

## Sansad TV Perspective: India-China Border Talks

In the series Sansad TV Perspective, we bring you an analysis of the discussion featured on the insightful programme 'Perspective' on Sansad TV, on various important topics affecting India and also the world. This analysis will help you immensely for the [IAS exam](#), especially the mains exam, where a well-rounded understanding of topics is a prerequisite for writing answers that fetch good marks.

In this article, we feature the discussion on the topic: '**India-China Border Talks**'

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**Guests:**

1. Srikanth Kondapalli, Professor, Center For East Asian Studies SIS, JNU
2. Suresh K Goel, Former Ambassador
3. Maj Gen A K Siwach (Retd.), Defence Expert

**Context:** Diplomatic talks between India and China to review the situation at the Line of Actual Control.

**Highlights of the Discussion:**

1. Introduction
2. Significance
3. Continued military aggression by China
4. What could China do to de-escalate tension
5. Using G20 to de-escalate tension

**Introduction:**

- India and China held another round of diplomatic talks on February 22nd to review the situation at the Line of Actual Control.
- For the first time since the [India-China](#) border stand-off began in 2020, India's top official in the Ministry of External Affairs dealing with China travelled to Beijing for the 26th meeting of the Working Mechanism for Consultation & Coordination on India-China Border Affairs (WMCC).
- Both sides reviewed the situation along the LAC in the Western Sector of India-China border areas and discussed proposals for disengagement in the remaining areas in an open

and constructive manner and create conditions for the restoration of normalcy in bilateral relations.

- The two sides also agreed to continue discussions through military and diplomatic channels.

#### **Significance of this meeting:**

- This was the first in-person WMCC meeting since the 14th meeting held in July 2019.
  - The last meeting of the WMCC took place in October 2022, a month after the disengagement at the Gogra-Hot Springs.
  - During the continuing border stand-off that began in eastern Ladakh in May 2020, 11 WMCC meetings have taken place through video-conferencing.
- India's move to send in a top official to Beijing, albeit for the border talks, signals a willingness to move forward. This could ensure a high-level visit from China given that [SCO](#) and G-20 meetings will be in India this year.
- This was seen as a positive development in the India-China relationship, as it showed a willingness on both sides to engage in dialogue and work towards resolving their differences through peaceful means.

#### **Continued military aggression:**

- With the 32 months old military standoff in the Eastern Ladakh sector of the Line of Actual Control (LAC) still continuing, there is no possibility of an end to or reduction of heavy deployment in near future.
- Amid this, China opened another front in the eastern sector in December 2022, further impacting the already tense Sino-Indian relations.
  - Indian and Chinese troops clashed along the Himalayan borders on December 09, 2023, after hundreds of Chinese soldiers transgressed into India's side of the boundary.
- Prior to this attack, Chinese drones had reportedly moved quite aggressively towards Indian positions on the LAC in Arunachal Pradesh which forced the IAF to scramble its fighter aircraft deployed in the region.
- There had also been increased activity in Ladakh by the Chinese military, as well as a "possible" airspace violation by the Chinese air force in the same area.

#### **India's Countermeasures:**

- In response to China's aggression on the Indo-China border, India has pursued a range of countermeasures and strategies aimed at addressing the situation and defending its territorial integrity.

- These measures are aimed at enhancing India's border management capabilities, improving the mobility and effectiveness of its troops, and strengthening its overall defence posture in the region.
  - India has ramped up the construction of new roads and bridges along the LAC, which will improve access and mobility for troops and equipment in the region. The government has also approved the construction of strategic roads along the LAC to provide better connectivity to border areas.
  - India has improved its border outposts, providing better living conditions and communication facilities for troops stationed along the border. This includes the deployment of high-tech surveillance equipment, such as drones, to monitor the border more effectively.
  - India has improved its communication infrastructure along the border, including setting up new communication towers and laying fibre-optic cables to ensure better connectivity for troops stationed in remote areas.
  - India has strengthened its logistics support for troops stationed along the LAC, including providing better transportation, storage, and supply of essential goods and equipment.
  - India has also created new border defence infrastructure, including the establishment of a new mountain strike corps and the deployment of additional artillery and air defence units along the border.

#### **What can China do to de-escalate tensions?**

- There are several steps that China could take to help de-escalate tensions in the Line of Actual Control (LAC) between China and India:
  - China could withdraw its troops from the areas where there is a standoff with India along the LAC. This would help to reduce tensions and the risk of a military confrontation.
  - China could engage in diplomatic talks discussing the demarcation of the LAC, as well as other issues that have contributed to the current standoff.
  - China could take steps to build confidence with India, such as by exchanging information on troop movements, or by allowing Indian patrols in certain areas of the LAC.
  - China and India could work together on regional security issues, such as counterterrorism or piracy in the Indian Ocean, which could help to build trust between the two countries.

#### **Impact of G20 presidency on de-escalating tensions:**

- India, as the current president of the [G20](#), has an important platform to address the growing border tension with China. India can use its G20 presidency to emphasise the

importance of the peaceful resolution of disputes between nations by highlighting the role of international law in resolving disputes.

- India could call for respect for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of nations. This can help to raise awareness about the issue of border tension between India and China and the importance of resolving it in a peaceful and constructive manner.
- India can use its G20 presidency to promote economic cooperation between India and China by encouraging investments and trade between the two countries and creating a more conducive environment for economic engagement.
- India can also use its G20 presidency to foster regional security cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region, which includes both India and China. This can help to build trust between the two countries and create an environment for constructive engagement.
- China could also engage in constructive dialogue with India to address the issues of border tension and regional security cooperation. This could involve high-level talks between the leaders of both countries or participation in G20 meetings focused on these issues.
- Overall, de-escalating tensions in the LAC will require both China and India to engage in constructive dialogue and take steps to address the underlying issues.