International Relations · GS - II

Examine the strategic significance of diplomatic engagement with North Korea for regional stability in East Asia. What role can major powers, particularly the United States and China, play in reducing tensions on the Korean Peninsula?

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 17/11/2026	GS - II	International Relations

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

Nuclear proliferation, Korean Armistice, US-North Korea relations, China’s strategic influence, Six-Party Talks, security dilemma, sanctions, confidence-building measures, regional stability.

Model Answer

Introduction

The Korean Peninsula remains a major geopolitical flashpoint due to North Korea's nuclear and missile programmes, unresolved hostilities and competing security interests of regional powers.

Strategic Significance of Diplomatic Engagement

1. **Nuclear risk reduction:** Dialogue can create opportunities for limiting nuclear and missile-related escalation.
2. **Regional stability:** Reduced tensions benefit South Korea, Japan and neighbouring countries by lowering security risks.
3. **Avoiding military escalation:** Diplomatic channels reduce the possibility of miscalculation and unintended conflict.

4. **Economic implications:** Stability can support regional trade, investment and connectivity.

Role of Major Powers

- **United States:** Can pursue sustained negotiations, security assurances and reciprocal confidence-building measures.
- **China:** Its economic and diplomatic influence over North Korea gives it an important role in facilitating dialogue.
- **South Korea and Japan:** Can strengthen regional coordination while supporting diplomatic initiatives.
- **Multilateral platforms:** Reviving dialogue mechanisms such as the Six-Party Talks could provide a broader negotiating framework.

Challenges and Way Forward

Deep mutual distrust, sanctions, military exercises and differences over denuclearisation complicate negotiations. Progress requires phased, verifiable commitments, crisis communication channels and sustained diplomatic engagement.

Conclusion

A durable settlement requires moving beyond episodic summit diplomacy towards institutionalised negotiations. Coordinated engagement by regional and global powers remains essential for peace on the Korean Peninsula.

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