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Quiz of the Day

Indian and Chinese soldiers clash near Arunachal border

Both sides 'suffered injuries' and the troops immediately disengaged from the area, says the Army; commanders hold a Flag Meeting to discuss the issue and restore peace in the Tawang sector

Vijaita Singh
Dinakar Peri
NEW DELHI

Indian and Chinese soldiers suffered "minor injuries" in a face-off along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the Tawang sector of Arunachal Pradesh on December 9, the Army said on Monday evening. *The Hindu* had earlier in the day reported the clash that occurred at Yangtse. Around 20 Indian soldiers and a much higher number on the Chinese side were injured, multiple sources had said.

"On December 9, 2022, People's Liberation Army (PLA) troops contacted the LAC in the Tawang sector, which was contested by own troops in a firm and resolute manner. This face-off led to minor injuries to a few personnel from both



Face-off: This is the first such incident after the June 2020 episode when 20 Indian soldiers were killed in Galwan Valley. FILE PHOTO

sides," the Army said in a statement after reports of the incident. "Both sides immediately disengaged from the area."

As a follow-up to the incident, Commanders on both sides held a Flag Meeting to discuss the issue in accordance with structured mechanisms to restore peace and tranquillity, the Army's statement

added. It noted that in certain areas along the LAC in the Tawang sector, there are areas of differing perception, wherein both sides patrol the area up to their claim lines. This had been the trend since 2006, the Army added.

This is the first such incident after the June 15, 2020 episode when 20 Indian soldiers were killed and

several others were injured in violent clashes with the PLA troops in Ladakh's Galwan Valley.

The clash occurred as a large PLA patrol came across into the Indian side, one Army source said. "Injuries on the Chinese side were much higher than on the Indian side," the source added. At least three different units of the Indian Army were present at the time of the face-off, it has been learnt.

According to another source, a few soldiers sustained fractured limbs during the skirmish and are said to be recuperating at a hospital in Guwahati. Around 600 PLA soldiers were present when the clashes took place, the source said.

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Indian and Chinese soldiers clash near Arunachal border

What's the source of tension?

- China and India share a disputed 3,440km (2,100 mile) long de facto border - called the Line of Actual Control, or LAC - which is poorly demarcated.
- Rivers, lakes and snowcaps along the frontier mean the line can shift, bringing soldiers face to face at many points, sparking a confrontation.
- The two nations are also competing to build infrastructure along the border, which is also known as the Line of Actual Control.
- India's construction of a new road to a high-altitude air base is seen as one of the main triggers for a clash with Chinese troops in June that left at least 20 Indian soldiers dead.

Why wasn't any firearm used in conflict?

- **1996 Agreement**
 - The 1996 agreement is on **Confidence-Building Measures** in the Military Field along the Line of Actual Control in the India-China Border Areas.
 - Article VI (1) of the 1996 agreement says “With a view to preventing dangerous military activities along the line of actual control in the India-China border areas... **Neither side shall open fire**, cause bio-degradation, use hazardous chemicals, conduct blast operations or hunt with guns or explosives within two kilometres from the line of actual control. This prohibition shall not apply to routine firing activities in small arms firing ranges.”
 - However, it is Article VI (4) that is more applicable in the current instance: “If the border personnel of the two sides come in a face-to-face situation due to differences on the alignment of the line of actual control or any other reason, they **shall exercise self-restraint** and take all necessary steps to avoid an escalation of the situation. Both sides shall also enter into immediate consultations through diplomatic and/or other available channels to review the situation and prevent any escalation of tension.”
- **2005 Agreement**
 - In Article 1: “the two sides will resolve the boundary question through peaceful and friendly consultations. **Neither side shall use or threaten to use force** against the other by any means”.
 - The 2013 Agreement on Border Defence Cooperation also stated that **neither side shall use its military capability** against the other.
- Since no round has been fired on the Sino-India border in Ladakh after 1962 and with a view to preventing any escalation, these routines of not firing have been drilled into the soldiers.

MAPPING INDIA AND CHINA'S DISPUTED BORDERS



World's longest disputed border

India and China share the longest disputed border in the world but no bullet was fired in nearly 50 years until the June 15 incident.

Both countries claim vast swaths of each other's territory along the Himalayan frontier, with the border problems rooted in the demarcation of boundaries by British colonial rulers.

The border can be grouped into three different sectors: the Eastern, Central and Western.

Beijing has never recognised the 1914 border drawn by British officer Henry McMahon. China currently claims 90,000 square kilometres (34,750 square miles) of territory - nearly all of which constitutes India's Arunachal Pradesh state. Beijing shows it as Southern Tibet in its map.

On the other hand, India claims 38,000sq km (15,000sq miles) of land currently under Chinese control, which includes Aksai Chin plateau near the Ladakh region.



Past clashes

India and China have mostly avoided border clashes since the 1962 truce. Border protocols agreed after several rounds of talks since the late 1980s have largely prevented violence except for episodic border standoffs.

► 1962 - Sino-Indian War

In 1962, the two sides fought a four-week war over a border dispute that left thousands dead on the Indian side. Beijing retained Aksai Chin, a strategic corridor linking Tibet to western China.

The war ended with a truce and the formation of the de facto boundary, known as the LAC.

► 1967 - Nathu La clashes

Another flashpoint was Nathu La, India's highest mountain pass in northeast Sikkim state, which is sandwiched between Bhutan, Chinese-ruled Tibet and Nepal.

During a series of clashes, including the exchange of artillery fire, New Delhi said some 80 Indian soldiers died and counted up to 400 Chinese casualties.

► 1975 - Tulung La ambush

This skirmish was the last time shots were officially reported to have been fired across the disputed border. Four Indian soldiers were ambushed and killed along the dividing line in Arunachal Pradesh.

New Delhi blamed Beijing for crossing into Indian territory, a claim dismissed by China.

► 2017 - Doklam standoff

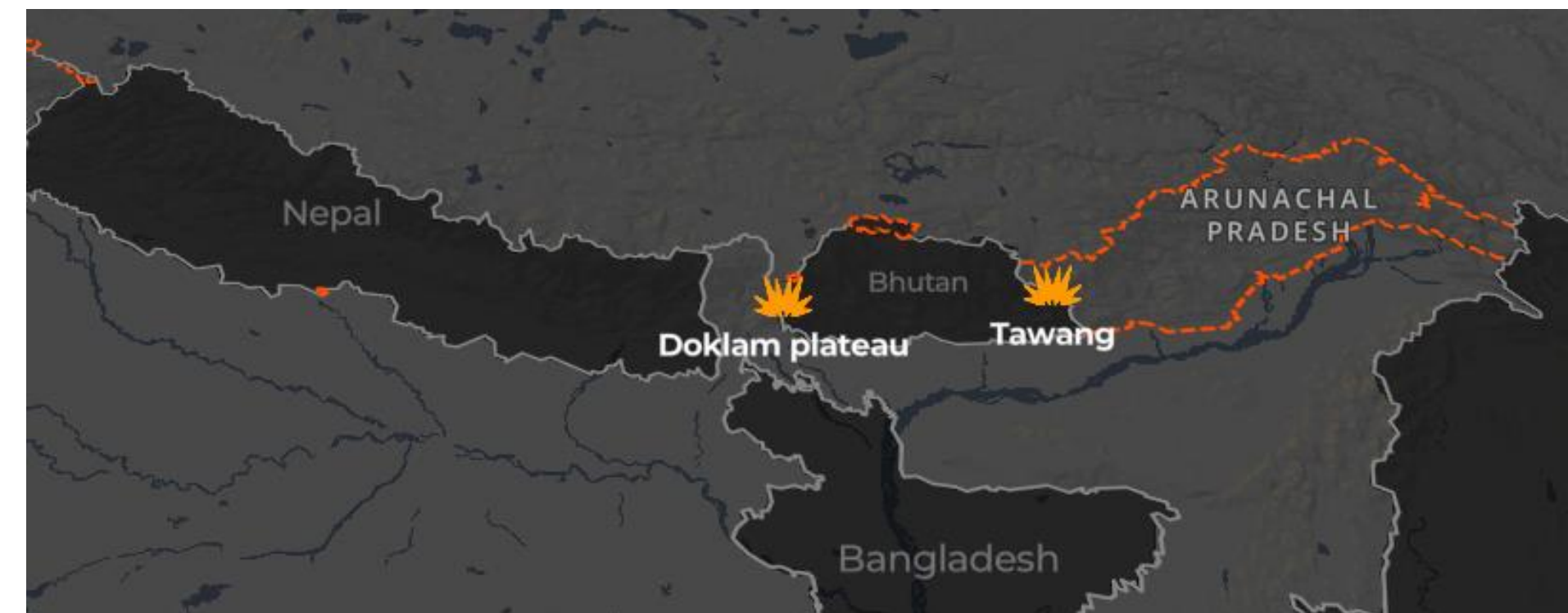
India and China had a months-long high-altitude standoff in Bhutan's Doklam region after the Indian army sent troops to stop China from constructing a road in the area.

The Doklam plateau is strategically significant as it gives China access to the so-called "chicken's neck" - a thin strip of land connecting India's northeastern states with the rest of the country. It is claimed by both China and Bhutan, an ally of India. The issue was resolved after talks.

► 2020 - Ladakh confrontation

On June 15, tensions led to hand-to-hand combat that killed 20 and wounded 76 Indian soldiers. The clash followed weeks of low-level tensions after several Indian and Chinese soldiers were injured in a high-altitude fistfights on the border in Sikkim state in early May.

Within days, said Indian officials, Chinese troops encroached across the demarcation line further west in Ladakh region and India then moved in extra troops to opposite positions.



Eastern sector - Arunachal Pradesh

Population: 1.4 million

Highest altitude: 7,000 m

Arunachal Pradesh, which shares a 1,129km (700-mile) border with China, forms part of the Eastern sector. The state, which is claimed by Beijing, was at the centre of a full-scale border war in 1962 when India lost some territory to China.

Central sector - Doklam Plateau

Highest altitude: 4,600 m

The Central sector is the shortest with a distance of 89km (55 miles). In early May, fights erupted at Nathu La Pass in the Indian state of Sikkim between Indian and Chinese soldiers.

The sector has remained largely peaceful but it was the site of a weeks-long confrontation in 2017 at the Doklam Plateau, which is at the trijunction of India, China and Bhutan.

Western sector - Ladakh

Population: 280,000

Highest altitude: 5,300 m

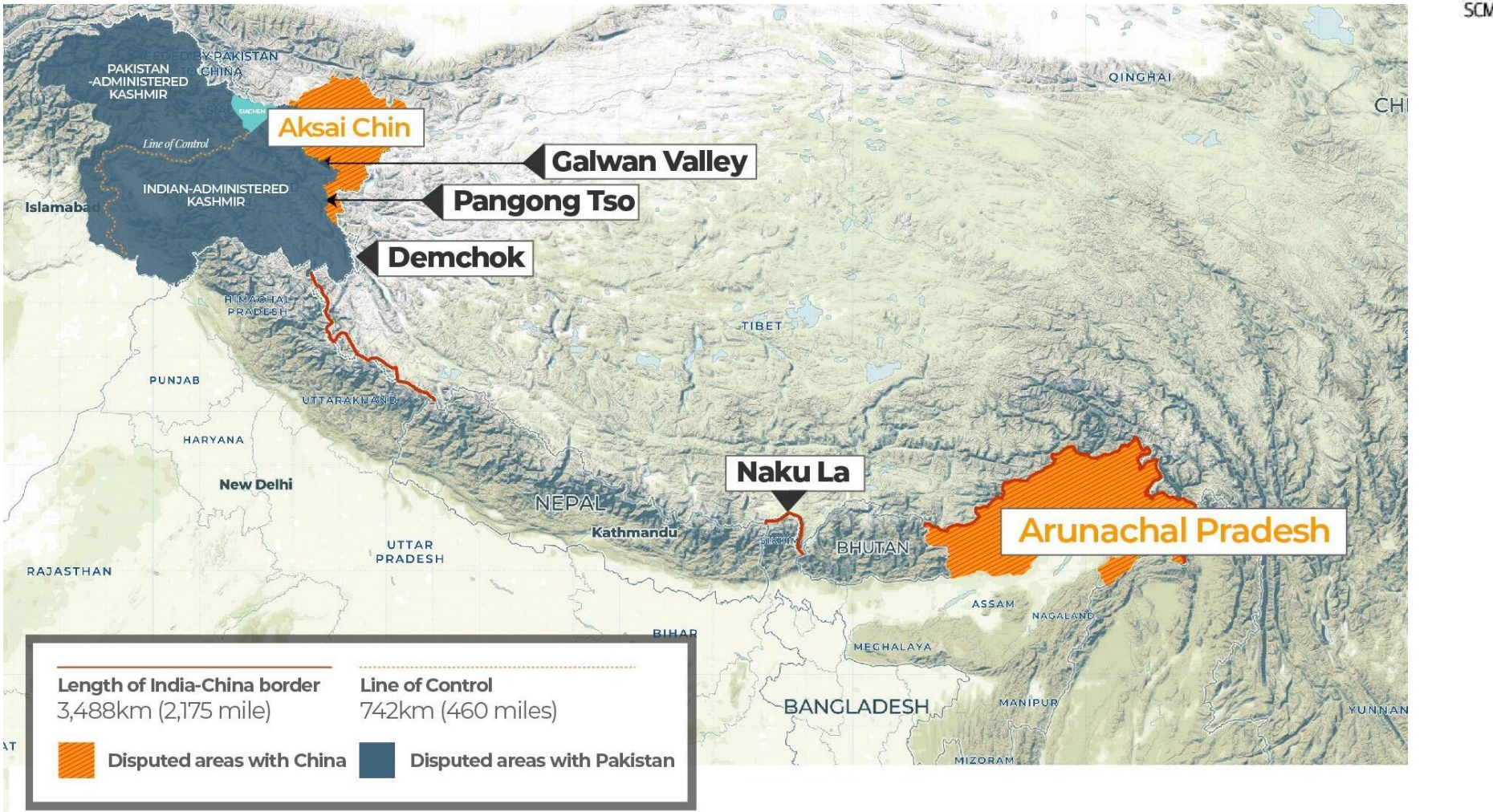
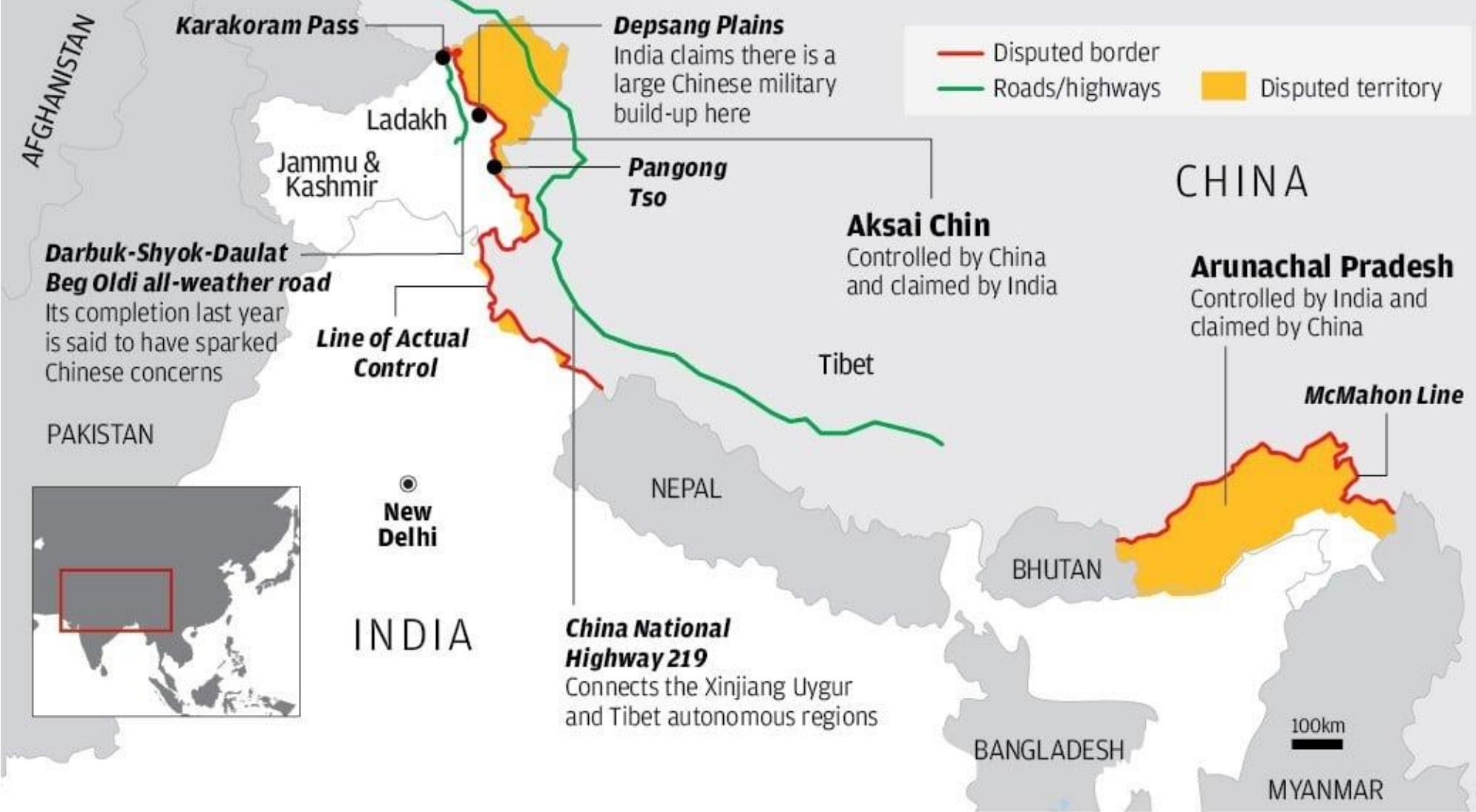
The Himalayan region of Ladakh, which was carved out of Indian-administered Kashmir last August, and border regions of Himachal Pradesh form the Western sector of the China-India border.

Rival soldiers have clashed in Pangong Tso Lake, Galwan Valley, Depsang plains, and Demchok in Ladakh after PLA soldiers built bunkers and brought armoured trucks and artillery.

Hundreds of soldiers remain poised eyeball-to-eyeball in Ladakh region.

In the last decade or so, India has started to bolster its border infrastructure across the border, including the building of roads and airports near the LAC.

Experts say India's defence upgrade near the border in Ladakh and last year's change of status of Kashmir triggered the latest Chinese pushback.



Territorial claims over Kashmir

Indian-administered Kashmir is one of the most militarised zones in the world with more than half a million Indian forces deployed to quell a decades-old armed rebellion.

Kashmir is claimed by both India and Pakistan in its entirety but they control only parts of it. The two Asian neighbours have fought two wars over control of the Muslim-majority region since independence from the British colonial rulers in 1947.

A small portion of Kashmir, called Aksai Chin, is in the control of China.

Administered regions



Claimed by India



Claimed by Pakistan



Claimed by China



Jaishankar to attend meetings on UNSC reform and terrorism

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar will visit New York to participate in two high-level ministerial meetings at the UN Security Council on December 14 and 15. The meetings will take up reforms in the UN Security Council and the global counter-terror campaign. During the visit, he will unveil a bust of Mahatma Gandhi on the UN premises.

“The high-level ministerial open debate on December 14 is on the theme of ‘New Orientation for Reformed Multilateralism’ [NORMS] and the high-level briefing on December 15 is on ‘Global Approach to Counter Terrorism’ -



S. Jaishankar

Challenges and Way Forward’. Both these themes have been key priorities for India during its current tenure at the UN Security Council,” the Ministry of External Affairs said. Mr. Jaishankar will also interact with UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and hold bilateral meetings with his counterparts from UNSC member countries.

02

Jaishankar to attend meetings on UNSC reforms and terrorism

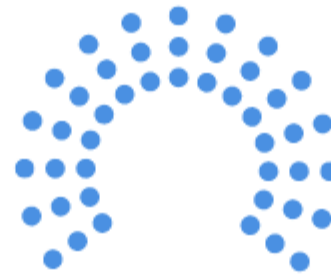
Structure of the United Nations

The main parts of the UN structure are the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the Trusteeship Council, the International Court of Justice, and the UN Secretariat. All were established in 1945 when the UN was founded.



General Assembly

The General Assembly is the main deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the UN. All 193 Member States of the UN are represented in the General Assembly, making it the only UN body with universal representation.



Security Council

The Security Council has primary responsibility, under the UN Charter, for the maintenance of international peace and security. It has 15 Members (5 permanent and 10 non-permanent members). Each Member has one vote. Under the Charter, all Member States are obligated to comply with Council decisions.



Economic and Social Council

The Economic and Social Council is the principal body for coordination, policy review, policy dialogue and recommendations on economic, social and environmental issues, as well as implementation of internationally agreed development goals.



Trusteeship Council

The Trusteeship Council was established in 1945 by the UN Charter, under Chapter XIII, to provide international supervision for 11 Trust Territories that had been placed under the administration of seven Member States, and ensure that adequate steps were taken to prepare the Territories for self-government and independence.



International Court of Justice

The International Court of Justice is the principal judicial organ of the United Nations. Its seat is at the Peace Palace in the Hague (Netherlands). It is the only one of the six principal organs of the United Nations not located in New York (United States of America).



Secretariat

The Secretariat comprises the Secretary-General and tens of thousands of international UN staff members who carry out the day-to-day work of the UN as mandated by the General Assembly and the Organization's other principal organs.

UN SECURITY COUNCIL STRUCTURE LOCKS INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM

UN Security Council's five permanent members' use of their veto power for their national interests leads to questioning of the legitimacy of the UNSC

UNSC STRUCTURE

- Use of force **at UN** is decided **by UNSC**
- **Five permanent** members have the right to veto a draft resolution
- To adopt a draft resolution, none of the permanent members should veto it and **9 countries** should vote in favor



China and Russia have vetoed four draft resolutions **on Syria** since 2011

The U.S. has used its veto right 42 times **for Israel** since 1972

Palestine has not become a UN member, as full membership requires **UNSC approval**

China **blocks Taiwan's UN membership**, not recognizing Taiwan as a sovereign country

CRITICISM OF UN STRUCTURE

- Permanent membership system
- Five permanent members' veto right and weak equal representation due to a small number of members

PERMANENT MEMBERS



REFORM PROPOSALS

- Increasing the number of non-permanent members
- Restricting veto right

Need to Reform UNSC

- UN represents a larger world and the irony is that it has only 5 permanent members in its such an important body.
- Current composition of the Security Council represents the post World War II realities and thus is not in pace with the changing balance of power in the world.
- The regions like far East Asia, South America, Africa have no representation in the permanent membership of the council
- Misuse of Veto Power
- Lack of Global Governance:
 - There are no regulatory mechanisms for global commons like the Internet, Space, High Seas (beyond one's EEZ-exclusive economic zone)

Case for Permanent Membership of India in UNSC

- India is the founding member of the UN
- India has almost twice the number of peacekeepers deployed on the ground than by P5 countries
- India, till now has been elected for eight terms for a two-year non-permanent member seat
- India is the largest democracy and second-most populous country in the world
- India's acquired status of a Nuclear Weapons State (NWS) in May 1998 also makes India a natural claimant as a permanent member similar to the existing permanent members who are all Nuclear Weapon States
- India has been inducted in various export control regimes like MTCR, Wassenaar arrangement, etc
- India is the undisputed leader of the Third world countries, as reflected by its leadership role in the Non-Aligned Movement
- The G4 nations comprising Brazil, Germany, India, and Japan are four countries which support each other's bids for permanent seats on the United Nations Security Council

Challenges in Permanent Membership of India in UNSC

- India has still not signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and also refused to sign the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
- China, which has veto power in the UNSC being one of its five permanent members is against India's efforts to become a permanent member
- The five permanent members themselves don't want anyone to come on board with them
 - In the year 2005, when G4 came with a resolution for the expansion of the council, U.S. and China lobbied very hard with African countries to ensure that they do not vote for the resolution.
- One country opposing another country's bid for the permanent membership from a region.
 - Pakistan does not want India to be the permanent member of the council.
 - China has serious objections to Japan being there in the Security Council.
 - Italy trying to compete with Germany in Europe for a place in the Security Council.
 - Argentina does not agree with the fact that Brazil should represent South America in the UNSC as a permanent representative
- Coffee Club/Uniting for Consensus
- Expansion of the council may lead to a decline in its efficiency and functioning
- In Africa, there is still no consensus on which country should represent the region as a permanent member

United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT)

12th December THNA

The United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) was established on 15 June 2017 through the adoption of UN General Assembly Resolution 71/291.

Mr. Vladimir Voronkov was appointed as its first Under-Secretary-General.

The creation of the Office is considered as the first major institutional reform undertaken by the UN Secretary-General António Guterres following his report (A/71/858) on the Capability of the United Nations to Assist Member States in implementing the **United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy**.

The Office of Counter-Terrorism has five main functions:

- **Provide leadership** on the General Assembly counter-terrorism mandates entrusted to the Secretary-General from across the United Nations system
- Enhance **coordination and coherence across the Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact entities** to ensure the balanced implementation of the four pillars of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy
- Strengthen the **delivery of United Nations counter-terrorism capacity-building assistance** to Member States
- Improve **visibility, advocacy and resource mobilization for United Nations counter-terrorism efforts**
- Ensure that **due priority is given to counterterrorism across the United Nations system** and that the important work on preventing violent extremism is firmly rooted in the Strategy

UNSC 1267 committee

12th December THNA

It was first set up in 1999, and strengthened after the September, 2001 attacks. It is now known as the Daesh and Al Qaeda Sanctions Committee.

It comprises all permanent and non-permanent members of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).

The 1267 list of terrorists is a global list, with a UNSC stamp

Process by which people are listed under UNSC 1267

- **Any member** state can submit a proposal for listing an individual, group, or entity.
- The 1267 Committee **meets as required** with a notice of four working days.
- Decisions on listing and de-listing are adopted **by consensus**.
- The proposal is sent to all the members, and **if no member objects** within five working days, the proposal is adopted. An “objection” means curtains for the proposal.
- Any member of the Committee may also put a “**technical hold**” on the proposal, and ask for more information from the proposing member state. During this time, other members may also place their own holds.
- The matter remains on the “**pending**” list of the Committee until such time as the member state that has placed the hold decides to turn its decision into an “objection”, or until all those who have placed holds remove them within a timeframe laid down by the Committee.
- **Pending issues must be resolved in six months**, but the member state that has placed the hold may ask for an additional three months. At the end of this period, **if an objection is not placed, the matter is considered approved**.

Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC)

It is mandated to monitor the implementation by Member States of measures to prevent terrorist acts proscribed by resolutions 1373 (2001) and 1624 (2005)

Decisions in the Committee are reached by consensus

The Permanent Representative of India is the current Chair of the CTC

UN Global Counter Terrorism Strategy

12th December THNA

What is UN Global Counter Terrorism Strategy – GCTS?

- The UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy is a unique global instrument to enhance national, regional and international efforts to counter terrorism.
- GCTS was adopted by consensus 15 years ago in 2006. All UN Member States agreed the first time to a common strategic and operational approach to fighting terrorism.
- The GCTS sends a clear message that terrorism is unacceptable in all its forms and manifestations.
- It also resolves to take practical steps, individually and collectively, to prevent and combat terrorism. Those practical steps include a wide array of measures ranging from strengthening state capacity to counter terrorist threats to better coordinating UN System's counter-terrorism activities.

The UN General Assembly reviews the Strategy every two years, making it a living document attuned to member states' counter-terrorism priorities. The General Assembly reviews the Strategy and considers the adoption of a resolution.

Pillars or Function of UN Global Counter Terrorism Strategy

- Addressing the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism
- Measures to prevent and combat terrorism
- Measures to build states' capacity to prevent and combat terrorism and to strengthen the role of the United Nations system in that regard
- Measures to ensure respect for human rights for all and the rule of law as the fundamental basis for the fight against terrorism

RS passes 'futuristic' Energy Conservation Bill to further regulate carbon emissions

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Rajya Sabha on Monday passed the Energy Conservation (Amendment) Bill clearing the decks for “mandate use of non-fossil sources”, including green hydrogen, green ammonia, biomass and ethanol for energy and feedstock and establish Carbon Markets in the country.

The Lok Sabha had passed the Bill in August.

Replying to a debate on the Bill, Power Minister R.K. Singh termed the Bill futuristic and said it will give an impetus to India's efforts to go for greener sources of energy.

Mr. Singh said the Bill aims to bring large residential buildings, with a minimum connected load of 100 Kilowatt (kW) or con-

The Bill, according to R.K. Singh, will enhance the scope of Energy Conservation Building Code

tract demand of 120 Kilo-volt Ampere (kVA), within the fold of energy conservation regime. He said the States, if they wish, can bring down the connected load and contract demand.

The Bill, according to him, will also enhance the scope of Energy Conservation Building Code, amend penalty provisions, increase members in the Governing Council of Bureau of Energy Efficiency and empower the State Electricity Regulatory Commissions to make regulations for smooth discharge of its functions.

The Opposition, howev-

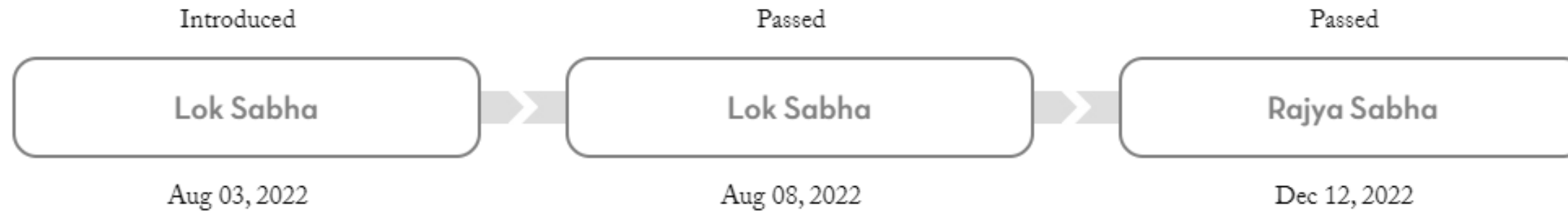
er, found flaws in the Bill. DMK member P. Wilson said the Bill has a lot of legal infirmities which go to the root of the matter and requires re-consideration and reintroduction. He added that the Bill is *ultra vires* of the Energy Conservation Act, 2001.

“While the Energy Conservation Act, 2001 deals with saving energy, the present Bill deals with saving environment and conserving climate change due to usage of fossil and non-fossil fuels while generating electricity. The scope and objective of the principal Act does not take in the purpose and object of the present Bill. The Bill relates to monitoring and controlling of carbon emission and climate change, which is an aspect of the environmental laws,” Mr. Wilson said.

03

RS passes 'futuristic' Energy Conservation Bill to further regulate carbon emissions

The Energy Conservation (Amendment) Bill, 2022



Highlights of the Bill

- The Bill amends the Energy Conservation Act, 2001 to empower the central government to specify a carbon credit trading scheme.
- Designated consumers may be required to meet a proportion of their energy needs from non-fossil sources.
- The Energy Conservation Code for buildings will also apply to office and residential buildings with a connected load of 100 kilowatt or above.
- Energy consumption standards may be specified for vehicles and ships.

Key Features

- **Carbon credit trading:** The Bill empowers the central government to specify a carbon credit trading scheme. Carbon credit implies a tradeable permit to produce a specified amount of carbon dioxide or other greenhouse emissions. The central government or any authorised agency may issue carbon credit certificates to entities registered and compliant with the scheme. The entities will be entitled to trade the certificates. Any other person may also purchase a carbon credit certificate on a voluntary basis.
- **Obligation to use non-fossil sources of energy:** The Act empowers the central government to specify energy consumption standards. The Bill adds that the government may require designated consumers to meet a minimum share of energy consumption from non-fossil sources. Different consumption thresholds may be specified for different non-fossil sources and consumer categories. Designated consumers include: (i) industries such as mining, steel, cement, textile, chemicals, and petrochemicals, (ii) transport sector including Railways, and (iii) commercial buildings, as specified in the schedule. Failure to meet this obligation will be punishable with a penalty of up to Rs 10 lakh. It will also attract an additional penalty of up to twice the price of oil equivalent of energy consumed above the prescribed norm.
- **Energy conservation code for buildings:** The Act empowers the central government to specify Energy Conservation Code for buildings. The code prescribes energy consumption standards in terms of area. The Bill amends this to provide for an 'Energy Conservation and Sustainable Building Code'.
 - This new code will provide norms for energy efficiency and conservation, use of renewable energy, and other requirements for green buildings. Under the Act, the energy conservation code applies to commercial buildings: (i) erected after the notification of the Code, and (ii) having a minimum connected load of 100 kilowatt (kW) or contract load of 120 kilo volt ampere (kVA). Under the Bill, the new Energy Conservation and Sustainable Building Code will also apply to the office and residential buildings meeting the above criteria. The Bill empowers the state governments to lower the load thresholds.
- **Standards for vehicles and vessels:** Under the Act, the energy consumption standards may be specified for equipment and appliances which consume, generate, transmit, or supply energy. The Bill expands the scope to include vehicles (as defined under the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988), and vessels (includes ships and boats). The failure to comply with standards will be punishable with a penalty of up to Rs 10 lakh. Non-compliance in case of vessels will attract an additional penalty of up to twice the price of oil equivalent of energy consumed above the prescribed norm. Vehicle manufacturers in violation of fuel consumption norms will be liable to pay a penalty of up to Rs 50,000 per unit of vehicles sold.
- **Composition of the governing council of BEE:** The Act provides for the setting up of the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE). The Bureau has a governing council with members between 20 and 26 in number. These include: (i) secretaries of six departments, (ii) representatives of regulatory authorities such as the Central Electricity Authority, and the Bureau of Indian Standards, and (iii) up to four members representing industries and consumers. The Bill amends this to provide that the number of members will be between 31 and 37. It increases the number of secretaries to 12. It also provides for up to seven members representing industries and consumers.

- **Regulation of carbon credit trading**
 - **The question is which is the appropriate Ministry to regulate the carbon credit trading scheme**
 - As per the Act, the Ministry of Power will be the nodal Ministry for the regulation of the scheme, and the Bureau of Energy Efficiency under the Ministry of Power will be the implementing agency. However, the ambit of carbon credit trading could be wider than the energy sector. In jurisdictions such as USA, UK, and Switzerland, the Environment Ministry or Environment Regulator implement schemes similar to the one proposed by the Bill.
 - **No clarity on who will regulate the carbon credit market**
 - The Bill does not give clarity on how carbon credit certificates will be traded, or who will regulate such trading. The question is if there were to be a regulator, should it be specified in the Act itself.
 - **Same activity may be eligible under renewable energy, energy savings, and carbon credit trading schemes**
 - Currently, there are two key trading schemes operational in the energy sector in India: (i) Renewable Energy Certificate under the Electricity Act, 2003 for promoting renewable energy, and (ii) Energy Savings Certificate under the Energy Conservation Act, 2001 for promoting energy efficiency. The Bill adds a tradeable carbon credit certificate for reducing carbon emissions. The same activity may get covered under these schemes separately.
- **Challenges in meeting non-fossil energy use obligation**
 - **Choice in the energy mix of supply from discom:**
 - Typically, commercial establishments like a hotel in Delhi will be procuring energy from the discom of the area. Under the Bill, an obligation may be cast upon it to procure electricity from non-fossil sources. Power supply in an area is often a monopoly, that is, only one discom supplies electricity to all consumers in an area. The hotel may not have control or choice over the mix of electricity it is buying, since the energy mix is decided by the discom.
- **Difficulties with open access:**
 - Amendments to Electricity Rules notified in June 2022 have allowed consumers with a minimum load of 100 kW to procure green energy from a generator of their choice (called open access). The earlier threshold was 1 MW. As per these Rules, green energy includes renewable energy such as solar, wind, and hydro, and green hydrogen and green ammonia. However, the Ministry of Power had informed the Standing Committee on Energy (2022) that in most states, open access is not really a possibility for consumers as Regulatory Commissions have stipulated high open access charges.

Key issues and analysis

- **Implications of obligation for nascent technologies:**

- Through the non-fossil energy use obligation, the Bill seeks to increase the demand for new sources of non-fossil energy and thereby their adoption. The term non-fossil sources has not been defined in the Bill, the Act, or the Electricity Act, 2003. The Bill defines energy as “any form of energy derived from fossil fuels or non-fossil sources or renewable sources”.
- Hence, it distinguishes between non-fossil sources and renewable sources (which would include sources such as solar, wind, and hydro). As per the Statement of Objects and Reasons of the Bill, examples of non-fossil sources include biomass, green hydrogen, green ammonia, biomass, and ethanol.
- There may not be a widespread generation of power from some of these sources that the consumer can access. For instance, the share of biomass in India’s total installed electricity generation capacity was 2.5%, as of August 2022.
- Technologies such as green hydrogen and green ammonia are still at a nascent stage.
- Currently, it may not be feasible to produce energy from them affordably.
- Also, energy is a key input to industrial activity, and such an obligation may then adversely impact the competitiveness of the industry.

QUIZ OF THE DAY

Q1. Consider the following statements regarding Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana:

1. It gives monetary assistance of ₹3,000 to pregnant and lactating mothers for the birth of the first child.
2. The scheme is not applicable for those women who are employed by the Central or State governments.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

Q2. Consider the following statements:

1. Under Article 343 of the Constitution, the official language of the Union shall be Hindi in the Devanagari script.
2. The Eighth Schedule contains 22 languages including Hindi and English.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2