Army Opens Himalayan Battlefields to Boost Tourism | Jammu & Kashmir | 12 Sep 2024

Why in News?

Recently, in a move to enhance border tourism and match China's infrastructure **efforts along the** Line of Actual Control (LAC), the Indian Army has opened up **historic battlefield** locations in the Himalayas **for tourists.**
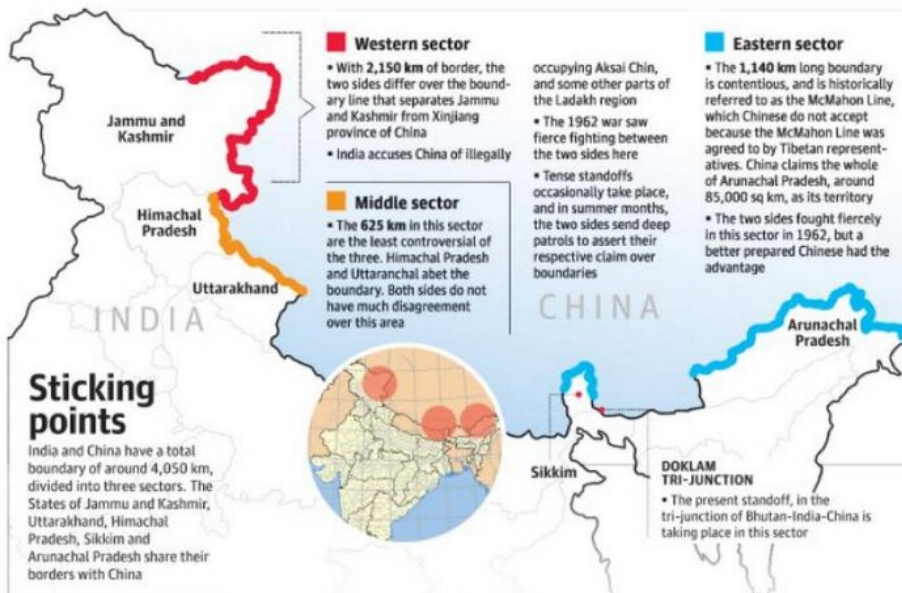
Key Points

- **Tourism Infrastructure Development:**
  - India has identified **100 additional villages** along the **LAC** to create infrastructure for tourism as part of a **multi-pronged approach** to counter China's efforts in the region.
  - The Army is opening up Himalayan locations where key battles, such as the Kargil conflict,1999 took place.
    - Tourists are now allowed to visit Tiger Hill, a critical site during the Kargil war.
- **Border Security and Deterrence:**
  - According to the Army, opening these inaccessible areas and developing infrastructure in border regions will act as a deterrent to claims on undemarcated borders with China.
  - A **pilot project** for tourism is being set up in **Zemithang,** the **last Indian village near the LAC in Arunachal Pradesh.** This is the route through which the 14th Dalai Lama entered India in 1959.

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Western sector
- With **2,150 km** of border, the two sides differ over the boundary line that separates Jammu and Kashmir from Xinjiang province of China
- India accuses China of illegally occupying Aksai Chin, and some other parts of the Ladakh region
- The 1962 war saw fierce fighting between the two sides here
- Tense standoffs occasionally take place, and in summer months, the two sides send deep patrols to assert their respective claim over boundaries

Middle sector
- The **625 km** in this sector are the least controversial of the three. Himachal Pradesh and Uttaranchal abet the boundary. Both sides do not have much disagreement over this area

Eastern sector
- The **1,140 km** long boundary is contentious, and is historically referred to as the McMahon Line, which Chinese do not accept because the McMahon Line was agreed to by Tibetan representatives. China claims the whole of Arunachal Pradesh, around 85,000 sq km, as its territory
- The two sides fought fiercely in this sector in 1962, but a better prepared Chinese had the advantage

DOKLAM TRI-JUNCTION
- The present standoff, in the tri-junction of Bhutan-India-China is taking place in this sector

Sticking points
India and China have a total boundary of around 4,050 km, divided into three sectors. The States of Jammu and Kashmir, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh share their borders with China

- **Line of Actual Control:** It is divided into three sectors.
  - The eastern sector which spans **Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim** (1346 km).

- - The middle sector in **Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh** (545 km).
    - The western sector in **Ladakh** (1597 km).
    - The alignment of the **LAC in the eastern sector i**s along the [McMahon Line of 1914.](#)
  - **Case of Arunachal Pradesh:** India's claim line is different from that of the LAC. It is the line seen in the official boundary marked on the maps as released by the **Survey of India**, including [Aksai Chin (occupied by China)](#). The state of Arunachal Pradesh is an 'integral and inalienable' part of India.
    - In China's case, LAC corresponds mostly to its claim line, but in the eastern sector, it claims the entire Arunachal Pradesh as South Tibet.
  - **China's Intention**: There have been reports of **Chinese construction of villages** in Arunachal Pradesh, 5 kilometres from the [Bum La pass](#).
    - The construction of the village has been seen by analysts as a move to bolster China's claim to the area, and part of a broader recent push by China to build civilian settlements in disputed frontier areas, which [it has also done with Bhutan](#).

Purple Revolution | Jammu & Kashmir | 12 Sep 2024

Why in News?

The [Lavender cultivation](#) success in Jammu and Kashmir exemplifies the powerful collaboration between research institutions, industry, and [youth entrepreneurship,](#) offering a path to [boost farmers' income](#) and enhance the [rural economy.](#)

Key Points

- **Aroma Mission and Lavender Cultivation:**
  - [Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)](#) launched the [Jammu and Kashmir Aroma Arogya Gram (JAAG)](#) project to promote alternative crops like [medicinal and aromatic plants (MAPs).](#)
  - The [Aroma Mission](#) **introduced** lavender cultivation **to boost farmers' income** and create employment.
  - Farmers received **free planting material, training, and support in cultivation, processing, and marketing.**
    - Originating in **Bhaderwah, Doda, lavender cultivation** has spread to other J&K districts and states like **Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, and Nagaland.**
- **Economic Impact:**
  - Over 1,300 hectares in J&K are under lavender cultivation, with significant **progress in districts like Udhampur, Poonch, and Rajouri.**
  - Lavender farms have gained national recognition and **boosted tourism,** as seen in the [Republic Day tableau at Kartavya Path.](#)
  - In 2024, **Doda district extracted 100 kg of lavender oil** and harvested 10 quintals of dry flowers, generating significant revenue for farmers.
- **Agricultural Challenges in J&K:**
  - Agriculture employs **65% of the population** and contributes **27% to J&K's** economy.
  - The region faced challenges like **difficult terrain, monkey menace, and poor accessibility, limiting land utilization for traditional crops** (rice, maize, wheat, pulses).
- **Future Prospects:**
  - Lavender farming opens opportunities in **value-added medicinal and cosmetic** products.
  - The initiative is a [model for rural entrepreneurship,](#) fostering growth in India's path to

becoming a developed nation.

Purple Revolution

- Purple revolution is also known as **Lavender Revolution** and aims to promote the **indigenous aromatic crop-based** agro-economy by shifting from foreign aromatics to homegrown kinds.
- First-time producers were offered free lavender seedlings as part of the goal, and those who had previously produced lavender were paid Rs. 5-6 per plant.
- The CSIR-Aroma Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine **(IIIM)'s** Initiative has begun lavender cultivation in the **Ramban district of Jammu and Kashmir.**
- Lavender farming is done in nearly all of **Jammu and Kashmir's 20 districts.**
    - Particularly, the districts of Kathua, Udhampur, Doda, Kishtwar, Rajouri, Srinagar, Bandipora, Budgam, Ganderbal, Anantnag, Kulgam, Baramulla etc. have made huge progress in this direction.
- **Lavender Cultivation:**
    - Native to Europe, lavender was introduced in the temperate regions of Jammu & Kashmir by the **CSIR Aroma Mission.**
    - It is a small, perennial aromatic herb shrub used in fragrance, specialty food, and alternative medicine industries.
    - **Propagation Methods:**
        - Seeds
        - Rooted cuttings
        - Tissue culture
        - Layering
    - **Soil:**
        - Grows well in light, well-aerated soil rich in organic matter.
        - Thrives in neutral to alkaline soil that is free-draining.
        - Sensitive to waterlogging but can grow in poor or eroded soil.
    - **Rainfall:**
        - Performs well with an annual rainfall range between 300 to 1400 mm.
    - **Climate:**
        - A hardy temperate plant, tolerant to drought and frost.
        - Prefers cool winters and cool summers with ample sunlight.
        - Can be cultivated in areas with snowfall and hilly terrain.
    - **Applications:**
        - Food and flavouring
        - Pharmaceutical and therapeutic uses
        - Cosmetic products
        - Industrial purposes