



# CURRENT AFFAIRS



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## GALWAN VALLEY

This article covers "Daily Current Affairs" and the topic details "Galwan Valley". The topic "Galwan Valley" has relevance in the Security section of the UPSC CSE exam.

### Relevance:

#### For Prelims:

Facts about Galwan Valley?

#### For Mains:

GS 3: Security

Challenges for India at LAC?

Solutions for the Challenges?

Reason Behind India's Failure to Acquire latest Defence Technology?

### Why in the News?

Three years after the Galwan Valley clash between India and China on June 15, 2020, despite many rounds of negotiations and engagement at multiple levels, the military tensions continue. India has said there can be no normal ties if China breaches border agreements. Both sides are building infrastructure in the area.

### Facts about Galwan valley

- **Location:** The Galwan Valley is located in the Aksai Chin region of the Union Territory of Ladakh in India. It lies on the western side of the Line of Actual Control (LAC), the de facto border between India and China.
- **Geography:** The valley is situated in the Himalayas and is surrounded by high-altitude mountain ranges. It is a remote and challenging terrain with harsh weather conditions, including freezing temperatures and high winds.
- **Strategic Importance:** The Galwan Valley holds significant strategic importance due to its proximity to the LAC. It provides access to the Shyok River and serves as a route for the movement of troops and supplies.
- **Galwan River:** The valley is named after the Galwan River, which flows through it. The river originates from the glaciers in the area and eventually merges with the Shyok River.
- **Military Presence:** Both India and China have maintained military posts and patrols in the Galwan Valley. The region has witnessed occasional standoffs and tensions between the two sides.
- **Galwan Valley Clash:** The Galwan Valley clash refers to the violent confrontation that occurred between Indian and Chinese troops on June 15, 2020. It resulted in casualties on both sides and marked a significant escalation in the ongoing border tensions.
- **Infrastructure Development:** In recent years, both India and China have undertaken infrastructure development projects in the region. This includes the construction of roads, bridges, and military infrastructure to support their respective positions along the border.

### Challenges for India at LAC?

- **Border Infrastructure:** One of the challenges for India is the relatively underdeveloped infrastructure along the LAC compared to China.

- **Border Incursions:** China has been known to undertake border incursions into the Indian territory along the LAC. These incursions often involve Chinese troops crossing into disputed areas, setting up temporary structures, and asserting their presence.
- **Border Disputes and Perceptions:** India and China have differing perceptions of the LAC in several areas, including the Galwan Valley. These differences in perception often lead to face-offs and confrontations between the troops of both countries.
- **High-Altitude Environment:** The LAC is characterized by a high-altitude environment with extreme weather conditions, including freezing temperatures, high winds, and low oxygen levels. The harsh terrain poses logistical challenges for Indian troops deployed in the region.
- **Military Build-up:** China has significantly developed its military infrastructure along the LAC, including the construction of roads, airstrips, and advanced surveillance systems. India faces the challenge of countering this military build-up to maintain a credible defense posture along the border.
- **Diplomatic and Geopolitical Considerations:** The border disputes between India and China have broader diplomatic and geopolitical implications. India needs to balance its responses at the LAC while considering the potential impact on regional dynamics, relations with other countries, and its overall strategic interests.

### Solutions for the Challenges?

- **Strengthen Border Infrastructure:** India should continue investing in the development of border infrastructure, including roads, bridges, and communication networks. Improved infrastructure will enhance mobility, logistics, and troop deployment capabilities along the LAC, bolstering India's defense posture.
- **Enhance Surveillance and Intelligence:** India should focus on enhancing its surveillance and intelligence capabilities along the LAC. This includes utilizing advanced technologies such as unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), satellite imagery, and early warning systems to monitor and detect any suspicious activities or incursions.
- **Build Military Capabilities:** India should continue to build and modernize its military capabilities, including land forces, air power, and naval assets. This involves upgrading equipment, improving training and readiness levels, and fostering interoperability among different branches of the armed forces to effectively respond to any contingencies at the LAC.
- **Strengthen Diplomatic Engagement:** India should maintain consistent diplomatic engagement with China to find a peaceful resolution to the border disputes. Continued dialogue and negotiations can help in building mutual trust, clarifying perceptions of the LAC, and reducing tensions along the border.
- **Forge Strategic Partnerships:** India should strengthen its strategic partnerships and alliances with like-minded countries that share concerns about China's assertiveness in the region. Collaborating with partners can provide diplomatic support, intelligence sharing, and opportunities for defense cooperation, which can enhance India's position at the LAC.
- **Focus on Indigenous Defense Production:** India should continue to promote indigenous defense production and research and development capabilities. Encouraging domestic defense manufacturing and innovation will reduce dependence on foreign technology and enhance self-reliance in critical defense sectors.
- **Improve Border Management:** India should enhance border management mechanisms, including regular consultations, joint patrols, and hotlines, to maintain communication channels and prevent misunderstandings or accidental escalations. Confidence-building measures can play a crucial role in de-escalating tensions and maintaining peace along the border.
- **Strengthen Economic and Trade Relations:** Strengthening economic and trade ties with neighboring countries can create interdependencies and promote stability. Enhanced economic cooperation can provide avenues for dialogue and de-escalation, reducing the likelihood of conflicts along the LAC.
- **Focus on Soft Power Diplomacy:** India should leverage its soft power assets, including cultural exchanges, people-to-people contacts, and economic diplomacy, to build goodwill and influence in the region. Soft power initiatives can help in fostering understanding and trust between countries, contributing to peaceful relations at the LAC.

### Reason Behind India's Failure to Acquire latest Defence Technology?

- **Limited R&D Investment:** Historically, India has allocated a relatively low percentage of its GDP towards research and development (R&D) compared to some other countries. Insufficient investment in R&D hampers the country's ability to develop cutting-edge technologies domestically and can limit its capacity to acquire advanced technologies from abroad.
- **Emphasis on Low-cost Solutions:** India has often prioritized low-cost solutions and affordability over acquiring advanced technology. This approach has been driven by the need to address the country's large population and socio-economic challenges. Consequently, there may be less focus on seeking and acquiring expensive, state-of-the-art technology.
- **Lack of a Robust Innovation Ecosystem:** Building a robust innovation ecosystem requires a combination of factors, including strong academia-industry collaboration, a favorable regulatory environment, and a vibrant startup culture. While India has made progress in recent years, there are still challenges in creating an ecosystem that fosters innovation and technological advancements.
- **Limited Defense Exports:** India's defense industry has traditionally focused more on meeting domestic requirements rather than pursuing extensive defense exports. This approach has restricted the country's exposure to advanced technology collaborations with other nations and limited its access to state-of-the-art defense technologies.
- **Complex Procurement Processes:** India's procurement processes, particularly in the defense sector, have often been criticized for their complexity and lengthy timelines. These bureaucratic hurdles can hinder the efficient acquisition of technology and discourage foreign entities from engaging in technology transfer partnerships.
- **Export Control Regimes:** Certain countries have strict export control regimes that limit the transfer of sensitive technologies. This can pose challenges for India when attempting to acquire advanced technology from these countries, particularly in strategic sectors such as defense and nuclear energy.
- **Intellectual Property Rights Concerns:** India has faced criticism regarding intellectual property rights (IPR) protection. Concerns over weak enforcement and inadequate legal frameworks can discourage foreign technology providers from engaging in technology transfer agreements with Indian entities.

Source:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/three-years-after-galwan-where-india-china-ties-stand-8665439/>

#### Q.1 Which of the following statements is/are correct regarding the Galwan Valley?

1. It is located in the Union Territory of Ladakh in India.
2. The Galwan River flows through the valley.
3. The Galwan Valley clash in 2020 marked a significant escalation in border tensions between India and Pakistan.
4. The valley is known for its lush green landscapes and agricultural productivity.

Select the correct option(s) from the following:

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 1, 2, and 3 only
- (c) 2 and 4 only
- (d) 1, 2, and 4 only

Answer: (a)

#### Q.2 Which of the following rivers are associated with the Galwan Valley?

1. Galwan River
2. Shyok River
3. Indus River
4. Brahmaputra River

Select the correct option(s) from the following:

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 1, 2, and 3 only
- (c) 2 and 4 only

(d) 1, 2, and 4 only

**Answer: (a)**

**Q.3** The Galwan Valley clash of 2020 highlighted the complexities and challenges in India-China relations. Discuss the strategic significance of the Galwan Valley, the factors contributing to the clash, and the implications for India's foreign policy approach towards China.

**Rishabh**

