International Relations · GS - II

Cultural diplomacy can provide avenues for engagement even when political relations between countries remain strained. Evaluate the significance and limitations of shared civilisational heritage in India–Pakistan relations.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 22/11/2026	GS - II	International Relations

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

Shared historical heritage, cultural diplomacy, people-to-people contact, historical narratives, political mistrust, cross-border cooperation, confidence-building measures, regional stability.

Model Answer

Introduction

India and Pakistan share interconnected historical, linguistic and cultural traditions. The invocation of Humayun and Sher Shah Suri at Delhi's Purana Qila during the SCO Civilisational Dialogue Forum illustrates how shared heritage can provide a platform for diplomatic engagement despite political tensions.

Significance of Shared Heritage

1. **Diplomatic engagement:** Cultural forums create opportunities for dialogue beyond conventional political negotiations.
2. **People-to-people relations:** Shared languages, literature, music and traditions can sustain societal connections.

3. **Regional identity:** Historical linkages highlight the interconnected nature of South Asian civilisation.
4. **Confidence-building:** Academic exchanges, heritage conservation and cultural cooperation can gradually improve mutual understanding.
5. **Multilateral engagement:** Platforms such as the SCO provide opportunities to discuss shared regional cultural interests.

Limitations

- Security concerns and unresolved political disputes constrain sustained engagement.
- Competing historical interpretations can generate mistrust.
- Cultural diplomacy cannot substitute for addressing terrorism and bilateral disagreements.
- Political developments may interrupt institutional and people-to-people exchanges.

Way Forward

India and Pakistan should encourage academic dialogue, heritage conservation, cultural exchanges and multilateral cooperation while maintaining clear distinctions between cultural engagement and security-related negotiations.

Conclusion

Shared civilisational heritage can create channels of communication and mutual understanding, but durable bilateral progress requires sustained political engagement and resolution of core security concerns.

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