Ending the Doklam Standoff

Why in news?

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After weeks of diplomatic negotiations, India and China agreed to disengage from the standoff on the Doklam plateau.

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What is the recent development?

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- After more than 2 months of negotiations, the Indian troops withdrew back from Doklam to their posts in Sikkim as a goodwill gesture as China promised to make adjustments.
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- Government sources have said that the process of disengagement had been almost completed and also verified by both sides.
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- This restores status quo ante at Doklam.
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- China had put off any plans to further construct the road in the disputerd area for the present.
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- However, Chinese officials maintained that its border troops will continue to patrol the Doklam area and asserted its soverinity over it, therby not recognising it as a disputed territory.
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What is the significance of the dis-engagement?

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- The statements issued by both the sides were inconsistent with each other.
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- It shows that both sides seem to have agreed to disagree, though not ideal, is a good sign.

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- Both sides have recognized that peace at border areas is an essential pre-requisite for development and vouched for diplomacy and have arrived at a rational compromise.
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- The agreement came a week before PM’s visit to China to attend the BRICS summit. This shows that the bilateral spirt will to develop beyond the summit.
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What should to be done in the future?

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- Diplomats must now repair the rupture in ties over the past few months that began with the cancellation of the Nathu La route for Kailash-Mansarovar pilgrims.
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- Presently, it appears that China no longer recognises the gains made in the Special Representative talks in 2012 or the disputed nature of the Doklam trijunction.
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- India, on the contrary has made it clear that it does not consider the Sikkim boundary settled.
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- Hence, both sides will have to walk swiftly on these basic issues.
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- Both must revert to the spirit of the Border Defence Cooperation Agreement of 2013, which laid down specific guidelines on tackling future developments along the 3,488-km boundary they share.
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Source: The Hindu

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