



TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS SOLVED

1. Identify the country:

- (a) The struggle among pro-monarchy, pro-democracy groups and extremists created an atmosphere of political instability.
- (b) A landlocked country with multi-party competition.
- (c) The first country to liberalise the economy in the South Asian region.
- (d) In the conflict between the military and pro-democracy groups, the military has prevailed over democracy.
- (e) Centrally located and shares borders with most of the South Asian Countries.
- (f) Earlier the island had the Sultans as the head of state. Now, it is a republic.
- (g) Small savings and credit cooperatives in the rural areas have helped in reducing poverty.
- (h) A landlocked country with a monarchy.

Answer:

- (a) Nepal
- (b) Bhutan
- (c) India
- (d) Pakistan
- (e) India
- (f) Maldives
- (g) India
- (h) Nepal

2. Which among the following statements about South Asia is wrong?

- (a) All the countries in South Asia are democratic.
- (b) Bangladesh and India have signed an agreement on river-water sharing.
- (c) SAFTA was signed at the 12th SAARC Summit in South Asian politics.
- (d) The US and China play an influential role in South Asian politics.

Answer: (a) All the countries in South Asia are democratic.

3. What are some of the commonalities and differences between Bangladesh and Pakistan in their democratic experiences?

Answer: Bangladesh has been the part of Pakistan itself. Both of these countries bear some similarities and differences as follows:

Commonalities

- 1. Both Bangladesh and Pakistan were under a military rule.
- 2. At both the places, the struggle for democracy took place in their own way.
- 3. Pakistan's administration began under the command of General Ayub Khan and gave up due to dissatisfaction among people giving way to Yahya's military rule and continued with the army rule though elections were held by military rulers to give a democratic shape to their own rule.
- 4. In the same way, Bangladesh drafted its own constitution to begin with democracy. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman formed presidential setup by abolishing all the parties except Awami League. But after his assassination the new military ruler Zia-ur-Rahman formed his own party and won elections in 1979. Later on he was also assassinated and another military leader Lt. Gen. H.M. Ershad took over.

Differences

1. In Pakistan, military, clergy and land-owning aristocrats dominated socially to overthrow elected government whereas in Bangladesh the leaders and their party members dominated for the same.
2. Pro-military groups have become more powerful due to conflict with India in Pakistan whereas in Bangladesh, pro-military groups are powerful due to friendship and encouragement of India.

4. List three challenges to democracy in Nepal.

Answer: The three challenges to democracy in Nepal were the result of a triangular conflict between-

1. the monarchist forces
2. the democrats
3. the Maoists

These challenges created massive, countrywide, pro-democracy protest in April 2006.

5. Name the principal players in the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka. How do you assess the prospects of the resolution of this conflict?

Answer: The principal players in the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka were Sinhala and Sri Lankan Tamils.

After its independence, politics in Sri Lanka was dominated by the interests of Sinhala community who was hostile to Tamils, who migrated from India to be settled there. Sinhalese presumed Sri Lanka to be belonged to them only, hence no concession should be given to Tamils. This created militant Tamil nationalism i. e. 'Ethnic conflict'.

Despite the revenges of internal conflict Sri Lanka has maintained democratic political system and registered considerable economic growth and high level of human development.

6. Mention some of the recent agreements between India and Pakistan. Can we be sure that the two countries are well in their way to a friendly relationship?

Answer: Although Indo-Pakistan relations seem to be the story of endemic conflict and violence, there have been a series of efforts to manage tensions and build peace under the various agreements:

1. Agreed to undertake confidence building measures to reduce the risk of war.
2. Social activists and prominent personalities have collaborated to create an atmosphere of friendship.
3. Leaders have met at summits to better understanding.
4. Bus routes have been opened up between these two countries.
5. Trade between the two parts of Punjab has increased substantially in the last five years.
6. Visas have been given more easily. No, despite the above mentioned agreements and initiatives, we can not be sure that both the countries are well in their way to friendship, still some areas of conflict exist there to be sorted out,

7. Mention two areas each of cooperation and disagreement between India and Bangladesh.

Answer:

Disagreement

1. Differences over the sharing of the Ganga and Brahmaputra river waters.
2. Illegal immigration to India.
3. Refusal to allow Indian troops to move through its territory.
4. Not to export natural gas to India.

Cooperation

1. Economic relations have been improved considerably within last ten years.
2. Bangladesh is the part of India's 'Look East' policy to link up with southeast Asia via Myanmar.
3. Cooperated on the issues of disaster management and

environment.

4. Cooperation on identifying common threats and being more sensitive to each other's needs.

8. How are the external powers influencing bilateral relations in South Asia? Take any one example to illustrate your point.

Answer: The external powers influence bilateral relations in South Asia because no region exists in the vacuum. It is influenced by outside powers and events no matter how much it may try to insulate itself from non-regional powers:

1. China and the US remain key players in South Asian politics.

2. Sino-Indian relations have improved significantly in the last ten years, but China's strategic partnership with Pakistan remains a major irritant.

3. The demands of development and globalisation have brought the two Asian giants closer and their economic ties have multiplied rapidly since 1991.

4. The US enjoys good relations with both India and Pakistan and works as a moderator in Indo-Pak relations.

5. Economic reforms and liberal economic policies in both the countries have increased the depth of American participation.

6. The large South Asian economy remains in the US and the huge size of population and markets of the region give America an added stake in the future of regional security and peace.

9. Write a short note on the role and the limitations of SAARC as a forum for facilitating economic cooperation among the South Asian Countries.

Answer: Role of SAARC: Role of SAARC can be identified as follows:

1. 'South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation' (SAARC) is a regional initiative among South Asian states to evolve cooperation since 1985 onwards.

2. It consists of seven members to encourage mutual harmony and understanding.

3. SAARC has initiated SAFTA (South Asian Free Trade Agreement) to free trade zones for whole south Asia for collective economic security.

4. SAARC has projected on economic development of its member states to reduce their dependencies on the non-regional powers.

Limitations: SAARC is growing slowly due to political differences among its member states—

1. Only the conflicts led to bilateral issues as Kashmir problem between India and Pak.

2. Some of the India's neighbours fear that India intends to dominate them by influencing their societies and politics.

3. SAARC members are from among the developing or least developing countries which creates insufficiency of funds.

10. India's neighbours often think that the Indian government tries to dominate and interfere in the domestic affairs of the smaller countries of the region. Is this a correct impression?

Answer: No, the impression is not correct because India makes efforts to manage its neighbours beyond its size and powers which can be justified on following grounds-

1. India often feels exploited by its neighbours.

2. On the other hand, India's neighbours fear that India wants to dominate them regionally but India is centrally located who shares borders with other countries geographically, which should be accepted on mutual understanding.

3. India avoids political instability in its neighbouring states so that outsiders should not take advantage of influence in the region.

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