



General Studies-2; Topic: India and its neighbourhood- relations.

India - Bangladesh Partnership

Introduction

- The third consecutive innings of the partnership between Indian and Bangladesh Prime Minister marks a pivotal moment in relations between the two South Asian neighbours.
- Both countries signed 10 MoUs, including seven new and three renewals.

Economic ties

- The bilateral trade reached \$15.9 billion in 2023 spanning across various sectors.
- **Bangladesh's ability to conduct rupee transactions with India** eases pressure on its foreign currency reserves and facilitating smoother trade.
- The **Shared Vision for India-Bangladesh Digital Partnership** is expected to boost collaboration in emerging technologies and digital economies.

Energy, infrastructure and connectivity

- The landmark initiatives improving regional transport networks
 - **Akhaura-Agartala cross-border rail link**, connecting India's northeast to Bangladesh.
 - **Khulna-Mongla port rail line**.
- India has been supplying power to Bangladesh, with exports reaching 1,160 MW in 2023.
- The **Maitree super thermal power plant** showcases collaboration in critical infrastructure.
- Cooperation is also being explored in renewable energy.
- Commencement of hydroelectric 40 MW power export from Nepal to Bangladesh through the Indian grid, marks a significant step in regional energy cooperation.
- The **Shared Vision of India-Bangladesh Green Partnership** for a sustainable future.

Security

- Both countries manage their 4,096.70 km long international border through regular talks between border guarding forces and nodal drugs control agencies to address challenges like terrorism, extremism, and transnational crimes.
- Cooperation in military education will further strengthen the security relationship.
- Collaboration in intelligence sharing and joint counterterrorism.
- \$500 million line of credit was extended by India for defence purchases.

Teesta water sharing

- This remains a bone of contention with India currently controlling 55 per cent and Bangladesh claiming 50 per cent during the dry season.
- The resolution of this dispute is critical for agriculture, livelihoods, and environmental sustainability for both.
- The challenge lies in balancing the needs of West Bengal's agriculture with Bangladesh's water requirements.
- Addressing environmental concerns and setting a good precedent for managing shared water resources in South Asia.

Border issues

- There are joint patrols, increased communication between border forces, and use of non-lethal weapons.
- Managing illegal cross-border activities while ensuring civilian safety remains a challenge.
- Ongoing discussions on border demarcation, enclave exchanges, and coordinated management.

South Asian trajectory

- The Indo-Bangla relationship is entering a new phase with the 10 MoUs reflecting growth and collaboration.
- Regional connectivity initiatives are expected to enhance trade and transform the South Asian economic landscape.
- The ties have the potential to positively impact the broader South Asian region by setting new standards for regional cooperation.
- BBIN motor vehicles agreement, and the BIMSTEC free trade agreement could further strengthen economic cooperation and stability across the subcontinent.