Modern History · GS - II

Examine the role of civilisational and cultural diplomacy in strengthening regional cooperation within the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. How can India leverage such platforms to deepen its engagement with Eurasia?

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 20/11/2026	GS - II	Modern History

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

Cultural diplomacy, shared heritage, people-to-people contacts, SCO, soft power, archaeological cooperation, regional connectivity, strategic interests, India's Eurasian engagement.

Model Answer

Introduction

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) provides a platform for regional cooperation across Eurasia. Beyond security and economic engagement, cultural diplomacy can build mutual understanding through shared heritage, historical exchanges and people-to-people contacts.

Role of Civilisational Diplomacy

1. **Building mutual understanding:** Cultural exchanges reduce stereotypes and strengthen social connections among member countries.
2. **Preserving shared heritage:** Archaeological exhibitions, conservation initiatives and academic exchanges promote awareness of interconnected histories.

3. **Strengthening soft power:** Cultural performances, languages, literature and educational cooperation enhance India's cultural outreach.
4. **Promoting regional stability:** People-to-people engagement can complement formal diplomatic channels, particularly where political relations remain difficult.
5. **Supporting tourism and creative industries:** Cultural collaboration can generate opportunities in heritage tourism, handicrafts and creative economies.

How India Can Leverage These Platforms

- **Institutional cooperation:** Expand collaboration among universities, museums, archaeological institutions and cultural organisations.
- **Digital heritage:** Develop multilingual digital archives and joint research projects on Eurasian history.
- **Cultural connectivity:** Promote student exchanges, scholarships, festivals and heritage tourism.
- **Inclusive participation:** Encourage engagement with civil society, scholars and younger generations.
- **Strategic balance:** Complement cultural engagement with cooperation on connectivity, trade and regional security.

Conclusion

Civilisational diplomacy cannot replace political negotiations or resolve strategic disagreements by itself. However, sustained cultural engagement can create social foundations for dialogue and strengthen India's long-term relationship with the wider Eurasian region.

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