International Relations · GS - II

“A country's diplomatic influence is closely linked to its domestic economic and technological capabilities.” Discuss this statement in the context of India's pursuit of strategic autonomy.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 22/11/2026	GS - II	International Relations

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

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Answer Hint

Comprehensive national power, economic resilience, defence indigenisation, technological capabilities, supply-chain security, strategic autonomy, trusted partnerships, global influence.

Model Answer

Introduction

Foreign policy is not determined by diplomatic engagement alone. A country's economic strength, technological capabilities, industrial base and defence preparedness shape its bargaining power and ability to pursue independent international objectives.

Linkages Between National Capacity and Foreign Policy

1. **Economic strength:** A strong economy enhances India's negotiating position in trade, investment and multilateral institutions.
2. **Defence capabilities:** Indigenous defence production reduces external dependence and strengthens security partnerships.

3. **Technological capacity:** Domestic capabilities in semiconductors, artificial intelligence and telecommunications reduce strategic vulnerabilities.
4. **Supply-chain resilience:** Diversified sourcing and domestic manufacturing improve India's ability to withstand geopolitical disruptions.
5. **Energy security:** Diversification of energy sources protects foreign policy flexibility during international crises.

India's Policy Approach

- Make in India and the Production Linked Incentive schemes promote domestic manufacturing.
- The India Semiconductor Mission seeks to strengthen semiconductor capabilities.
- Defence indigenisation initiatives support domestic defence production.
- Partnerships such as the Quad and other technology collaborations complement domestic capacity-building.

Challenges

Technology gaps, import dependence, infrastructure constraints and limited research expenditure can restrict strategic autonomy.

Conclusion

Strategic autonomy does not mean isolation from global networks. It requires building sufficient national capacity to engage internationally from a position of strength while maintaining diversified and trusted partnerships.