

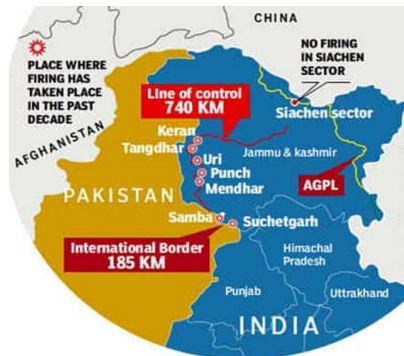
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Institute of Research Based Learning & Competition

Current Affairs - 03 May 2025

CEASEFIRE VIOLATIONS ALONG THE LOC - CAUSES, CONSEQUENCES & STRATEGIC DYNAMICS IN INDIA-PAKISTAN RELATIONS

Evolution of the India-Pakistan Ceasefire:



- **Origin and legal ambiguity:**
 - Ceasefire Line first established via **Karachi Agreement (1949)** post 1948-49 war.
 - **Simla Agreement (1972)** renamed it as the **LoC**, not an international boundary (IB) but a **military control line**.
 - Ceasefire agreement between the two nations is **not a formal treaty**; but based on military-level "understandings".
- **LoC and IB - Distinct legal interpretations:**
 - **LoC (de facto border between India and Pakistan):** 740 km, from Sangam in Kashmir to Point NJ-9842 near the Siachen Glacier.
 - **IB:**
 - **In Jammu**, the LoC changes into the IB for India, since it has no territorial claims on Pakistani Punjab on the other side.
 - But for Pakistan, the IB is a “**Working Boundary**”, since it claims Jammu on the Indian side - and hence deems the border unsettled.

Nature of Ceasefire Violations:

- **Motivations behind violations:**
 - Typically **increase during every bilateral crisis** since 1972 to **impose military costs** on the other side.
 - Such violations have ranged from **limited small-arms fire** to full-fledged cross-border operations such as the **Indian surgical strikes** against terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan occupied Kashmir in 2016.

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- **"Autonomous military factors":** Local commanders act independently for boosting troop morale, revenge, testing enemy resolve.
- **Absence of formal rules of engagement:**
 - **No strict protocols** prevent firing; governed by unwritten SOPs.
 - **Conflict resolution mechanisms:**
 - Flag meetings between local commanders.
 - Hotlines between DGMOs in New Delhi and Rawalpindi.
 - These reduce escalation but do not prevent future violations.

Ceasefire Understanding of 2021 and Its Significance:

- **Strategic rationale behind 2021 understanding:**
 - **Pakistan:** Internal instability and Afghanistan border tensions.
 - **India:** Focus on China and the **Line of Actual Control** (LAC, Ladakh).
 - **Result:** Drop in violations, increased civilian safety, agriculture revival, and economic stability in border villages.
- **Diplomatic and military communication:**
 - **Since the 2019** India-Pakistan diplomatic freeze, only military-level communication remains active.
 - **Weekly DGMO calls continue;** April 29 call saw India objecting to ongoing violations.

Current Developments and Strategic Outlook:

- **Cross-border dynamics post-Pahalgam attack:**
 - Firing possibly used by Pakistan to maintain military pressure and leverage.
 - India needs to:
 - Retaliate (militarily) to the Pakistani violations.
 - Resolve BSF jawan detention issue (crossed IB accidentally on April 23).
 - During times of crisis, such accidental crossings act as leverage for one side over the other.

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A PROFOUND SHIFT IN THE GLOBAL ORDER

The Shifting Global Framework

- **Decline in Globalisation**
 - The **post-colonial global order**, often characterised by multilateralism and rule-based globalization, **has started to erode**.
 - This system, once predicated on a division between ‘donors’ and ‘recipients,’ is **losing relevance**, particularly as **China has overtaken the United States** in both manufacturing output and global trade share.
- **Emergence of New Global Institutions**
 - This unravelling order has left a **vacuum that emerging institutions like BRICS are eager to fill**.
 - The **disintegration of the G-7 and weakening of the G-20** signal a broader **diffusion of global influence**, with new powers reshaping the global agenda.
 - Notably, **the U.S. has begun to restructure its international posture through bilateral deals**, forcing partner nations to recalibrate their policies under pressure, particularly in areas like tariffs and trade imbalances.

Asia's Resurgence and India's Opportunity

- We are witnessing **the re-emergence of Asia as the world's economic centre**, a return to historical norms disrupted only by the colonial era.
- **Countries like China and Russia are increasingly asserting themselves**, and Asia is projected to hold two-thirds of global wealth and power in the near future.
- Against this backdrop, **India must act decisively to secure its place in this evolving order**.
- **Managing trade relations with both China and the U.S. will be crucial**, balancing American pressure to absorb agricultural and energy surpluses with opportunities for deeper economic integration with China.

Challenges, Opportunities and the Way Forward for India

- **Addressing Historical Blind Spots**
 - India's historical foreign policy, rooted in balancing great powers rather than advancing strategic economic interests, has often prioritised diplomacy over trade and innovation.
 - Rather than merely responding to global trends, India should aim to set them, seeking complementarities with China, ASEAN, and Africa as global value chains are restructured.
- **Technological Imperatives and the Digital Frontier**
 - India's strongest card lies in its potential for technological leadership, especially in software development.
 - Despite past successes, India has faltered in maintaining its competitive edge, even as China has surged ahead in hardware innovation.
 - Patents, rather than GDP, are increasingly seen as indicators of future prosperity.
 - A concerted effort to build the world's leading language models and digital tools can position India as a formidable cyber power, echoing its historical role as a global hub of skilled production.

Conclusion

- India's moment of reckoning has arrived. The global order is shifting from a Western-centric framework to a multipolar one, with Asia at its core.
- To seize this moment, India must break from its historical patterns of tactical balancing and embrace a bold, strategic vision.
- This includes rethinking trade and diplomatic engagement, investing in technological innovation, and crafting a new global governance framework suited to a more equitable world.
- By doing so, India can not only secure its rightful place in the new order but also help shape the contours of the 21st century.

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WHAT IS OPERATION KAGAR?



- It is a large-scale **counterinsurgency initiative** launched by the **Indian government** in 2024, aimed at **dismantling the Maoist (Naxalite) insurgency**, particularly in the **"Red Corridor"** spanning Chhattisgarh, Telangana, and neighbouring states.
- Under this operation, around **1 lakh paramilitary troops**, including the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), its elite CoBRA units, District Reserve Guards (DRG), and state police, have been deployed in the left-wing terrorism-affected areas.
- These security personnel are **equipped with modern technology** like **drones** for information gathering, **AI for intelligence gathering**, and **satellite imagery**, among others.
- The **primary goal** of Operation Kagar is to **eradicate Maoist influence by March 2026**.
- Operation Kagar, which roughly means 'Final Mission', follows a **four-part plan**:
 - **Establishing forward operating bases** deep in Maoist territory.
 - **Building hundreds of fortified police stations** in reclaimed areas.
 - **Gathering intelligence** through high-tech monitoring.
 - **Pushing a "generous surrender policy"** that has seen thousands of Naxalites lay down arms in the past decade.

WHAT IS THE SOLAR ENERGY CORPORATION OF INDIA LTD. (SECI)?

- It is the leading **Central Public Sector Undertaking (CPSU)** dedicated to the development and expansion of Renewable Energy (RE) capacity in India. It is the **only CPSU dedicated to the renewable energy**.
 - SECI was **incorporated in 2011** as a not-for-profit company (Sec. 25 of the Companies Act, 1956) and **converted to a commercial company in 2015** (Sec. 3 of the Companies Act, 2013).



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- It was **established to facilitate** the implementation of the **National Solar Mission**.
- It is under the administrative control of the **Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE)**.
- It has been accorded the status of **Miniratna Category-I CPSU**.
- SECI serves as an **implementing agency** for the development of **Solar, Wind, and Hybrid Projects** as part of fulfilling the country's **Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)**.
 - To achieve this, SECI releases tenders for selection of Renewable Energy (RE) developers for the establishment of projects on a pan-India or state-specific basis.
 - The **selection process** for successful bidders is **conducted through a tariff-based competitive e-bidding procedure**.

Procuring Power:

- SECI is a **Category-I (highest) Power Trading Licensee** for trading power on a **pan-India basis**.
- It is the intermediary power procurer for projects being set up through SECI tenders.
- It procures power from successful developers under its tenders and sells it to buying entities (i.e. DISCOMs) through long term PPAs and PSAs, respectively.
- SECI is a **premier trader of renewable energy power in the country**.
- **Providing Consultancy Services to other entities:** SECI also offers **Project Management Consultancy** in the Renewable Energy sector to **Public Sector/Government entities**, including Feasibility Studies, Bid process Management, Construction Monitoring and Management, Commissioning, etc.
- SECI now **oversees a massive 3 GW of awarded generation capacity**.
 - Out of this, more than **60%—over 40 GW—is solar energy**.
 - The remaining capacity includes **3 GW of wind energy** and about 9 GW of hybrid energy projects.

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BHAKRA DAM



- It is a **concrete gravity dam** across the **Sutlej River** and is near the **border between Punjab and Himachal Pradesh**.

- It is located at a gorge near the upstream Bhakra village in the Bilaspur district of **Himachal Pradesh**.

- It is the **highest straight gravity dam in the world**, with a height of about 207.26 meters. It is **Asia's second tallest dam**, next to the 261m **Tehri Dam**, also in India.
- It has a length of 518.25 (1,700 ft) meters and a width of 9.1 meters (30ft) approximately.

History:

- The Bhakra Dam is one of the **earliest river valley development schemes** undertaken by **India after independence**.
- The **construction** of this dam **started in 1948**, when Jawahar Lal Nehru, the first prime minister of India, poured the first bucket of concrete into the foundations of Bhakra.
- The dam was **completed by the end of 1963**.
- Bhakra Dam was **described** as the '**New Temple of Resurgent India**' by **Jawaharlal Nehru**.
- **Operation and maintenance** of the Bhakra dam is done by the **Bhakra Beas Management Board (BBMB)**.
- Its **reservoir**, known as the "**Gobind Sagar**", stores up to 9.34 billion cubic meters of water.
 - The 90 km long reservoir created by the Bhakra Dam is spread over an area of 168.35 sq.km.
 - **In terms of storage of water**, it is the **second largest reservoir in India**, the first being Indira Sagar Dam in Madhya Pradesh with a capacity of 12.22 billion cu m.
- **Nangal Dam** is another dam downstream of **Bhakra Dam**. Sometimes both the dams **together** are called the **Bhakra-Nangal Dam** though they are two separate dams.

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VIZHINJAM PORT INAUGURATION: BOOSTING INDIA'S MARITIME ECONOMY AND GLOBAL TRADE PRESENCE

- India has officially entered the **global container transshipment** league with the inauguration of the Vizhinjam International Deepwater Multipurpose Seaport in Kerala.
- Commissioned by PM Modi, the ₹8,800 crore project marks the culmination of decades-long efforts to establish India's first deepwater transshipment port, positioned strategically to serve as a vital logistics hub in the Indian Ocean region.

About Vizhinjam Deepwater Port

- The Vizhinjam Port, **located near Thiruvananthapuram in Kerala**, has been developed under a **Public-Private Partnership (PPP)** model between the **Adani Group** and the **Kerala government**.
- With a natural draft of nearly 20 metres, it can accommodate ultra-large container vessels, a key requirement for global cargo movement.
- The port had been conceptualized as far back as 1991, but saw several delays due to environmental, legal, and logistical challenges.
- Its eventual operationalization in 2025 marks a major milestone in India's maritime infrastructure ambitions.

Key Features and Strategic Importance

- **Natural Depth & Strategic Location:** The port's depth and proximity to international shipping lanes make it ideal for large cargo vessels with over 20,000 container capacity.
- **Low Maintenance Advantage:** Minimal coastal sand movement around the port ensures reduced dredging and maintenance costs.
- **Reduced Dependency on Foreign Ports:** Vizhinjam aims to significantly reduce India's reliance on transshipment hubs like Colombo, Singapore, and Jebel Ali, which currently handle 75% of India's transhipped cargo.

Economic Impact and Cost Savings

- According to government estimates, **India will save approximately \$220 million annually by managing its own transshipment cargo.**
- Presently, the country pays an additional \$80–\$100 per container due to reliance on foreign ports.
- Bringing these operations in-house will:
 - Improve logistics efficiency
 - Reduce delivery delays
 - Strengthen India's economic resilience during geopolitical disruptions

Vision for a Port-led Economy

- In his address, PM Modi emphasized that port cities and coastal states will play a critical role in realizing the vision of a developed India.
- He noted that the government's maritime policy over the last decade has focused on integrating modern infrastructure with ease of doing business.
- Over the last ten years, billions have been invested through PPP models to modernize Indian ports and bring them on par with global standards.
- The Vizhinjam port also serves as a **model of cooperative federalism**, with a Left-led state government partnering with a major private enterprise, Adani Ports and SEZ Ltd, to realize a shared economic vision.

Wider Maritime and Industrial Push

- The inauguration of the Vizhinjam Port aligns with broader national strategies:
 - **Shipbuilding Promotion:** The Union Budget has introduced policies to promote indigenous ship construction.
 - **Kochi Shipbuilding Cluster:** A shipbuilding and repair hub is being developed in Kochi to enhance employment and manufacturing in the sector.
 - **Improved Global Rankings:** India now has two ports in the world's top 30 and ranks among the top 20 in the Logistics Performance Index.