



Current Affairs of the Day

PAPER 2:

International Relations:

1. Pakistanis behind 'Chinese' info war on border stand-off
2. India, China hold fifth round of military talks
3. U.K. to issue coin to honour Gandhiji

Health & Social Issues:

1. Menstrual Hygiene Management National Guidelines, 2015



Pakistanis behind 'Chinese' info war on border stand-off

- Many of the 'Chinese' accounts that mushroomed on social media this summer and spread false information about the border clash with India have been traced to Pakistan, in what is believed to be



Web of lies
A look at how Pakistani Twitter accounts turned 'Chinese'

- The users exploited a Twitter loophole which allowed them to change profile names, account handles
- They used stock profile photos of Chinese soldiers to look authentic
- 'Chinese' accounts which were active after the LAC clash previously had different names
- The accounts had bios in Urdu, which were later changed to Mandarin

How they were detected?

The changed avatars were detected because some of these accounts, which have tens of thousands of followers, were previously being tracked

- a coordinated disinformation campaign aimed at India.
- The India-China border tensions starting in May, and culminating in the June 15 clash in the Galwan Valley, sparked a first-of-its-kind information war on social media, where Indian and Chinese accounts on Twitter, Facebook and YouTube traded images and videos in an effort to both capture the narrative and the attention of the media.
- The disinformation flowed both ways. But what was unknown to consumers of the posts by 'Chinese' social media users is that many of the accounts that posed as China-based users were actually Pakistani accounts. Twitter is banned in China, although it can be accessed using virtual private networks.
- An analysis of some of the most active 'Chinese accounts' on the border clash on Twitter found that these accounts previously had different profile names and handle names. Some of these accounts even had user bios that were earlier in Urdu, before morphing overnight into Mandarin.



- One such account, 'xiuying637', was earlier run as 'hinaarbi2', before it began tweeting information related to the Chinese military and the border clash. The account has been suspended, but only belatedly.
- These accounts have used a loophole on Twitter that allows users to not only change their profile names, but their Twitter handles as well. Their changed avatars were detected because some of these accounts, which have tens of thousands of followers, were previously being tracked.
- One account, with a profile name in Chinese characters, Zeping, and handle 'sawaxpx', that tweeted on the border previously tweeted in Urdu. Its tweets are now unavailable. Another account, 'Yasifxi', had a Chinese name and tweeted in Chinese characters, posting information about the border clash, but was traced to Pakistan.
- These accounts have shared false information about casualties from the clash, unrelated images of injured soldiers, and videos of troops' confrontations that were from previous border incidents. Tweeting in Mandarin and using Chinese names gave the posts a sense of credibility.

India, China hold fifth round of military talks

- India and China held the fifth round of Corps Commanders-level talks at Moldo on the Chinese side on Sunday to take forward the stalled process of disengagement on the Line of Actual Control (LAC). The talks were still on at the time of going to print.
- India has demanded that status quo be restored along the unsettled boundary line. China had massed troops since April-May along the LAC and occupied positions in India's perception of the LAC in Eastern Ladakh.
- The talks on July 14 went on for 15 hours but failed to restart the disengagement process, despite a consensus for full disengagement and de-escalation.

NSA-led panel meets:

- The high-powered China Study Group, headed by National Security Adviser (NSA) Ajit Doval also met on Thursday, and discussed the ongoing situation, a government official said.



- The first phase of disengagement undertaken in early July remains incomplete with disengagement completed only at Galwan Valley and Patrolling Point (PP) 15 in Gogra-Hot springs area. Only limited disengagement has been undertaken at PP 17A in Gogra-Hot Springs and it has barely begun at Pangong Tso.
- Chinese troops have only moved back from the base of Finger 4, the mountain spur, to Finger 5 but remain to occupy the ridge lines of Finger 4 while India's claim extends till Finger 8, while it has always held till Finger 4.

Chushul BPM cancelled:

- With ongoing tensions, the ceremonial Border Personnel Meeting (BPM), usually held at Chushul to mark the People's Liberation Army (PLA) Day on August 1, did not take place. The BPM was toned down and happened only in Eastern Command, the second source stated.

U.K. to issue coin to honour Gandhiji

- Britain is considering minting a coin to commemorate Mahatma Gandhi, amid growing interest in recognising the contributions of people from the Black, Asian and other minority ethnic communities.
- Gandhiji's birthday, October 2, is observed as the International Day of Non-Violence. As part of a global reassessment of history, colonialism and racism triggered by the death in May of a Black man, George Floyd, in the United States after a Minneapolis police officer knelt on his neck for nearly nine minutes, some British institutions have begun re-examining their past.

Menstrual Hygiene Management National Guidelines, 2015

- National Guidelines on Menstrual Hygiene Management was released by the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation in 2015.
- It seeks to address every component of menstrual hygiene ranging from, raising awareness, addressing behaviour change, creating a demand for better hygiene products, capacity building of frontline community cadre, sensitization of key stakeholders, convergence needed for effective outreach and intervention, creation of WASH facilities including safe disposal options, etc.



Measures needed:

- The Guidelines should recognise sanitary napkins as an essential commodity, and to add it to the schedule of the Essential Commodity Act.
- Maharashtra's Rural Development department had initiated ASMITA scheme – to ensure that women and young adolescent girls in rural areas have access to quality and affordable sanitary napkins through a network of women SHGs. (Such schemes need effective implementation)
- Vending machines for sanitary napkins should be set up across schools, colleges and other locations.