International Relations · GS - II

“India's engagement with ASEAN is central to its Act East Policy and its vision of a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific.” Examine the opportunities and challenges in strengthening India-ASEAN relations.

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MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

India-ASEAN civilisational ties, Act East Policy, trade, connectivity, maritime security, digital cooperation, strategic autonomy, ASEAN centrality, South China Sea, Myanmar crisis, supply chains and regional integration.

Model Answer

India and ASEAN share civilisational links and common interests. Their partnership is central to India's Act East Policy and Indo-Pacific vision.

At the 23rd ASEAN-India Summit in Manila, leaders reaffirmed a free, open, inclusive and rules-based Indo-Pacific. Priorities include trade, connectivity, maritime security, digital technology, defence, space and people-to-people exchanges. Cooperation in critical minerals, cyber forensics, disaster management and skills can strengthen resilience and supply chains.

However, the partnership faces challenges, including uneven connectivity, trade imbalances, non-tariff barriers, the Myanmar crisis, South China Sea tensions and strategic competition. India's implementation delays and limited regional integration also constrain its potential.

India should accelerate connectivity projects, deepen trade facilitation, support ASEAN centrality and expand technology partnerships. Maritime cooperation and capacity-building should remain inclusive and consistent with

international law.

Aligning ASEAN Community Vision 2045 with Viksit Bharat 2047 can advance shared prosperity. A stable, integrated Indo-Pacific requires sustained dialogue, mutual trust and cooperation.

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