International Relations · GS - II

Analyse how control over strategically important infrastructure and maritime chokepoints influences military logistics and the geopolitical dynamics of the Russia–Ukraine conflict.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 18/11/2026	GS - II	International Relations

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

Strategic infrastructure, Kerch Bridge, Crimea, military logistics, maritime chokepoints, Black Sea, Sea of Azov, territorial control, economic connectivity, escalation risks, international law.

Model Answer

Introduction

The Kerch Bridge, connecting the Crimean Peninsula with mainland Russia, has acquired considerable strategic importance in the Russia–Ukraine conflict. Its repeated targeting illustrates the role of critical infrastructure in contemporary warfare.

Strategic Importance of the Kerch Bridge

- **Military logistics:** The bridge provides a road and rail connection for transporting military personnel, equipment, fuel and supplies to Crimea.
- **Territorial control:** It supports Russia's logistical connectivity with Crimea, which Russia annexed in 2014, a move not recognised by Ukraine and most of the international community.
- **Symbolic significance:** The bridge represents Russia's physical integration of Crimea with its mainland.
- **Economic connectivity:** It facilitates civilian movement and the transportation of essential goods.

Role of Maritime Chokepoints

The Kerch Strait connects the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov. Control over such narrow maritime passages can influence naval movement, commercial shipping and military access. Their strategic importance increases during armed conflicts.

Broader Implications

- **Asymmetric warfare:** Attacks on critical infrastructure can disrupt the logistics of a militarily stronger opponent.
- **Economic consequences:** Damage to transport networks can affect trade, civilian mobility and regional economic activity.
- **Escalation risks:** Repeated attacks may trigger retaliation and expand the scope of conflict.
- **International law:** Military operations must consider distinction, proportionality and precautions to protect civilians and civilian infrastructure.

Conclusion

The Kerch Bridge demonstrates that infrastructure and geography are integral to modern warfare. Its strategic significance extends beyond transportation to military logistics, territorial control and regional geopolitics.

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