



Increased investment, pooling of resources and above all, convergence of everybody's interest and focus by various central agencies for regional infrastructure development of the border areas

MEA should establish a Cell to identify specific initiatives, projects and programmes to be taken up by various Ministries and Departments with our neighbouring countries

Explore feasibility of setting up regional development fund
Disaster Relief Fund under NFP

Scale-up academic cooperation
Promote tourism

Periodic review and upgrade

Maintain synergy for connectivity and economic development, especially in the North-Eastern Region

Unresolved border disputes (e.g., Pakistan)

Influence of domestic politics and federal dynamics

Political instability, weak governance, internal conflicts

Terrorism and illegal migration

Delayed implementation of projects

Dysfunction in regional multilateral institutions (e.g., SAARC)

INDIA'S NEIGHBOURHOOD FIRST POLICY (NFP)

Why in the News?

Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs submitted an Action Taken report on observations/recommendations contained in its 22nd report (submitted in July 2023) on India's NFP

About NFP

Neighbourhood First construct as a policy came around 2008

Aims to forge strong neighbourhood relations based on a consultative, non-reciprocal, and outcome-oriented approach

Focus

- Greater connectivity
- Improved infrastructure
- Stronger development cooperation
- Security
- Broader people-to-people contacts

Dynamic policy adjusting to renewed interests in the region and evolving regional circumstances

Significance of NFP

Strategic Imperative

- Enhanced regional integration in South Asia
- Countering external influence (e.g., China)
- Promoting India's vision of free and open Indo-Pacific

Strengthen Multilateralism

Through regional/sub-regional organizations (e.g., SAARC, BIMSTEC)

Soft Power

- Promotes diverse cultural values
- Builds peace and cooperation, positioning India as a responsible global actor

Economic Benefits

- Increased regional trade and investment
- Cross-border infrastructure development
- Addressing developmental deficits in India's Northeast

Regional Stability and Security

- Addressing traditional and non-traditional security threats
- Pursuing Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR) Vision

Key Recommendations by Parliamentary Committee

Implementation of Developmental Projects

Border Infrastructure and Connectivity

Development Fund

Cultural and People-to-People Connect

Bilateral and Multilateral Framework

Synergy with Act East Policy

Historical Baggage and Disputes

Domestic Politics

Neighbouring Country Dynamics

Capacity and Resources

Multilateralism

Challenges in India's Neighbourhood