International Relations · GS - II

Examine the strategic importance of the Maldives for India's maritime security and discuss the challenges posed by growing geopolitical competition in the Indian Ocean Region.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
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MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

India–Maldives Relations, Indian Ocean Region, Maritime Security, Sea Lines of Communication, Defence Diplomacy, China, Pakistan, SAGAR, Neighbourhood First Policy, Strategic Competition

Model Answer

Introduction

The Maldives occupies a strategically important position in the Indian Ocean, close to major international shipping routes. Its geographical location makes it significant for India's maritime security and regional diplomacy.

Main Body

India and the Maldives cooperate in maritime surveillance, defence training, disaster relief and capacity-building. These partnerships support regional stability and help protect vital sea lines of communication. India's SAGAR vision and Neighbourhood First Policy underline the importance of cooperative regional security.

However, increasing engagement by external powers, including China and Pakistan, can complicate regional strategic dynamics. Defence agreements, infrastructure investments and competing geopolitical interests may influence the foreign-policy choices of smaller island states.

India should respond through sustained diplomatic engagement, development assistance, mutually beneficial defence cooperation and respect for the Maldives' sovereignty. It should also strengthen maritime information-sharing and cooperation with other Indian Ocean partners.

Conclusion

India's regional influence depends not only on its strategic capabilities but also on trust, reliable partnerships and respect for neighbouring countries' interests. A cooperative and inclusive maritime approach is essential for long-term stability in the Indian Ocean.

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