

# International Boundaries of India

## Land and Maritime Borders, LAC and LOC

India is the seventh-largest country in the world and has one of the longest international boundaries. These borders separate India from its neighboring countries and also help in maintaining its security, trade, and cultural exchange. The international boundaries of India include both **land borders** and **maritime borders**, making it strategically important in South Asia. Understanding these boundaries is very important for competitive exams as they are often asked in questions related to geography, polity, and current affairs.

## International Boundaries of India

The international boundaries of India, both land and maritime, are vital for the country's geography, defense, economy, and culture. With seven neighboring countries and a long coastline, India's borders make it a strategically important nation in South Asia. For competitive exams, remembering the length of borders, states sharing them, and related issues is very important. As India grows stronger, maintaining peaceful and secure boundaries remains one of its top priorities.

## International Boundaries of India: Overview

India shares its boundaries with several countries through land and sea. The total length of India's land border is about 15,106 kilometers, while the maritime boundary is about 7,516.6 kilometers, including the mainland and island territories. These boundaries not only define India's geographical identity but also influence its defense, economy, and foreign policy.

International Boundaries of India: Overview	
Type of Boundary	Length (Approx.)
Land Borders	15,106 km
Maritime Borders	7,516.6 km
Coastline (Mainland + Islands)	7,516.6 km
Total Area Covered	32,87,263 sq. km

## Land Boundaries of India

India shares land borders with **seven countries** and has a total land boundary length of **15,106 kilometers**. Out of these, China, Pakistan, and Bangladesh share the longest borders. Each border is important for trade, defense, and cultural ties. Fact: India's border with Bangladesh is the longest, while its border with Afghanistan (Wakhan Corridor) is the shortest.

Countries Sharing Land Borders with India		
Country	Length of Border (km)	States/ UTs Sharing Border
Bangladesh	4,096 km	West Bengal, Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, Mizoram
China	3,488 km	Jammu & Kashmir (Ladakh), Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh
Pakistan	3,323 km	Jammu & Kashmir, Punjab, Rajasthan, Gujarat
Nepal	1,751 km	Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Sikkim
Myanmar	1,643 km	Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram
Bhutan	699 km	Sikkim, West Bengal, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh
Afghanistan	106 km	Ladakh (Union Territory)

## Maritime Boundaries of India

Apart from land borders, India also has long **maritime boundaries** that touch the **Indian Ocean, Arabian Sea, and Bay of Bengal**. The total length of the maritime boundary is **7,516.6 km**, which includes both mainland and island territories such as the **Andaman & Nicobar Islands** and **Lakshadweep Islands**.

### Key Facts about India's Maritime Boundaries:

- India's coastline passes through **9 states and 2 Union Territories**.
- Important states with a long coastline: **Gujarat, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, and Odisha**.
- Strategic points include the **Strait of Malacca** near the Andaman & Nicobar Islands, which is one of the busiest sea routes in the world.

States/ UTs with Coastline	
State/ UT	Coastline Length (km)
Gujarat	1,214 km
Andhra Pradesh	974 km
Tamil Nadu	906 km
Maharashtra	652 km
Kerala	569 km
Odisha	476 km
Karnataka	280 km
West Bengal	158 km
Goa	160 km
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	1,962 km
Lakshadweep Islands	132 km

## Importance of India's International Boundaries

The international boundaries of India are not just lines on the map, they play a very important role in the nation's progress and security.

- **Security:** India faces cross-border challenges with Pakistan and China, making these boundaries highly sensitive.
- **Trade:** Borders with Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, and Myanmar are important for regional trade and cooperation.
- **Cultural Links:** Shared borders allow cultural and historical ties, especially with Nepal, Bhutan, and Bangladesh.
- **Maritime Importance:** Coastal boundaries provide opportunities for international trade through major ports like Mumbai, Chennai, and Kolkata.

## Challenges at the International Boundaries of India

India's international borders are often in the news due to disputes and challenges. Some key issues include:

- **Border Disputes with China:** The Line of Actual Control (LAC) remains disputed in Ladakh and Arunachal Pradesh.
- **Border Issues with Pakistan:** The Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu & Kashmir sees frequent tensions.
- **Illegal Migration:** Especially across the Bangladesh border.
- **Smuggling & Infiltration:** Drugs, weapons, and human trafficking across porous borders.
- **Maritime Security:** Piracy and illegal fishing in the Indian Ocean pose challenges.

## Line of Actual Control (LAC)

The **Line of Actual Control (LAC)** is the boundary between India and China. It is not an officially demarcated border but a line that separates Indian-controlled areas from Chinese-controlled areas. The LAC covers a length of about **3,488 km** across Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim, and Arunachal Pradesh.

- It was created after the 1962 Sino-Indian War.
- The LAC is divided into three sectors: **Western sector (Ladakh), Middle sector (Himachal Pradesh & Uttarakhand), and Eastern sector (Sikkim & Arunachal Pradesh).**
- Disputes arise because India and China interpret the LAC differently, which often leads to standoffs like the **Galwan Valley clash of 2020**.

## Line of Control (LoC)

The **Line of Control (LoC)** is the boundary line between India and Pakistan in the **Jammu & Kashmir region**. It is about **776 km long** and was established after the 1947-48 Indo-Pak war, later formalized in the **Simla Agreement of 1972**.

- Unlike the LAC, the LoC is clearly demarcated on maps and marked with fencing in many areas.
- It is heavily guarded by both the Indian and Pakistani armies.
- The LoC often sees ceasefire violations, infiltration, and cross-border firing, making it one of the most sensitive boundaries in the world.
- Major areas along the LoC include **Siachen Glacier, Poonch, and Rajouri**.