International Relations · GS - II

Examine the implications of attacks on commercial shipping for international trade and maritime security. Discuss the measures India can pursue to protect its seafarers and promote safe navigation in the region.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
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MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Maritime security; commercial shipping; safety of seafarers; international trade; freedom of navigation; UNCLOS; International Maritime Organization; diplomatic engagement; regional cooperation; de-escalation

Model Answer

Introduction

Maritime security is essential for international trade, energy supplies and global economic stability. The reported attack on an India-flagged cargo vessel off Oman, which killed an Indian seafarer, highlights the human and economic consequences of insecurity at sea.

Implications

Attacks on commercial vessels endanger seafarers, disrupt supply chains and may increase insurance premiums and freight costs. Prolonged insecurity can force ships to alter routes, increasing delivery times and operating expenses. Such incidents also create diplomatic tensions and threaten regional stability.

Measures for India

India should strengthen maritime surveillance, intelligence-sharing and coordination with regional partners. Diplomatic engagement and cooperation through international institutions, including the International Maritime Organization, can reinforce shipping safety and accountability. Indian authorities should also improve emergency communication, consular assistance and support for affected seafarers.

Way Forward

States should respect international maritime law, investigate attacks, protect civilian shipping and pursue de-escalation through dialogue. Regional cooperation can help reduce risks without aggravating existing tensions.

Conclusion

Protecting commercial shipping requires coordinated security measures, effective diplomacy and adherence to international law. India's response should prioritise the safety of seafarers, uninterrupted trade and regional stability.

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