International Relations · GS - II

In an increasingly contested Indo-Pacific security environment, military-to-military communication has become an important instrument of conflict prevention. Analyse how confidence-building measures can reduce strategic miscalculations while examining their limitations in managing major-power rivalries.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 13/11/2026	GS - II	International Relations

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Indo-Pacific security, military diplomacy, confidence-building measures, crisis communication, strategic mistrust, escalation management, maritime security, transparency, institutional mechanisms, major-power competition.

Model Answer

Introduction

Intensifying strategic competition among major powers increases the possibility of accidental confrontation. Military-to-military dialogue provides institutional channels for managing tensions without requiring the resolution of underlying disputes.

Role of Confidence-Building Measures

- **Crisis communication:** Hotlines and emergency channels facilitate direct contact during military incidents.
- **Transparency:** Information-sharing about military exercises and operational activities reduces uncertainty.

- **Misinterpretation prevention:** Regular engagement helps clarify intentions and avoid accidental escalation.
- **Institutional trust:** Repeated communication creates predictable mechanisms for handling disagreements.
- **Maritime stability:** Naval communication protocols can reduce risks of incidents in contested waters.

Limitations

1. **Strategic mistrust:** Political and ideological differences may weaken cooperation.
2. **Power asymmetry:** Unequal military capabilities can influence negotiations.
3. **Communication breakdown:** Political tensions may lead to suspension of dialogue.
4. **Limited enforceability:** CBMs generally do not resolve territorial disputes or prevent deliberate aggression.

Way Forward

Regular defence dialogues, functioning crisis hotlines, agreed incident-management protocols and sustained diplomatic engagement should complement deterrence mechanisms.

Conclusion

Confidence-building measures cannot eliminate geopolitical rivalry, but they can make competition more predictable and reduce the risks of unintended conflict.

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