

Contemporary South Asia Notes Class 12

Political Science Book 1 Chapter 3

South Asia

There are mainly eight countries in the South Asian region.

- India
- Nepal
- Pakistan
- Maldives
- Bhutan
- Sri Lanka
- Afghanistan
- Bangladesh

Features of South Asia

Geographical

- This region is bounded by the Himalayas in the north, the Indian Ocean in the south, the Bay of Bengal in the east and the Arabian Sea in the west.
- Because of these differences this area is filled with cultural and social diversity.

Political

- Support for democracy by all countries
- The political system of the countries did not remain stable.
- India and Sri Lanka have been successful in maintaining democracy after independence.
- Pakistan and Bangladesh have both democratic and military rule.
- Nepal had a constitutional monarchy till 2006 and then democracy came
- Maldives used to be a sultanate till 1968, now it is a democracy.

Problems of countries of South Asia

- Border dispute
- River water dispute
- Rebellion
- Ethnic conflict

- Poor economic condition

Countries of South Asia

Pakistan

- After independence, military rule came in Pakistan under the leadership of Ayub Khan.
- Due to public displeasure, General Yahiya Khan overthrew Ayub Khan and himself came under the rule.
- After the Bangladesh crisis in 1971, a democratic government was formed in Pakistan under the leadership of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto.
- This government lasted till 1977 and after Zia ul Haq overthrown the government and again military rule came in Pakistan.
- After 1982, there were movements in support of democracy in Pakistan and in 1988, once again a democratic government was formed under the leadership of Benazir Bhutto.
- This government also did not last long and in 1999, once again General Pervez Musharraf seized power.

Why democracy could not be established in Pakistan?

- Dominion of religious leaders, army and landowners
- Army comes into power by showing the fear of Indian attack
- Support of military rule by most political and social organizations
- Lack of international support
- Military rule supported by other countries for their own benefit
- Corrupt political parties

Bangladesh

After the independence of India, due to the large Muslim population in the two regions, two different regions were separated from India and Pakistan was created. One of these areas was in the east and the other was in the west.

The main problem

- There were more people speaking Bengali in East Pakistan, but since independence, West Pakistan tried to impose Urdu language on the people, which was opposed by them.
- The people of East Pakistan started protesting against the bad behaviour on Bengali culture.

- Movements started in East Pakistan against the domination of West Pakistan and these movements were led by Shaikh Mujibur Rahman.
- In the elections of 1970, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's party Awami League won all the seats in East Pakistan.
- But this was not accepted by the government of West Pakistan and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was arrested.
- To suppress the movements in East Pakistan, Yahia Khan sent the army, in which thousands of agitators were killed by the Pakistani army.

Independence of east Pakistan

- Due to such situation in the country, thousands of people started coming to India.
- Seeing all this, India started supporting the demand for independence of East Pakistan and gave economic and military assistance to East Pakistan.
- Because of this help, war broke out between West Pakistan and India.
- India won in this war and East Pakistan became independent as a new country Bangladesh.

After independence

- After independence, Bangladesh made its constitution and declared a secular, democratic and socialist country.
- In 1975, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman changed the constitution and adopted presidential system instead of parliamentary system.
- Sheikh Mujibur Rahman ended all parties except his own party, the Awami League.
- Because of this, the tension in the country increased and the army revolted.
- Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was killed by the army and military rule came in Bangladesh.
- After this Ziaur Rahman formed the Bangladesh National Party and tried to normalize the system but he was also assassinated.
- After Ziaur Rahman, military rule again came under the leadership of HM Ershad.
- This rule was opposed by the students and the military rule ended in 1990.
- After this democracy was established and since 1991 there is democracy in Bangladesh.

Nepal

- Nepal was a Hindu nation in history and remained a constitutional monarchy for a long time.
- During this period, the political parties and people of Nepal kept demanding democracy, but using the army, the king suppressed these movements.
- The people of Nepal continued their efforts and in 1990 the king accepted the democratic constitution.

- The influence of Maoists in Nepal has also increased since 1990.
- Conflict broke out between the Maoists and the king's army and in this struggle people who were agitating for democracy also joined.
- In this way a triangular conflict started in Nepal. This struggle went on for a long time.
- Parliament was dissolved by the king in 2002 and the government was toppled.
- Agitations against this started again and this time the government had to bow down
- After that a democratic government was established
- Now Nepal has democratic government since 2006.
- Nepal has made also its own constitution.

Sri Lanka

- Sri Lanka became independent in 1948 and democracy has prevailed here since independence.
- The main problem of Sri Lanka is the ethnic dispute between Tamil and Sinhalese.
 - Tamil – migrated from India and settled in Sri Lanka
 - Sinhalese – Natives of Sri Lanka.

Cause of conflict

- The natives of Sri Lanka, Sinhalese believe that they have right over Sri Lanka and Tamils should not be given any kind of concession.
- Due to this thinking, Tamils did not get equal share in the politics of Sri Lanka, due to which they had to face many difficulties.
- Because of all these problems and discrimination, Tamils formed their own organization called LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) and adopted aggressive method to get their demands fulfilled.

Demands of Tamils.

- LTTE said that a region of Sri Lanka should be made a separate country.
- Presently LTTE and its supporters have been eliminated and Tamils of Sri Lanka are demanding equal rights.

India's intervention

- The Tamils of India put pressure on the Government of India to appeal to the Government of Sri Lanka to improve the condition of Tamils in Sri Lanka.
- The Indian government tried to talk to the Sri Lankan government and in 1987 sent a peacekeeping force to rectify the situation.
- This peace army got stuck in conflict with LTTE and the people of Sri Lanka also opposed this army.

- In 1989, India withdrew its peacekeeping force and the goal of establishing peace could not be achieved.

Economic status of Sri Lanka

- Despite the civil war, Sri Lanka developed rapidly.
- Sri Lanka was the most successful in terms of population control.
- Sri Lanka was the first to liberalize its economy in South Asia.
- Sri Lanka's per capita GDP is also the highest in South Asia.

Maldives

- The Maldives was under the British Government until 1965.
- Maldives gained independence from British rule in 1965 and became a sultanate under King Muhammad Farid Didi.
- In 1968, this monarchy was also abolished, and the republic was established, which has remained till date.

Bhutan

- Bhutan enacted its constitution in 2008
- Since then Bhutan currently has a system of constitutional monarchy.

Relations between India and the countries of South Asia

India and Pakistan

There have been 4 wars between India and Pakistan so far.

- 1947 (Kashmir dispute)
- 1965 (River Water Division)
- 1971 (Bangladesh)
- 1999 (Kargil War)

Issues of conflict

- Kashmir dispute
- Border dispute
- Support of terrorism by Pakistan
- Pakistan's promotion of separatism
- River water sharing

India and Bangladesh

Conflict

- Illegal entry of thousands of Bangladeshis into India
- Ganga and Brahmaputra river water sharing
- Non-export of natural gas by Bangladesh to India
- Bangladesh's support of anti-Indian Muslims
- Do not give way to the Indian army to go to east India.

Cooperation

- Good economic relations
- Cooperation on disaster management and environmental issues
- Bangladesh is a part of India's Look East policy

India and Nepal

Conflict

- There have been differences between India and Nepal regarding trade in history.
- India's concern is also about the friendship between China and Nepal.
- India considers the growing Maoist supporters in Nepal as a threat to itself.
- India is also not happy with Nepal not taking action against anti-Indian elements.
- Nepal feels that India interferes in their internal affairs.

Cooperation

- Cooperation in the field of science and business
- There is an agreement of free movement between both the countries, according to which any person can come from India to Nepal and Nepal to India without passport and visa.
- Nepal is being helped by India in many schemes.

India and Sri Lanka

Conflict

- Tamil status
- In 1987, a peacekeeping force was sent by India, which the people of Sri Lanka considered interference in their internal affairs.

Cooperation

- There is an agreement of free trade between both the countries.
- Help by India during the tsunami in Sri Lanka.

India and Bhutan

- Relations between India and Bhutan are very good.
- Bhutan drove the anti-India extremists from here, which helped India.
- India is helping with projects like hydroelectric power in Bhutan.
- India gives maximum grant for development in Bhutan.

Relations between India and Maldives

- In 1988, some soldiers from Sri Lanka attacked Maldives.
- Maldives asked India for help and India sent its army to help Maldives
- Help in the economic development of Maldives.
- India's support to Maldives' tourism and fishing industry

SAARC (SAARC)

SAARC was created to establish cooperation in the countries of South Asia.

SAARC – South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation

Established in – 1985

Headquarters – Kathmandu (Nepal)

Members – India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Afghanistan

Objectives

- Maintaining Peace and Cooperation in South Asia
- Free Trade Zone

But SAARC could not succeed.

Cause

- Dispute between countries
- Lack of unity
- Failure to resolve disputes

SAFTA

SAFTA – South Asian Free Trade Area

Implemented – in 2006

Objective

Reducing custom duty between the countries of South Asia for free trade.

Status

It also failed because small countries believe that through this agreement India wants to take advantage of their markets.