

Instability in India's Neighbourhood → Causes & Implications

Causes

- Frequent coups and fragile institutions
Ex → Nepal, Bangladesh
- Economic crisis and debt traps
Ex → Sri Lanka's total debt 52% to China
- China's strategic encirclement → string of pearls strategy
Ex → Gwadar, Chittagong
- Border disputes → Kalapani

Instability in India's Neighbourhood



Myanmar:
Military coup in 2021 has destabilized democracy, sparking widespread protests and violence.



Afghanistan:
Taliban takeover in 2021 led to collapse of democratic government.



Sri Lanka:
In 2022, Economic crisis triggered political instability and public unrest.



Maldives:
Political turbulence in the Maldives – which began in 2012, when radicals forced the country's President to resign at gunpoint.



Nepal:
Political instability persists due to frequent government changes.

Implications on India

- α **Security threats**
 - Cross Border Terrorism → Ex Pulwama, Rajouri-Poonch
 - Insurgent sanctuaries → unstable Myanmar allows NE insurgent groups to operate from safe havens.
- α **Refugee influx**
 - Rohingya from Bangladesh → internal security concern
 - Myanmar coup (2021) → fled to Mizoram & Manipur.
- α **Border Management**
 - Porous borders with Nepal, Bang, Myanmar enables smuggling of arms, drugs & fake currency
 - Golden triangle worsens.
- α **Geopolitical vacuum & Chinese encroachment**
 - Instability provides BRI dominance
 - Ex → Hambantota lease.

Impacts on India's Strategic Autonomy

- Myanmar dilemma → Democracy vs Counter Insurgency ties.
- Pressure to Align with Global Powers → QUAD → Counter China.
- Balancing Ideals vs Pragmatism.
Ex → Non-Recognition of Taliban while maintaining dialogues.

Implication on India's

- Neighbourhood Policy
- Defence Diplomacy
- Economic connectivity and diplomacy → Kaladan Project, BBIN, Chabahar Port.

5S Approach

Samman (Respect): India's need to further strengthen its 'Neighbourhood First doctrine' by voicing the concerns of the Neighbourhood in international fora.	Samvad (Dialogue): Engage in Track 2 diplomacy with Afghanistan as well as Myanmar. Indo-Pacific Regional Dialogue, such platforms can be used to engage stakeholders to address issues from climate change to piracy.	Sahyog (Cooperation): Assist neighbours during the time of crisis. E.g., over \$4 Billion extended to Sri Lanka during economic crisis in 2022; India's aid to Maldives increased by 50% in spite of 'India Out Campaign'.	Shanti (Peace): Unlike China, India's core principle towards resolving neighbourly disputes is founded on peace. Such principled stance should be maintained.	Samridhi (Prosperity): South Asia's intraregional trade is barely 5% of its total trade – compared to 60% in Europe and 25% in ASEAN region. Therefore, India should work speedily in completion of infrastructural projects.
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