

Siachen Glacier

January 17, 2025 • vajiramandravi.com



About Siachen Glacier:

- It is a **piedmont glacier** located in the **Karakoram Range**.
- It lies in the heavily glaciated Himalayan **region known as the "Third Pole,"** because mountain glaciers in this region contain more freshwater than is found anywhere else on Earth except for the polar ice caps.
- It lies between the **Saltoro Ridge**, a subrange of the Karakorams, to the west and the main Karakoram Range to **the east**.
- It is the **second longest nonpolar glacier** in the world, after **Fedchenko Glacier** in **Tajikistan**.
- It originates at the **base of the Indira Col West**, a col (low point) on the Indira Ridge.
- It is located so strategically that while it **dominates Shaksgam Valley** (ceded to China by Pakistan in 1963) in **the north**, controls the routes coming from Gilgit Baltistan to Leh from the west, and at the same time, it dominates the **ancient Karakoram Pass** in the eastern side too.
- It is the **major source** of the 80km long **Nubra River**, a major tributary of the Shyok River.
- It is considered the **world's highest battleground** and in 1984 India took its control from Pakistan under **Operation Meghadoot**.

Q1: Why is Siachen so important for India?

It is important to India because of its Strategic location. Saltoro Ridge in the Siachen glacier acts as a division that averts the linkage of Pakistan Occupied Kashmir with China directly, prohibiting the two from developing geographical military alliances. Siachen also helps India to watch over Pakistan's Gilgit-Baltistan territories.

Source: TH

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