

② India cannot address the unfinished agenda of South Asian integration without engaging Pakistan?

Introduction -

India's neighbour PAKISTAN currently undergoing severe flood disasters where $\frac{1}{3}$ rd of country is under water, which has affected 33 million people & death toll rises to 1,300 mark.

India's current position with PAK -

① India must step up extending humanitarian assistance to its neighbourhood.

② As India helped SL of Afghanistan, it can help PAK too.

③ PAKISTAN is also now desperately short of foreign exchange to import its essentials & seeking IMF help.

④ Behind this, there are many opinions within PAK govt to

source vegetables & food from IND.

(5) Last year too conflict arisen to import sugar & cotton from IND.

(6) IND now in a position, that now is on the PAK govt to resume trade thus there's been no decision taken on sending Aid.

IND - PAK relation & conflict

(i) The IND - PAK relation deteriorated severely since 2019.

(ii) PAK wants to restore the (GSR) special status while as the core issue bedeviling bilateral relations

(iii) India has also withdrew MFN status to Pakistan after Pulwama attacks while Pakistan denied as most favoured nation status to ~~PAK~~ India's goods.

(iv) IND's ~~PAK~~ trade with PAK dwindled to \$516 million in FY 22

while our two-way trade with Bangladesh is 35 times larger accounted to \$ 18 Billion.

(v) Despite PAK ban on trade with India it increased its import during this fiscal year from India [sugar, pharmaceuticals, organic chemicals].

Way Forward

① Interdependencies b/w IND & PAK must be seized on trade front to harvest potential opportunities which could enhance their relationship.

② When both leaders meet on SCO summit IND must ^{go} further ahead than communication with PAK

③ SAARC should be served effectively with PAKISTAN'S coordination.

④ India must now offer to rush food & other assistance immediately to PAK.

Conclusion - India could strengthen its diplomatic power in south & SE Asia with PAK'S enhanced relationship, thus stabilising peace & [South Asian integration can be addressed].