International Relations · GS - II

“ASEAN-led institutions remain central to India's Indo-Pacific strategy, particularly in addressing maritime security and regional economic challenges.” Analyse the significance and limitations of India's engagement with these institutions.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
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MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

ASEAN centrality, Act East Policy, East Asia Summit, maritime security, freedom of navigation, supply-chain resilience, trade integration, strategic competition, institutional consensus.

Model Answer

Introduction

The Indo-Pacific has emerged as a major centre of global economic and strategic activity. India's engagement with ASEAN-led institutions provides an important platform for regional cooperation and strategic dialogue.

Significance of Engagement

- **Strategic cooperation:** The East Asia Summit enables dialogue on regional security, geopolitical developments and confidence-building.
- **Maritime security:** Cooperation supports freedom of navigation, maritime domain awareness and adherence to international law.
- **Economic integration:** Stronger trade, investment and connectivity can diversify supply chains and strengthen regional economic resilience.

- **Regional partnerships:** ASEAN provides India with diplomatic opportunities to engage Southeast Asian countries through the Act East Policy.

Key Limitations

Divergent strategic interests, geopolitical competition, infrastructure gaps and slow consensus-based decision-making can constrain cooperation. Trade imbalances and non-tariff barriers also affect economic integration.

Way Forward

India should deepen maritime partnerships, improve connectivity, expand trade cooperation and support ASEAN centrality through inclusive regional institutions.

Conclusion

Sustained engagement with ASEAN-led platforms can advance India's strategic interests while contributing to a stable, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific.

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