International Relations · GS - II

Evaluate the role of cross-border connectivity and energy cooperation in transforming India-Nepal relations from a traditional neighbourhood partnership into a framework for regional economic integration.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
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MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

Landlocked geography, trade and transit, cross-border infrastructure, hydropower cooperation, electricity trade, regional integration, mutual interdependence, strategic autonomy

Model Answer

Introduction

India and Nepal share deep geographical, economic and cultural ties. Connectivity and energy cooperation can strengthen this relationship by linking Nepal's development priorities with India's regional economic and energy interests.

Areas of cooperation

1. **Trade and transit:** Access to Indian transport infrastructure and ports facilitates Nepal's international trade and reduces landlocked constraints.

2. **Physical connectivity:** Cross-border roads, railways and integrated check posts improve movement of goods and people.
3. **Hydropower development:** Nepal's hydropower potential can support electricity exports, while India benefits from cleaner energy imports.
4. **Regional integration:** Improved connectivity can facilitate wider economic linkages with Bangladesh and other South Asian markets.

Challenges

- Delays in infrastructure implementation and regulatory coordination.
- Trade imbalances and concerns over economic asymmetry.
- Border management and unresolved territorial differences.
- Need for predictable energy pricing and long-term investment arrangements.

Conclusion

India-Nepal cooperation can evolve into a mutually beneficial economic partnership through reliable connectivity, transparent energy arrangements and respect for Nepal's sovereign choices. Institutional continuity and equitable benefits are essential for sustainable regional integration.

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