

Galwan Valley Conflict

The India China Border Dispute dates way back to the Sino-India war of 1962. The main cause of the war was a dispute over the sovereignty of the widely separated Aksai Chin and Arunachal Pradesh border regions. India claimed the Aksai Chin is a part of Kashmir and hence a part of Indian territory, while China claimed it to be a part of Xinjiang. It contained an important road link that connects the Chinese regions of Tibet and Xinjiang. China's construction of this road was one of the triggers of the conflict. Since then, there has been some border issue, be it minor or major, along the McMohan Line.

- India and China share a 3,488 km long boundary. Unfortunately, the entire boundary is disputed. The line, which delineates the boundary between the two countries, is popularly called the McMahan Line, after Sir Henry McMahan.
- In 1913, the British-India government called a tripartite conference, where the boundary between India and Tibet was formalized after a discussion between the Indians and the Tibetans. A Convention was adopted, resulting in the Indo-Tibetan boundary's delimitation. This boundary is, however, disputed by China, which terms it illegal.
- In 1957, China occupied Aksai Chin and built a road through it. This episode was followed by intermittent clashes along the border, culminating in the border war of 1962. The boundary, which came into existence after the war, came to be known as the Line of Actual Control (LAC). It is a military-held line.

India China Border Dispute Segments

The India China Border Dispute is divided into three segments:

- The Western boundary dispute is related to the Johnson Line established by the British. This border stretches up to the Kunlun Mountains and Aksai Chin. India, after attaining Independence, claimed Aksai Chin as part of India. China initially did not deny this but reversed its position in the following years.
- The central border disputes are minor, and most issues around this border are resolved and agreed upon by both India and China.
- The Eastern boundary dispute is related to the McMahan Line. Many attempts to resolve the issue failed, and the dispute on this border remains unresolved. China firmly believes that Arunachal Pradesh is a section of South Tibet. This claim of China has been relentlessly rejected by India.

Galwan Valley: Strategic Importance

Since the Shyok route runs near the Galwan River, the highest ridgeline, the Chinese can control the area. It is located near Aksai Chin, a disputed region claimed by India but governed by China, and along the western portion of the LAC.

India is attempting to build a feeder road that starts from the route that connects Darbuk-Shyok Village and Daulat Beg Odi (DS-DBO road). The most important communication route near LAC, this road, follows the Shyok River. As a result, the Chinese were motivated to take control of this region because they were concerned that the Indian side might use the Galwan valley to threaten their position on the Aksai Chin plateau.



Galwan Valley Conflict

The latest standoff between the two major countries of the Asian continent on the India China border disputes represents an escalation of the sort not seen since the Sino-India war of 1962. The Sino-India border dispute covers the 3,488-km-long Line of Actual Control.

- In the first week of May 2020, around 250 Chinese and Indian soldiers were engaged in a fierce face-off in Pangong Tso, also known as Pangong Lake in eastern Ladakh.
- Pangong Tso Lake is located 14,000 feet above sea level in the Himalayan region of India's United Territory Ladakh. The trigger of the current face-off has been China's stiff opposition to India laying roads around the Pangong Tso Lake.
- Another reason can be the construction of the link road connecting the Durbuk-Shayok-Daulat Beg Oldie road in Galwan Valley. Galwan Valley is a strategically important point on the Line of Actual Control for India.
- With China's incursion in the valley, it is now less than 2 km away from the newly rebuilt strategic all-weather Durbuk-Daulat Beg Oldi road that supports the lone Indian outpost of Daulat Beg Oldi at the mouth of the Karakorum Pass.

Galwan Valley Standoff: India China Border Dispute

In eastern Ladakh's Pangong Tso, Galwan Valley, Demchok, and Daulat Beg Oldie, the Indian and Chinese soldiers are locked in a standoff. In numerous locations, including Pangong Tso, many Chinese Army men even crossed onto the Indian side of the de facto boundary. Pangong

Tso's northern bank activities aim to increase control over the resource-rich lake, not merely for territorial gains on land.

- As a result of India's recent infrastructure developments, the standoff in Ladakh's Galwan Valley grew more heated.
- To connect the area to an airport, India is constructing a crucial road across the Galwan Valley, which is near China.
- There are frequent border violations because the border, or Line of Actual Control, is not marked, and China and India have different notions about where it should be.
- A violent confrontation resulted when the Chinese side disregarded the consensus to respect the LAC and tried to change the status quo unilaterally.
- China's 'nibble and negotiate policy' is responsible for it. They want to prevent India from developing infrastructure along the LAC. They use military force to accomplish a political objective while expanding their territory at the same time.

Events that Heated the India China Border Dispute

After a short war between India and China in 1962, a ceasefire due to international pressure resulted in China confining the Line of Actual Control. However, there were several instances where the India China Border Dispute heated up.

Some of the instances include:

- In 2017, the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) constructed a road that entered the Dhoklam region by Bhutan. The road construction was halted by the Indian troops, and in August, both countries withdrew their forces.
- In May 2020, the soldiers of both countries engaged in face-offs and scuffles at the Galwan Valley. The incident resulted in the death of 20 Indian soldiers and several Chinese soldiers.
- In September 2020, five youths were abducted from the McMahon Line in Arunachal Pradesh. The Chinese troops near the Kibithu border post released the abducted youth after a week.
- China has ramped up infrastructure, built bunkers, deployed weaponry, and built villages in the disputed areas.
- Both countries have accused each other of firing shots and provoking military tensions.
- In February 2021, both countries agreed on disengagement from the South and North Banks of Pangong Lake.
- In August 2021, Both agreed on disengagement from Gogra.

Galwan Valley Conflict: China's Action

Since the Galwan Valley Face-off in May, 2020, the Chinese government has undertaken the following measures:

- The PLA has constructed additional housing in the depth zones along the LAC on its side and is getting ready to establish a long-term presence in the region.
- The Chinese are rotating troops in certain locations.
- China is stepping up development efforts behind the Aksai Chin's primary flashpoints of conflict.
- The PLA practiced using small weaponry in Tibet. In this exercise, PLA forces received training in using various weaponry, including anti-aircraft machine guns, grenade launchers, and anti-tank rocket launchers.
- According to reports, China has also placed long-range rocket artillery in the border region at the height of 5200 meters.

India China Border Dispute: Present Condition

The India China Relations are uncertain. At least on the outside, there is neither improvement nor deterioration. India and China have held numerous discussions, but their standoff at the border has not progressed significantly. The Line of Actual Control (LAC), the de facto border in areas that the two nations dispute, nevertheless has more than 60,000 troops on each side. Despite China's assurances that India and China do not pose a threat to one another, India lacks faith in China's sincerity due to its repeated confrontational actions. Given the hostile behavior of China on the ground, this loss of faith in China and the ensuing skepticism will only deepen.

