International Relations · GS - II

Examine the importance of international humanitarian law in protecting civilians during armed conflicts. Discuss the role of international institutions in promoting accountability and humanitarian access in Gaza.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 20/10/2026	GS - II	International Relations

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Geneva Conventions, principle of distinction, proportionality, precaution, civilian protection, humanitarian assistance, International Criminal Court, United Nations, accountability, ceasefire diplomacy.

Model Answer

Introduction

The reported killing of four Palestinians in Gaza highlights the continuing risks faced by civilians amid the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. International humanitarian law seeks to limit the effects of armed conflict and protect people who are not participating in hostilities.

Protection under International Humanitarian Law

- **Distinction:** Parties must distinguish civilians from combatants and civilian objects from military objectives.
- **Proportionality:** Attacks expected to cause excessive incidental civilian harm relative to the anticipated military advantage are prohibited.
- **Precautions:** Parties must take feasible measures to minimise civilian casualties.
- **Humanitarian protection:** Civilians must receive humane treatment, and impartial humanitarian relief must be facilitated as required by applicable law.

Role of International Institutions

The United Nations can coordinate humanitarian assistance, support diplomatic negotiations and document concerns about civilian protection. The International Criminal Court may exercise jurisdiction over qualifying crimes within its legal authority, while other competent bodies can investigate alleged violations.

Way Forward

Priorities include protecting medical facilities, facilitating humanitarian access, securing the release of hostages where applicable, pursuing credible investigations and advancing negotiations towards a sustainable political settlement.

Conclusion

Civilian protection must remain central to conflict resolution. Consistent application of international humanitarian law, accountability and sustained diplomacy are essential to reducing suffering and building conditions for lasting peace.

BECOME IAS
AI POWERED UPSC PREP