Science & Technology · GS - III

A disruption in a major cloud platform can affect governments, businesses and essential services simultaneously. What does this reveal about the risks of excessive dependence on digital service providers?

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 25/11/2026	GS - III	Science & Technology

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~ 150 words

Answer Hint

Cloud concentration, systemic risk, digital sovereignty, business continuity, redundancy, cybersecurity, disaster recovery

Model Answer

Introduction

The November 2026 Microsoft outage illustrates how technical failures in a widely used cloud ecosystem can produce consequences beyond an individual company's operations.

The Risk of Digital Concentration

1. **Systemic vulnerability:** Dependence on a few large providers creates concentration risks, allowing one technical failure to disrupt multiple organisations simultaneously.

2. **Interconnected services:** Email, communication, data storage and administrative platforms often depend on shared infrastructure, enabling cascading disruptions.

3. **Institutional dependence:** Governments and businesses may struggle to maintain essential functions when external digital platforms become unavailable.

4. **Limited operational autonomy:** Excessive dependence can reduce an organisation's ability to control its data, infrastructure and recovery timelines.

Resilience Priorities

Risk	Required response
Single-provider dependence	Multi-cloud or hybrid-cloud strategies
Infrastructure failure	Geographic redundancy
Software defects	Staged updates and stress testing
Prolonged outages	Disaster recovery and continuity plans
Limited visibility	Independent audits and transparency

India's Priorities

India should strengthen domestic cloud capabilities, promote interoperable digital infrastructure and establish appropriate resilience standards for critical public services. Organisations must also maintain offline contingency arrangements for essential operations.

Conclusion

Digital transformation must be accompanied by digital resilience. The objective should not be to eliminate dependence on private technology providers, but to ensure that their failure does not translate into systemic institutional paralysis.

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