International Relations · GS - III

Evaluate how attacks on maritime infrastructure in West Asia can transform regional conflicts into wider challenges for global energy security and international trade.

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MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

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Answer Hint

Maritime chokepoints, energy transportation, Bab-el-Mandeb, supply-chain disruption, insurance costs, regional rivalry, freedom of navigation, international cooperation

Model Answer

Introduction

West Asia occupies a critical position in global energy transportation. Attacks on ports, shipping facilities and maritime infrastructure can extend regional conflicts beyond national borders by disrupting vital commercial routes.

From Regional Conflict to Global Disruption

1. **Energy supply vulnerability:** Threats to oil-exporting ports and maritime routes can interrupt shipments, create supply uncertainty and contribute to volatility in international energy markets.

2. **Strategic chokepoints:** The Strait of Hormuz and Bab-el-Mandeb are crucial to global maritime connectivity. Disruptions around these routes can affect energy shipments and trade between Asia, Europe and Africa.

3. **Higher transportation costs:** Security threats increase insurance premiums, freight charges and shipping times. Rerouting vessels around the Cape of Good Hope further raises costs.

4. **Supply-chain consequences:** Delayed energy and industrial inputs can affect manufacturing, logistics and inflation in import-dependent economies.

5. **Regional escalation:** Retaliatory attacks can widen conflicts, involve additional actors and increase risks to civilian and commercial infrastructure.

India's Strategic Exposure

India's dependence on imported energy and its extensive trade links with West Asia make maritime instability particularly consequential. Higher crude prices can widen the import bill, increase inflationary pressure and affect the current account balance.

Policy Imperatives

India must strengthen maritime surveillance, diversify energy sources, maintain strategic petroleum reserves and cooperate with international partners to protect freedom of navigation.

Conclusion

Maritime security is an essential component of global economic stability. Preventing attacks on civilian infrastructure and ensuring secure sea lanes require diplomatic engagement alongside cooperative maritime security arrangements.

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