

Ch 5. Contemporary South Asia

Class 12 Political Science

**NOTES + 1&2
Marks Questions**

**** ignore the SAFTA and SAARC Topic**

Contemporary South Asia

- South Asia includes the following countries; Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Afghanistan. Geographically Himalayas lies to its North, the Indian ocean, the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal lies to the South, West and East respectively.
- China which is an important player is not considered to be a part of this region. Further, each and every country in the region has its own political system.
- India and Sri Lanka continues to be a democratic system since their independence from British.
- Both Pakistan and Bangladesh have experienced civilian and military rulers, with Bangladesh remaining a democracy in the Post Cold War period.
- A political transformation has also taken place in two smallest countries i.e. Bhutan and Maldives.
- Even though there was mixed record of the democratic experience, the people in all these countries share the aspiration for democracy.
- Some important countries of South Asia are discussed below :

Pakistan

- The first military rule in Pakistan took place under General Yahya Khan. The reason for this was the popular dissatisfaction against the rule of General Ayub Khan.
- After this, a government was formed under the leadership of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto from 1971 to 1977.
- Bhutto Government was removed by General Zia-ul-Haq but had to face pro-democracy movement from 1982 onwards.
- Again in 1988 an elected democratic government was established under Benazir Bhutto but had to face competition from the Pakistan People's Party and the Muslim League.
- Army stepped in again and General Pervez Musharraf removed Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. General Musharraf got himself elected as the President in 2001.
- There were several factors which led to the failure of Pakistan in building a stable democracy.
- At present, again a democratic form of government is ruling the country under Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif.

India-Pakistan Conflicts

- After independence, both India and Pakistan got involved in issue related to Kashmir. It led to wars in 1947-48 and 1965 which failed to settle the matter.
- Both the countries face conflict over strategic issues like the control of the Siachen glacier and over acquisition of arms.
- Both the countries continue to be suspicious of each other over security issue.
- Another issue of conflict among the two countries is over the sharing of river waters of Indus river system.
- The two countries are not in agreement over the demarcation line in Sir Creek in the Rann of Kutch.

Bangladesh

- Bangladesh was a part of Pakistan from 1947 to 1971. But it started protesting against the domination of Western Pakistan and the imposition of Urdu Language.
- A popular struggle against West Pakistani dominance was led by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.
- In 1970 election, the Awami league under Sheikh Mujibur Rahman won all seats but the government dominated by the West Pakistani leadership refused to convene the assembly.
- The Pakistani army tried to suppress the movement which led to a large number of migration to India.
- The Indian Government supported the demands of people of East Pakistan and helped them. This led to a war with Pakistan in 1971.
- Bangladesh was formed as an independent country after the end of war.
- A Constitution was adopted by Bangladesh declaring faith in secularism, democracy and socialism. But government under Sheikh Mujibur amended the Constitution and formed Presidential form of government.

- Sheikh Mujibur was assassinated and a military rule was established under Ziaur Rahman. He was also assassinated and the rule of Lt Gen H.M. Ershad started this continuing the military rule.
- A pro-democratic movement was again started which led to election in 1991. Since then representative democracy based on multi-party elections has been working in Bangladesh.

Nepal

- Nepal was a Hindu Kingdom in the past but later changed into a constitutional monarchy for many years.
- In the wake of a strong pro-democracy movement the king accepted the demand for a new democratic Constitution in 1990.
- There was a conflict among the democrats, maoists and monarchist forces which led to the abolition of parliament and dismissal of government in 2002 by the king.
- Again in 2006, after a pro-democratic movement, the king was forced to restore the House of Representatives.

Sri Lanka

- The democratic set up of Sri Lanka was disturbed by the Ethnic conflict among the Sinhalese and Tamil origin people.
- According to the Sinhalese, the region of Ceylon belonged to Sinhala people only and not to the Tamils who migrated from India.
- This led to the formation of Liberation Tiger of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), a militant organisation, who demanded a separate country.
- The Government of India was pressurised by the Tamil people in India for the protection of the Tamils in Sri Lanka.
- India signed an accord with Sri Lanka and sent troops to stabilise relations between the Sri Lankan Government and the Tamils.
- Eventually, the Indian Army got into a fight with the LTTE. Later on the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) was pulled out of Sri Lanka in 1989 without achieving its aims.

- Presently, the LTTE has been destroyed by the Sri Lankan Government and the area under LTTE has been recovered.
- In spite of the Ethnic conflict, the economy of Sri Lanka has always been high.

India and its Other Neighbours

- Neighbouring countries of India are Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Maldives and Pakistan.
- There are certain issues of conflicts between India and Bangladesh. These include sharing of Ganga and Brahmaputra river waters, illegal immigration to India etc.
- Still, both India and Bangladesh share a cordial relation with each other. Economic relations between the two have improved considerably.
- Nepal and India shares a friendly relation with each other but certain issues like warm relation of Nepal with China, Maoist movement in Nepal etc have disturbed the relation.
- Despite differences, trade, scientific co-operation, electricity generation and inter locking water management grids hold the two countries together.
- India enjoys a very special relationship with Bhutan too and does not have any major conflict with the Bhutanese government.

Peace and Cooperation

- Even though there are certain issues of conflicts among the South Asian countries, they recognise the importance of cooperation and friendly relationship among themselves.
- The South Asian countries initiated the establishment of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) in 1985 to evolve cooperation among each other.

- The SAFTA was signed in 2004 by the South Asian countries to allow free trade across the borders.
- SAFTA aims at lowering trade tariffs by 20 percent by 2007.
- Although there has been issues between India and Pakistan, measures were being taken to bring cordial changes between the countries.
- There is also an outside power which influence the region. China and the United States remain key players in South Asian politics.

PREVIOUS YEARS' EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

1 Mark Questions

1. What is the full form of 'SAARC'?

All India 2014

Ans. The full form of SAARC is the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation.

2. Who controls the North-Eastern parts of Sri Lanka? All India 2014

Ans. The LTTE controlled the North-Eastern parts of Sri Lanka. After its defeat the area is now under the control of the Government of Sri Lanka.

3. Whose mediation resolved the 'Indus River Waters Dispute' between India and Pakistan? All India 2012

Ans. The World Bank resolved the 'Indus River Water Dispute' between India and Pakistan.

4. Mention any two objectives of SAARC. Delhi 2011

Ans. The two objectives of SAARC are :

- (i) Cooperation through multilateral ways.
- (ii) Peace and friendly relations among the nations.

5. Mention any four names of the countries belonging to the SAARC.
All India 2011

Or Name the member countries of SAARC? Delhi 2009, All India 2009

Or Mention any two member nations of SAARC. All India 2009

Ans. Member countries of SAARC are :

- | | |
|------------------|--------------------|
| (i) India | (ii) Pakistan |
| (iii) Bangladesh | (iv) Nepal |
| (v) Sri Lanka | (vi) Bhutan |
| (vii) Maldives | (viii) Afghanistan |

6. What does SAFTA stand for? Delhi (C) 2008

Ans. SAFTA stands for South Asian Free Trade Agreement.

7. Mention the names of any four countries of South Asia. All India 2008

Ans. The four countries of South Asia are Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Pakistan.

2 Marks Questions

1. Analyse the two political developments of 1940s that led to the decision for the creation of Pakistan. All India 2017

Ans. Two political developments of 1940s that led to the decision for the creation of Pakistan are following :

- Pakistan resolution passed by Muslim League in March 1940 demanding separate homeland for the Muslim.
- Massive Hindu-Muslim riots on 16 August, 1946 which was observed as Direct Action Day by Muslim League.

2. Suggest any two measures to have good relations with Pakistan. All India 2015

Ans. Two measures to have good relations with Pakistan are :

- Pakistan must stop helping the terrorist.
- Cultural delegates from both the countries must visit each other frequently.

3. State any two reasons for the instability of democracy in Pakistan.

Delhi 2014

Ans. The two factors for Pakistan's failure of stable democracy are :

- The social dominance of military.
- Stiff confrontation for coming to power among political parties.

4. Before 1971, which two reasons were a source of resentment among the people of East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) against West Pakistan? Delhi 2013

Ans. The two reasons which were source of resentment (hate) among the people of Pakistan against West Pakistan were :

- West Pakistan dominated East Pakistan.
- East Pakistan was forced to use Urdu language.

5. What were the two main consequences of Indo-Pakistan conflict of 1971? All India 2013

Ans. The consequences of Indo-Pakistan conflict of 1971 are given below :

- Eastern command of Pakistan military collapsed and East Pakistan was recognised as Bangladesh.
- Over 93000 Pakistani troops surrendered to the Indian forces making the largest surrender since Second World War.

6. Explain any two common features relevant to the countries of South Asia. All India (C) 2008

Ans. The common features relevant to the countries of South Asia are :

- The nations of South Asia do not share same type of political system. Though, all countries of South Asia prefer democratic form of government.
- South Asian countries stand for diversity in every sense and yet constitute a geo-political space.