International Relations · GS - II

Examine the challenges to diplomatic engagement between the United States and North Korea. Discuss the implications of changing domestic political dynamics in the United States for the Korean Peninsula.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
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MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Nuclear programme, denuclearisation, mutual distrust, economic sanctions, regime security, domestic political constraints, congressional oversight, strategic rivalry, regional security, diplomatic engagement.

Model Answer

Introduction

Relations between the United States and North Korea remain strained due to Pyongyang's nuclear programme, international sanctions and competing security interests.

Challenges to Diplomatic Engagement

The central obstacle is disagreement over denuclearisation. Washington has traditionally sought verifiable nuclear disarmament, while Pyongyang considers its nuclear arsenal essential for regime security. Mutual distrust, military exercises and sanctions further complicate negotiations.

Impact of U.S. Domestic Politics

The 2026 U.S. midterm elections have given Democrats control of both chambers of Congress. Analysts suggest this could reduce North Korea's confidence in the durability of any agreement with President Trump. Congressional oversight and legislative control over sanctions can constrain implementation of certain diplomatic commitments. However, the President retains considerable authority over diplomatic engagement.

Way Forward

Sustained dialogue, confidence-building measures, risk reduction and coordination with South Korea, China and other regional stakeholders are necessary.

Conclusion

Diplomatic progress requires realistic negotiations, credible commitments and regional cooperation. Political changes should not undermine long-term efforts to maintain peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula.

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