Defence & Security · GS - III

The reported Ukrainian strike on a Russian naval vessel in Libya highlights the expanding geographical dimensions of modern warfare. Analyse how long-range military capabilities and unmanned systems are reshaping maritime security beyond traditional conflict zones, with particular reference to India's interests.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 23/11/2026	GS - III	Defence & Security

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

Long-range warfare, unmanned systems, maritime domain awareness, naval logistics, Mediterranean security, Indian Ocean interests, strategic partnerships, international law

Model Answer

Introduction

The reported Ukrainian strike on a Russian naval vessel at Libya's Tobruk port illustrates how modern military operations can extend beyond the immediate geographical boundaries of a conflict. Long-range weapons, intelligence networks and unmanned platforms are changing the strategic character of maritime warfare.

Changing Dimensions of Maritime Security

1. **Extended operational reach:** Long-range missiles and unmanned platforms allow states to target military assets far from conventional battlefronts, expanding the geographical scope of conflicts.

2. **Vulnerability of naval logistics:** Warships, ports, repair facilities and supply networks can become targets, increasing the importance of protecting naval infrastructure.

3. **Asymmetric warfare:** Relatively inexpensive drones and unmanned surface vehicles can threaten sophisticated naval platforms, altering traditional cost-benefit calculations.

4. **Strategic uncertainty:** Operations beyond immediate conflict zones can increase tensions among states, complicate diplomatic relations and create risks of escalation.

5. **Importance of maritime intelligence:** Satellite surveillance, electronic intelligence and real-time vessel tracking are becoming essential for identifying potential threats.

Implications for India

1. **Indian Ocean security:** India must strengthen surveillance of its maritime neighbourhood, including strategic ports, shipping routes and naval approaches.

2. **Protection of trade:** Disruptions to maritime infrastructure and shipping can affect India's energy supplies and international trade.

3. **Defence modernisation:** Indigenous drones, anti-drone systems, maritime patrol aircraft and advanced naval sensors require greater investment.

4. **Diplomatic engagement:** India needs balanced engagement with regional partners while supporting freedom of navigation and peaceful dispute resolution.

Way Forward

1. Expand integrated maritime domain awareness and intelligence-sharing.
2. Strengthen port security, coastal surveillance and protection of critical infrastructure.
3. Develop counter-drone capabilities and resilient naval logistics.
4. Promote adherence to international law and diplomatic mechanisms to prevent escalation.

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Conclusion

Modern maritime security extends beyond territorial waters and conventional naval confrontation. India must combine technological preparedness, maritime cooperation and diplomatic engagement to safeguard its strategic and economic interests.

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