

Ques - What is the controversy behind the treaty of Sagauli?

Answer: Due to a dispute on the precise location of Kali River which was fixed as the western boundary between India and Nepal, the “Lipulekh Pass- Kalapani- Limpiyadhura Pass” trijunction area is being claimed by Nepal.

The Anglo-Nepal war ended with the signing of the Sugauli treaty (1816), which delimited the boundaries of Nepal, as it stands today. Consequently, the river Kali marked the western border of Nepal. The dispute on the precise location of the River Kali is partly because of a shift in the course of the river and partly because of the fact that **the British cartographers in the consequent years kept shifting the line demarcating the river eastwards for strategic reasons.**

Nepalese geographers claim that “since no map attached with the Sugauli Treaty has come to light, the only way to ascertain the correct location of Kali is to examine the contemporary maps.”

According to them, up until the year 1857, all maps produced by British cartographers suggest that the origins of the Kali river lie in the Limpiadhura pass. But, in the period between 1857 and 1881, a subtle attempt to misname the river Kali got underway.

Officials in India, on the other hand, claim revenue records dating back to the 1830s show that the Kalapani area has traditionally been administered as part of the Pithoragarh district.

An article for the *Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies* explains that British India conducted the first regular surveys of the upper reaches of the river Kali, in the 1870s. The Indian government has held that the 1879 map is what should be considered in deciding the borders between the two countries.

Thus, these differences amount to the differences in maps that each country possesses, which is further exacerbated by the shifting course of the Kali River.