Indian troops have moved back 1.5 km from the site of the June 15 clash at the Galwan Valley in eastern Ladakh, creating a buffer zone, which will be off-limits for foot patrolling by them for the next 30 days, a senior government official has told The Hindu.

This is as per the agreement reached during the Corps Commander-level talks on June 30.

Then and now: A June 28 satellite image of the Galwan Valley, left, shows that India had built a wall on its side and China had expanded an outpost camp at the end of a long road connected to its military bases farther from the poorly defined border, according to experts. The structures appear to have been dismantled in the July 6 image, on the right. • AP

The government is readying a document that will lay down guidelines for companies and institutions working on potential COVID-19 vaccines.

The COVID-19 pandemic has prompted regulators across the world to issue emergency use authorisation for certain drugs and trials on potential vaccines to accelerate the approval process without compromising on objectively assessing whether the potential candidate vaccines from India, including Covaxin from Bharat Biotech and one from Zydus Cadilla, which were cleared by the Drug Controller General of India...
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U.S. stance on CAATSA unchanged

The message was reiterated in the context of India's jet fighter deal with Russia.

SRIKANTH LAKSHMIN

Despite a change in the ground realities following the deadly clash between India and China along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) last month, the U.S. message to countries, including India, on sanctions for the purchase of Russian arms has not changed. This message was reiterated in the context of India's planned jet fighter deal with Russia at an estimated $13 billion.

"We urge all of our allies and partners to forge transactions with Russia that risk triggering sanctions under the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA)," a State Department spokesperson told The Hindu.

Last week, the Defence Acquisition Council approved the procurement of 21 MiG-29 jets for the Indian Air Force (IAF), an upgrade for 39 of these Russian aircraft and the acquisition of 15 Su-30 MKI aircraft.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh had discussed defence cooperation with Russia while on a visit to Moscow two weeks ago.

"There is strict criteria for considering a waiver, and each transaction is evaluated on a case-by-case basis," an unnamed State Department official told Jane's (a defence and security magazine) on June 26.

Monitoring situation

The U.S. was continuing to "closely monitor" the situation and supported a "peaceful resolution," the spokesperson said.

The U.S. itself has become increasingly wary of China, with which it has an extensive but increasingly strained economic relationship. Two American aircraft carriers recently entered the South China Sea and conducted exercises on July 4, the U.S. Independence Day. "Our military might stands strong and will continue to stand strong, whether it's in relationship to a conflict between India and China or anywhere else," White House Chief of Staff Mark Meadows told Fox News on July 6.

Indian and U.S. bureaucrats are scheduled to meet at the India-U.S. Foreign Office Consultations on Tuesday afternoon (India time). The CAATSA issue was not on the agenda, but the U.S. was free to raise any issues, said an Indian official.

The U.S. President was given the authority in 2018 to waive CAATSA sanctions on a case-by-case basis for fiscal year 2019. However, U.S. officials have repeatedly stated that India should not assume it will get a waiver. These remarks were made in the context of India's planned purchase of the S-400 "Triumf" missile defence system from Russia for about $5 billion.
• News: The position of US - not changed about possible sanctions to India

• Need for India for the supply of the S-400 Long Range, Surface to Air Missile System to India:
  1. China has a strong ground-based air defence network in Tibet
  2. Rising border tensions from both Pakistan and China.

Why the supply/purchase has not materialized yet?
• because of a law of United States of America, called ‘CAATSA’
  ✓ Countering America’s Adversaries Through Sanctions Act
  ✓ Provides for congressional review and to counter aggression by the Governments of Iran, the Russian Federation, and North Korea.
• If India attracts sanctions under CAATSA
  ✓ will affect India’s status of ‘Major defence partner’ conferred by USA in 2016.
  ✓ will hamper the defence and financial relations of India with the USA.
  ✓ may also affect India’s relations with countries having friendly relations with USA.

• Can a waiver be issued to India?
  ✓ can be – by US President

Practice Question – Prelims

Q. The US law called as Countering America’s Adversaries Through Sanctions Act, primarily provides for congressional review and to counter aggression by the Governments of which of the following countries?

1. Afghanistan
2. Pakistan
3. China
4. North Korea
5. Iran

Select the correct answer from the code given below:

(a) 3, 4 and 5 only
(b) 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
(c) 4 and 5 only
(d) 1 and 2 only
UGC has shown it does not care about our well-being: students

They are protesting decision on final-term exams; DU deliberates future course

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Students' organisations and teachers on Tuesday hit out at the recommendations of the University Grants Commission (UGC) regarding compulsory conduct of final-term examinations by September end.

At Delhi University, where online open book exams are scheduled to start from Friday, deadlines over its conduct were on but no final decision was taken till late evening, said sources.

Earlier, the UGC had recommended that exams take place in July, but on Monday it said the deadline has been extended while stating that exams may be conducted in offline mode or a blend of online and offline by September end.

DU has been facing flak from several quarters for going ahead with online OBE, especially in light of recent mock tests where several students raised complaints.

Student representatives from various groups, including the All India Students' Association (AISA) and the Students' Federation of India (SFI), submitted a memorandum to the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), demanding recall of the decision, and suggested alternatives to holding the exam such as taking average of marks of previous years.

In their petition, students reiterated issues that will be faced in participating in such exams considering a digital divide. Lack of high-speed internet and accessibility to other resources makes this an "undemocratic and exclusionary" exercise, said AISA.

They demanded an immediate withdrawal of the rules regarding the final-term exams.

"Focus not on students" "The focus in DU's OBE is obviously not on academics or students. It is an attempt to push through a software lobby-driven system into the mainstream of the university's academic life. That is why all statutory processes and discussions have been sidelined to issue dictats," said DU Academic Council member Bhabat Ghosh.
UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION (UGC)

- Established in 1956 as a statutory body - University Grants Commission Act of 1956.
- Unique distinction:
  ✓ providing funds,
  ✓ coordination, determination and maintenance of standards in institutions of higher education.

Mandates of UGC:

- Promoting and coordinating university education.
- Determining and maintaining standards of teaching, examination and research in universities.
- Framing regulations on minimum standards of education.
- Monitoring developments in the field of collegiate and university education; disbursing grants to the universities and colleges.
- Serving as a vital link between the Union and state governments and institutions of higher learning.
- Advising the Central and State governments on the measures necessary for improvement of university education.
ALL INDIA COUNCIL FOR TECHNICAL EDUCATION (AICTE)

• Established under the AICTE Act, 1987 – statutory body.
• Authorized to take all appropriate steps to
  • ensure coordinated and integrated development of technical education,
  • maintenance of standards.

Functions of AICTE:
• to coordinate the development of technical education in the country at all levels;
• to evolve suitable performance appraisal system for technical institutions and universities imparting technical education such as engineering, management, and architecture, incorporating norms and mechanisms for enforcing accountability;
• to laydown norms and standards for courses, curricula, physical and instructional facilities, staff pattern, staff qualifications, quality instruction, assessment and examinations;
• to grant approval for starting new technical institutions and for introduction of new course or programmes in consultation with the agencies concerned.
Practice Question – Prelims

Q. Consider the following statements about University Grants Commission:

1. It is an apex regulatory body for technical education in India.
2. It is a non-statutory body.
3. The regulatory architecture for the Institutions of Eminence Scheme is provided by the University Grants Commission.

Which of the statements given above is/are not correct?

(a) 1 only
(b) 1 and 2 only
(c) 1 and 3 only
(d) 1, 2 and 3
More sabre-rattling, more isolation

Chinese muscularity in the South China Sea is leading to a growing chorus of protest.

Chinese construction works on Johnson South Reef in the disputed Spratly Islands. *AFP/Andy RUTTER*

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China, they are seeking political influence, strengthening their navies, and deepening their military relationships with the United States.

Vietnam has added six Kilo-class, Russian origin submarines to its navy. France, Germany and the Netherlands, respectively, have supplied formidable class stealth ships to Singapore, patrol boats to Brunei Darussalam, and corvettes to Indonesia. Japan is partially funding the upgrade of the Indonesian coast guard. Indonesia and the Philippines are in early stages of exploring procurement of the Brahmos missile from India. The other ASEAN countries that have shown interest are Thailand and Vietnam.

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Indonesia proxied to China about Chinese vessels trepassing into its waters close to the Natuna islands, towards the south of the SCS. The Philippines protested to China earlier this year about violations of Filipino sovereignty in the West Philippine Sea. It also wrote to the UN Secretary General (UNSG) in March disputing China’s claim of “Historic Rights”.

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India’s relevant options

From India’s perspective, foreign and security policy in its larger neighborhood covers the entire expanse of the Asia Pacific and extends to the Persian Gulf and South Asia. Its ela straddles, and is the fulcrum of, the region between the Saat and Shanghai, between West and East Asia, and between the Mediterranean and the SCS. The SCS carries maritime trade and trade with India. It fosters a strategic relationship with China, and is the Indian Ocean. India must continue to actively pursue its defence diplomacy outreach in the Indo-Pacific region: its cross military training and combat exercises and exchanges at a higher level of complexity, extend humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.

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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, Polity, Social Justice and International 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.
- Important International institutions, agencies and fora- their structure, mandate.
South China Sea (SCS)

- Located in the western Pacific Ocean.
- Surrounded by countries like
  - China.
  - Taiwan.
  - Philippines.
  - Malaysia.
  - Brunei.
  - Indonesia.
  - Singapore.
  - Thailand.
  - Cambodia.
  - Vietnam.
Significance of SCS

- Large reserves of oil and natural gas.
- World's most important shipping lanes.

Disputes

- Growing Chinese aggression.
- Increased patrolling and live-fire exercising.
- Ramming and sinking of fishing vessels of other countries.
- Building runways, bunkers etc.

Response of different Countries to Chinese aggression in South China Sea

Philippines:

- Dispute with China regarding Spratlys Island.
- Philippines invoked the dispute settlement mechanism of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).
  - UNCLOS
    - an international agreement.
    - It demarcates the rights and usage limits of marine space to each country.
Philippines: (Contd.,)

- Philippines approached UNCLOS to test the legality of China’s ‘nine-dash line’ policy.
  - Nine line segments encircling most of the SCS.
  - China claims indisputable sovereignty in areas inside this 9 dash line.
- Dispute taken to Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) under Annex VII of UNCLOS.
  - About PCA:
    - An intergovernmental organization.
    - Established by the 1899 Hague Convention on the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes.
• PCA judgment:
  ✓ Nine dash line had “no legal basis”.
  ✓ None of the features of the Spratlys qualified them as islands.
  ✓ China dismissed the judgment as “null and void.”
  ✓ China violated the Philippines Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).

India's perspective wrt to SCS:
• Important for us to reduce the dangers caused by Chinese influence in the region.
  ✓ India also have a stake in the SCS
• India must actively pursue our defence diplomacy outreach in the Indo-Pacific region like conducting military exercises and exchanges.
• improving patrolling in Malacca Strait with the help of other littoral countries.
• increasing Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief activities to our South East Asian region.
• Improve the military capacity of the tri-service Andaman and Nicobar Command.
Practice Question – Prelims

Q1. Consider the following statements regarding the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR):

1. The Commission’s mandate is to ensure that all Laws, Policies, Programmes, and Administrative Mechanisms are in consonance with the Child Rights perspective as enshrined in the Constitution of India and also the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

2. The Child is defined as a person in the 0 to 18 years age group as per the Commissions for Protection of Child Rights (CPCR) Act, 2005.

3. NCPCR comes under the administrative control of the Ministry of Social Justice and empowerment.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 and 2 only
(b) 2 and 3 only
(c) 1 and 3 only
(d) 1, 2 and 3
The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR)

- **Commissions for Protection of Child Rights (CPCR) Act, 2005**
- a statutory body
- under the administrative control of the Ministry of Women & Child Development
- **Mandate is to ensure that all Laws, Policies, Programmes, and Administrative Mechanisms are in consonance with the Child Rights perspective**
- **The Child is defined as a person in the 0 to 18 years age group.**
UPSC Prelims Question – 2019

Q. With reference to Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), consider the following statements

1. AIIB has more than 80 member nations.
2. India is the largest shareholder in AIIB.
3. AIIB does not have any members from outside Asia.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 only (Correct Answer)
(b) 2 and 3 only
(c) 1 and 3 only
(d) 1, 2 and 3
News

• External Commercial Borrowings (ECB) loan received by L&T Infrastructure Finance Company Ltd. (LTIF) from Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank.

Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank

• A multilateral development bank.

• Headquarters - Beijing.

• Mission - to improve social and economic outcomes in Asia.

• Invests in Asia-pacific region

• Total membership - 102 at present.

• India - Founding Member.
Practice Question – Prelims

Q2. Consider the following statements:

1. The Border Roads Organization (BRO) was conceived and raised during the Prime Ministership of Jawaharlal Nehru.

2. The Department of Border Management, Ministry of Home Affairs deals with the Border Roads Organization.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(a) 1 only
(b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2
Darbuk-Shyok-Daulat Beg Oldi road:

- A 255 km long all-weather strategic road connecting Darbuk and Shyok to the Daulat Beg Oldi.
- Meanders through the elevations ranging between 13,000 ft and 16,000 ft.
- Constructed by the Border Roads Organisation.
- Strategic importance - it connects to the Karakoram Pass.

Daulat Beg Oldi - known for one of the world’s highest airstrips – Has IAF’s Advanced Landing Ground along LAC.

Source: drdo.gov.in

Civilspedia - Powered by Shankar IAS Academy
PRACTICE QUESTIONS
DISCUSSION
Practice Question – Prelims

Q3. Consider the following statements about University Grants Commission:

1. It is an apex regulatory body for technical education in India.
2. It is a non-statutory body.
3. The regulatory architecture for the Institutions of Eminence Scheme is provided by the University Grants Commission.

Which of the statements given above is/are not correct?

(a) 1 only
(b) 1 and 2 only
(c) 1 and 3 only
(d) 1, 2 and 3
Practice Question – Prelims

Q4. The US law called as Countering America’s Adversaries Through Sanctions Act, primarily provides for congressional review and to counter aggression by the Governments of which of the following countries?

1. Afghanistan
2. Pakistan
3. China
4. North Korea
5. Iran

Select the correct answer from the code given below:

(a) 3, 4 and 5 only
(b) 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
(c) 4 and 5 only
(d) 1 and 2 only

Answers

1. Option ‘a’ - 1 and 2 only
2. Option ‘a’ - 1 only
3. Option ‘b’ - 1 and 2 only
4. Option ‘c’ - 4 and 5 only
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