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Q19

**India has a long and troubled border with China and Pakistan, fraught with contentious issues. Examine the conflicting issues and security challenges along the border. Also give out the development being undertaken in these areas under the Border Area Development Programme (BADP) and Border Infrastructure and Management (BIM) Scheme.**

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2024 · GS III · 15 marks · Border Security and Organised Crime  
Security challenges and their management in border areas - linkages of organized crime with terrorism.

**Core demand of the question**

- Examine conflicting issues and security challenges on the China and Pakistan borders
- State development under **BADP** and the Border Infrastructure and Management scheme
- Keep rights of border residents in view

**Revision summary**

With Pakistan the live issues are the **LoC**, PoK, Sir Creek, Siachen, infiltration and drone-aided terror or narcotics.

With China the issues are an undelimited **LAC**, Aksai Chin, Arunachal, patrol face-offs and a roads-and-villages race after Galwan 2020.

A two-front stress is the strategic envelope.

**BADP** funds border-block development so hamlets do not empty.

**BIM** funds fencing, lighting, BOPs, roads and surveillance; it must not reduce the border resident to a cleared field of fire.

**Introduction**

India's **land frontier with China and Pakistan** is long, high and **politically unfinished**. With Pakistan the wound is **Jammu and Kashmir, terrorism and a Line of Control**. With China it is an **undefined Line of Actual Control**, a 1962 memory and a **2020 clash** that ended the old peace-by-patrol habit. People still live on those edges. **BADP** and **Border Infrastructure and Management** are how the State tries to make that edge a **livable, watchable** strip, not only a trench.

**Body****Pakistan: **LoC**, terror and the west**

The **International Boundary** in the west is largely settled; the **Line of Control** in J&K is not a recognised international border. **Pakistan-occupied J&K, Sir Creek** in the Rann, and **Siachen** remain dispute files. **Cross-border terrorism**, infiltration, and **ceasefire violations** on the **LoC** are the standing security challenge. **Drone drops** of weapons and narcotics, and

**tunnel** attempts, are newer tactics. **Punjab and Rajasthan** see smuggling and, at times, drone narcotics more than infantry assault. Nuclear overlay makes a conventional war a last resort, which is why **sub-conventional violence** is the persistent form.

- **Peg:** LoC infiltration and IB drone-narcotics are two Pakistani-border grammars, not one fence problem.
- **Peg:** Siachen and Sir Creek remain unfinished political files beside the daily terror watch.

### China: LAC, 2020 and the two-front envelope

The boundary with China is not fully delimited. **Aksai Chin**, the **western LAC**, the **middle sector**, and **Arunachal Pradesh** (which China contests) are the geographic files. **Transgressions, face-offs and dual-use villages** opposite Indian tracts are the peacetime pattern. **Galwan 2020** showed that a patrol clash can kill. The **infrastructure race** - Chinese roads and villages, Indian roads and landing grounds - is itself a security challenge, because the first truck to a ridge changes facts. **Water** (upstream Brahmaputra dams) and **cyber/info** operations sit beside the infantry. Collusion risk - a **two-front** stress with Pakistan - is the strategic envelope.

- **Peg:** LAC friction is territorial and infrastructural; it is not the same as LoC terrorism, and both can heat together.
- **Peg:** Aksai Chin and Arunachal are the named map disputes; roads and villages are how those maps are pressed daily.

### BADP and BIM

The **Border Area Development Programme** (MHA) funds **blocks along the international border** (and, in practice, designated difficult border tracts) for **roads, schools, health, sports, livelihoods and irrigation-like local works**, so that a border hamlet is not forced to empty toward the interior. The aim is **security through presence**: a populated, serviced village is a **human sensor** and a political fact. The **Border Infrastructure and Management** (BIM) scheme, also under the Home Ministry's border-management work, is the harder kit: **fencing, floodlighting, border roads, Border Out Posts, hi-tech surveillance** (including along the west) and related civil works that let the BSF and other forces **see and reach**. Complementary Union efforts - **BRO roads, Vibrant Villages** on the northern border, **rail to Kashmir**, advanced landing grounds - sit in the same family even when the budget head differs. The rights caution is real: **fencing and a security zone** can cut a farmer from a field or a herder from a pasture. Development that is only a **lateral road for the battalion**, with no clinic, will not keep the young from leaving. Security with welfare is the GS-III test on this frontier.

- **Peg:** BADP is the village-and-livelihood head; BIM is the fence-road-BOP-surveillance head.
- **Peg:** Vibrant Villages is the northern political cousin: stay, don't migrate, on the China-facing edge.

### Flow diagram

Pakistan LoC terror -> Indian borders  
China LAC friction -> Indian borders  
BADP livelihoods livelihoods -> Border people stay  
BIM fence road BOP fence road BOP -> Force reach  
Border people stay -> Indian borders  
Force reach -> Indian borders

## Conclusion

Pakistan's border challenge is terrorism and an unfinished **LoC**; China's is an unlimited **LAC** and an infrastructure race. **BADP** tries to keep people on the rim with schools and roads. **BIM** builds the fence, light and post. Both fail if the resident is only a spectator of a patrol.

## Facts & figures

### LoC

Line of Control in J&K, a military control line, not a finally settled international boundary.

### LAC

**Line of Actual Control** with China, not fully agreed, with western, middle and eastern sectors.

### Galwan, 2020

A deadly clash in eastern Ladakh that ended the old assumption of a non-violent patrol regime.

### BADP

Border Area Development Programme, MHA: civic and livelihood works in designated border blocks.

### BIM

Border Infrastructure and Management: fencing, floodlighting, roads, BOPs and related surveillance works.

### Vibrant Villages

A northern-border programme to hold population and basic services on the China-facing rim.

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