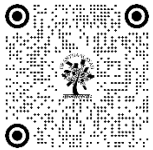


KALAPANI, LIPULEKH, LIMPIYADHURA DISPUTE AND CHALLENGES IN INDIA-NEPAL RELATIONS

Dr. Pardeep Kumar ¹, Navin Kumar ²

¹ Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Maharshi Dayanand University, Rohtak

² Research Scholar, Department of Political Science, Maharshi Dayanand University, Rohtak



DOI

[10.29121/shodhkosh.v4.i2.2023.3525](https://doi.org/10.29121/shodhkosh.v4.i2.2023.3525)

Funding: This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

Copyright: © 2023 The Author(s). This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](#).

With the license CC-BY, authors retain the copyright, allowing anyone to download, reuse, re-print, modify, distribute, and/or copy their contribution. The work must be properly attributed to its author.

ABSTRACT

Geographical location, socio-cultural environment, economic interdependence, have had a great influence in determining the relations between India and Nepal. In fact, there are very few countries in the world that are so closely intertwined with each other as India and Nepal. A clear depiction of person to person relations is seen in India-Nepal relations. The open border of both countries has further enriched this closeness. India is an important and large ally of Nepal. India has the most trade partners with Nepal and also has the highest foreign investment etc. However, sometimes border disputes between the two become serious issues. The recent border dispute is related to the Kalapani region, which has affected relations between the two countries because both present historical evidence in their favor. The current border dispute has seriously impacted both the countries, which were considered to have an open border and served as a model for the world. China is increasing its role in the India-Nepal border dispute. Therefore, in this research paper, we will describe how India and Nepal can resolve this border dispute, considering their historical relations. India and Nepal can resolve their border dispute in a formal and friendly manner. What changes will the resolution of this border dispute bring to the relations between the two countries and what is the importance of this border dispute in India's foreign policy?

Keywords: Kalapani Dispute, India-Nepal Relations, Strategic, Border Disputes



1. INTRODUCTION

India-Nepal relations have developed due to their shared history, common culture and long-standing people-to-people relations, as well as open border between the two countries. Nepal is an important neighbor of India and has been significant for centuries due to geographical, historical, cultural and economic ties. The results of which are visible in foreign policy. Not only do the two countries share an open border and facilitate people-to-people movement, but there is also a strong relationship between the two through marriage and Indian families. The Treaty of Peace and friendship Signed in 1950 between the two countries, was the first step toward establishing a bilateral relationship. It helped in building special relations between two countries. According to the provisions of this treaty, citizens of Nepal will receive benefits and facilities in India without any hindrance.

Through this agreement, Nepal was saved from the disadvantages of being landlocked country. Nepal shares a 1,850 km border with India. In the east, south and west, it borders five Indian States: Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Sikkim and Bihar. Nepal is located to the north of the Himalayan frontiers of India and adjoins Bhutan. It appears as the northern borderland and acts as a buffer state, which protects us from any attack by China. Despite this, the issue of security is a matter of concern for both countries. There has been a high-level exchange of leaders between both

countries. Additionally, there have been a high-level exchange between the two nations from time to time and both countries have held discussions with each other.

2. BORDER DISPUTE BETWEEN INDIA AND NEPAL

The borders between India and Nepal have been a sensitive issue for centuries, causing disputes. Sometimes, even discussion about the border creates an atmosphere of tension between the two countries. Border disputes are accepted globally as a cause of war, often linked to political instability and military conflict. Since 1953, 97 percent of territorial disputes are being resolved through bilateral discussions. Border disputes are both the cause and symptom of tensions between major neighbors in South Asia, leading to questions of peace, stability and prosperity in this region. India has land disputes with many neighboring countries. For more than 70 years, India has had border disputes with Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. Furthermore, there is no demarcated border with Myanmar and Bhutan; tensions also remain with China, Pakistan and Nepal.

The Kalapani, Limpiyadhura, Lipulekh tri-junction between India and Nepal is where Nepal connects the Susta region (western district of Bihar) to India and China. India surrounds Nepal to the east, west and south. The work of determining modern India-Nepal began on March 4, 1816, through the Treaty of Sugauli, between British India and the Kingdom of Nepal. This agreement established that the Mahakali River of Nepal is the boundary line between the two countries. This agreement was supposed to end the border dispute, but it did not. After 200 years, the border dispute started again and the uninhabited land area around it is now populated and the Indo-Nepal border visible in other states: Kalapani, Lipulekh and Limpiyadhura border dispute.

The Kalapani region is located at the trijunction of northern India, Western Nepal and Southern China, (Tibet). The border of this region is Contested: India claims that this area is part of Uttarakhand's Pithoragarh district, while Nepal believes it is part of its Dharchula district. This region has strategic importance for both Nepal and India. This dispute intensifies further when historical evidence is considered as both countries present valid claims. This dispute is from the 19th century is seen. Because both the countries present valid claims. This dispute dates back to the 19th Century, originating from the time under British rule in India and during the region of King Prithvi Narayan was ruling the country. The dispute was first initiated by the Nepal government in 1998. The Indian army had occupied it during the 1962 India-China war, Nepal did not offer any resistance at that time. From 1961 to 1997, Nepal ignored the Kalapani dispute, but due to domestic political reasons, it became controversial between India and Nepal in 1998.

In November 2019, the Home Minister of India released a political map of India in which Ladakh Part of Jammu and Kashmir was made a new union territory. This was part of the changes made in 2019 when the Government of India abolished Article 370 and 35A of the Indian Constitution, which granted special status to Jammu and Kashmir. Immediately after that, a new map was released. In this map, the disputed 'Kalapani' area is shown on the border of India connected to the Himalayas. It is depicted in the Pithoragarh district of Uttarakhand. The Government of Nepal immediately lodged a protest against this map, considering it a part of the Dharchula district of its far western state, which still remains a divided area. While issuing a protest regarding the map, the Government of Nepal immediately sent its diplomat to India for talks on this matter, but there was no success in the discussions.

In May 2020, India's Defense Minister Rajnath Singh virtually inaugurated an 80km long road near the Himalayas, which will connect to the Chinese border and will also reduce the travel time to Mansrovar. This road will pass through Lipulekh. The Government of Nepal immediately protested against it saying that India has changed the status quo of this region without any diplomatic consultations. Recently, Nepal has opposed the new map presented by the Government of India, in which Kalapani is shown as Indian territory. The most recent controversy occurred. In June 2020, when Nepal amended its constitution and released a new national map in which 300 square km of mountainous land, which included Lipulekh, Limpiyadhura and Kalapani, which is currently connected to India, has been shown in its map. India rejected Nepal's map stating that it has artificially enlarged the territories, which has nothing to do with the issue of hand. Nepal's action is a prelude to the bilateral border dispute that should be resolved through diplomatic talks. India has urged the Nepal government to rectify such mistakes and respect India's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

3. INDIA'S SIDE

India has produced revenue records from the 1830s to show that traditionally, Kalapani was administered by the Pithoragarh district. In his article Kalapani; The main basis of India-Nepal contact, Alok Kumar Gupta, a researcher at the Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies, writes, that Kalapani is considered a safe place for Indian Army soldiers, with an elevation of 20,276 feet. At that time, China considered Kalapani to be part of India.

Nepal's Stand: The Government of Nepal believes that geographical information has been continuously obtained from the historical documents of this region. It is mentioned in these documents that the people of Kalapani region voted in the national elections of 1959 and participated in the revenue collection of 1961. Nepal's Foreign Minister Pradeep Gyawali said, "We have told the Indian Government to accept and acknowledge the historical facts that the western border of Nepal is the Kalapani river. The Kali River originates from the heights of Limpiyadhura, which is in the northwest of Lipulekh. Therefore, Kalapani and Limpiyadhura and Lipulekh fall to the east of the river, which is part of the Dharchula district of Nepal. Lipulekh was removed from the map of the country because the king was in favor of India, after the Indo-China war of 1962. India requested King Mahendera for Kalapani, due to the threat from China, he was worried about India's security during the Indo-China war". Kalapani was not a subject of dispute between India and Nepal. It was the territory of Nepal that the king gave to India for temporary use. The new map is a factual document that can be seen in Nepal from the 1950s.

The recent border dispute has greatly affected the relations between the two countries, which were seen as a model for the world. If India and Nepal do not resolve their border issues, such problems can arise in the future. The dispute poses a challenge to creating an International peaceful environment, in which both India Nepal should engage in friendly behavior with all countries, especially with neighbors. Such bilateral disputes will not only have a negative impact on current relations but also allow China's interest in the India-Nepal border dispute to grow. Now, China is stating that this is a dispute between two countries that will be resolved only by these two countries, but it always supports Nepal. The Chinese ambassador has said that "China has always respected Nepal's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Seeing such statements, has started to be said in India that Nepal is raising controversial issues in this way under pressure from China. For example, experts believe that China has made Nepal a means of pressure on India in return for which it can get some facilities from India and strengthen its relations with Nepal.

4. CONCLUSION

India and Nepal should resolve their border issue in a formal and amicable manner. To remain united, both countries will have to forget their past mistakes and look at the depth of their history. The simplest solution to this problem is dialogue, which can protect the relations between the two neighboring Countries. Nepal is useful for India from both strategic and economic perspectives. India should strengthen its relations with Nepal and give importance to agreements. India should strengthen its relations with Nepal and give importance to agreements with Nepal. It should be kept in mind that our relationship has been one of Roti-Beti. Nepal is currently engaged in building relations with China. India can become a soft power chariot only when it increases its political and cultural relations and connects people with one other. Therefore, India can strengthen its identity by adopting a stable and friendly relationship with Nepal.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

None.

REFERENCES

- Choudhary, S. R. (2017). *India-Nepal relations and SAARC: An analytical study*. First Print Publication.
- Devi, M. (2017). *Nepal-China's growing ties: A security concern for India*. Blue Rose Publishers.
- Kumar, S., & Solanki, N. (2019). *Strategic importance in India's security*. The Reader's Paradise Publications.

- Mishra, A. (2022). Various dimensions of India-Nepal relations. Avinaspab Prakashan.
- Pandey, P. K. (2021). India-Nepal relations from past to present. B.L. Media Solution.
- Pant, P. (2013). India's foreign policy. McGraw Hill Publications.
- Shukla, K. (2011). India-Nepal relations. Rajpal Publications.
- Sikri, R. (2017). India's foreign policy. Sage Publications.
- Singh, A. (2018). India-Nepal relations: A political study. Ankit Publications.
- World Focus. (2021, April). India and Bangladesh Myanmar.
- Yadav, B. S. (2022). Contemporary study of India-Nepal relations. Avinaspab Publications.