# Defence & Security · GS - III

**Analyse how the targeting of critical infrastructure is transforming the nature of modern warfare. Discuss the challenges it poses for military logistics, civilian security and international humanitarian law.**

| EXAM YEAR | PAPER | SUBJECT |
|---|---|---|
| DAILY PRACTICE 18/11/2026 | GS - III | Defence & Security |

| MARKS | WORD LIMIT |
|---|---|
| 15 | ~250 words |

## Answer Hint

**Critical infrastructure, strategic chokepoints, dual-use infrastructure, military logistics, asymmetric warfare, drones and precision strikes, civilian infrastructure, supply-chain disruption, proportionality, distinction, international humanitarian law, infrastructure resilience.**

## Model Answer

### Introduction

Modern warfare increasingly extends beyond conventional battlefields to critical infrastructure such as bridges, ports, energy networks and communication systems. These assets have both civilian and military significance, making them strategically important targets.

### Strategic Significance

1. **Military Logistics:** Bridges and transport corridors facilitate the movement of troops, weapons and supplies. Their disruption can weaken operational mobility.

2. **Asymmetric Warfare:** Drones, missiles and precision-guided weapons allow comparatively weaker actors to target strategically important infrastructure at relatively lower operational costs.

3. **Economic Disruption:** Damage to transport and energy networks can interrupt trade, supply chains and economic activity, extending the impact of conflict beyond military operations.

**Major Challenges**

- **Civilian Security:** Attacks on dual-use infrastructure may disrupt essential services and endanger civilian populations.
- **International Humanitarian Law:** The principles of distinction, proportionality and precaution must guide military operations. Civilian infrastructure cannot be treated as a lawful military target merely because it has some military utility.
- **Escalation Risks:** Attacks on strategically significant assets may provoke retaliation and widen conflicts.
- **Infrastructure Vulnerability:** Increasing dependence on interconnected networks creates additional security risks.

**Way Forward**

States must strengthen infrastructure resilience, improve surveillance and defensive capabilities, and ensure compliance with international humanitarian law. Diplomatic mechanisms should also discourage attacks that cause disproportionate civilian harm.

**Conclusion**

Critical infrastructure has become an important dimension of modern warfare. Balancing legitimate military objectives with civilian protection and international legal obligations is essential for limiting the humanitarian and economic consequences of armed conflicts.

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