Indian Economy · GS - III

“The vulnerability of energy infrastructure in West Asia has implications far beyond the region's political boundaries.” Analyse the strategic significance of alternative oil transportation routes for global energy security, with reference to Saudi Arabia.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 13/11/2026	GS - III	Indian Economy

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Energy security, Strait of Hormuz, East-West Pipeline, Yanbu port, Red Sea connectivity, maritime chokepoints, supply-chain vulnerabilities, geopolitical risks, diversification of energy routes.

Model Answer

Introduction

West Asia is central to global energy supply, while its geographical concentration of oil infrastructure and maritime chokepoints creates significant geopolitical vulnerabilities.

Strategic Significance of Alternative Routes

Saudi Arabia's East-West Crude Oil Pipeline transports crude from eastern oil-producing regions towards Yanbu on the Red Sea. It provides an alternative export corridor when movement through the Strait of Hormuz faces disruption.

Its importance includes:

- **Route diversification:** Reduces dependence on a single maritime chokepoint.
- **Supply continuity:** Supports oil exports during regional tensions.

- **Strategic flexibility:** Strengthens Saudi Arabia's ability to access markets through the Red Sea.
- **Global stability:** Helps mitigate supply disruptions and sudden energy-price fluctuations.

Persistent Vulnerabilities

Pipelines, pumping stations and export terminals remain exposed to missile and drone attacks, sabotage and regional conflict. Moreover, Red Sea shipping faces risks around Bab-el-Mandeb, demonstrating that alternative routes are not entirely insulated from geopolitical instability.

Way Forward

Countries should diversify energy sources and transportation corridors, strengthen infrastructure protection, maintain strategic petroleum reserves and promote diplomatic cooperation.

Conclusion

Alternative pipelines improve resilience but cannot eliminate geopolitical risks. Global energy security requires diversified routes, protected infrastructure and stable regional cooperation.

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