International Relations · GS - II

The effectiveness of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime depends not merely on treaty commitments but also on verification, transparency and institutional cooperation. Examine the role of the IAEA in strengthening nuclear safeguards and discuss the challenges it faces in monitoring politically sensitive nuclear programmes.

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

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

NPT framework, IAEA safeguards, verification mechanisms, Additional Protocol, enriched uranium, nuclear transparency, state sovereignty, access restrictions, geopolitical divisions, non-proliferation regime.

Model Answer

Introduction

Nuclear non-proliferation seeks to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons while preserving the peaceful use of nuclear energy. The International Atomic Energy Agency plays a central role in verifying states' nuclear commitments.

Role of the IAEA

- **Safeguards inspections:** Verify nuclear material inventories and detect possible diversion from peaceful purposes.

- **Monitoring systems:** Use surveillance cameras, seals, sampling and remote monitoring to strengthen verification.
- **Safeguards agreements:** Implement verification obligations arising from international commitments, particularly the NPT.
- **Technical cooperation:** Support peaceful nuclear applications in healthcare, agriculture and energy.

Major Challenges

1. **Restricted access:** Political tensions and limitations on inspections can weaken verification.
2. **Unverified stockpiles:** Incomplete information about nuclear material creates uncertainty.
3. **Sovereignty concerns:** States may resist intrusive inspections, citing national security.
4. **Geopolitical divisions:** Rivalries among major powers can complicate collective responses.
5. **Verification limitations:** Safeguards cannot independently eliminate political incentives for proliferation.

Way Forward

Strengthening safeguards agreements, implementing Additional Protocols, ensuring timely information-sharing and maintaining impartial inspections are essential.

Conclusion

The credibility of nuclear non-proliferation depends on consistent verification and diplomatic engagement. A technically independent and adequately supported IAEA remains central to global nuclear security.