International Relations · GS - II

How can defence cooperation between the United States and Pakistan affect India's security interests? Discuss how India can address such concerns through diplomacy and strategic preparedness.

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MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Regional military balance; India–US strategic partnership; Pakistan's military capabilities; counterterrorism concerns; diplomatic engagement; indigenous defence production; strategic autonomy

Model Answer

Introduction

Defence transfers and military modernisation in South Asia influence regional threat perceptions. India's reported concerns over a proposed US F-16 upgrade package for Pakistan highlight the challenges of managing strategic partnerships amid regional rivalries.

Security Implications

1. Regional Military Balance

Upgraded aircraft may enhance Pakistan's operational capabilities, depending on the package's actual scope. India is concerned that capabilities presented as supporting counterterrorism could also affect conventional military calculations.

2. Strategic and Diplomatic Challenges

Such developments can complicate India–US defence cooperation and reinforce mistrust between India and Pakistan. However, their actual impact depends on the equipment supplied, its intended use and the broader military balance.

3. India's Response

India should communicate its security concerns through sustained diplomatic engagement with Washington, seek clarity on the package's scope and end-use safeguards, and strengthen intelligence-sharing and regional security dialogue where appropriate.

4. Strengthening Preparedness

Accelerating indigenous defence manufacturing, modernising surveillance and air defence, and improving joint operational readiness can reduce external dependencies. India should also preserve strategic autonomy while deepening mutually beneficial defence partnerships.

Conclusion

India's response should combine diplomatic engagement with credible deterrence and technological self-reliance. A stable regional security environment requires transparency, responsible defence transfers and sustained efforts to prevent escalation.

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