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MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



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DTE Jan 30

SPAI PROGRAM
(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Env and Eco)

India has 718 snow leopards; most of them live in unprotected areas: Centre

Context: Union Minister of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change, Shri Bhupender Yadav released the report on the Status of Snow leopards in India during the National Board for Wildlife meeting held in New Delhi.

- The Wildlife Institute of India (WII) is the National Coordinator for this exercise that was carried out with support the support of all snow leopard range states and two conservation partners, the Nature Conservation Foundation, Mysuru and WWF-India.

Snow Leopard Population Assessment in India (SPAI) Program

- **Range Coverage**: The SPAI systematically covered over 70% of India's potential snow leopard habitat.
- Engaged forest & wildlife staff, researchers, volunteers, and knowledge partners.
- **Geographic Scope**: Encompassed 120,000 km2 of vital snow leopard habitat in the trans-Himalayan region.
- **Two-Step Framework:** Conducted from 2019 to 2023 using a meticulous two-step approach.
- Evaluated spatial distribution and abundance through camera traps and occupancy-based sampling.
- **Survey**: Surveyed 13,450 km of trails, deploying camera traps at 1,971 locations.
- Recorded snow leopard occupancy in 93,392 km2 with an estimated presence in 100,841 km2.
- **Population**: Estimated populations in different states: Ladakh (477), Uttarakhand (124), Himachal Pradesh (51), Arunachal Pradesh (36), Sikkim (21), and Jammu and Kashmir (9).
- **Future Recommendations**: Proposes establishing a dedicated Snow Leopard Cell at WII under MoEFCC. Emphasizes long-term population monitoring through structured study designs and consistent field surveys.
- **Consistent Monitoring**: Stresses the importance of continuous monitoring for snow leopards' long-term survival. Suggests adopting a periodic population estimation approach (every 4th year) for effective conservation strategies.

Wildlife Institute of India (WII):

- **About**: It is an autonomous natural resource service institution under the Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate change, Government of India, was established in 1982.
- **Located at:** Dehradun, India.
- **Functions**:
  - It **carries out wildlife research** in areas of study like Biodiversity, Endangered Species, Wildlife Policy, Wildlife Management, Wildlife Forensics, Spatial Modelling, Eco-development, Ecotoxicology, Habitat Ecology and Climate Change.

THE HINDU Page 14

WOMEN IN WORKFORCE

Syllabus GS Paper 3 – Economy)

Centre starts survey on participation of women in workforce

Study undertaken to assess the spread of women employee-friendly practices such as running creche and equal pay for equal work

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI



The latest results of the PLFS show the women participation rate increased from 23.3% in 2017-18 to 37% in 2022-23. FILE PHOTO

The Union Ministries of Labour & Employment and Women & Child Development have started a joint survey on increasing women participation in the workforce. The survey was announced by Union Minister Smriti Irani here on Tuesday at a function, "Women in the workforce for *Viksit* Bharat".

The survey is being undertaken to assess the spread of women employee-friendly practices in the country. Various international agencies and trade unions, including the International Labour Organization , had expressed concern over the decrease in participation of women workforce in the country.

Latest PLFS data

The latest results of the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), released by the Labour Bureau last October, showed a considerable increase in women participation. In 2017-18, the participation rate was 23.3% and in 2022-23, 37%. The survey, conducted by the Union Labour Ministry through the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation and other government agencies, has asked questions to the subscribers of government schemes about policies or initiatives for women by the companies they are employed with.

The government is seeking details such as formation of the internal complaints committee for prevention of sexual harassment at the workplace, creche for children, equal pay for equal work, flexible or remote working hours for women and transportation facilities during late hours.

A senior officer said the survey is carried out in a confidential manner. "We are not asking the names of [the women] or any other identification detail, except their gender," the officer said. The name of the company, its location and address are also sought in the survey.

Context: The Union Ministries of Labour & Employment and Women & Child Development have started a joint survey on increasing women participation in the workforce.

Women in Workforce in India

- **India's Lagging Female Labour Force Participation**: India's FLFP rate is the lowest among BRICS nations and lags behind South Asian neighbors like Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.
- **Crucial Role of Increasing FLFP**: Boosting female workforce participation is essential for economic growth, inclusive development, and achieving Sustainable Development Goals.
- **Rural vs. Urban Disparities**: More women are part of the labor force in rural areas compared to urban settings.
- **Persistent Gender Wage Gaps**: It persist across various employment sectors.
- Migration: The migration of women for employment has witnessed an upward trend in recent years.
- **Prominent Role of Women in Healthcare**: Women constitute a significant portion of healthcare workers, with over 80% employed as nurses and midwives.
- **Women in Education Sector**: Women play a substantial role in India's education sector, particularly in primary education and early childhood care.
- **Labour-Intensive Nature of Care Service Sector**: The care service sector, encompassing health and education, relies heavily on labor, unlike sectors affected by technological advancements.

Latest PLFS data

- PLFS data (Oct 2023) reveals growth from 23.3% (2017-18) to 37% (2022-23).
- **Government's Inclusive Survey Approach:** Union Labour Ministry's survey, via EPFO and others, involves scheme subscribers.
- **Survey targets policies**: ICC for POSH, creche facilities, equal pay, flexible hours, and late-hour transport.

PIB

Jan 30

NATIONAL ANTI DOPING AGENCY

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Gov Agencies)

NADA India conducts Live Session with NCERT on "Preserving Fair Play: A Stand Against WADA's Prohibited Substances"

Context: The National Anti-Doping Agency of India (NADA India) and the National Council of Education & Training (NCERT) joined together to host a live session on "Preserving Fair Play: A Stand Against WADA's Prohibited Substances."

National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA)

- **About**: NADA was established by the Government of India with the goal of serving as an independent Anti-Doping Organization for India, with a vision of fostering drug-free sports.
- **Found**: It was officially formed as a registered society under the Societies Registration Act of 1860 in November 2005.
- **Nodal Ministry**: Union Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports
- **Objective**: To enforce anti-doping regulations in accordance with the **World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA)** code and oversee the doping control program. **To actively promote education, research, and awareness** initiatives aimed at addressing the issue of doping and its detrimental consequences.

World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA)

- **Set up**: In November 1999 under the International Olympic Committee.
- **Recognised by**: UNESCO International Convention against Doping in Sport (2005).
- **Headquarters:** Montreal, Canada
- **Objective**: To create, align, and synchronize anti-doping regulations and policies universally, encompassing all sports and nations.
- **Key Activities**: Engaging in scientific and social science research.
    - Providing education on anti-doping measures.

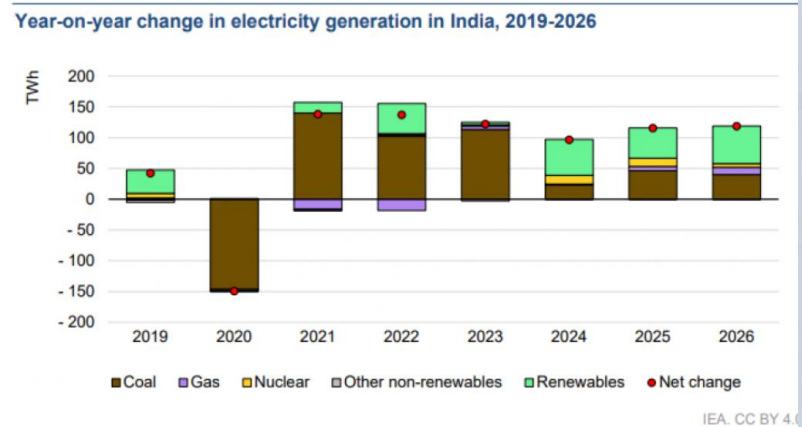
DTE

Jan 30

IEA REPORT – ELECTRICITY 2024

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Economy)

India will continue to rely on coal to meet its rising electricity demand through 2026: IEA



International Energy Agency

- **About**: It is an **autonomous inter-governmental organisation** within the OECD framework.
- **Foundation:** 1974 to ensure the security of oil supplies.
- **Membership**: 31 member countries and 11 association countries.
- India joined this organization **in 2017 as** an Associate member.
- **Reports published by IEA**: World Energy Outlook, World Energy Balances, Energy Technology Perspectives, World Energy Statistics and Net Zero by 2050.

Context: India's electricity demand will outpace China's and have the world's fastest growth rate by 2026, the latest projections by the International Energy Agency (IEA) have indicated.

IEA Report - Electricity 2024

- **Dominance of Coal**: Despite a projected decrease to 74% in 2023, coal will continue to dominate India's power sector through 2026, as per the IEA report.
  - Prime Minister of India set a net-zero target for India by 2070 in 2021.
- **Stable Renewable Generation**: Renewable generation remained stable at 21% of electricity generation in 2023, with 21 GW of renewable energy capacity added.
- **Rise in Electricity Demand:** India experienced a 7% increase in electricity demand in 2023, driven by economic growth and higher space cooling needs.
- **Future Projections**: Coal-fired power generation in India is expected to rise by 2.5% annually (2024-2026), while renewable generation will grow by 13% annually.
- **Electricity Capacity Growth**: About 85% of new electricity capacity is expected to come from emerging economies, particularly in South Asia, with China and India leading.
- **Global Nuclear Power Growth**: More than half of the nuclear power plants in the global pipeline (2024-2026) are in China and India, contributing to a forecasted 10% increase in global nuclear generation by 2026.
- **India's Nuclear Expansion**: India aims to triple its nuclear capacity by 2032, with 6 GW under construction, anticipating rapid growth in nuclear power generation (2024-2026).

ALL INDIA RADIO

Jan 30

SESSIONS OF PARLIAMENT

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Polity)

Budget Session of Parliament to begin today with President Droupadi Murmu's address to joint sitting of both Houses

Context: The **Budget Session** of Parliament will commence with an address by President of India to the joint sitting of both Houses of Parliament.

Sessions of the Parliament:

- **Meaning:** A 'session' of Parliament is the period spanning between the first sitting of a House and its prorogation (or dissolution in the case of the Lok Sabha).
- There are **usually three sessions in a year:**
  - 1. the Budget Session (February to May);
  - 2. the Monsoon Session (July to September); and
  - 3. the Winter Session (November to December).
- **Summoning:** The **President under Article 85** from time to time summons each House of Parliament to meet. But, the maximum gap between two sessions of Parliament **cannot be more than six months.**
- **Adjournment:** An adjournment suspends the work in a sitting for a specified time, which may be hours, days or weeks.
- **Adjournment sine die:** It means terminating a sitting of Parliament for an indefinite period.
- **Prorogation:** The Presiding officer (Speaker or Chairman) declares the House adjourned sine die, when the business of a session is completed. Within the next few days, the President issues a notification for prorogation of the session (End of the session).
- **Dissolution:** Only the Lok Sabha is subject to dissolution which ends the very life of the existing House, and a new House is constituted after general elections are held.

Budget Session

- **Presidential Address**: The Budget session commences with the President addressing a joint session of Parliament.
- **Budget Presentation**: This session focuses on the presentation and approval of the national budget, making it the most crucial among the three parliamentary sessions.
- **Duration and Importance**: Known for its significance, the Budget session spans from February to the third week of May, making it the lengthiest parliamentary session.
- **Preponed Budget**: Since 2017, the government shifted the budget session to start on 1st February annually, signaling a change in the traditional timeline.

PIB

Jan 30

UDAN SCHEME
(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Govt Scheme)

Union Minister of Civil Aviation & Steel Shri Jyotiraditya M. Scindia inaugurates UDAN flight service between Dehradun and Pithoragarh

Context: The Union Minister of Civil Aviation and Steel recently virtually inaugurated a UDAN flight connecting Dehradun and Pithoragarh from New Delhi.

UDAN Scheme (Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik)

- **About**: UDAN is a regional connectivity scheme spearheaded by the Government of India (GoI).
- **Launched**: In 2017. The scheme is a component of the National Civil Aviation Policy (NCAP), 2016.
- **Ministry**: Ministry of Civil Aviation
- **Objective**: To develop a regional aviation market. It seeks to connect under-served and unserved airports in India through the revival of existing airstrips and airports.
- **Over the period of 6 years,** various versions of UDAN Scheme were launched
  - **UDAN 1.0**: 5 airlines companies were awarded 128 flight routes to 70 airports (including 36 newly made operational airports)
  - **UDAN 2.0**: 73 underserved and unserved airports were announced and for the first time, helipads were also connected.
  - **UDAN 3.0**: In coordination with the Ministry of Tourism, Tourism Routes were included. In addition to Seaplanes for connecting Water Aerodromes, several routes in the North-East Region came under the ambit of the scheme.
  - **UDAN 4.0**: Gave impetus to North-Eastern Regions, Hilly States, and Islands. The operation of helicopters and seaplanes incorporated.
- **Significance**
  - RCS-UDAN is **contributing to the growth of the civil aviation industry** as four new & successful airlines have come up in the last 6 years.
  - This **initiative has successfully connected destinations** such as Khajuraho, Deoghar, Amritsar, and Kishangarh (Ajmer), which have substantial relevance in religious tourism.

BUSINESS STANDARD

Jan 30

ANTI PROFITEERING

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Economy)

Delhi HC upholds validity of anti-profiteering provisions under GST

Context: Recently, the Delhi High Court upheld the constitutional validity of anti-profiteering provisions in the Goods and Services Tax (GST), despite more than 100 companies, including Hindustan Unilever, Patanjali, Jubilant Foodworks, and Phillips, filing petitions against them.

Anti-Profiteering under GST

- **About**: Any reduction in rate of GST tax on any supply of goods or services or the benefit of input tax credit should have been passed on to the recipient by way of commensurate reduction in prices.
- **Illegal Profiteering Prohibition**: Businesses are prohibited from withholding GST benefits, and engaging in illegal profiteering is against the law under anti-profiteering provisions.
- **Regulation by Anti-Profiteering Rules**: The Anti-Profiteering Rules, 2017, specified in Section 171 of the Central Goods and Services Tax Act, prevent entities from excessively profiting due to GST reductions.

National Anti-Profiteering Authority (NAA)

- **About:** NAA, established by the Government, identifies and takes action against taxable persons involved in illegal profiteering, determining methodologies for evaluation.
- **Methodology Determination Power**: NAA holds the authority to decide the methodology and procedure for assessing if a taxable person is engaging in illegal profiteering.
- **Reporting to NAA**: Interested parties can report suspected illegal profiteering to the local screening committee, which consists of state government officers.
- **State Level Screening Committee**: Formed by State Governments, examine reported matters and determine their merit regarding illegal profiteering.
- **Recommendations to Standing Committee**: If the screening committee finds merit, it forwards the matter with recommendations to the Standing Committee on Anti-Profiteering, comprising both state and central government officers.
- **Referral for Investigation**: If the Standing Committee gathers sufficient evidence of illegal profiteering, it refers the case to the Director General of Safeguards for a detailed investigation.

BUSINESS STANDARD

Page 1

World Economic Outlook

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Economy)

IMF raises India's FY25 GDP growth forecast to 6.5%

But estimate falls below FinMin's 7% projection

RUCHIKA CHITRAVANSHI
New Delhi, 30 January

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) raised India's growth projection for 2024-25 (FY25) by 20 basis points (bps) to 6.5 per cent in its World Economic Outlook (WEO) update on Tuesday, citing buoyant domestic spending and improved global growth prospects. The estimate, however, falls below the 7 per cent growth projection by the Ministry of Finance (FinMin).

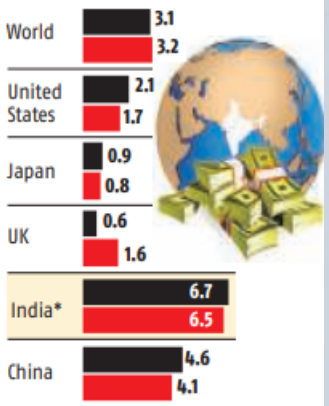
For FY24, the IMF raised India's growth estimate by 40 bps to 6.7 per cent compared to its October report, which is still lower than the 7.3 per cent growth projected by the National Statistical Office earlier this month.

Fund cites India's resilient domestic demand, says global 'soft landing' in sight

"Growth in India is projected to remain strong at 6.5 percent in both 2024 (FY25) and 2025 (FY26), with an upgrade from October of 0.2 percentage point for both years, reflecting resilience in domestic demand," the IMF said in its report.

The FinMin, in its review released on Monday, said the economy is likely to grow at or over 7 per cent for the fourth consecutive year in FY25. Turn to Page 6

GROWTH PREDICTIONS



*Figures for India are for FY24 and FY25, respectively
Source: IMF

FY24 DIRECT TAX-GDP RATIO MAY BE HIGHEST SINCE FY01

On the back of robust tax collection, the ratio of direct taxes to gross domestic product (GDP) this financial year is likely to be the highest in this century so far. This, along with strong GST collection, may drive up receipts from central taxes as a proportion of GDP to the highest level since FY09. 4

Context: India's economy is projected to grow at 6.5% in the financial year starting April 1, 2024, and at a similar pace the year after, according to the International Monetary Fund's World Economic Outlook released recently.

IMF's World Economic Outlook Report

- **IMF Raises India's GDP Growth**: IMF increases India's GDP growth projection to 6.7% for FY24, up from the previous 6.3% estimate in October 2023.
- **Steady Growth Predicted for India**: India's GDP growth expected to remain stable at 6.5% for both FY25 and FY26, reflecting domestic demand resilience.
- **RBI's Optimistic GDP Estimate**: Reserve Bank of India estimates a robust 7.4% GDP growth for India in FY24.
- **Factors Supporting Improved Outlook**: Stronger private and public spending, increased labor force participation, mended supply chains, and lower energy prices contribute to the improved global economic outlook.
- **Global Growth Forecast**: IMF predicts global growth of 3.1% in 2024 and maintains a forecast of 3.2% for 2025, below the historical average.
- **Inflation and Oil Price Projections**: IMF projects global headline inflation at 5.8% for 2024, with a lowered forecast of 4.4% for 2025. Average oil prices expected to drop in 2024 and 2025.
- **Concerns About Red Sea Attacks**: IMF acknowledges potential challenges from geopolitical shocks, such as Red Sea attacks, but anticipates a limited impact on the broader economy.

International Monetary Fund (IMF)

- **About:** The IMF works to achieve sustainable growth and prosperity for all of its member countries.
- **Establishment**: In 1944 in the aftermath of the Great Depression of the 1930s.
- **Member countries**: 190 countries.
- **Headquarters:** Washington, D.C
- **Representation**: Each member country has a representation on the IMF's executive board.

INDIAN EXPRESS Page 14

DEATH PENALTY IN INDIA

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Polity)

DEATH PENALTY TO 15: THE KERALA BJP LEADER MURDER CASE OF 2021

SHAJU PHILIP
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, JANUARY 30

AN ADDITIONAL sessions court in Kerala's Alappuzha district Tuesday awarded the death sentence to 15 activists of PFI-SDPI, for the murder of BJP leader Ranjith Sreenivasan.

Who was Ranjith Sreenivasan?

Ranjith (45) was the BJP's OBC morcha state secretary, and an advocate by profession. He had contested the 2016 Assembly polls as the BJP candidate from Alappuzha. He had been a special invitee in the BJP state committee and had served as additional standing government counsel in Alappuzha. Besides, he had been a member of the management committee of the Central Institute of Fisheries Technology. He was involved in welfare measures for coastal communities and fishermen.

How was he killed?

On December 19, 2021, Kerala woke up to the news of two tit-for-tat political killings in Alappuzha.

The previous night around 7 pm, Social Democratic Party of India (SDPI) state general secretary K S Shan (39) was killed in Mannanchery. SDPI is the political wing of Popular Front of India (PFI), which was banned in 2022 by the Centre for activities "prejudicial to the integrity, sovereignty and security of the country".

Hours later, a gang of assailants forced their way into the house of Ranjith Sreenivasan. He was hacked to death in front of his mother, wife, and younger daughter. His face was disfigured.



Police escort convicted PFI men in Alappuzha on Tuesday. PTI

What was the background of this?

Tensions between the Sangh Parivar and PFI had been running high in Alappuzha in 2021. In February of that year, an RSS worker, Nandu R Krishna, was murdered in Vayalar allegedly by an SDPI-PFI gang. This came after the SDPI took out a march in Vayalar against the Kerala visit of UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. The RSS also marched against the PFI, allegedly raising "provocative slogans".

Shan's murder was believed to be in retaliation to Nandu's killing.

What about the Shan case trial?

The police submitted chargesheets in both murders on March 17, 2022. In the Shan murder case, the chargesheet named 15 persons belonging to the RSS. However, the trial in this case is yet to begin for want of a special prosecutor.

Context: Recently, an additional sessions court in Kerala's Alappuzha district awarded the death sentence to 15 activists of PFI-SDPI in connection with the murder of leader Ranjith Sreenivasan.

Death Penalty in the Indian

- **About**: Execution of offenders sentenced to death by hanging after conviction for a criminal offense.
- **Article 39A**: Inspired by Article 39A of the Indian Constitution, aiming to promote equal justice and equal opportunity by removing socio-economic barriers.
- **Sessions Courts in 2022**: 165 death sentences imposed by Sessions Courts in India during 2022.
- **Highest Convicts**: Uttar Pradesh led with 32 death sentences imposed in 2022, followed by Gujarat (61) and Jharkhand (46).
- **Majority Cases**: Sexual offenses constituted the majority (51.28%) of cases resulting in the death penalty imposed by trial courts in 2022.

Judgements Related Death Penalty

- **Deena Vs. Union Of India**: The court affirmed the constitutionality of hanging as a mode of execution under section 354(5) of the Indian Penal Code, considering it fair and just under Article 21.
- **Bachan Singh v State of Punjab**: The Supreme Court upheld the constitutional validity of the death sentence, emphasizing its applicability only in the "rarest of rare cases."
- **Machhi Singh Vs. State of Punjab**: This case introduced exceptions to the rarest of rare rule, allowing the death penalty when a murder is exceptionally brutal, driven by total depravity, or when the crime is of enormous proportion.

FINANCIAL EXPRESS Page 12

LADAKH

(Syllabus: GS Paper 1 – Geography)

Graziers confront Chinese soldiers in eastern Ladakh

Vijaita Singh
Dinakar Peri
NEW DELHI

Indian graziers were stopped by Chinese soldiers in the Kakjung area of Ladakh along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) earlier this month, according to a video shot by the local people that was shared on X by Chushul councillor Konchok Stanzin on Tuesday.

In the video, the herders can be seen confronting the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) soldiers when the latter ask them to go back claiming it to be Chinese territory. The local people, who can be heard speaking in a Tibetan language, are seen throwing rocks at the Chinese soldiers.

The incident occurred on January 2 near Patrolling Points 35 and 36 at Kakjung under the Nyoma constituency in Ladakh, Mr. Stanzin said. While Chinese soldiers with their vehicles can be seen in the video, there is no presence of Indian security forces.

Ishey Spalzang, councillor, Nyoma, told *The Hindu* that the area is within India's perception of the LAC.

He said that after the face-off, the sarpanch, the sub-divisional magistrate, and officials of the Indian Army and the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) visited the grazing site on January 12. "It is a valley and is essential for winter grazing of cattle. In 2019, the Chinese had tried to stop the graziers but we had pitched tents to assert our claim. The nearest Army unit is present around five to seven kilometres from this place. That particular day they were not present," Mr. Spalzang said, adding that the herders had started from their village around 20 days ago before they reached the location.



Face off: People Liberation Army soldiers and tanks during military disengagement along the Line of Actual Control in Ladakh. AFP

Mr. Stanzin said on X, "See how our local people are showing their bravery in front of the PLA claiming that the area they are stopping is our nomad's grazing land. PLA stopping our nomads from grazing in our territory. Seems it is never a never-ending process due to different lines of perceptions. But I salute our nomads, who always stand to protect our land and stand as the second guardian force of the nation." He later told *The Hindu* that the place where the incident happened is within one kilometre of the Indian claim on the line of the border with China.

A defence source said the video is of an incident that happened in the first week of January where "nomad graziers [with livestock] from our side are seen in conversation with PLA soldiers".

Such incidents are commonplace and happen on both sides whenever graziers stray across the LAC on account of the differing perceptions of the LAC, the source said. Such incidents are dealt with appropriately as per established mechanism.

Context: Indian graziers were stopped by Chinese soldiers in **Kakjung area** of Ladakh along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) earlier this month.



Importance of Ladakh:

- **About**: Ladakh, also known as **"the Land of Passes,"** is the largest among the regions of Jammu, Kashmir, and Ladakh,
- **Coverage**: Area of 95,876 km2. It is administered by India as a union territory.
- **Bordering Territories**: Shares borders with the Chinese Tibet Autonomous Region to the east, Himachal Pradesh to the south, Jammu and Kashmir, Gilgit-Baltistan, and Xinjiang across the Karakoram Pass to the west and far north, respectively.
- **River System**: The region is drained by the Indus River and its major tributaries, including Shyok-Nubra, Chang Chenmo, Hanle, Zanskar, and Suru-dras rivers. The high-altitude landscape is shaped by glacio-fluvial processes and freeze-thaw weathering.
- **Harsh Climate**: Ladakh experiences an extremely harsh environment, earning it the reputation of being one of the highest and driest inhabited places on earth.
  - Its climate is characterized as a "cold desert" due to a blend of arctic and desert features.

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