

## Growing India-South Korea Relations

### What is the issue?

\n\n

\n

- Recent political developments between India and South Korea have created an opening to share mutual security interests in Asia.

\n

- However, cultural and political differences could present a challenge to forging effective regional ties.

\n

\n\n

### What are the recent developments?

\n\n

\n

- **South Korea** - There is rising tension with China, concerning the US-supplied missile and radar deployment in its territory.

\n

- The prolonged confrontation with China on the deployment of Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) constrained the relationship.

\n

- The pros and cons of THAAD is debated among the US, South Korea, and China in terms of its purpose and application.

\n

- **Bilateral - South Korea** is taking a bold step by inviting India into South Korea's diplomatic domain.

\n

- South Korean President dispatched a special envoy to Prime Minister Modi to reinforce bilateral relations.

\n

- It reiterated its message of placing India on par with the US, Russia, China, and Japan.

\n

- It expressed its desire for stronger security cooperation with India in designing various levels of official talks more regularly.

\n

- It played a critical role in moderating opposing members in India's

application for the Nuclear Suppliers' Group's membership in a plenary meeting.

\n

- **India**, on its part, started building an increasingly incompatible stance toward North Korea.

\n

- It also implemented a plan to launch a strategic initiative, 'Korea Plus' to facilitate Korean FDI and forge larger economic cooperation.

\n

- At Seoul's request, it discontinued the provision of training courses to North Korean students in the Centre for Space Science and Technology Education in Asia and the Pacific, Dehradun.

\n

- It also suspended the training of North Korean soldiers in Indian languages in a Madhya Pradesh-based military school.

\n

\n\n

## **What are the common interests?**

\n\n

\n

- **Regional Stability** - The regional tensions in South Asia especially between India and China create a common interest for India and South Korea.

\n

- This could be a collaborative approach for regional stability.

\n

- **Nuclear** - South Korea's key interest in managing their nuclear neighbour (North Korea) is similar to India's considerations toward Pakistan.

\n

- The US alliance system, established with South Korea and Japan, puts pressure on North Korea to cap its nuclear programme.

\n

- Containing North Korea is beneficial to India's economic and regional ambit in East Asia.

\n

- It also adds to its approach to nuclear non-proliferation regime as a responsible nuclear state.

\n

- **Diplomatic** - There is long lasting regional security dilemma with the continued verbal provocations and a conventional arms race.

\n

- Thus, despite the alliance system, Seoul appears to be in searching for a stronger diplomatic stand on imminent regional issues beyond the alliance

system.

\n

- South Korea's approach to India comes with strategic optimism for expanding ties to ensure a convergence of interest in planning global and regional strategic frameworks.

\n

\n\n

## **What lies ahead?**

\n\n

\n

- Thus South Korea's approach to India under these circumstances is a gesture towards balancing East Asian affairs more broadly than before.

\n

- In all, the strategic ties between Seoul and New Delhi present promise for mutual interest as well as regional stability.

\n

- However, the incipient stage of growing ties requires more careful study to overcome a number of shortcomings.

\n

- The emerging political interests and motivations between the two countries still lag behind the regional and global demand.

\n

- Moderating the dissimilar style of diplomacy and communication under cultural differences is another task.

\n

\n\n

\n\n

**Source: Business Line**

\n

