

New Army division with a focus on eastern Ladakh

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Context

A new Army division will be created this year for possible deployment of troops to eastern Ladakh.

About

- **Creation of 72 Division**
 - The Army is thinking about elevating the 72 Division for viable deployment in eastern Ladakh under the Northern Command.
 - The 72 Division was to at the beginning function under the **17 Mountain Strike Corps (MSC)** based in Panagarh (West Bengal).
 - A department has about 14,000 to 15,000 troops.

Restructuring of Army corps in the backdrop of the army standoff with China

- Currently, the Army has 4 strike corps — the Mathura-based 1 Corp, Ambala-based 2 Corps, Bhopal-based 21 Corps, and 17 MSC in Panagarh.
 - However, till 2021, only the 17 MSC was focused on China. The other 3 were

focussed on Pakistan.

- But in the backdrop of the army standoff with China which started in 2020, a restructuring became completed in 2021 to keep of the strike corps for the mountains facing China.
- The 1 Corps and 17 Corps had been restructured to focus on the northern and eastern borders to tackle Chinese threats.

Role of the 1 Corps and 17 Corps

- The function of the 1 Corps was reoriented to awareness at the northern borders with China with two infantry divisions.
- The 17 Corps was given a further division from a present corps to recognition at the eastern theater.
- Some factors of the 17 Corps have been deployed in eastern Ladakh in the backdrop of the military standoff with China.

Part of two-pronged strategy

- This choice is a part of normal redeployment changes being deliberate in the Northern Command, with a -pronged method targeted on:
 - eastern Ladakh amid the standoff along the LAC with China, and
 - on ensuring no gap in training of strike corps elements.

Situation around LAC after Galwan incident

- India and China drove in almost 50,000-60,000 troops each alongside the **Line of Actual Control (LAC)** following the lethal clashes in the Galwan Valley in June 2020.
- Friction points along with Galwan Valley, north and south banks of Pangong Tso and the Gogra-Hot Springs area have visible some resolution inside the remaining three years with the creation of buffer zones.
- Legacy friction points such as Depsang Plains and Demchok are yet to see any disengagement.

Operation Meghdoot

- Operation Meghdoot was the code call for an military operation carried out by the Indian Armed Forces on thirteen April 1984.
- Its objective was to secure and control over the strategically vital Siachen Glacier in the Jap Karakoram Range of the Himalayas, situated in Kashmir.
- The operation involved Indian troops airlifting to key positions along the glacier and organising military posts to prevent Pakistan from gaining control over the area.
- On April 13, 1984, a fleet of Indian Air Force (IAF) helicopters flew an Indian Army platoon, one soldier at a time, to the Bilafondla Pass on the Saltoro Ridge, towering over the Siachen Glacier at an altitude of 5,450 metres (17,880 toes).
- Simultaneously, a platoon of Ladakh Scouts was airlifted to Sia La, in the northern glacier, at an altitude of 5,589 metres (18,336 feet).
- Soon, about 300-abnormal Indian troops had been positioned on the strategically

important peaks and passes of the Saltoro Ridge.

- The operation changed into successful in reaching its objectives, and India has for the reason that maintained a navy presence inside the Siachen Glacier location.
- This is seen as India's ambitious army response to what New Delhi calls Pakistan's aggression in the uncharted territory of Ladakh, north of map reference NJ9842.
- Both New Delhi and Islamabad had agreed that the **Line of Control (LoC)** stopped at factor NJ9842 on the map.
- Beyond this was an uncharted territory and Pakistan wanted to occupy this region to benefit strategic gain which was thwarted through India.

Source: *The Indian Express*

UPSC Prelims Practice Question

Q. Siachen Glacier is situated to the (2020)

(a) East of Aksai Chin

(b) East of Leh

(c) North of Gilgit

(d) North of Nubra Valley

Ans: (d)