International Relations · GS - II

Examine how border closures, alleged state-sponsored sabotage and retaliatory diplomatic measures are transforming the security environment in Europe. Discuss their implications for regional stability and international cooperation.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 21/11/2026	GS - II	International Relations

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

Securitisation of borders, hybrid warfare, critical infrastructure, NATO's eastern flank, EU security, economic disruption, diplomatic escalation, international law, confidence-building measures.

Model Answer

Introduction

The proposed closure of Estonia's road border crossings with Russia reflects growing security concerns along NATO's eastern frontier. Allegations of state-linked sabotage highlight the increasing importance of hybrid threats in contemporary international relations.

Changing European Security Environment

- **Border securitisation:** Security concerns are encouraging European states to tighten border controls and strengthen surveillance.
- **Hybrid warfare:** Alleged sabotage, cyberattacks, disinformation and covert operations can destabilise societies without conventional military confrontation.
- **Critical infrastructure vulnerability:** Energy networks, communication systems, transport corridors and defence industries have become potential targets.

- **Alliance dynamics:** Estonia's NATO membership gives regional security developments wider strategic significance.
- **Diplomatic escalation:** Reciprocal restrictions and retaliatory measures can weaken communication and increase mistrust.

Implications

Prolonged border restrictions may disrupt local trade, mobility and cross-border communities. They can also deepen geopolitical divisions, complicate regional cooperation and increase the risk of miscalculation.

Way Forward

1. Strengthen intelligence-sharing and coordinated border surveillance among European partners.
2. Improve protection of critical infrastructure through cyber resilience and physical security.
3. Investigate sabotage allegations through credible, evidence-based mechanisms.
4. Maintain diplomatic communication to prevent unintended escalation.
5. Ensure border restrictions remain proportionate and consistent with applicable international obligations.

Conclusion

Europe's security challenges increasingly extend beyond conventional military threats. A combination of resilience, credible investigations, collective security and sustained diplomacy is essential to prevent further fragmentation.

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