

# Mains Master

**Arunachal Pradesh will always be a part of India: Jaishankar**

## Context:

- **Geographical Significance:** The Line of Actual Control (LAC) traverses some of the world's most challenging terrain in the Himalayan mountains, underscoring the logistical challenges of maintaining a concrete border demarcation.
- **Power Dynamics:** The dispute isn't just about territory; it symbolizes a larger struggle for influence within Asia between two rapidly growing economic and military powers.

## Background:

- **Legacy of the British Raj:** The McMahon Line, drawn as part of the 1914 Simla Convention, was meant to define borders between British India and Tibet. China never accepted its legitimacy, arguing Tibet wasn't an independent power at the time.
- **The 1962 War:** This short but brutal war solidified Chinese control over Aksai Chin. It created deep-seated mistrust between India and China, hindering future negotiations.

## The Dispute:

- **Aksai Chin's Importance:** While largely barren, Aksai Chin holds strategic value for China as it contains a vital road linking its restive regions of Xinjiang and Tibet.
- **Arunachal Pradesh's Significance:** India considers Arunachal Pradesh an integral state with cultural and historical ties. China views it as part of South Tibet, further complicating negotiations.
- **Divergent Perceptions of the LAC:** Lack of a mutually agreed-upon border demarcation means frequent transgressions and accusations of encroachment from both sides.

## Present Standoff:

- **Galwan Valley Legacy:** The deaths of soldiers in 2020 were a stark reminder that the border can turn volatile despite previous agreements.
- **Lingering Distrust:** Mutual suspicions over troop movements and infrastructural development activities keep tensions high and the potential for miscalculation significant.

## Key Initiatives to Resolve the Dispute:

- **Diplomatic Track:** Special Representatives from both countries maintain ongoing talks for confidence-building and border management, though finding a breakthrough on territorial claims remains elusive.
- **Military-level Dialogues:** These focus on tactical disengagements, preventing flare-ups, and creating protocols for encounters along the LAC.

## Possible Future Trajectory:

- **Danger of Accidental Conflict:** Increased military presence and aggressive maneuvering raise the risk of incidents spiraling out of control.
- **Potential for Cooperation:** Emphasis on mutually beneficial areas like trade, climate collaboration, or joint regional initiatives could create positive momentum and lessen tensions over time.
- **Protracted Negotiations:** A final resolution will likely be years in the making, requiring careful management of the dispute in the interim along with small, incremental steps.

## Conclusion

The India-China border dispute is complex, layered, and potentially combustible. Open communication channels are vital. Both nations need a strong political will to compromise and engage in creative diplomatic solutions—not just for their own interests but for the stability of the wider region

**Ladakh's protest; a hunger for justice**

## Context

- Ladakh, a cold, high-altitude region in India, has been made a Union Territory (UT) without a legislature following the reorganization of Jammu and Kashmir in 2019.
- This move has limited the decision-making powers of the local Ladakhi people.

## Background

- Sonam Wangchuk, a renowned Ladakhi educator and environmentalist, led a 21-day hunger strike to advocate for greater autonomy and protections for Ladakh.
- The strike highlights the growing demand for Statehood and inclusion of Ladakh under the Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution.

## Reasons for Demand for Statehood

- **Loss of decision-making power:** Ladakh's status as a UT without a legislature has led to decision-making being concentrated in the hands of non-resident bureaucrats, affecting matters like land use and resource management.
- **Exclusion from land allotment policies:** Even the existing Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Councils (LAHDCs) have limited power, as evidenced by their exclusion from the new Ladakh Industrial Land Allotment Policy, designed to attract investment to the region.
- **Lack of power to address land issues:** Locals are losing grazing land along borders and to industries, without the authority to intervene in matters affecting their land.

## Demands of Protesters

- **Sixth Schedule safeguards:** Inclusion under the Sixth Schedule would establish regional councils with the power to enact laws on land use, catering to the needs of the local people.
- **Statehood OR UT with a legislature:** Granting either Statehood or retaining UT status but with a legislature would restore the local population's decision-making powers.
- **Separate Public Service Commission and Parliamentary seats:** These would enable fair representation and better address Ladakh's unique needs.

## Environmental Challenges

- **Tourism pressure on resources:** The rapid growth of tourism in Ladakh has strained water resources, with uneven distribution of access.
- **Climate change threats:** Ladakh is facing the impact of climate change with increased instances of glacial lake outburst floods (GLOFs), landslides, permafrost degradation, and rising temperatures. These events threaten lives, property, and infrastructure.

## Impact of Tourism, Mining, and Development

- **Exacerbating water scarcity:** The influx of tourists significantly increases water demand, leading to greater reliance on potentially contaminated groundwater.
- **Environmental damage:** Pollution from increased traffic and mining activities contributes to accelerated glacial melting.

## Possible Solutions

- **Sixth Schedule Inclusion:** Empowering locals with decision-making abilities would likely lead to more sustainable and community-focused development.
- **Sustainable tourism:** Implementing practices like water conservation measures and limiting tourist numbers during peak seasons.
- **Climate-resilient development:** Investment in infrastructure and early-warning systems to mitigate the impacts of climate change.

## Conclusion

The hunger strike led by Sonam Wangchuk is a powerful sign of the dissatisfaction among the people of Ladakh with their current status and its impact on their lives and environment. Their primary demands for increased self-governance through the Sixth Schedule or Statehood aim to secure their autonomy, resources, and a sustainable future in a rapidly changing world



**Context:**

- India's ambitious renewable energy goals, aiming to source 50% of electricity from non-fossil fuels by 2030.
- Solar power is a crucial component of this plan.

**Background:**

- India's domestic solar manufacturing capacity lags behind its installation targets.
- Reliance on imported solar panels, primarily from China, due to cost and availability.

**New Change:**

- Implementation of the "Approved Models and Manufacturers" list.
- This list requires domestic solar manufacturers to undergo inspection for certification.
- Certified manufacturers gain eligibility for government solar energy tenders.

**Impact:**

- Aims to boost domestic solar manufacturing and reduce reliance on Chinese imports.
- Potentially raises costs in the short term, as domestic industry ramps up to meet demand.

**Implication on Solar Industry:**

- Domestic manufacturers face increased scrutiny and need to ensure high quality to be competitive.
- Potential risk of protectionism leading to quality compromises for the sake of supporting domestic industry.

**Matter of Concern:**

- Balancing the growth of India's solar industry with the need to maintain affordability and quality of solar power for consumers.

**Way Forward:**

- Emphasize stringent quality checks for domestic manufacturers to ensure competitiveness on the global market.
- Promote healthy growth in the domestic industry while seeking ways to keep solar energy accessible.
- Avoid relying solely on protectionist measures; quality and consumer interests should be paramount.

**Agencies must focus on crimes that truly threaten nation: CJI**

- CJI Chandrachud emphasizes the need for investigative agencies like the CBI to prioritize their focus on crimes that pose significant threats to the nation's security, economy, and public order.
- He suggests that agencies have been stretched too thin over the years and must choose their battles wisely to enhance efficiency.
- Chandrachud raises concerns about the excessive confiscation of personal devices during searches, stressing the importance of balancing investigative needs with individual privacy rights.
- The CJI highlights the potential of technology in improving crime detection and advancing criminal justice reform, emphasizing the importance of leveraging technology responsibly and ethically.
- He underscores the significance of fairness, equity, and accountability in embracing technological capabilities to ensure that the benefits of advancements are accessible to all members of society.

**Rise in demand for MGNREGS points to failure of govt.: Cong**

- Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh criticizes the Narendra Modi government, stating that the rise in demand for the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) indicates the government's failures.
- Latest statistics show an increase in demand for work under MGNREGS, surpassing pre-pandemic levels, with 305.2 million person days generated in the financial year 2023-24.
- Ramesh highlights that MGNREGS was originally designed by the Congress government as a safety net for the rural poor, generating employment only when alternative options with better wages are unavailable.
- He accuses the government of ignoring the widespread unemployment and stagnant wages revealed by the data, which contradicts the development narrative promoted by the government.

**Team led by PRL Ahmedabad finds ozone on Jupiter's moon****Discovery of Ozone on Callisto:**

An international team, including Indian scientists, has discovered evidence of ozone on Jupiter's moon, Callisto, revealing insights into complex chemical processes on icy celestial bodies and their potential habitability, as published in the journal *Icarus*.

**Chemical Evolution Study:**

The study focused on the chemical evolution of 'SO<sub>2</sub> astrochemical ice' on Callisto's surface, leading to the formation of ozone, with experiments conducted to simulate solar radiation effects on sulphur dioxide ice samples.

**Significance of Ozone:**

The presence of ozone indicates the potential for oxygen and complex molecule formation essential for life, raising questions about Callisto's habitability and extending implications to other icy moons in the solar system, offering insights into geological and atmospheric processes.

**Experimental Process:**

Scientists recreated Callisto's surface conditions using sulphur dioxide ice samples irradiated with vacuum ultraviolet photons, observing the absorption spectrum to detect ozone formation, with comparisons made to Hubble Space Telescope data to validate findings.

**Broader Implications:**

The discovery of ozone on Callisto provides valuable insights into potential habitable conditions beyond Earth, highlighting common molecular sources in celestial bodies' surface compositions and advancing understanding of Jupiter's moon formation processes.

**March's gross GST of ₹1.78 lakh crore lifts FY24 revenue to ₹20.2 lakh cr.****March GST Revenue Overview:**

Gross GST revenue in March reached ₹1,78,484 crore, marking the second-highest level, with a growth rate of 11.5% compared to February's 12.5%, contributing to a total of over ₹20.18 lakh crore for the fiscal year 2023-24.

**Net Revenue Growth:**

Net GST revenue, after refunds, grew by 18.4% in March to ₹1.65 lakh crore, surpassing February's growth of 13.6%, with a total of ₹18.01 lakh crore for the full financial year, reflecting a 13.4% growth rate.

**Domestic Transactions Impact:**

Gross revenue from domestic transactions surged by 17.6% in March, outpacing February's 13.9% rise, while revenue from goods imports saw a decline of about 5% year-on-year, following February's 8.5% increase.

**Financial Year Performance:**

The Finance Ministry noted an average monthly collection of ₹1.68 lakh crore for the fiscal year, exceeding the previous year's average, with Central GST collections surpassing FY24's revised estimate and a slight shortfall in GST compensation cess inflows.

**Future Outlook:**

ICRA's chief economist, Aditi Nayar, highlighted the likelihood of exceeding the Interim Budget Estimate growth for FY25, with the implicit growth target now below 10%, indicating a positive trend in GST revenue performance.

**Hydro-power records steepest fall in four decades**

- Steepest decline in 38 years: India's hydroelectricity output fell by 16.3% due to erratic rainfall, leading to increased reliance on coal-fired power amid higher demand, marking a significant shift in energy generation trends.