

Forest Fire & Landmine Explosions in Jammu and Kashmir | Jammu & Kashmir | 23 Nov 2024

Why in News?

In **Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district,** a <u>forest fire</u> along <u>the Line of Control (LoC)</u> triggered the explosion of nearly half a dozen landmines, which were part of an <u>anti-infiltration obstacle system.</u>

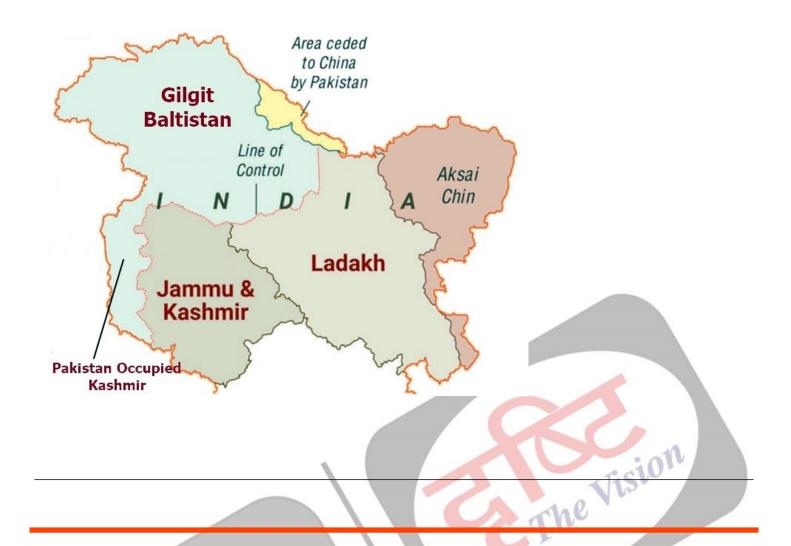
Key Points

- Explosions Triggered by Forest Fire:
 - The explosions were triggered by a forest fire that spread to Indian territory in the **Krishna Ghati sector, Mendhar sub-division.**
 - The fire began on the other side of the border before spreading to Indian forward areas.
 - Authorities are investigating the cause, with speculation of deliberate attempts from across the border to damage India's anti-infiltration obstacle system.
- Casualties and Control Measures:
 - No casualties have been reported and efforts to control the flames are actively ongoing.
- Army Response:
 - The Indian Army stationed along the LoC is on high alert to prevent potential infiltration attempts by terrorists.

Line of Control

- The Line of Control (LoC) emerged from the 1948 ceasefire line negotiated by the **United Nations** (UN) after the **Kashmir War**.
- It was designated as the LoC in 1972, following the Shimla Agreement between the two countries.
- LoC is demarcated upto the <u>Siachen Glacier</u> (Point NJ9842)- the world's highest battlefield.
- LoC is delineated on a map signed by the Director General of Military Operations (DGMO) of both armies and has the international sanctity of a legal agreement.

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Investigation into Allegations of "Ill-Treatment" of Civilians | Jammu & Kashmir | 23 Nov 2024

Why in News?

The Army initiated an investigation into allegations of "ill-treatment" of civilians during search operations for militants in Jammu and Kashmir's Kishtwar district.

Key Points

- Launch of Operation:
 - The Rashtriya Rifles initiated an operation in the Kishtwar Sector, based on specific intelligence about terrorist movements.
 - The <u>White Knight Corps</u> confirmed the operation and ongoing monitoring of the terrorist group.
- Allegations of Civilian III-Treatment:
 - Allegations surfaced regarding the ill-treatment of four men from Kuath village, who were reportedly called to an Army camp.
 - Sources suggest the allegations include **accusations of** torture in custody.
- The Army announced an investigation to verify the claims and assured necessary follow-up actions.
- Past Allegations:
 - In **December 2023 three civilians were allegedly killed in custody** in connection with a terror attack in Poonch.
 - Following an inquiry, **lapses in personnel conduct were reported,** and the involved Army unit was relocated out of the district.
 - This situation underscores ongoing tensions and challenges in managing counter-terrorism

operations while addressing allegations of human rights violations.

The Rashtriya Rifles

- It is a **counter-insurgency force** in India, **formed in 1990,** to deal with <u>internal security</u> in the Jammu and Kashmir region.
- They maintain public order by drawing powers from the <u>Armed Forces (Jammu and Kashmir)</u>
 Special Powers Act, 1990 (AFSPA).
- The force operates under **the Ministry of Defence.** The Indian Army describes RR as their "specialist elite force to combat insurgency".
- The RR is headquartered at Northern Command in Udhampur and commanded by an Additional Director General of Rashtriya Rifles (ADG RR).

