Modern History · GS - II

Examine the strategic and economic significance of India–Nepal connectivity for strengthening bilateral relations.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 24/11/2026	GS - II	Modern History

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

Neighbourhood First, open border, cross-border infrastructure, hydropower cooperation, trade facilitation, people-to-people ties, regional integration

Model Answer

Introduction

India and Nepal share deep historical, cultural, economic and geographical connections. Their bilateral relationship is strategically significant because of Nepal's location between India and China and the extensive movement of people, goods and services across their open border.

Significance of Connectivity Cooperation

1. **Economic Integration:** Cross-border railways, roads and trade infrastructure can reduce transportation costs, improve market access and strengthen bilateral commerce.

2. **Energy Security:** Hydropower cooperation provides opportunities for Nepal to export electricity and for India to diversify its energy resources while supporting regional clean-energy transition.

3. **Strategic Partnership:** Connectivity strengthens India's engagement with Nepal and supports its broader Neighbourhood First policy.

4. **People-to-People Relations:** Improved air, road and rail links facilitate tourism, education, healthcare access and cultural exchanges.

5. **Regional Integration:** Cross-border infrastructure can improve Nepal's access to Indian ports and wider regional markets, supporting its development as a land-linked economy.

Challenges in Bilateral Cooperation

1. **Political Sensitivities:** Border disputes and differences over historical interpretations can periodically affect diplomatic trust.

2. **Implementation Delays:** Infrastructure projects may face land acquisition, financing, environmental and administrative constraints.

3. **Strategic Concerns:** Nepal's relations with multiple external partners require India to maintain a cooperative approach that respects Nepal's sovereignty.

4. **Trade Imbalances:** Differences in economic scale and market access can create concerns regarding the distribution of benefits.

Way Forward

1. Ensure timely implementation of connectivity and development projects.
2. Strengthen institutional dialogue on border-related concerns.
3. Expand transparent hydropower and renewable-energy partnerships.
4. Promote balanced trade and investment opportunities.
5. Maintain mutual respect, sovereign equality and regular political engagement.

Conclusion

Connectivity can transform geographical proximity into shared economic and strategic gains. Sustained cooperation based on trust, mutual sensitivity and respect for sovereignty is essential for a stable India–Nepal partnership.

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