International Relations · GS - II

Assess the significance of development assistance and cross-border connectivity in strengthening India-Nepal relations. How can cooperation in energy, trade and disaster management contribute to regional stability and mutual prosperity?

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

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

Development partnership, hydropower trade, railway connectivity, inland waterways, open border, disaster resilience, economic integration, neighbourhood first policy, mutual trust

Model Answer

Introduction

India and Nepal share deep historical, geographical and economic ties. Development assistance, connectivity projects and bilateral agreements provide important instruments for strengthening this relationship and addressing shared regional challenges.

Significance of Development Assistance and Connectivity

1. **Infrastructure development:** Indian assistance in roads, railways, bridges and integrated check posts can improve Nepal's connectivity and facilitate regional trade.

2. **Energy cooperation:** Nepal's hydropower potential and India's growing energy demand create opportunities for electricity generation, cross-border transmission and energy trade.

3. **Trade facilitation:** Improved transport infrastructure, customs coordination and inland waterways connectivity can reduce logistics costs and expand Nepal's access to international markets.

4. **People-to-people relations:** Cross-border connectivity supports tourism, education, employment and cultural exchanges, strengthening traditional social links.

Cooperation in Regional Stability

1. **Disaster management:** Joint preparedness, early-warning systems and coordinated rescue operations are essential because both countries face earthquakes, floods and landslides.

2. **Economic interdependence:** Greater trade and investment can generate employment, improve livelihoods and create shared economic interests.

3. **Strategic cooperation:** Regular institutional dialogue can address border-related concerns, security challenges and regional geopolitical developments.

Challenges

1. Differences over project implementation, financing and execution timelines can delay cooperation.
2. Nepal's landlocked geography increases dependence on reliable transit infrastructure.
3. Political changes and bilateral disagreements may affect policy continuity.
4. Environmental concerns require sustainable planning of hydropower and infrastructure projects.

Way Forward

1. Ensure timely implementation of development projects through joint monitoring.
2. Expand electricity trade and regional energy connectivity.
3. Improve customs procedures and multimodal transport infrastructure.

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4. Strengthen disaster preparedness and institutional cooperation.

Conclusion

A development-oriented partnership based on mutual respect, reliable connectivity and shared economic interests can strengthen India-Nepal relations and contribute to stability across South Asia.

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