

## Current Affairs of the Day

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## India, China agree to ease stand-off

- Indian and Chinese troops began a partial “disengagement” from some of the stand-off points along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh,
- In the first sign of moving towards resolution of the month long stand-off between the Indian Army and the People’s Liberation Army there.

### The way forward

A look at some fresh developments, and the future course of action by India and China

- India and China discuss de-escalation plan on five conflict points in Ladakh – Galwan area (PP 14, 15 and 17), Pangong Tso and Chushul
- Partial disengagement begins at Galwan area
- China removes some tents and some troops and vehicles moved back. India reciprocates



**Border tension:** A file photo of Indian Army vehicles near the Pangong Tso area in Ladakh.

- Talks at Major General level on Wednesday at PP 14
- Talks at other levels over the next 10 days at PP 15, PP 17, Chushul
- No talks decided yet at Pangong Tso
- At Pangong Tso, territory is marked by ridges or “Fingers”. India claims up to Finger 8 and patrols up to Finger 4, but after a skirmish on May 5, Chinese troops have dug in at Finger 4
- No discussion yet on stand-off at Naku La in Sikkim

### ON THE TABLE

- Return to status quo ante pre-May 5
- Full withdrawal of PLA troops from the five conflict points, and away from the LAC
- Removal of tents, vehicles and equipment pitched at various points
- Drawdown of fighter bombers, rocket forces, air defence radars and jammers and troops build-up in the Chinese side of the LAC

- A series of ground level military talks are due to be held over the next 10 days, to try and resolve most of the other issues at the local level.

### Pangong Tso issue:

- However, major worries remain at the Pangong Tso (lake), where territory is marked by ridges or “Fingers” in increasing serial order towards Chinese territory. India claims up to Finger 8 and patrols up to Finger 4, but after a skirmish on May 5, Chinese troops have dug in at Finger 4. No mention was made of the situation at Naku La in Sikkim, where the stand-off continues, as the focus for these talks was the Ladakh situation.
- The sources stressed that India remained “firm” on restoring the status quo to pre-May 5 positions, and that apart from troops retreating from the “front lines”, it was necessary to ensure a drawdown of troops and firepower behind the Chinese lines where the PLA had deployed “fighter bombers, rocket forces, air defence radars and jammers among others”.
- Underscoring the efforts to resolve the tensions, which they referred to as “episodic issues”, the sources said that tactical level hotlines at border meeting points at Daulat Beg Oldie (DBO)-Tien Wein Dien (TWD) and Chushul-Moldo remain “on and open”.
- It has also been proposed that the Corps Commanders should have formal meetings once or twice every year for better interaction between the two armies at a higher level.



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## Cross-party backing in Nepal for new map

- The Lower House of Nepal's Parliament on Tuesday expressed cross-party support for the new map which shows the disputed Kalapani region as part of Nepalese sovereign territory.
- During the discussion on the Second Constitution Amendment Bill, which will grant legal status to the updated map, Nepal's Foreign Minister Pradeep Kumar Gyawali said India has undermined Nepal's sovereignty by building the Lipulekh link road in the area.

### Sugauli treaty (1816):

- According to the Sugauli treaty (1816), the region of Limpiyadhura, Lipulekh and Kalapani are part of Nepal's sovereign territory and any unilateral change in our borders is unacceptable to us. We regard the inauguration of the Lipulekh link road as a serious matter. This action has undermined Nepal's sovereignty," said Mr. Gyawali.
- Mr. Gyawali said Nepal does not feel happy while recollecting the Sugauli treaty as it was part of a compromise deal with the colonial rulers of India, however, that is the basis of Nepal's present territorial identity. He said despite repeated efforts, Nepal's request for a resolution of the disputes at Kalapani in the west and Susta on the U.P.-Bihar border were not resolved in the past. "India acknowledged these two issues as unresolved and pending in 1997," the Minister said.

## Uncertainty over food scheme extension

- Centre to extend the **Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Ann Yojana (PMGKAY)**, which covers the 80 crore ration card-holders, providing 5 kg of rice or wheat each month and one kg of pulses for a household.
- A second scheme was announced by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman to cover 8 crore migrant workers who do not have ration cards and are supposed to get 5 kg of rice or wheat and 1 kg of chana or other pulses free.

### Facts:

- As per government data, nearly 74 crore ration card holders in April, 71 crore in May and nearly 8 lakh so far in June have got additional foodgrains.
- Under the **Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan**, only 59% of the allocation had been lifted by the States.



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## Value Added Information

### Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Ann Yojana (PMGKAY):

#### Key components:

#### Insurance scheme for health workers fighting COVID-19 in Government Hospitals and Health Care Centres:

##### What are the benefits?

Any health professional, who while treating Covid-19 patients, meet with some accident, then he/she would be compensated with an amount of Rs 50 lakh under the scheme.

##### Coverage:

- All government health centres, wellness centres and hospitals of Centre as well as States would be covered under this scheme.
- Approximately 22 lakh health workers would be provided insurance cover to fight this pandemic.
- Safai karamcharis, ward-boys, nurses, ASHA workers, paramedics, technicians, doctors and specialists and other health workers would be covered.

##### ➤ PM Garib Kalyan Ann Yojana:

Under this scheme, 80 crore poor people, covering about two-thirds of the country's population, will get 5 kg rice or wheat each month for the next three months free of charge, in addition to the 5 kg they already get. Each household will get 1 kg of dal of their choice, for next three months, also free of charge.

Besides, to ensure adequate availability of protein to all the above mentioned individuals, 1 kg per family, would be provided pulses according to regional preferences for next three months.

##### ➤ Benefit to farmers:

The first instalment of Rs 2,000 due in 2020-21 will be front-loaded and paid in April 2020 itself under the PM KISAN Yojana. It would cover 8.7 crore farmers.

##### ➤ Cash transfers Under PM Garib Kalyan Yojana:

A total of 20.40 crores PMJDY women account-holders would be given an ex-gratia of Rs 500 per month for next three months.

Gas cylinders, free of cost, would be provided to 8 crore poor families for the next three months.



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Wage-earners below Rs 15,000 per month in businesses having less than 100 workers: Government proposes to pay 24 percent of their monthly wages into their PF accounts for next three months.

Support for senior citizens (above 60 years), widows and Divyang: Government will give them Rs 1,000 to tide over difficulties during next three months.

MNREGA wages would be increased by Rs 20 with effect from 1 April, 2020. Wage increase under MNREGA will provide an additional Rs 2,000 benefit annually to a worker.

➤ **Self-Help groups:**

Limit of collateral free lending would be increased from Rs 10 to Rs 20 lakhs.

➤ **Other components:**

Employees' Provident Fund Regulations will be amended to include Pandemic as the reason to allow non-refundable advance of 75 percent of the amount or three months of the wages, whichever is lower, from their accounts.

Welfare Fund for Building and Other Constructions Workers: State Governments will be given directions to utilise this fund to provide assistance and support to these workers to protect them against economic disruptions.

**Why these measures were necessary?**

For economic agents – particularly poor households and small businesses – the crisis today is a crisis of liquidity. The nationwide lockdown, imposed to stop the novel coronavirus in its tracks, has led to scores of daily wage workers and informal sector entrepreneurs losing earning opportunities from their existing activities.

**Concerns and challenges ahead:**

Essentially, this package seems to reach those who are connected to bank accounts and formal payment systems. But certain groups of daily wagers and informal workers may be left out.

And the real challenge would come in implementing these measures. For example, while there was sufficient surplus foodgrains available in government warehouses and an existing system for further procurement, the system for procurement of pulses needed to be created in most states.

## North Korea cuts off all communication with South

- North Korea said it was cutting off all communication channels with South Korea on Tuesday, a move experts say could signal Pyongyang has grown frustrated that Seoul has failed to revive lucrative inter-Korean economic projects and persuade the U.S. to ease sanctions.



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## Inter-Parliamentary Alliance on China launched to counter China

- A group of senior lawmakers from eight countries including the US have launched the **Inter-Parliamentary Alliance on China**.

These countries are:

1. USA
  2. Germany
  3. UK
  4. Japan
  5. Australia
  6. Canada
  7. Sweden
  8. Norway
  9. Members of the European parliament.
- It is a **new cross-parliamentary alliance** to help counter the **threats** posed by **China's growing influence** to global trade, security and human rights.
  - The group aims to achieve the following on issues related to China:
    1. to **construct** appropriate and coordinated responses
    2. to **create** a proactive and strategic approach

## Payments Infrastructure Development Fund (PIDF) created by RBI

- The RBI has announced the creation of a **Payments Infrastructure Development Fund (PIDF)** with an initial contribution of **₹250 crore**.
- It is created to encourage the adoption of **Points of Sale (PoS) machines** by businesses in tier-3 to Tier-6 centres and Northeastern States.
- The POS machines allow businesses to accept e-payments, thereby reducing the need to deal in cash.

### Key Points:

- The PIDF will be **governed** through an **Advisory Council**.
- It will be **managed** and **administered** by **RBI**.
- RBI will make an initial contribution of ₹250 crore which will cover half of the fund.



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- The remaining contribution will be from card-issuing banks and card networks operating in the country.
- RBI will also **contribute to** yearly shortfalls, if necessary.
- It is being set up according to the recommendations of the report of the **committee on deepening of digital payments**, chaired by **Nandan Nilekani**.
- Most of the POS terminals in the country are concentrated in tier-1 and tier-2 cities and towns only.
- Other regions have been left out. Thus, there was need to create such a kind of fund for such cities.