International Relations · GS - II

Examine the strategic significance of the Strait of Hormuz in global energy security. Discuss the implications of its potential closure for international trade and India's economic and maritime interests.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
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MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Strait of Hormuz, global oil and LNG flows, chokepoint vulnerability, energy security, oil price volatility, shipping and insurance costs, India's import dependence, maritime security, diplomatic engagement, diversification of energy sources.

Model Answer

Introduction

The Strait of Hormuz is a critical maritime chokepoint connecting the Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Oman. Its strategic importance arises from the substantial volume of global petroleum and liquefied natural gas transported through it.

Strategic and Economic Significance

- **Global energy security:** Disruption can restrict energy supplies, increase crude oil prices and destabilise international markets.
- **Trade vulnerability:** Shipping delays, higher insurance premiums and freight costs can disrupt global supply chains.
- **Geopolitical leverage:** Regional powers can use control over maritime access as a tool of strategic pressure.

Implications for India

India's dependence on imported crude oil makes it vulnerable to supply disruptions and price fluctuations. Higher energy costs can widen the import bill, intensify inflationary pressures and affect economic growth. Indian commercial shipping and seafarers may also face security risks.

Way Forward

India should diversify energy suppliers and transportation routes, strengthen strategic petroleum reserves, enhance maritime surveillance and maintain diplomatic engagement with regional stakeholders. Cooperation through international maritime institutions is equally important.

Conclusion

Protecting freedom of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz is essential for stable energy markets, international trade and India's long-term economic security.

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