Nepal Opposes India-China Trade Through Lipulekh Pass

Nepal officially objected to the resumption of border trade between India and China through the Lipulekh Pass, as the country claims sovereignty over the area. India dismissed Nepal's claim as unjustified, while China called it a bilateral issue to be resolved between India and Nepal. Nepal claims the pass, along with the Kalapani and Limpiyadhura regions, is part of its territory.

Timeline of events

- **August 19:** During a visit by Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi to New Delhi, India and China announce an agreement to reopen three border trade points, including the Lipulekh Pass.
- **August 20:** Nepal's Ministry of Foreign Affairs issues a statement asserting its constitutional claim to Lipulekh and the surrounding areas of Kalapani and Limpiyadhura. It notes that Nepal has requested India not to conduct trade or construction in the region and has also informed China of its position.
- **August 20:** India's Ministry of External Affairs responds, stating that the border trade route has existed since 1954 and was only paused due to COVID-19. It calls Nepal's territorial claims "untenable" and "not based on historical facts".

Historical context of the dispute

The disagreement stems from differing interpretations of the 1816 Treaty of Sugauli between Nepal and the British East India Company, which set the Kali River as the border.

- **Nepal's argument:** Nepal claims the Kali River originates at Limpiyadhura, placing the pass and the Kalapani region to the east and within its territory.
- **India's argument:** India asserts that the river originates at a different point further downstream, putting the contested areas within India.

Strategic importance of Lipulekh for India

For India, the pass is strategically important for managing its border with China and provides access to Tibet for trade and the Kailash Mansarovar pilgrimage.

Bhaskar English
NEPAL CLAIMS THIS PART OF INDIA
Nepal's claim
Border of india
Limpiyadhura
Kalapani
Lipulekh
CHINA
INDIA
NEPAL
This map is symbolic

EXPRESS explained.
This route involves 200km of trekking
Lipulekh Pass
Mount Kailash
TIBET (China)
Mansarovar Lake
Zhongba
Tawaghat
Kangma
Almora
NEPAL
Delhi
Pithoragarh
Kathmandu
Nathu La
BHUTAN
INDIA
Lucknow
Gangtok

Practice Questions:

1. **Which of the following mountain passes is NOT part of the reopened Himalayan trade routes announced by India and China recently?**
   - **a)** Nathu La Pass
   - **b)** Lipulekh Pass
   - **c)** Shipki La Pass
   - **d)** Zojila Pass

Answer: d

Explanation: In August 2025, India and China announced the reopening of the Lipulekh Pass in Uttarakhand, Shipki La Pass in Himachal Pradesh, and Nathu La Pass in Sikkim. Zojila Pass was not part of this announcement.

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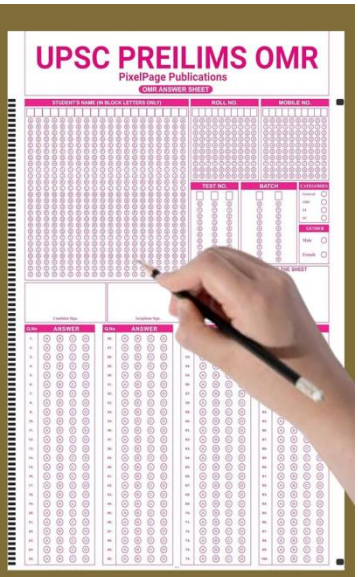

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