International Relations · GS - II

Evaluate the role of cross-border connectivity in transforming India–Nepal relations from traditional cultural ties into a broader economic and strategic partnership.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 23/11/2026	GS - II	International Relations

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

Cross-border railways, religious tourism, energy cooperation, hydropower, trade facilitation, people-to-people relations, neighbourhood first policy, regional integration

Model Answer

Introduction

India and Nepal share deep historical, cultural and geographical ties. Cross-border connectivity, including railways, roads and energy transmission networks, can convert these traditional links into sustained economic and strategic cooperation.

Contribution of Connectivity

1. **Cultural integration:** Rail links connecting Ayodhya and Janakpur can facilitate religious tourism and strengthen shared civilisational ties.
2. **Trade facilitation:** Improved transport infrastructure reduces logistics costs, supports border trade and expands market access.

3. **Energy partnership:** Transmission networks and hydropower projects enable Nepal to export electricity and support India's energy diversification.
4. **Regional integration:** Connectivity strengthens Nepal's access to Indian ports and wider regional markets.
5. **People-to-people relations:** Easier mobility promotes educational, cultural and social exchanges.

Challenges

- Delays in infrastructure implementation and cross-border coordination.
- Differences in regulatory standards and customs procedures.
- Concerns relating to project financing, environmental sustainability and equitable benefits.
- Vulnerability of transport networks to natural disasters.

Way Forward

India and Nepal should prioritise timely project implementation, integrated border management, sustainable infrastructure and transparent energy agreements. Regular bilateral dialogue can address concerns and build mutual trust.

Conclusion

Connectivity is not merely a transport instrument; it is a foundation for shared prosperity. Balanced cooperation can strengthen India–Nepal relations while advancing regional stability and integration.

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