International Relations · GS - II

Discuss the significance of the 13th Amendment to the Sri Lankan Constitution for India–Sri Lanka relations. How can India support the political aspirations of Sri Lankan Tamils while respecting Sri Lanka’s sovereignty?

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
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MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Indo-Lanka Accord 1987, 13th Amendment, provincial councils, devolution of power, Tamil minority rights, neighbourhood diplomacy, Sri Lankan sovereignty, bilateral cooperation, peaceful political settlement.

Model Answer

Introduction

India and Sri Lanka share historical, cultural and strategic ties. The 1987 Indo-Lanka Accord led to the 13th Amendment to the Sri Lankan Constitution, which introduced provincial councils to promote the devolution of power.

Main Body

Significance of the 13th Amendment

The amendment provides a constitutional framework for provincial administration and power-sharing. Its implementation remains important to Tamil political parties seeking greater regional autonomy and protection of

their political interests. The issue also influences bilateral relations and regional stability.

India’s Role

1. Diplomatic engagement: India can encourage dialogue between the Sri Lankan government and Tamil representatives.
2. Constitutional implementation: India can support meaningful implementation of the existing devolution framework through peaceful and democratic means.
3. Respect for sovereignty: India should pursue its concerns through dialogue and diplomatic channels while respecting Sri Lanka’s territorial integrity.
4. Development cooperation: Economic assistance, education, healthcare and livelihood programmes can contribute to reconciliation and social inclusion.

Conclusion

India’s approach should combine constructive diplomacy, respect for sovereignty and support for an inclusive political settlement. Meaningful devolution and sustained dialogue can strengthen reconciliation and contribute to long-term stability in Sri Lanka.

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