International Relations · GS - II

Examine the challenges in India–US defence cooperation arising from Washington's military assistance to Pakistan. How can India safeguard its strategic interests while maintaining its partnership with the United States?

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
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MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

India–US strategic partnership; US–Pakistan defence ties; regional security; counterterrorism; strategic autonomy; defence agreements; diplomatic engagement

Model Answer

Introduction

India and the United States have expanded defence cooperation through agreements such as LEMOA, COMCASA and BECA. However, differences over US military assistance to Pakistan remain a concern in India's regional security calculations.

Key Challenges

1. **Regional Security:** Advanced military equipment supplied to Pakistan may alter regional military capabilities and affect India's security environment.
2. **Counterterrorism Concerns:** India expects international military assistance to be linked with credible and verifiable action against terrorist networks.

3. **Strategic Trust:** Divergent assessments of Pakistan's security role can create friction in India–US defence relations.
4. **Strategic Autonomy:** India seeks deeper cooperation without becoming part of a military alliance or compromising independent foreign-policy choices.

Way Forward

India should strengthen diplomatic engagement with Washington, seek greater transparency in defence transfers and promote verifiable counterterrorism commitments. Simultaneously, it should diversify defence partnerships, enhance indigenous defence production and deepen regional security cooperation through platforms such as ASEAN-led mechanisms.

Conclusion

India–US relations can remain resilient through sustained dialogue, mutual sensitivity to security concerns and respect for India's strategic autonomy.

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