



TATHASTU
Institute Of Civil Services

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

28th June 2025



TATHASTU
Institute Of Civil Services



9560300770



www.tathastuics.com



support@tathastuics.com

HEAD OFFICE: 53/1, UPPER GROUND FLOOR, BADA BAZAR ROAD,
OLD RAJINDER NAGAR, NEW DELHI-110060



28th June 2025

Mains Manthan

- A China led trilateral nexus as India's new challenge (**Page No – 8**)
- Convicted ex-MLA of BJP seeks Governor's pardon (**Page No – 5**)

Prelims Saarthi

- M.M. Hills WLS
- Kishanganga & Ratle Hydroelectric Projects

A China-led trilateral nexus as India's new challenge

Why in News?

- Trilateral Partnership of China, Pakistan & Afghanistan

Syllabus

- GS Paper 2 – International Relations

A China-led trilateral nexus as India's new challenge

Last week, China, Pakistan and Bangladesh held their first trilateral meeting in Kunming, China. The discussions focused on furthering cooperation and exploring the possibilities of deeper engagement. This meeting closely follows another trilateral meeting between China, Pakistan, and Afghanistan, held in May, with the aim of extending the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor and increasing cooperation. These trilaterals, led by China, come at a time of Pakistan's little relevance to the region, India's increasing relations with Afghanistan, and New Delhi's deteriorating ties with Bangladesh. The use of trilaterals underscores China's fresh attempts at making Pakistan a stakeholder in the region and keeping New Delhi preoccupied with immediate concerns.

A war that shaped alignments

The 1962 war between India and China has largely shaped regional alignments and geopolitics. Following the war, China found Pakistan to be an ally that could keep India engaged with immediate threats and limit it from challenging Beijing's interests, security, and status. On the other hand, Pakistan deemed China to be a country that would unquestionably offer economic and military assistance to support its aggression against India. To date, Pakistan is highly dependent on China for assistance, investments and infrastructure development. In fact, by the end of 2024, Pakistan had a loan of over \$29 billion from China. It is estimated that over 80% of Pakistan's arms imports are from China. In addition, China has also shielded Pakistan-backed terrorists at the United Nations Security Council and other multilateral platforms.

This camaraderie was largely visible during India's Operation Sindoor in May 2025. China termed India's retaliation to the Pakistan-sponsored attack in Pahalgam as "regrettable" and urged a political solution and dialogue. It backed Pakistan's stance of initiating an investigation into the Pahalgam terror attack in April 2025. The latest escalation also saw Pakistan deploying various Chinese-made hardware and weapons that ranged from surveillance radars, drones, missiles, guidance



Harsh V. Pant
is Vice-President,
Observer Research
Foundation



**Aditya Gowdara
Shivamurthy**
is Associate Fellow,
Neighbourhood
Studies, Observer
Research Foundation

The Beijing-led trilaterals are aimed at challenging India's long-term interests

systems, and fighter jets. In the immediate aftermath of Operation Sindoor, Pakistan's Foreign Minister met his Chinese counterpart to reaffirm its "iron-clad friendship." The trilateral with Afghanistan and other countries likely emerged from this meeting.

The resurfacing of an idea

This idea of China and Pakistan using plus one against India is not a new phenomenon. Even in 1965, Pakistan flirted with the idea of using East Pakistan, China and Nepal to cut off India from its strategic Siliguri corridor. This idea of using South Asian countries seems to have resurfaced as both China and Pakistan face a confident India. Pakistan-sponsored terror attacks in Uri (2016), Pulwama (2019), and Pahalgam have seen India retaliate in a befitting manner. It has shown that India will no longer tolerate Pakistan's nuclear blackmail. India has also used its diplomatic clout and growing economy to isolate Pakistan. India's suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty, halting trade, restricting port access, and targeting military installations – all as a part of its retaliatory measures against the Pahalgam attack – has damaged Pakistan military's operational capacities and confidence, highlighting Rawalpindi's limitations and weaknesses. India's military and diplomatic responses to Chinese border intrusions in Doklam and Galwan have also likely taken Beijing by surprise. New Delhi has also increased close cooperation with like-minded countries to limit Chinese aggressions.

At the same time, India's pragmatic engagement and domestic politics of the region have slowed down China's momentum in South Asia. In the Maldives, Beijing appears reluctant to trust President Mohamed Muizzu and the country's economy, despite his initial anti-India rhetoric. Mr. Muizzu has now turned to India to keep the country's economy afloat. In Nepal, despite signing the framework for Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) cooperation, major differences in funding remain unresolved and the progress of projects has been slow. In Sri Lanka, President Anura Kumara Dissanayake is developing close ties with India by respecting its redlines. Despite ideological and historical differences with Delhi,

he visited India before China. In the case of Bangladesh, despite differences, India has not hindered the trilateral energy cooperation with Nepal.

These increasing anxieties are likely to have motivated China to push for trilaterals with Afghanistan and Bangladesh. Before their respective regime changes in 2021 and 2024, both countries were staunch supporters of India's fight against both Pakistan and its state-sponsored terrorism. With the change in regimes, however, Pakistan and China have attempted to draw both countries closer to their orbit. They remain cautious of pragmatic engagement between India and the Taliban, fearing that Pakistan would lose its leverage. At the same time, Pakistan has increased security, economic and political engagements with the new government in Bangladesh.

Historically, both Bangladesh and Afghanistan have enjoyed close ties with Pakistan and provide a fertile ground for cross-border terrorism. Pakistan's influence, supported by China and its economic clout, could thus create new terror and security-related challenges. This will help Pakistan become a relevant country in the region, create rifts between India and its neighbours, and keep Delhi preoccupied with immediate security and terror-related challenges, making way for Chinese BRI projects, interests and investments in the region.

China efforts and setbacks

The developments in the region demonstrate, once again, that China, and not Pakistan, is India's biggest challenge. With both Pakistan and China confronting a confident India, China sees an opportunity to challenge India through the trilateral nexus. At a time when India is seeking support from South Asian countries to fight terrorism, Chinese efforts will create new setbacks. South Asian countries will thus have to learn to balance between India and China, as Beijing uses Islamabad to create new complexities in the region. On its part, Delhi will have to continue to express redlines and convey the point that any misadventures by its neighbours could have severe economic, military, and political costs.





Key Takeaways from the Article

- **Trilateral Meetings:**

- ◆ **China, Pakistan, and Bangladesh** held their first trilateral meeting in Kunming, China, focused on strengthening cooperation and exploring deeper engagements.
- ◆ This meeting follows another trilateral between **China, Pakistan, and Afghanistan** held earlier in May, aimed at expanding the **ChinaPakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)** and enhancing cooperation.



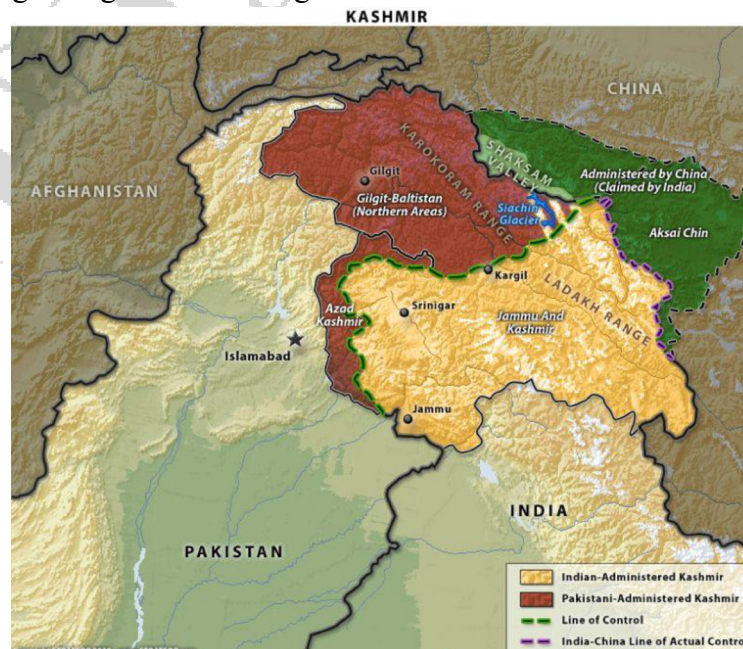
- **Historical Context:**

- ◆ The **1962 India-China War** significantly shaped the relationship between China and Pakistan.
- ◆ **China saw Pakistan** as an ally to keep India engaged with immediate threats and limit its challenge to Beijing's regional interests.
- ◆ Pakistan has been highly dependent on China for **military support, infrastructure development, and economic assistance**, including a \$29 billion loan from China by the end of 2024.
- ◆ Over **80% of Pakistan's arms imports** are from China.



- **China's Support for Pakistan:**

- ◆ China has shielded **Pakistan-backed terrorists** at the **United Nations Security Council** and other multilateral forums.
- ◆ During India's **Operation Sindoor** in May 2025, China condemned India's retaliation against Pakistan, urging dialogue and backing Pakistan's stance.





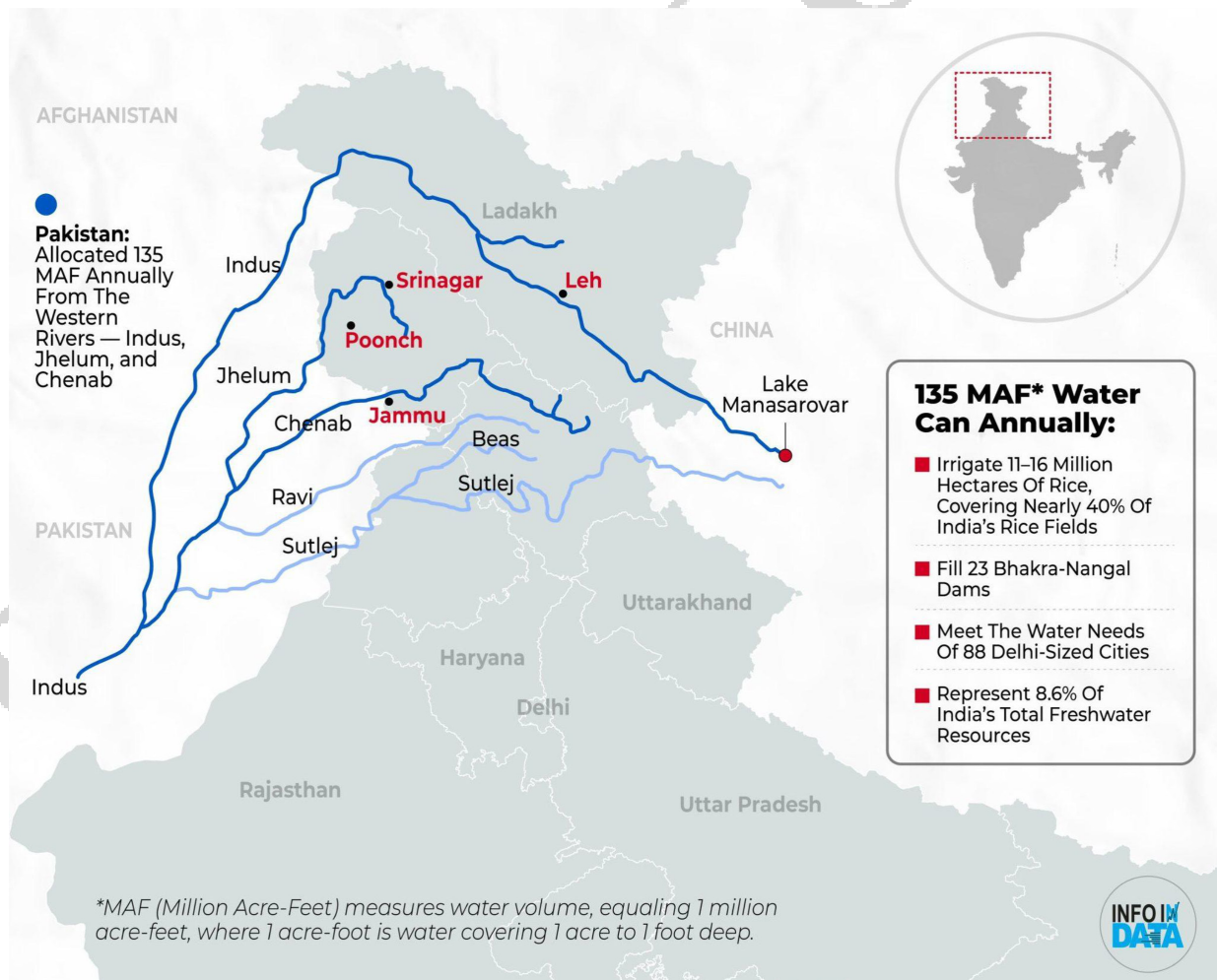
- **Resurfacing Strategic Ideas:**

- ◆ The idea of using a **“plus one” strategy** against India, involving regional countries like **Nepal and East Pakistan (now Bangladesh)**, emerged during the 1965 India-Pakistan war and has resurfaced now with China and Pakistan attempting to limit India's influence in the region.
- ◆ China and Pakistan are pushing to draw **Bangladesh and Afghanistan** into their orbit, especially after regime changes in both countries, **aiming to counter India's growing influence**, particularly in Afghanistan.



- **Impact of Indian Retaliations:**

- ◆ India has shown **robust responses to Pakistan-sponsored terrorism**, including **military strikes and diplomatic actions** such as halting trade and suspending the **Indus Waters Treaty**.
- ◆ India's diplomatic and military responses, especially to Chinese border intrusions in **Doklam and Galwan**, have surprised Beijing.





● Challenges to China's Regional Influence:

- ◆ In the Maldives, despite initial anti-India rhetoric, **President Mohamed Muizzu** now seeks India's support for the country's economy.
- ◆ In **Nepal**, despite the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) cooperation, there are unresolved financial issues, and progress has been slow.
- ◆ In **Sri Lanka**, President Anura Kumara Dissanayake maintains close ties with India, prioritizing India over China.
- ◆ **Bangladesh**, while cautious, has seen increased engagements with Pakistan as it shifts its regional alliances.



● Pakistan's Growing Role in Regional Security:

- ◆ The **trilaterals** could make **Pakistan a more relevant player in South Asia**, potentially fostering **cross-border terrorism and security challenges** that directly affect India.
- ◆ The nexus between China and Pakistan could create **new complexities in regional security dynamics**, drawing India's neighbors closer to their orbit.



Pardoning powers of President & Governor

Why in News?

- Rajasthan MLA seeking pardon from Governor

Syllabus

- GS Paper 2 – Indian Polity

Convicted ex-MLA of BJP seeks Governor's pardon; State govt.'s opinion sought

Kanwar Lal Meena was sentenced to three years' imprisonment in a 20-year-old criminal case and denied relief by SC; initiating process for remission amounts to 'political duplicity': Rajasthan Cong.

The Hindu Bureau
JAIPUR

Former Bharatiya Janata Party MLA Kanwar Lal Meena, convicted and sentenced to three years' imprisonment in a 20-year-old criminal case, has moved a mercy petition before Rajasthan Governor Haribhau Bagde seeking pardon. As part of the process, the opinion of police officers in Jhalawar, where the case was registered in 2005, has been sought.

The former Anta MLA's Assembly membership was terminated last month after the Rajasthan High Court upheld his conviction and sentence and he surrendered in the trial court following the Supreme Court's refusal to give any relief. The delay on Mr. Meena's disqualifi-



Kanwar Lal Meena

cation had led to a political slugfest between the ruling BJP and the Opposition Congress.

'Double standards'
The Congress and civil rights groups here on Friday questioned "political duplicity" in the matter, while affirming that initiating the process for remission of Mr. Meena's sentence amounted to adopting "double standards". Congress MLA and

There seems to be one law for the BJP members and another for the common people

TIKA RAM JULLY
Rajasthan Leader of the Opposition

Leader of the Opposition Tika Ram Jully said there seems to be "one law for BJP members and another for common people".

The case against Mr. Meena pertained to a February 2005 incident. He arrived with seven associates at the venue of a protest by villagers in Jhalawar district demanding a Deputy Sarpanch's repoll and brandished a revolver at the Sub-Divisional Magistrate. He threatened the SDM and asked him to either

announce a repoll within two minutes or get killed.

Some BJP leaders had favoured seeking pardon or commutation of Mr. Meena's sentence to less than two years.

The Governor's office has sought a report from the State government on his petition. Following this, Jhalawar SP Richa Tomar has sent letters to Station House Officers of Manohar Thana and Aklera police stations, asking them for their opinion, along with the comments of the Circle Officer.

Rajasthan Law Minister Jogaram Patel told media-persons during his visit to Jodhpur that the filing of a mercy petition before the Governor was a constitutional process, to which every convicted person has a right.





Key Takeaways from the Article

Article 72 of the Constitution empowers the President to grant pardons to persons who have been tried and convicted of any offence in all cases where the:

Punishment or sentence is for an offence against a Union Law;

Punishment or sentence is by a court martial (military court); and

Sentence is a sentence of death.

Pardoning power of the President

Pardon

Commutation

Remission

Respite

Reprieve

The pardoning power of the governor differs from that of the President:

The President can pardon sentences inflicted by court martial(military courts) while the governor cannot.

The President can pardon death sentence while governor cannot. Even if a state law prescribes death sentence, the power to grant pardon lies with the President and not the governor.

However, the governor can suspend, remit or commute a death sentence. In other words, both the governor and the President have concurrent power in respect of suspension, remission and commutation of death sentence.

The Supreme Court examined the pardoning power of the President:

The petitioner for mercy has no right to an oral hearing by the President

The President Can examine the evidence afresh and take a view different from the view taken by the court.

The power is to be exercised by the President on the advice of the union cabinet.

There is no need for the Supreme Court to lay down specific guidelines for the exercise of power by the President.

The exercise of power by the President is not subject to judicial review except where the presidential decision is arbitrary, irrational, mala fide or discriminatory.

Prelims PYQ (2025)

16. Consider the following statements with regard to pardoning power of the President of India :

- I. The exercise of this power by the President can be subjected to limited judicial review.
- II. The President can exercise this power without the advice of the Central Government.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) I only
- (b) II only
- (c) Both I and II
- (d) Neither I nor II





M.M.Hills WLS

- ◆ Located in - ?
- ◆ TR soon - ?
- ◆ Which are the rest TRs - ?
- ◆ Contiguous to - ?

Centre orders probe into tiger deaths at M.M. Hills in Karnataka

The Hindu Bureau
MYSURU

Shocked by the death of a tigress and its four cubs in the M.M. Hills Wildlife Sanctuary in Karnataka, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has ordered a probe into the deaths and constituted a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to look into them.

The carcasses of the five tigers were discovered on Thursday in the Meeniyam section of the Hugyam range of the sanctuary, following which the State government constituted a high-level team to investigate the matter. The Centre's probe will be parallel to the one being conducted by the State.

The SIT has been mandated to carry out a detailed investigation and submit a report within two weeks. The State has been requested to provide logistic support and other assistance to the investigating team, according to a communique from the Ministry.

The incident has been described as one of the most alarming ones in recent years, with an activist pointing out that mass mortality involving an entire tiger family was not only rare, but was reflective of a systemic failure.

Amid speculation that the tigers were poisoned, they were cremated after the completion of post-mortem and other formalities on Friday.





Kishanganga & Ratle Hydroelectric Projects

- **Kishanganga Hydroelectric Project: KHP** is located on the Kishanganga River (tributary of Jhelum) in J&K. Pakistan objected, claiming that water diversion for power generation violates the IWT.
- **Ratle Hydroelectric Project: RHP** is a run-of-the-river project on the Chenab River in J&K, Pakistan raised concerns that the dam's design, including the spillway gates, gives India excessive control over river flow.

India rejects 'supplemental award' on Kishenganga, Ratle hydropower projects

Kallol Bhattacharjee
NEW DELHI

India on Friday "categorically rejected" the "supplemental award" by the Court of Arbitration on Kishenganga and Ratle hydroelectric projects in Jammu and Kashmir, saying that it "never recognised" the Court of Arbitration, a "serious breach" of the Indus Waters Treaty, which has been put "at abeyance" after the April 22 terror attack in Pahal-gam.

"India has never recognised the existence in law of this so-called Court of Arbitration, and India's position has all along been that the constitution of this so-called arbitral body is in itself a serious breach of the Indus Waters Treaty and consequently any proceedings before this forum and any award or decision taken by it are also for that reason illegal and per se void," the External Affairs Ministry said after the World Bank's Court of Arbitration gave a "supplemental award" on the Kish-

India said it has never recognised the existence in law of this 'so-called' Court of Arbitration

enganga and Ratle projects.

'Unilateral action'

Pakistan had been raising objections about the design of the power projects, and the two sides held multiple rounds of discussions till 2015. In 2016, Pakistan approached the World Bank to establish a Court of Arbitration to resolve these technical disputes. Pakistan took three issues concerning Kishenganga and four concerning Ratle to the Court of Arbitration. India's position from the beginning has been that it was a "unilateral action" by Pakistan to approach the World Bank.

Reflecting that position, the Ministry said on Friday, "Today, the illegal Court of Arbitration, purportedly constituted under the Indus Waters Treaty 1960, al-

beit in brazen violation of it, has issued what it characterises as a 'supplemental award' on its competence concerning the Kishenganga and Ratle hydroelectric projects in the Indian Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir."

The Ministry said that after the Pahal-gam terror attack, India exercised "its rights as a sovereign nation under international law" and placed the Indus Waters Treaty in abeyance, "until Pakistan credibly and irrevocably abjures its support for cross-border terrorism". It described the Court of Arbitration's declarations as a "charade at Pakistan's behest".

"Until such time that the Treaty is in abeyance, India is no longer bound to perform any of its obligations under the Treaty. No Court of Arbitration, much less this illegally constituted arbitral body, which has no existence in the eye of law, has the jurisdiction to examine the legality of India's actions in exercise of its rights as a sovereign," the Ministry said.

The Indus Waters Treaty (IWT)

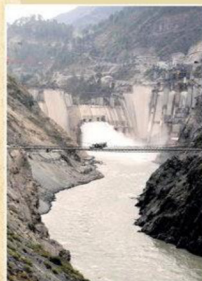
■ The distribution of waters of the Indus and its tributaries between India and Pakistan is governed by the Indus Water Treaty (IWT).

■ Was signed on Sept 19, 1960, between India, Pakistan and a representative of World Bank after eight years of negotiations.

■ Partition of India cut across the Indus river basin, which has the Indus river, plus five of its main tributaries.

Western rivers Chenab, Jhelum, Indus

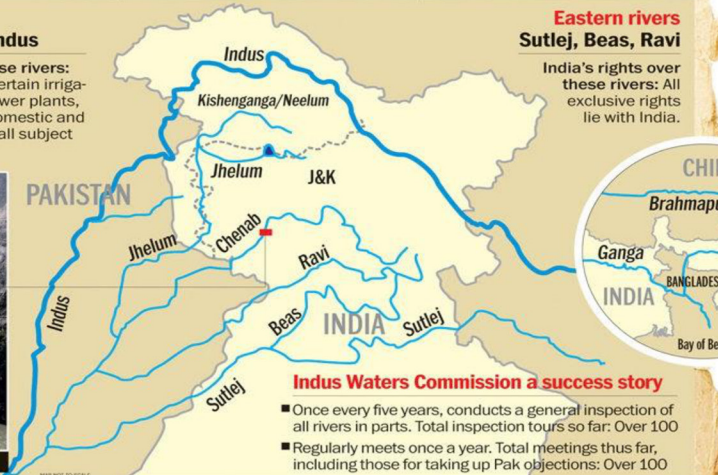
India's rights over these rivers: Limited — can set up certain irrigation, run-of-the-river power plants, very limited storage, domestic and non-consumptive use, all subject to conditions



Baglihar dam on Chenab

Eastern rivers Sutlej, Beas, Ravi

India's rights over these rivers: All exclusive rights lie with India.



Indus Waters Commission a success story

- Once every five years, conducts a general inspection of all rivers in parts. Total inspection tours so far: Over 100
- Regularly meets once a year. Total meetings thus far, including those for taking up Pak objections: Over 100

