



INDIA

RECOMMENDATION FOR ACTION

- India should accede to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) and clear all mined areas as a matter of priority.

CONTAMINATION

India is contaminated with mines, mainly as a result of large-scale mine-laying by government forces on and near the Line of Control (LoC) separating India and Pakistan during the 1971 war and the 2001–02 stand-off between the two states. Anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mines were laid on cultivated land and pasture, as well as around infrastructure and a number of villages.

Despite occasional official claims that all the mines laid were subsequently cleared, reports of contamination and casualties have persisted. A media report in 2013 cited a government statement that about 20km² of irrigated land was still mined in the Akhnoor sector of the LoC alone.¹ Security forces also have reported extensive use of mines and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) by Maoist insurgents in the north-eastern states of Bihar, Chhattisgarh, and Jharkhand, although mine types usually are not specified and may include command-detonated as well as victim-activated explosive devices.² A media report in October 2016 also alleged that the Indian military had threatened to lay mines along the Punjab border with Pakistan, after clashes and increasing tensions in the region.³

In July 2017, according to a media account, the Indian Army was manually clearing mines in the border districts of Jammu and Kashmir and was procuring more advanced demining equipment with a view to of improving safety and decreasing the number of deminer casualties.⁴ In June 2016, India's NDTV news reported that the Indian army was demining areas of the LoC in Rajouri district, Kashmir, in order to return land to communities for agricultural use as it vacated fields near the border that were reportedly taken over and mined during the Kargil Conflict in 1999 and Operation Parakaram in 2001.⁵

In 2016–17, a number of landmine incidents continued to be reported, primarily involving Indian army personnel, but also civilians, including an 18 year-old girl who was reportedly injured in a landmine explosion in north Kashmir's Baramulla district which an official confirmed involved an "underground mine" close to the Uri army camp located near the village where she lived.⁶ In May 2016, a large forest fire which broke out on the Pakistani side of the LoC spread through Balakote sector of Poonch district was reported to have triggered mine detonations, with eight mine explosions reported, according to a senior police officer.⁷

In September 2017, three soldiers were reportedly injured in a mine explosion while on a routine patrol in Kashmir's Kupwara district.⁸ In August 2017, it was reported that an Indian soldier was injured in a mine blast near the LoC in Keran sector of Jammu and Kashmir.⁹ In December 2016, another soldier was reportedly seriously injured in a mine incident along the LoC, in Poonch district.¹⁰ Similar incidents were reported in Kargil, Kupwara, and Poonch districts along the LoC.¹¹

In 2016–17, there were also numerous reports of Maoist rebels using “landmines” and IEDs, causing civilian and military casualties in Chhattisgarh state.¹²

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

India has no civilian mine action programme. The Director-General of Military Operations decides on mine clearance after receiving assessment reports from the command headquarters of the respective districts where mine clearance is needed.

LAND RELEASE

There is no publicly available official information on land release in 2016. The Army Corps of Engineers is responsible for clearing mines, as well as IEDs, placed by non-state armed groups.¹³ Media reports have indicated police also play an active part in clearing mines and IEDs on an ad hoc basis in states dealing with insurgency.¹⁴

India has not reported that any mine clearance has occurred in its Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) Amended Protocol II Article 13 transparency reports since 2006.¹⁵ In August 2016, India stated that “mines used for military operations were laid within fenced and marked perimeters and were cleared after operations”.¹⁶

ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

India is not a party or signatory to the APMBC but nonetheless has obligations under international human rights law to protect life, which requires the clearance of mines as soon as possible.

- 1 A. Sharma, “Heavy rainfall worsening landmine peril for Kashmiri farmers”, Thomson Reuters Foundation, 5 November 2013.
- 2 See, e.g., “Powerful landmines unearthed in Bihar”, *Business Standard (Press Trust of India)*, 4 April 2014; “Landmines recovered in naxal infested Medininagar in Jarkhand”, *Zeenews (Press Trust of India)*, 18 February 2015; and “India’s Maoists apologise after landmine”, *SBS (AAP)*, 14 April 2014; “India policemen killed in ‘Maoist attack’ in Chhattisgarh”, *BBC News*, 30 March 2016, at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-india-35926555>; “Maoist rebels kill 10 paramilitary soldiers in India”, *Aljazeera*, 19 July 2016, at: <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/07/maoist-rebels-kill-10-paramilitary-soldiers-india-160719083440361.html>; and “Three killed in landmine blast triggered by Maoists in Chhattisgarh”, *Hindustan Times*, 19 January 2017, at: <http://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/three-killed-in-landmine-blast-triggered-by-maoists-in-chhattisgarh/story-xhYWIUSxMqWaiFgX9VgcRN.html>.
- 3 V. Sharma, “5 lakh people leave crops on Punjab border; Army to lay land mines”, *The Economic Times*, 1 October 2016, at: <http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/5-lakh-people-leave-crops-on-punjab-border-army-to-lay-land-mines/articleshow/54617461.cms>.
- 4 “Advanced tech to help soldiers map minefields”, *The Times of India*, 10 July 2017, at: <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/pune/advanced-tech-to-help-soldiers-map-minefields/articleshow/59518560.cms>.
- 5 S. Z. Iqbal, “Farmers Hope to Return to Fields as Army Clears Landmines on Line of Control”, *NDTV*, 27 June 2016, at: <http://www.ndtv.com/india-news/farmers-hope-to-return-to-fields-as-army-clears-landmines-on-line-of-control-1423616>.
- 6 “Girl injured in a mine explosion outside Uri army camp”, *Kashmir Reader*, 30 July 2017, at: <http://kashmirreader.com/2017/07/30/girl-injured-mine-explosion-outside-uri-army-camp/>.
- 7 S. Bhargav and J. Iqbal, “Forest fire along LoC in Poonch triggers landmine explosions”, *Greater Kashmir*, 16 May 2016, at: <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/pir-panjal/forest-fire-along-loc-in-poonch-triggers-landmine-explosions/217680.html>.
- 8 “3 army soldiers injured in landmine blast in Kupwara district”, *The Tribune*, 11 September 2017, at: <http://www.tribuneindia.com/news/jammu-kashmir/3-army-soldiers-injured-in-landmine-blast-in-kupwara-district/465388.html>.
- 9 “Kashmir: Army jawan injured in landmine explosion near LoC in Keran sector”, *First Post*, 12 August 2017, at: <http://www.firstpost.com/india/kashmir-army-jawan-injured-in-landmine-explosion-near-loc-in-keran-sector-3923445.html>.
- 10 “Soldier injured in landmine blast on LoC”, *Telegana Today*, 19 December 2016, at: <https://telanganatoday.com/soldier-injured-landmine-blast-loc>.
- 11 “Indian trooper, 2 porters wounded in separate landmine explosions on Kashmir LoC”, *Xinhua*, 11 January 2016, at: http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2016-01/11/c_134998674.htm; and “Landmine blast kills 2 troopers in Indian-controlled Kashmir”, *Xinhua*, 1 August 2016, at: http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2016-08/01/c_135555545.htm.
- 12 See: “Three killed in landmine blast triggered by Maoists in Chhattisgarh”, *Hindustan Times*, 19 January 2017, at: <http://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/three-killed-in-landmine-blast-triggered-by-maoists-in-chhattisgarh/story-xhYWIUSxMqWaiFgX9VgcRN.html>; “Maoist rebels kill 10 paramilitary soldiers in India”, *Aljazeera*, 19 July 2016, at: <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/07/maoist-rebels-kill-10-paramilitary-soldiers-india-160719083440361.html>; and “India policemen killed in ‘Maoist attack’ in Chhattisgarh”, *BBC News*, 30 March 2016, at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-india-35926555>.
- 13 Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) Article 13 Report (for 2006), Form B.
- 14 “IEDs pose huge challenge in efforts to counter Naxals: Police”, *The Indian Express*, 24 July 2017, at: <http://indianexpress.com/article/india/ieds-pose-huge-challenge-in-efforts-to-counter-naxals-police-4764492/>.
- 15 CCW Amended Protocol II Article 13 Report (for 2016), Form B.
- 16 Statement of India, “Summary record of 18th Annual Conference of High Contracting Parties to CCW Amended Protocol II”, Geneva, 30 August 2016, CCW/AP.II/CONF.18/SR.1.