International Relations · GS - II

Examine the significance of India–Australia defence cooperation in promoting a free, open and stable Indo-Pacific. Discuss the opportunities and challenges associated with deeper strategic cooperation.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
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MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Indo-Pacific, maritime security, joint military exercises, interoperability, Quad, freedom of navigation, supply-chain resilience, strategic autonomy, regional balance, ASEAN centrality.

Model Answer

Introduction

The Indo-Pacific has emerged as a major centre of global trade and strategic competition. India and Australia have strengthened defence cooperation to promote maritime security, regional stability and a rules-based order.

Significance of Defence Cooperation

- **Operational interoperability:** Joint exercises improve coordination and preparedness among the armed forces.
- **Maritime security:** Cooperation supports information sharing, maritime-domain awareness and protection of sea lanes.
- **Regional cooperation:** Engagement through the Quad and bilateral mechanisms strengthens coordination on shared strategic concerns.

- **Strategic resilience:** Defence partnerships can support technology cooperation and diversified supply chains.

Challenges

Differences in strategic priorities, resource constraints and changing regional alignments may limit cooperation. Excessive militarisation or perceptions of bloc politics could also increase regional tensions. India must balance deeper partnerships with its strategic autonomy and inclusive regional engagement.

Way Forward

Regular exercises, defence technology collaboration, maritime information sharing and dialogue with regional partners can strengthen cooperation. ASEAN-led mechanisms and adherence to international law should remain important elements of regional engagement.

Conclusion

India–Australia defence cooperation can contribute to a stable Indo-Pacific when combined with strategic autonomy, diplomatic engagement and respect for international law.

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