



UKRAINE-RUSSIA
BORDER CONFLICT

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- Tensions are rising over the conflict in eastern Ukraine, with growing violations of a cease-fire and a massive Russian military buildup near its border with the region.

Key Points

- The Paris Summit in the Normandy format was held in December 2019, the first meeting in three years.
- During the summit, the leaders of **Ukraine, Russia, Germany and France stressed complete cease-fire and loyalty to the Minsk Agreement.**
- The summit did not diminish the clashes, but Russia, Ukraine and the OSCE later made a comprehensive cease-fire decision starting from July 27, 2020, which was maintained until 2021.
- However, this year, the Russian army's military build-up on the Ukrainian border has once again escalated the conflicts in the Donbas region.
- The **killing of four Ukrainian soldiers by the pro-Russian separatists on March 26 triggered the crisis.**
- Ukraine pointed to the increasing number of Russian troops in the north and east sides of Ukraine's border and Crimea.
- Russia said it was moving its armed forces within its own territory, which should not disturb anyone. The country also announced a strategy to "save Crimea."



Background

- The restrictions have halted the transfer of Western technology and blocked Russia's access to global capital markets. Russia retaliated by banning most Western food imports. The United States and the European Union imposed sanctions on Moscow for its annexation of Crimea, which wasn't recognised by most of the world, and its support for the separatists.
- Dutch prosecutors allege it was shot by a Russian Buk missile from an area controlled by the Russia-backed separatists. Russia denied any involvement.
- Also, a Malaysia Airlines passenger jet traveling from Amsterdam to Kuala Lumpur was shot down on July 17, 2014, over eastern Ukraine, killing all 298 people on board.
- Pro-Russian separatists also claim control over eastern Ukraine, including the Donbas region, which they illegally controlled over the past seven years.
- Russia subsequently annexed "**Crimea**" (**Russian speaking province in Ukraine**) by force and declared its sovereignty over it with people's support. Yanukovich had to flee to Russia as the

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protests went out of control. As Ukraine is geographically divided between Europe and Russia, so are the people of Ukraine divided into two poles, as pro-Russian and pro-Western.

- **Pro-Russian Viktor Yanukovich, the fourth president of Ukraine**, announced that he suspended the EU Association Agreement in 2013 to prevent the country from turning to the West. This move marked the beginning of a deep crisis in Ukrainian history.
- Russia fell out with Ukraine after the former Soviet state started approaching the European Union.
- Ukraine was one of the republics within the USSR during the cold war days and has remained a strong ally of Russia ever since, till 2013.

Recent Development

- The lack of a lasting resolution to the conflict has fomented new tensions. Ukrainian authorities say cease-fire violations have become more frequent in recent weeks, with nearly 30 troops killed this year.
- They accused Russia of fueling tensions by deploying 41,000 troops near the border with eastern Ukraine and 42,000 to Crimea, where Russia maintains a large naval base.
- The U.S. and NATO say the Russian troops' concentration is the largest since 2014. Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu said the buildup in the past three weeks was part of readiness drills in response to what he described as threats from NATO.
- Russia also has cast it as a necessary security precaution amid what it described as Ukraine's provocations along the line of control. Kremlin officials have strongly warned Kyiv against trying to use force to retake the east, saying Russia could be forced to intervene to protect civilians if they face a threat of massacre.

Why Is Russia Threatening Ukraine Again Now?

- In February, **Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky** imposed sanctions on Viktor Medvedchuk, a powerful Ukrainian oligarch and friend of President Putin. Ukraine also banned broadcasts by three pro-Russian TV stations.
- The Minsk peace deal agreed in 2015 remains far from being fulfilled. For example, there are still no arrangements for independently monitored elections in the separatist regions.
- In previous conflicts in what it calls its "near abroad", Russia has sent in troops as "peacekeepers", who have ended up staying. It happened in Moldova and South Ossetia. It could well happen again in Ukraine. It would freeze the position firmly in Russia's favour.
- According to some reports, Mr Putin also wants to test US President Joe Biden, who has taken a tougher stance on Russia than his predecessor, Donald Trump, had.
- Mr Putin faces parliamentary elections in September and a continuing mass movement supporting his jailed arch-critic Alexei Navalny. So the Kremlin "defending" embattled Russians in Ukraine could go down well with many voters.

- Navalnymight also be marginalised if the Kremlin whipped up patriotic fervour over Ukraine.

Minsk Agreement

- After a series of Ukraine's military defeats, France and Germany helped broker a peace deal that was signed in February 2015 in the Belarusian capital of Minsk.
- On September 5 2014, Representatives of Ukraine, the Russian Federation, the **Donetsk People's Republic (DPR), and the Lugansk People's Republic (LPR)** inked the Minsk Agreement (2014) to stop the war in the Donbass region of Ukraine.
- The agreement was inked after widespread talks in Minsk, Belarus, under the patronage of the **Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)**.
- The settlement, which followed numerous earlier efforts to stop fighting in the Donbass, put into action an instantaneous ceasefire.
- It was drawn-up by the Trilateral Contact Group on Ukraine, which comprised of representatives from Ukraine, Russia, and the OSCE.
- **The protocol of the Minsk Agreement consists of 12 points:**
 - **Confirm an instant bilateral ceasefire.**
 - **Confirm the supervising and confirmation by the OSCE of the ceasefire.**
 - **A decentralization of power, via adoption of the law of Ukraine "about local government provisional arrangements in some areas of Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts" (law on the special status).**
 - **Confirm a long-lasting observation of the Ukrainian-Russian border and confirmation by the OSCE with the establishment of security zones in the border regions of Ukraine and the Russian Federation.**
 - **To instantly let go all hostages and unlawfully imprisoned persons.**
 - **A law on checking the trial and sentence of persons in link with the events that have taken place in some areas of Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts.**
 - **Resume the comprehensive national dialogue.**
 - **To take courses to better the humanitarian condition in Donbass.**
 - **Confirm speedy local elections in agreement with the law of Ukraine "about local government provisional arrangements in some areas of Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts" (law on the special status).**
 - **Pull out the unlawful armed groups, military equipment, as well as fighters and armed forces from Ukraine.**

- To implement the program of economic recovery and reconstruction of Donbass region.
- To deliver personal security for the members in the discussions.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

- It is a military alliance established by the North Atlantic Treaty (also called the Washington Treaty) of 4th April, 1949, by the United States, Canada, and several Western European nations to provide collective security against the Soviet Union.
- A key provision of the treaty, the so-called Article 5, states that if one member of the alliance is attacked in Europe or North America, it is to be considered an attack on all members. That effectively put Western Europe under the "nuclear umbrella" of the US.
- It is headquartered at Brussels, Belgium. NATO has only once invoked Article 5, on 12th September, 2001, following the **9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center in the US**.
- **NATO's protection does not extend to members' civil wars or internal coups.**
- As of 30th March 2021, there are 30 member states, with the Republic of North Macedonia becoming the latest member to join the alliance in 2020.

India-Ukraine Relations:

- Immediately after the breakup of the Soviet Union, the Government of India recognized the Republic of Ukraine as a sovereign independent country in December 1991.
- The Embassy of India in Kyiv was established in May 1992 and Ukraine opened its Mission in New Delhi in February 1993.
- Ukraine has been a source of military technology and equipment for India since its independence.
- Ukraine manufactures the R-27 air-to-air missiles which are in use by the IAF on its SU-30MKI fighters.
- Now, India is also supplying its weapons to Ukraine to enhance defence cooperation between the two countries.
- India is Ukraine's largest export destination in the Asia-Pacific and the fifth largest overall export destination. Pharmaceuticals account for the majority of Indian exports to Ukraine.

Editorial

- Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy is set to hold talks on Saturday with his Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan amid rising tension with Russia over the conflict in Ukraine's eastern Donbas region. Last week, Ukrainian commander-in-chief Ruslan Khomchak accused Moscow of pursuing an "aggressive policy" towards Kyiv by amassing troops near the contested region.

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- The continued military build-up in the area around eastern Ukraine has triggered a strong response from the West as the United States has warned of “consequences”. White House press secretary Jen Psaki said at a daily briefing that the US is in close consultation with its allies in the region over Russia’s troop movements. “Of the actions that have already been taken, that we’ve had an ongoing review about we’ve been clear, There will be consequences, some unseen and some seen. We will hope to have more about those soon,” Psaki said on Friday.
- During a phone call with Russian President Vladimir Putin, German Chancellor Angela Merkel demanded a reduction in troops at the Ukrainian border. "One subject of their conversation was, among others, the increased Russian military presence near eastern Ukraine. The chancellor called for a reduction of these troop reinforcements to de-escalate tensions," the German government said in a statement.
- However, Moscow accused Kyiv of provocative actions which “has recently purposefully escalated the situation on the line of contact”. Kremlin said in a statement that Putin stressed the need for strict implementation of previously reached agreements to “legally formalise the special status of Donbas”.
- Ukraine, a country geographically divided between Europe and Russia, has pro-Russia and pro-West people. The fourth Ukrainian president, Viktor Yanukovich, was pro-Russia and backed away from EU Association Agreement in November 2013 to prevent the country from turning to the West. Yanukovich’s U-turn over signing the agreement triggered protests and he had to flee to Russia.
- **Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskiy** visits positions of armed forces near the frontline with Russian-backed separatists during his working trip in Donbass region. (via Reuters) The tensions later spread to Crimea and the territory was annexed by Russia following a controversial referendum, which Crimean Tatars, an East European Turkic ethnic group, and Ukrainians had objected to. The long-running conflict has claimed more than 13,000 lives since 2014. Pro-Russian separatists also claim control over the Donbas region, which includes Donetsk and Luhansk provinces.
- Minsk Agreements were signed between the pro-Russian separatists and the Kyiv administration to stop the armed conflict. The agreements called for a ceasefire in the region as well as prisoner exchange while allowing the Ukrainian government to make a constitutional amendment that would provide for special status to Donbas. But the implementation of those agreements has been hampered by multiple ceasefire violations for which the two sides have traded blames.
- Earlier this week, **Zelensky urged Nato**, an intergovernmental military alliance between Western powers, to speed up his country’s membership. In a phone call with NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg, the Ukrainian president said that it was the only way to end fighting with pro- Russia separatists and end the war in Donbas. Russia sees Ukraine’s entry into Nato as a threat and fears have been mounting of a major escalation in the conflict areas.

Meet Our Mentors

We strongly endorse and believe in the fact that our faculty is our asset and one of the strong pillars of Success Mantra. This is the reason, we cherry-pick our faculties in order to fulfil the expectations of the students. Each of our faculty is the master of their subject, thus ensuring the best results across the industry.



Mahesh H Singh

Faculty - Constitutional Law (Polity)

I am a commerce graduate and belong to Mumbai. I have been teaching constitution and PSIR to Law and CSE aspirants for the last 4 years.

My role at Success Mantra is to mentor students to understand the constitution through flow charts and fine examples. I believe in 3 C's (i.e. CONTENT, CLARITY of topics and CONNECTION between students and teacher) are the key elements of effective teaching, what I ensure at success mantra.



Shivendra Pratik

Faculty - Logical Reasoning

I'm a Post Graduate Diploma in Management and a Gold Medalist in Finance and Banking. I have a comprehensive experience of around 8 years in the Corporate & Education industry. For the last 6 years, I have been teaching Logical Reasoning to various competitive entrance exam aspirants majorly CLAT, AILET, DU LLB, HM, BBA, Banking, UPSC, DSSSB etc.



Richa Jha

Faculty - Legal Aptitude

I am Advocate Richa Jha. I'm LLB, LLM from Law Faculty, University of Delhi. Law, as a subject, can be taught with the help of legal theories, their practices and applications which can be substantiated with the help of case studies.

I sincerely believe in imparting a legal education which a candidate can relate to his exam and could become a means to achieve success.



Ankit Jha

Faculty - General Knowledge | Service Aptitude

I'm a hospitality professional and a qualified manager. I've diversified experience of more than six years in different industries. I graduated from the prestigious IHM Pusa Delhi.

I mentor the aspirants of Success Mantra as a Faculty for General Awareness & Service Aptitude. I'm dedicated towards providing the best content in terms of quality & relevancy and always eager to assist the students.



Vipin Sharma

Faculty - Quantitative Techniques

I'm an MBA, LL.B. and B.Com (AMU). I have been in association with Success Mantra since 2013. Extensive knowledge of arithmetic mathematics, algebra, geometry, statistics and other areas of mathematics allows me to confidently explain concepts and processes to my students. My lesson plans engage students and help them feel confident in their mathematical abilities.



Deepak Chauchan

Faculty - English Language & Usage

I'm Deepak Chauhan. I'm PG in English. I've more than fifteen years of Experience including teaching experience of eight years. I'm committed to creating a classroom which is stimulating and highly motivated.

I'm highly professional and dedicated towards my work. I've created a huge library of competitive english which I share with my students as and when required. I've passion for English Language and my ultimate goal is to help my students to achieve their goal in life.

