International Relations · GS - II

“Multilateral institutions can sustain diplomatic engagement even when bilateral relations between member states remain strained.” Examine the significance and limitations of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation as a platform for India's regional diplomacy.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
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MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Regional cooperation, diplomatic engagement, India-Pakistan relations, consensus-based decision-making, counter-terrorism, connectivity, Central Asia, strategic interests, geopolitical differences, cultural diplomacy.

Model Answer

Introduction

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) provides India with a multilateral platform to engage with Eurasian countries on security, economic and cultural issues. It can sustain diplomatic communication despite bilateral tensions.

Significance for India

The SCO strengthens India's engagement with Central Asia, a region important for energy security, connectivity and strategic interests. It provides opportunities for cooperation against terrorism, extremism and transnational

threats. Cultural and civilisational exchanges can also promote people-to-people contacts. Participation enables India to engage with Pakistan within a multilateral institutional framework.

Limitations

Deep political differences, regional rivalries and divergent strategic interests can constrain cooperation. India-Pakistan tensions may affect the atmosphere of multilateral engagement. Connectivity limitations and competing geopolitical initiatives also restrict the organisation's effectiveness.

Way Forward

India should use the SCO to promote practical cooperation, regional stability, cultural dialogue and counter-terrorism coordination while maintaining its independent foreign policy.

Conclusion

The SCO cannot resolve every bilateral dispute, but it can preserve channels of communication and advance shared regional interests.

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