



India's role in its neighboring countries

Description

India is a neighbour to the following countries:

Pakistan, China, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Bhutan, Nepal and Sri Lanka.

- **Pakistan** :Â With Pakistan, we have had largely hostile relations due to tensions in Kashmir, ceasefire violations. We have also fought four wars with Pakistan. After the Pulwama attack, India doubled the import duty and has stopped trade with Pakistan. At present, Kartarpur corridor is the main positive thing happening between the two countries.
- **China** : Relations between India and China can be said to be cordial to some extent, with border and trade disputes happening now and then. Both the countries signed the 'Panchsheel Agreement' which is hardly followed by China on the field. India fought a war with China in 1962 and lost the Aksai Chin region to China. China is India's largest trading partner. But we have a trade deficit of 53 billion dollars. There is a huge competition between both countries to become a dominant power in the Indian Ocean region. China is continuously expanding its defence and strategic assets.Â Apart from direct tensions between both the countries, China openly supports Pakistan in all its endeavours to harm India to which India and other countries have raised their concerns. Due to China's stance of undermining India's sovereignty, India has withheld its support to China's BRI (Belt & Road Initiative).
- **Afghanistan** : India claims to be a direct neighbour of Afghanistan, but the border lies in the Gilgit Baltistan area which comes under POK.Â India is considered to be the most cherished partner of Afghanistan. We have donated over 3 billion dollars to Afghanistan, built schools, provided scholarships, built the new Parliament building for them and also constructed the Salma dam. India and Iran are also about to ink a transit agreement on transporting goods to landlocked Afghanistan. Since road connectivity was denied by



Pakistan, we have established two air corridors with them.

- **Bangladesh** : With Bangladesh we have seen certain ups and downs but as of now, relations are cordial. India helped Bangladesh in its liberation war from Pakistan. Both the countries in 2011 signed a major accord on border demarcation known as Tin Bigha corridor. India has invested heavily in infrastructure development of Bangladesh. Both countries have agreed to fight terrorism together. India also provides electricity to Bangladesh. Apart from giving 500 million dollars line of credit for defence equipment we also conduct military exercises with them regularly. Bangladesh has also allowed movement of Indian goods to our north-eastern states through its territory and can also transmit electricity from Assam to Bihar.
- **Myanmar** : India and Myanmar share a 1600 km long border, the relations have been quite normal. Myanmar was a province of British India and was separated in 1937. We have had cultural exchanges with Myanmar of Buddhist texts. Though the trade and connections with Myanmar are poor as of now but India wants to improve on these aspects as a part of 'Act East'™ policy. We have given no charge visa to all Myanmar citizens since 2017. Also, both countries have agreed to work together against terrorism and drug trafficking. India is helping Myanmar to modernize its military.
- **Bhutan** : Relations between India and Bhutan have been very close and unique. Bhutan is the largest beneficiary of Indian foreign aids. We have helped them develop in all aspects. Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru once said that any act of aggression on Bhutan will be considered as an act of aggression on India. In 1949 India and Bhutan signed a Treaty of Friendship according to which India won't interfere in internal matters of Bhutan while Bhutan will let India guide its foreign policy, this agreement was revoked in 2007. India also carries the responsibility of training Bhutan's army. Bhutan has declared that it will be a developed country by 2045, India should not shift its focus from economic and strategical importance of Bhutan when it comes to competing with China in this region.
- **Nepal** : Our relationship with Nepal started with the 1950 Treaty of Peace and Friendship. India and Nepal have open borders and citizens of both countries can move freely. Nepalese can also work freely in India except for some civil services and some states. India has helped a lot to Nepal with infrastructural development, line of credits, free trade and monetary aid. However, there is a growing closeness between Nepal and China recently and India should be tactful in dealing with both the countries.
- **Sri Lanka** : India and Sri Lanka generally have had positive relations. Both the countries



have deep cultural links as Buddhism and Hinduism form the core values of both the nations. India is Sri Lanka's largest trading partner. India helped Sri Lanka in its struggle against LTTE also. Nowadays there is an increased closeness between China and Sri Lanka, as China has the Hambantota port. But India has also got the Hambantota airport management for 40 years and India has signed a civil nuclear deal with Sri Lanka.

Conclusion :-

Though India started well with most of the countries, but they are now drifting towards China. India should be reviewing its policies continuously to avoid China from having a dominant position in the South Asian region.

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