Mains Question

The targeting of strategically important transport infrastructure during armed conflicts raises complex questions of military necessity, civilian protection and international humanitarian law. Examine with reference to the repeated attacks on the Kerch Bridge.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 19/11/2026	—	—

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Dual-use infrastructure, military necessity, proportionality, distinction, international humanitarian law, Geneva Conventions, military logistics, civilian infrastructure, escalation risks, rules of armed conflict

Model Answer

Introduction

The Kerch Bridge connects mainland Russia with the Crimean Peninsula and serves both civilian transportation and military logistics. Its repeated targeting in the Russia-Ukraine conflict highlights the strategic importance and legal complexities of dual-use infrastructure.

Strategic Significance

1. **Military logistics:** The bridge facilitates the movement of troops, fuel, ammunition and other supplies supporting Russian military operations.

2. **Disruption of supply chains:** Damaging the bridge can constrain logistical connectivity and compel reliance on alternative land routes.
3. **Symbolic importance:** The structure represents Russia's political and territorial claims over Crimea, making it strategically significant beyond its transport function.
4. **Psychological impact:** Successful attacks can challenge perceptions of military control and infrastructure security.

International Humanitarian Law Concerns

- **Distinction:** Parties must distinguish military objectives from civilian objects.
- **Military necessity:** An attack must contribute effectively to military action.
- **Proportionality:** Expected civilian harm must not be excessive in relation to the anticipated concrete and direct military advantage.
- **Precautions:** Parties must take feasible measures to minimise civilian casualties and damage to civilian infrastructure.

Conclusion

Strategic infrastructure can influence the course of modern warfare, but its military significance does not remove legal obligations towards civilians. Compliance with international humanitarian law remains essential to limiting humanitarian consequences and preventing further escalation.

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