two wildlife sanctuaries and a Ramsar site (Deepor Beel) besides the Brahmaputra flowing past its northern edge. This stretch of the river has a few Ganges river dolphins, which has the status of 'city animal'.

Mr. Purkayastha and members of Help Earth, a green group, have over the years recorded 26 species of amphibians, 56 reptiles, 36 mammals and 216 birds.

“We have more than 1,100 captive wild animals belonging to 107 species, of which 52 are highly protected under the Wildlife (Protection) Act of 1972. Our captive animals include exotic species such as giraffe, hippopotamus, macaw, Gaboon viper and some birds,” said Tejas Mariswamy, the zoo’s director.

“There have been reports of animals exploring human habitations during the COVID-19 lockdown. This has never been the case with Guwahati where people have co-existed with arguably the widest range of fauna despite human-animal conflicts such as the lynching of a leopard a few days ago,” Mr. Purkayastha told The Hindu.

His specialisation in herpetology triggered the initiative of documenting urban wildlife rather than 'conventional' areas such as the Kaziranga National Park. Among the reptiles, he has recorded 10 species of turtles, 18 of lizards and 30 of snakes.

“Six of Guwahati’s resident snakes are venomous, three of them (krait) strictly nocturnal while the monocled cobras are around wetlands. Thus, the snakes we see in the city are most likely to be non-venomous, providing services such as rodent population control," he said.

Wildlife specialists are worried that Guwahati has been following the global trend, which projects the urban area on earth to triple before 2050.

“Our innate obsession with big and colourful creatures makes it hard to recognise the small and less charismatic species. The common Asian toad, red-eyed frog, toad gecko, Salazar's pit viper, Indian rooted turtle, barred goose and oriental turtle dove need to survive as much as their larger neighbours like the elephant, gaur, leopard, Bengal fox, dhole and Indian flying squirrel," Mr. Purkayastha said.

Leopard to be shifted to zoo

STAFF REPORTER, COIMBATORE

The Forest Department plans to shift an injured female leopard, rescued from Sirumugai near Coimbatore on Sunday, to Vandalar zoo for better treatment. Officials said the leopard was showing signs of improvement.

Civilspedia Team - Powered by Shankar IAS Academy
News: Guwahati in Assam is an urban jungle, where human beings and free-ranging fauna coexists.

Ramsar Convention/Convention on Wetlands
- An intergovernmental treaty, which provides the framework for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources.

Deepor Beel: A Ramsar site in Guwahati.
- Deepor Beel is a permanent freshwater lake in a former channel of the Brahmaputra river.
- Significance:
  ✓ It is the only major storm water storage basin for Guwahati.
  ✓ Home for some of the largest concentrations of aquatic birds in Assam.
  ✓ Source of livelihood.

Montreux Record
- It is a selected wetland sites on the List of Wetlands of International Importance.
- Wetlands where changes in ecological character have occurred, are occurring, or are likely to occur are included in the Record.
- Montreux Record is maintained as a part of the Ramsar List.
- Keoladeo national park, Rajasthan and Loktak Lake in Manipur.
## Conservation status of some important fauna

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>IUCN Red List</th>
<th>CITES</th>
<th>WPA, 1972</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ganges River Dolphin</td>
<td>Endangered</td>
<td>Appendix 1</td>
<td>Schedule 1, Part 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Pangolin</td>
<td>Critically Endangered</td>
<td>Appendix 2</td>
<td>Schedule 1, Part 1</td>
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<td>Leopard</td>
<td>Vulnerable</td>
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<td>Schedule 1, Part 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black-hooded-oriole</td>
<td>Least Concern</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Schedule 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian Elephant</td>
<td>Endangered</td>
<td>Appendix 1</td>
<td>Schedule 1, Part 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaur/Indian Bison</td>
<td>Vulnerable</td>
<td>Appendix 1</td>
<td>Schedule 1, Part 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **IUCN** - International Union for Conservation of Nature.
- **NA** - Not Available
Practice Question – Prelims

Q2. Consider the following pairs.

Lakes - Situated in
1. Loktak lake - Assam
2. Lonar lake - Maharashtra
3. Sambhar lake - Rajasthan

Which of the pairs given above is/are correctly matched?

(a) 1 only
(b) 1 and 2 only
(c) 2 only
(d) 2 and 3 only
National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI)

- Constituent of Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR), New Delhi.
- Mandate
  - To conduct research and developmental studies in environmental science and engineering
  - To render assistance to the industries of the region, local bodies, etc. – in solving the problems of environmental pollution through Science & Technology intervention
  - To interact and collaborate with academic and research institutions on environmental science and engineering for mutual benefit
  - To participate in CSIR thrust area and National mission projects

Loktak Lake

- Situated in Manipur.
- Largest freshwater (sweet) lake in North-East India.
- Only Floating lake in the world due to the floating ‘phumdis’ on it.
- 1990 – designated as a wetland of international importance under the Ramsar Convention.
- 1993 – listed under the Montreux Record.

Sambhar Lake

- India’s largest saline wetland.
- Designated Ramsar Site.
Collective bargaining which empowers the labourers

It stops exploitation of the workers. Ex: when women form cooperatives, they can fight injustice at workplace like lack of proper amenities or wages.

Restructuring MGNREGA:

- MGNREGA - a way of alleviating the problems of migrant workers but it gives only a short term occupation for the labourers.
- Restructuring MGNREGA so that the funds can be used by women/artisan coop to market their products.
Practice Question – Prelims

Q3. With reference to ‘Member of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS)’, consider the following statements.

1. It is fully funded by the Government of India.
2. It comes under the control of Ministry of Rural Development.
3. Under this scheme, the MPs must recommend works that give special attention for infrastructure development of areas inhabited by Scheduled Castes and Schedule Tribes.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are incorrect?

(a) 1 only
(b) 2 only
(c) 2 and 3 only
(d) 1, 2 and 3
Answers

1. Option ‘d’ – 1, 2, 3 and 4
2. Option ‘d’ – 2 and 3 only
3. Option ‘b’ – 2 only
Mains Question – 2015
GS-II

Q. Discuss the impediments India is facing in its pursuit of a permanent seat in UN Security Council. (200 words, 12.5 marks)
Q. India and Nepal must act according to the changing scenarios, keeping in mind the past and the future. Discuss. (150 words, 10 marks)