

Significance of Pangong Tso Lake

Why in news?

\n\n

A series of clashes between Indian and Chinese army personnel are reported near Pangong Tso Lake.

\n\n

What happened recently?

\n\n

\n

- Recently violence between the two sides including kicking and punching, the throwing of stones, and the use of sticks and steel rods, leading to severe injuries was reported.

\n

- Usually the two patrols would have engaged in a “banner drill”, displaying a banner asking the other side to vacate its territory.

\n

- This drill could last a few minutes to an hour.

\n

- Except for some occasional jostling, the two sides would disengage quietly.

\n

- This time Chinese chose to initiate violence against the Indians due to the heightened tensions between the two armies at Doklam on the Sikkim border.

\n

\n\n

What is the significance of Pangong Tso?

\n\n

\n

- Pangong Tso is a long narrow, deep, landlocked lake situated at a height of more than 14,000 ft in the Ladakh, Himalayas.

\n

- The 135 km-long lake sprawls over 604 sq km in the shape of a boomerang, and is 6 km wide at its broadest point.

\n

- The western end of Pangong Tso lies 54 km to the southeast of Leh.

\n

- The brackish water lake freezes over in winter, and becomes ideal for ice skating and polo.

\n



asd

asd

asd



asd

-

\n

- **What are the reasons for the dispute?**

\n

- The Line of Actual Control (LAC) cuts through the lake, but India and China do not agree on its exact location.

\n

- In 1999, when the Army unit from the area was moved to Kargil for Operation Vijay, China took the opportunity to build 5 km of road inside Indian Territory along the lake's bank.

\n

- From one of these roads, Chinese positions physically overlook Indian positions on the northern tip of the Pangong Lake.

\n

- As things stand, a 45 km-long western portion of the lake is in Indian control, while the rest is under China's control.

\n

- Most of the clashes between the two armies occur in the disputed portion of the lake

\n

\n\n

What are the rights over this region?

\n\n

\n

- The Chinese had a major advantage, their superior boats could literally run circles around the Indian boats.

\n

- But India purchased better boats, leading to a quicker and more aggressive response.

\n

- Tourists were not allowed at Pangong Tso until 1999, and even today, one need to obtain an Inner Line Permit from the office of the Deputy Commissioner at Leh.

\n

- Now tourists are only allowed up to Spangmik village, around 7 km into the lake.

\n

\n\n

\n\n

Source: Indian Express

\n

