

# BENEVOLENT IAS ACADEMY

## COIMBATORE (HOPES)

### UPSC MAINS

#### In News:

Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually greets during the ‘**Sikkim@50**’ programme, marking the 50th anniversary of the statehood of Sikkim (**16th May 1975**). Sikkim Governor **Om Prakash Mathur** and State Chief Minister **Prem Singh Tamang** are also present.

**Exam Point of View: GS Paper I & II (mains)** - Indian Polity - Statehood / Union

#### Primary Facts about Sikkim (People, Culture, Geography)

- **Sikkim** is a state in northeastern India. It borders the Tibet Autonomous Region of China in the north and northeast, Bhutan in the east, Koshi Province of Nepal in the west, and West Bengal in the south. Sikkim is also close to the Siliguri Corridor, which borders Bangladesh.



- Sikkim is the least populous and second-smallest among the Indian states. Situated in the Eastern Himalaya, Sikkim is notable for its biodiversity, including alpine and subtropical climates, as well as being a host to Kangchenjunga, the highest peak in India and third-highest on Earth. Almost 35% of the state is covered by **Khangchendzonga National Park** – which is an UNESCO World Heritage Site.

- **Sikkim's capital and largest city is Gangtok.** Sikkim is a land of dramatic contours. Rugged mountains, deep valleys and dense forests consort with raging rivers, lakes and waterfalls to create a visual feast.
- The People of Sikkim consist of three ethnic groups, that is, **Lepcha, Bhutia and Nepali**. Different communities living in Sikkim have their own folk dances to celebrate their life. Most of the **folk dances** are performed as an essential aspect of the festival.



- The **red panda** is the state animal of Sikkim.



- The mountain chains which run southwards from the main Himalayan range from the natural boundaries of Sikkim; the Chola range dividing it from Tibet in the Northeast and Bhutan in the Southeast, the Singalila range separating it from Nepal in the West with the Greater Himalayan range forming the barrier between Sikkim and Tibet in the North.
- Sikkim has two main rivers, the **Teesta and Rangeet**, both of which are formed at high altitudes and flow in a generally southern direction till they converge at the confluence near Melli. **Teesta is one of the right tributaries of Brahmaputra.** river Rangeet originates in Sikkim and it is the tributary of Teesta. **Teesta river water conflict** is one of the most contentious issues between **India and Bangladesh.**

- Sikkim became the **world's first fully organic state** in **2016**.
- The official languages of the state are **English, Nepali, Bhutia, and Lepcha**.
- **Pakyong Airport** is the state's first airport which is also **the first greenfield airport**. A daily helicopter service run by the Sikkim Helicopter Service connects **Gangtok to Bagdogra**; National Highway 10 (**NH 10**; formerly NH 31A) links Siliguri to Gangtok.

## Constitutional View

- ✓ **Article 2** states that the Parliament may by law admit or establish new states in the Union on such terms and conditions as it may deem fit.
- ✓ **35th Amendment Act, 1974**: The status of Sikkim as a protectorate state was terminated and Sikkim was given the status of 'Associate State' of India.
- ✓ **36th Amendment Act, 1975**: It made Sikkim a full-fledged state in India.
- ✓ **Article 371F** - Special provision for state of Sikkim. This article grants special protections and privileges to the residents of Sikkim, including the exemption from income tax.
- ✓ **Section 10(26AAA) of the Income Tax Act** - It ensures the tax-free status for Sikkim residents.
- ✓ Sikkim participated in its first general elections in 1977 after joining the Union in 1975. Sikkim has only one Lok Sabha constituency. Sikkim has 1 seat in Rajya Sabha who is indirectly elected by the state legislators of Sikkim, since year 1976. There are 32 members in the legislative assembly. There are 12 seats reserved for BL Community of Sikkim and 2 seats reserved for Scheduled Castes and One seat (Sangha) is reserved for the Buddhist monastic community of Sikkim. (last Election 2024 and next election by 2029).

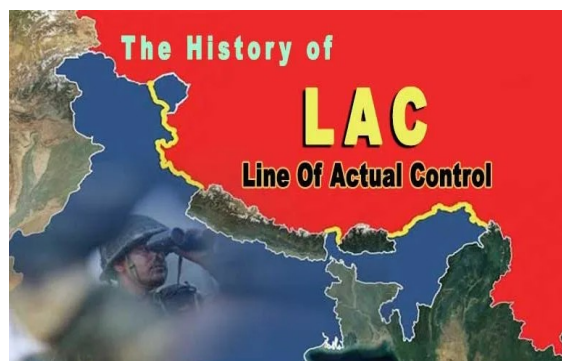
## Historical View:-

Sikkim was a **hereditary monarchy** ruled by the **Chogyal** dynasty from 1642 to 1975. It maintained its **autonomy** during British colonial rule and post Indian independence. Sikkim became a **protectorate state** of British India under **Treaty of Tumlong (1861)** and it gave the British authorities several **commercial and political advantages** in Sikkim by way of **Treaty of Titaliya (1817)** and then the **Calcutta Convention at 1890** demarcated the **Sikkim-Tibet border** and finally **Indo-Sikkim Treaty (1950)** made **Sikkim** an **Indian protectorate**, with India controlling **defence, external affairs, and communication**, while Sikkim retained **internal autonomy**.

## What happened in 1967 between India and China?

**The Nathu La** and **Cho La clashes**, sometimes referred to as Indo-China War of 1967, Sino-Indian War of 1967, were a series of clashes between China and India alongside the border of the Himalayan Kingdom of Sikkim, then an Indian protectorate. Nathu-La is a mountain pass in the Himalayas in East Sikkim district. It connects the Indian state of Sikkim with China's Tibet Autonomous Region.

The Line of Actual Control (LAC), shared between India and China goes back to the British colonial era when the **McMahon Line** was drawn in 1914 (**Simla Convention**) between the borders of Tibet and India. China had repeatedly protested the British drawings of boundaries. India believes that when the McMahon Line was drawn in 1914, Tibet was not ruled by China. But China has never considered Tibet as an independent country, that's why it does not even accept this McMahon line, which is the Line of Actual Control i.e. LAC.



## Recent Quotes of Hon'ble Prime Minister of Narendra Modi about Sikkim (2025)

The Prime Minister has praised the people of Sikkim for their democratic decision to integrate with India. “Sikkim chose a democratic future and became not just geographically but emotionally a part of India’s soul,” Mr. Modi said, referring to the 1975 referendum in which 97% of voters supported the move. Further, he has described Sikkim as a **“model of development with nature”**, citing its high per-capita income, 100% organic farming practices, and commitment to environmental sustainability. “The State has become a big garden of biodiversity and a symbol of conservation of culture and heritage that enriches India’s soul,”

X ----- X ----- X ----- X

### Model Questions / Previous Year Questions

1. Sikkim was become associate state of indian union thorough (UPSC - 2018)

- a) The Constitution (36th Amendment Act), 1975
- b) The Constitution (34th Amendment Act), 1974
- c) The Constitution (7th Amendment Act), 1956
- d) The Constitution (5th Amendment Act), 1955

2. With reference to river Teesta, consider the following statements: (2017)

- 1. The source of river Teesta is the same as that of Brahmaputra but it flows through Sikkim.
- 2. River Rangeet originates in Sikkim and it is a tributary of river Teesta.
- 3. River Teesta flows into Bay of Bengal on the border of India and Bangladesh.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 3 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) 2 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Ans: (b) for both.