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CURRENT ISSUES WRITING PRACTICE

PRE-TEST MATERIAL FOR CIWP – F

Essential Commodities

Why in News?

As the Union government announced massive reforms as part of the novel disease (COVID-19) relief package, attention went to three agriculture sector ordinances related to farmers' trade, contract farming and amendments in the Essential Commodities Act.

The Essential Commodities Act, 1955 was enacted at a time when the country faced an acute shortage of several commodities, especially food items.

Under the act, an 'essential commodity' is a commodity specified under the schedule of the Act. The Union government is empowered to amend the schedule to add or remove a commodity to said schedule in public interest and in consultation with state governments.

The schedule was amended recently due to the outbreak of COVID.

Connectedness to the Syllabus

Essay: UPSC may ask candidates to write an essay on the availability of Essential Commodities as the fundamental right, things fall under the ambit of Essential Commodities and the issues related to it.

General Studies I: Role of women and women's organization, population and associated issues, poverty and developmental issues, urbanization, their problems and their remedies; Effects of globalization on Indian society.

General Studies II: Functions and responsibilities of the Union and the States, devolution of powers and finances up to local levels and challenges therein; Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation; Important aspects of governance, transparency and accountability.

General Studies III: Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization, of resources, growth, development and employment; Inclusive growth; Government Budgeting; Disaster and disaster management.

Articles Link

<https://www.downtoearth.org.in/blog/governance/essential-commodities-amendment-ordinance-a-strong-ec-act-is-still-needed-72540>

<https://www.livemint.com/news/india/plea-in-delhi-hc-to-classify-masks-and-sanitisers-as-essential-commodities-11596812606917.html>

<https://www.livemint.com/news/india/delhi-hc-dismisses-plea-to-classify-masks-sanitisers-as-essential-commodities-11597320854520.html>

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Figures and Maps

#AatmanirbharBharatAbhiyanPackage

Part-3

Focus on Agriculture and Allied Sectors (2/2)

Governance and Administrative Reforms



- Amendments to Essential Commodities Act
 - Agriculture food stuffs like cereals, edible oils, onions etc. to be deregulated
 - Stock limit to be imposed under very exceptional circumstances
 - No such stock limit shall apply to processors or value chain participant

Agriculture Marketing Reforms

A Central law will be formulated to provide for :-

- Farmer to sell produce at attractive price
- Barrier-free Inter-State Trade
- Framework for e-trading of agriculture produce

- Facilitative legal framework for engaging with processors, aggregators, large retailers, exporters etc
- Risk mitigation for farmers, assured returns and quality standardisation



[/PIB_India](#) [/PIBHindi](#) [/pibindia](#) [/pibindia](#) [/pibindia.wordpress.com](#) [/pibindia](#) [pib.gov.in](#) **KBK**

https://twitter.com/pib_india/status/1261346494008848386

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#1YearofModi2

Historic Amendment to Essential Commodities Act





Visionary step towards transformation of agriculture and raising farmers' income



India has achieved near self-sufficiency in many essential food items



However, farmers have been unable to realize better prices due to lack of investment in cold storage, processing and export



Entrepreneurial spirit dampened due to stringent provisions of **Essential Commodities Act**



Farmers suffer huge losses when there are bumper harvests of perishable commodities



With adequate processing facilities, much of this wastage can be reduced

<https://twitter.com/mygovindia/status/1268158016307654656>

Video Links

Money Control (English): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yjvi54M-Lol>

The Hindu(English): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YUez3FoHTpg>

PRS Legislative(English): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=holrOv8Xq84>

NDTV(English): FM Nirmala Sitharaman announced Amendments in ESA, 1955:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Le399nlzSbE>

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Custodial Death

Why in News?

The Tamil Nadu CB-CID has re-registered an FIR filed against former Sathankulam sub-inspectors P Ragu Ganesh and K Balakrishnan in connection with the custodial torture of 36-year-old S Raja Singh. Earlier, the case was registered at the Sathankulam police station on directions of Thoothukudi Chief Judicial Magistrate S Hema. The CB-CID has re-registered the FIR under Section 294(b), 341, 342, 324, 330, 448, 427 and 506(i) of the Indian Penal Code.

Connectedness to the Syllabus

Essay: UPSC may ask candidates to write an essay on the extra judicial killings, Custodial Violence, and the issues related to police brutalities.

General Studies II: Important aspects of governance, transparency and accountability, e-governance applications, models, successes, limitations, and potential; citizens charters, transparency & accountability and institutional and other measures; Role of civil services in a democracy.

General Studies III: Linkages between development and spread of extremism; Role of external state and non-state actors in creating challenges to internal security; Various Security forces and agencies and their mandate.

Articles Link

<https://www.indialegallive.com/constitutional-law-news/courts-news/sc-dismisses-plea-for-enquiry-commission-into-rakesh-pandey-encounter-killing>

<https://caravanmagazine.in/news/sumedh-saini-dgp-punjab-extra-judicial-killing-balwant-multani-murder-cops-approvers>

<https://www.jurist.org/commentary/2020/07/akshat-bhushan-extrajudicial-killings-and-police-impunity/>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/20/world/asia/india-police-brutality.html>

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2020/aug/20/periyakulam-inspector-denies-custodial-torture-claims-2185960.html>

<https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/dk-basu-police-custodial-killing-encounter-6534750/>

Figures and Maps

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End the Regime of Police Torture & Custodial Terror



Radical Reform of the Institution of Police Need of the Hour



Condemn the Custodial Torture, Sexual Violence and Subsequent Death of Jayaraj and Bennicks at the Hands of the Thoothukudi Police



Arrest the Accused Cops:
Try them for Murder and Sexual Violence



India must **ratify the UN Convention against Torture** and pass a robust 'Anti-Torture' legislation



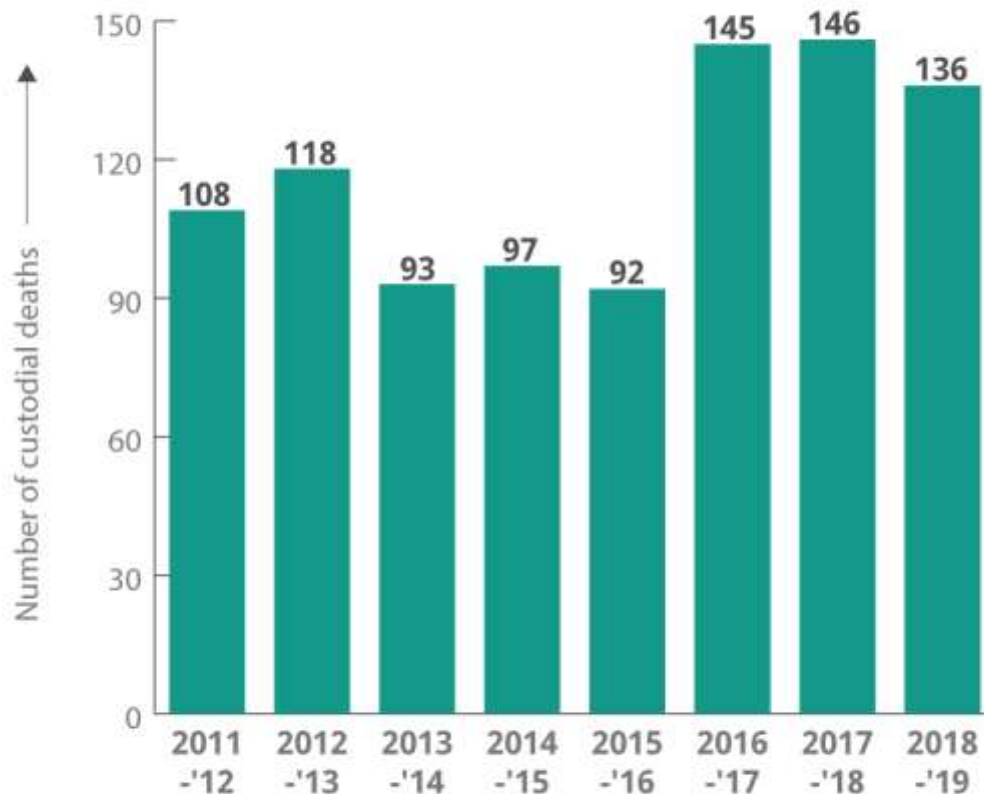
Implement Supreme Court directives in Prakash Singh & Ors v Union of India & Ors (2006)



National Alliance of People's Movements (NAPM)

<https://napmindia.wordpress.com/2020/06/29/end-the-regime-of-police-torture-custodial-terror-radical-reform-of-the-institution-of-police-need-of-the-hour/>

427 people died in police custody between 2016 and 2019



Source: Data from 2011 to 2015 is from the National Crime Records Bureau's annual report on crime statistics. This has not been published since 2016. Data from 2016 onwards is from a parliament answer by the Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs on June 26, 2019

Scroll.in

<https://scroll.in/article/936162/in-charts-high-approval-for-police-violence-in-india-80-among-police-50-among-citizens>


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CUSTODIAL DEATHS SINCE 2010

Year	State	Ahmedabad
➤ 2010	60	24
➤ 2011	67	24
➤ 2012	63	10
➤ 2013	65	10
➤ 2014	58	12
➤ 2015	43	12
➤ 2016	59	12
➤ 2017	55	15
Total	470	119
* Figures from Union home ministry and RTI replies		



<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/ahmedabad/state-recorded-55-custodial-deaths-in-2017-city-topped-list-with-15/articleshow/63250539.cms>

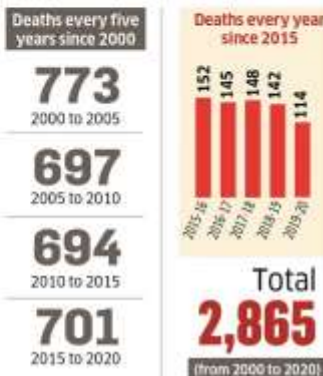
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POLICE BRUTALITY IN NUMBERS

Supreme Court's directives to states in 2006 to implement police reforms

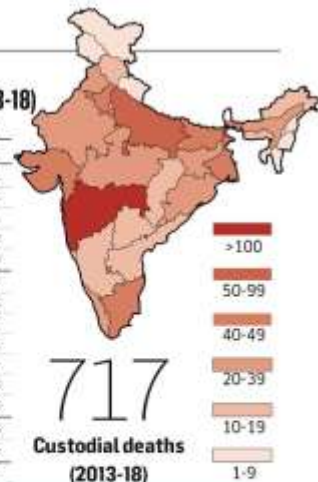
- 1 Set up a State Security Commission in every state to evaluate police performance
- 2 Constitute a Police Establishment Board in every state that will decide postings, transfers and promotions for officers below the rank of Deputy Superintendent of Police
- 3 Constitute Police Complaints Authorities at the state, district levels to inquire into allegations of serious misconduct and abuse of power by police personnel
- 4 Provide a minimum tenure of at least two years for the DGP and other key police officers
- 5 Separate the investigating police from the law and order police to ensure speedier investigation and better expertise
- 6 Constitute a National Security Commission to shortlist the candidates for appointment as Chiefs of the central armed police forces.

DEATHS IN POLICE CUSTODY ACROSS INDIA



States with highest custodial deaths (2013-18)

Maharashtra	114
Uttar Pradesh	64
Gujarat	44
West Bengal	44
Haryana	41
Bihar	40
Tamil Nadu	40
Assam	37
Madhya Pradesh	33
Jharkhand	27
Punjab	23
Rajasthan	21
Kerala	20
Odisha	20
Delhi	18
Karnataka	16
Others	115



WHAT AILS OUR POLICE FORCE?

- Tough working conditions
- Political interference
- Inadequate training
- Colonial mindset
- Corruption
- Religious and class-based prejudices

POLICE BELIEFS ABOUT LIKELIHOOD OF COMMUNITIES COMMITTING CRIMES (in %)

COMMUNITY		VERY MUCH	SOMEWHAT	NOT AT ALL
Muslims	India	14	36	17
	Karnataka	26	23	11
SCs	India	7	28	24
	Karnataka	22	24	19
STs	India	5	26	27
	Karnataka	5	21	28

The police's run-in with the law in 2018



Assam: 484
UP: 257
Chhattisgarh: 236
Jharkhand: 95
Maharashtra: 69
West Bengal: 57
Andhra Pradesh: 43

States with highest reported encounter killings (2008-2018)

1689
Total Encounter deaths

SC directives, if implemented effectively, can act as a deterrence against police excesses. There is a lack of awareness among the people and even the politicians about such provisions.

Hormis Tharakan, Former RAW chief and Kerala DGP

What is a Police Complaints Authority?

A Police Complaints Authority (PCA) is an external body that addresses the public's grievances of misconduct by the police on various issues, including custodial torture / death, illegal arrest etc.

Status of Police Complaints Authority

Erstwhile J&K and Uttar Pradesh have not yet instituted a PCA; at least 10 other states, including West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana do not have functional PCAs

United Nations Convention Against Torture (UNCAT)

The UNCAT is an international human rights treaty, that aims to prevent torture and other degrading treatment. India signed the United Nations Convention Against Torture in 1997; it is one of five countries yet to ratify the treaty.

COMPILED BY PRAJWAL SUVARNA; CH GRAPHICS: RAMU M

SOURCE: Status of Policing in India 2019, National Human Rights Commission, National Crime Records Bureau, State Human Rights Commission, National Campaign Against Torture Annual Report, Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative

<https://www.deccanherald.com/specials/insight/custodial-death-a-mother-s-long-fight-for-justice-871178.html>

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“

Much of the focus on murders of Jeyaraj and Beniks in police custody has been on the ratification of the Convention Against Torture, which India signed in 1997, a process that requires a domestic law implementing the Convention

Avi Singh
Advocate



<https://www.thequint.com/voices/opinion/jeyaraj-beniks-tamil-nadu-custodial-deaths-police-brutality-indian-judiciary-international-law-torture>

Video Links

NDTV(English):<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DffEoLlrp0>

India Today(English):<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KgKjDVIPJug>

The Quint(English):<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t7AS7OZJKGU>

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Indo-Nepal

Why in News?

India and Nepal are likely to hold their next joint commission meeting at the level of foreign ministers in October even as Kathmandu is pushing for foreign secretary-level talks on the Kalapani border dispute.

The last joint commission meeting between External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and his Nepalese counterpart Pradeep Kumar Gyawali was held in 2019 in Kathmandu.

Connectedness to the Syllabus

Essay: UPSC may ask candidates to write an essay on the Indo Nepal Bilateral Relations and the issues related to our neighbours, etc.

General Studies II: India and its neighbourhood- relations, Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests; Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests, Indian Diaspora.

General Studies III: Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization of resources, growth, development and employment, Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation, environmental impact assessment; Disaster and disaster management; Challenges to internal security.

Articles Link

<https://theprint.in/opinion/global-print/what-china-is-doing-in-bangladesh-nepal-afghanistan-not-good-for-india/488681/>

<https://kathmandupost.com/money/2020/08/25/nepal-india-in-talks-to-build-oil-pipelines-gas-plant-and-storage-facilities>

<https://theprint.in/diplomacy/india-nepal-foreign-ministers-likely-to-meet-in-october/488307/>

<https://theprint.in/diplomacy/india-nepal-meet-soon-to-discuss-all-bilateral-issues-but-kalapani-talks-will-have-to-wait/486725/>

https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/india-nepal-to-expand-energy-cooperation-explore-new-pipeline-120082401028_1.html

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/in-first-virtual-meet-after-border-row-india-nepal-decide-to-accelerate-bilateral-projects/story-rCgp5x0VyHJD6BU8Xyd5aK.html>

Figures and Maps

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TRI-JUNCTION TROUBLE

Lipulekh mountain pass at the 80-km-long Uttarakhand-Nepal border

Kalapani

Lowest point

11,980 ft

Highest point

20,280 ft

(Lipulekh Pass)

Uttarakhand

Dharchula

C H I N A

N E P A L

➤ Nepal has two tri-junctions with India and China

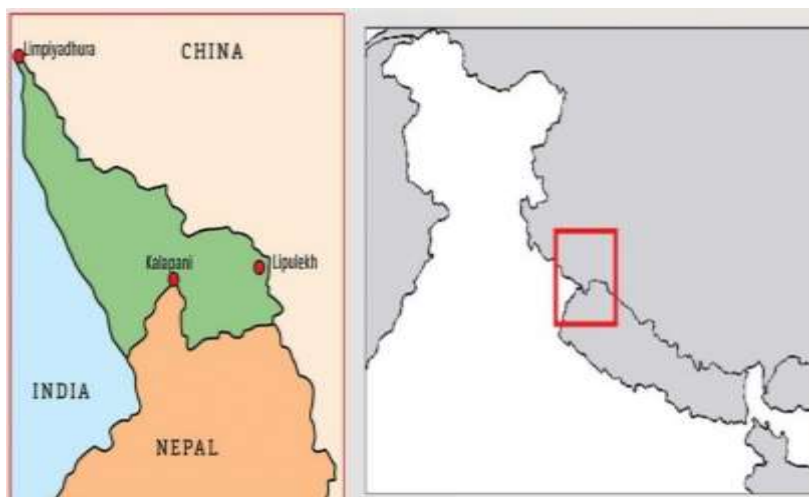
➤ The one in dispute now is Lipulekh in Kalapani, at the border of Uttarakhand with Nepal

➤ In 1816, the Sugauli Treaty signed by Nepal and British India identified Kali river as

Nepal's boundary with India

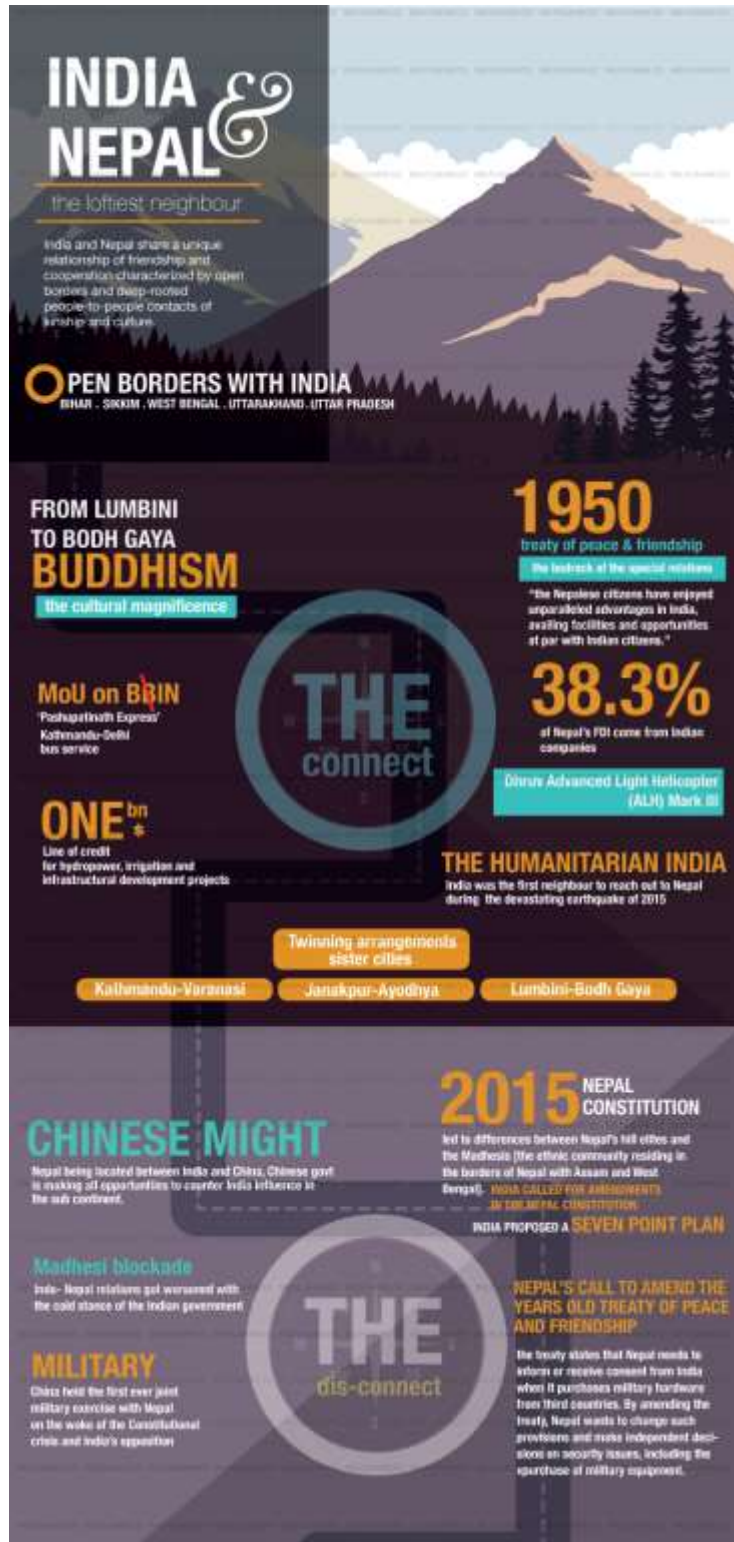
➤ Nepal claims the river to Kalapani's west is the main Kali, and thus Nepal has territorial rights to it

➤ India holds that a ridgeline to Kalapani's east is the border, thus Kalapani falls within its territory



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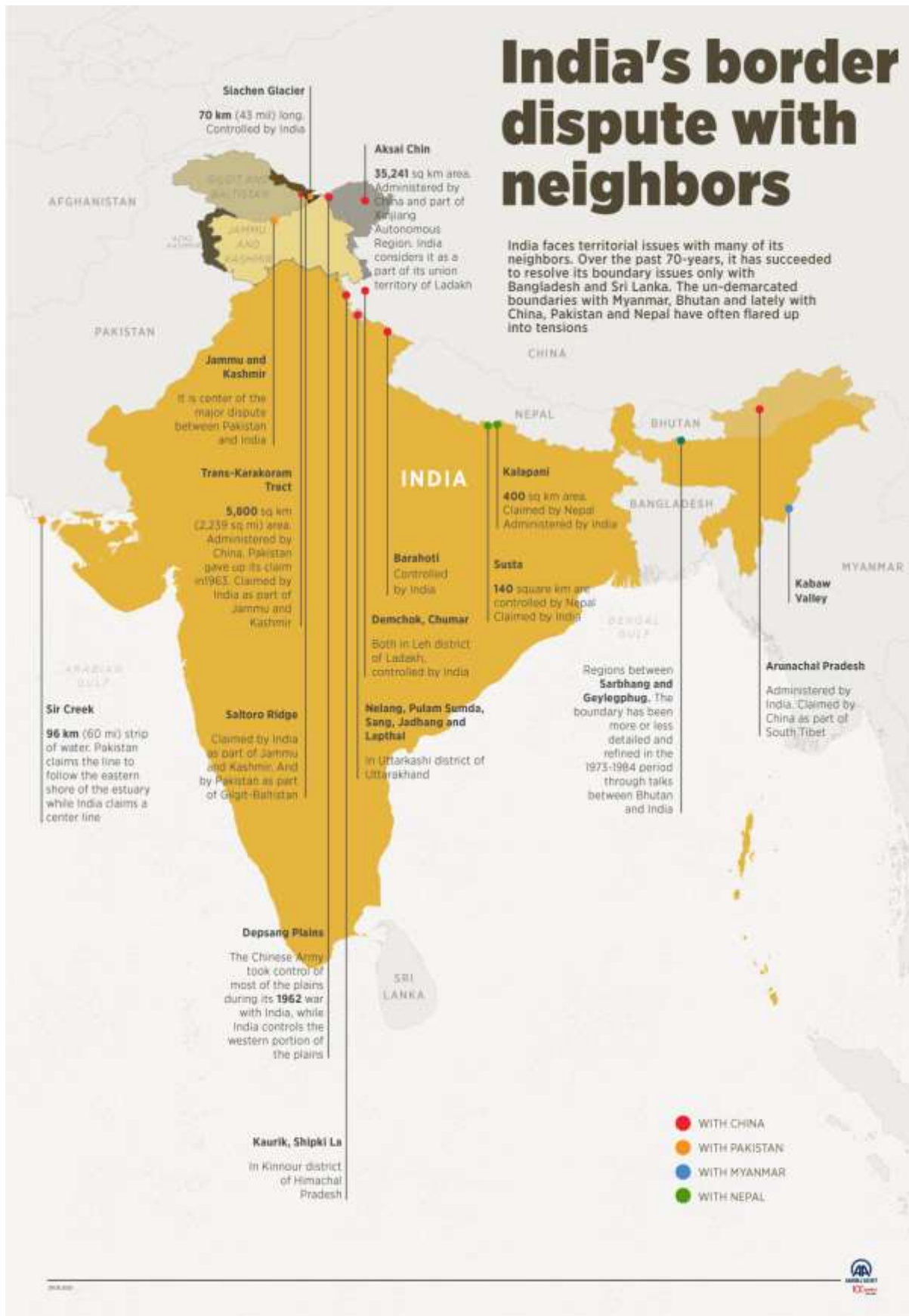


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Video Links

The Big Picture, RSTV (English):<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VhBH3xubAJc&t=908s>

The Big Picture, RSTV (English):<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=saY-4ZEsjPU>

The Big Picture, RSTV (English):<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QQzI7US2e1g&t=16s>

In Depth, RSTV (English):<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=glyFH5Sr71w&t=386s>