International Relations · GS - II

Examine the strategic significance of Greenland in the emerging geopolitics of the Arctic. How could competition over its resources and location affect international relations?

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 14/10/2026	GS - II	International Relations

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Arctic geopolitics, Greenland's strategic location, rare earth elements, critical minerals, energy resources, U.S. national security, Russia's Arctic presence, China's Arctic interests, NATO, Denmark–Greenland relations, sovereignty, self-determination, economic coercion, international law, climate change.

Model Answer

1. Introduction

Greenland is an autonomous territory within the Kingdom of Denmark. Its strategic Arctic location, mineral potential and proximity to North America have increased its geopolitical importance.

2. Strategic Significance of Greenland

- **National Security:** Its location supports Arctic surveillance, early-warning systems and North Atlantic defence.
- **Critical Minerals:** Potential reserves of rare earth elements may help diversify supply chains for advanced technologies and defence industries.
- **Emerging Trade Routes:** Melting Arctic ice could improve seasonal maritime access and increase competition over shipping routes and resources.

3. Geopolitical Implications

- **US–Russia Rivalry:** The United States seeks to protect its Arctic security interests amid Russia's regional military presence.
- **China's Interests:** China's interest in Arctic resources and connectivity adds another dimension to strategic competition.
- **US–Denmark Relations:** Pressure to acquire Greenland could strain NATO relations and raise concerns about sovereignty and economic coercion.
- **Greenland's Self-Determination:** Its people's political choices and consent remain central to any discussion of its future status.

4. Way Forward

- Strengthen NATO and Arctic security cooperation.
- Promote transparent, environmentally sustainable mineral development.
- Respect international law, Danish–Greenlandic arrangements and the right to self-determination.

5. Conclusion

Greenland is more than a resource-rich territory; it is a key part of Arctic security. Sustainable cooperation and respect for sovereignty are essential to prevent regional competition from escalating into wider geopolitical tensions.

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