International Relations · GS - II

Examine how the Saudi Arabia–Houthi conflict threatens regional stability and maritime security in West Asia.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
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MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

Yemen conflict, Houthi movement, Saudi intervention, Red Sea security, Bab-el-Mandeb Strait, civilian infrastructure, regional diplomacy

Model Answer

The Saudi Arabia–Houthi confrontation is a major dimension of the prolonged Yemen conflict. Reciprocal missile and air strikes targeting Riyadh and Sana'a demonstrate how the conflict continues to threaten civilian populations and regional security.

Major implications:

1. **Regional instability:** Cross-border attacks increase tensions between Saudi Arabia and the Houthi movement, complicating diplomatic efforts to resolve the Yemen conflict.

2. **Threat to civilians:** Strikes on residential areas, shops and essential infrastructure cause casualties, displacement and disruption of basic services.

3. **Maritime insecurity:** Houthi activities in the Red Sea region raise concerns about commercial shipping through the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait, a critical route connecting the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden.

4. **Economic consequences:** Insecurity can increase shipping costs, insurance premiums and supply-chain disruptions, affecting global trade and energy transportation.

5. **Wider geopolitical involvement:** The conflict has implications for regional rivalries and the security interests of external powers.

For India, instability in the Red Sea region can affect trade routes, energy security and the safety of seafarers. India therefore has an interest in protecting freedom of navigation and supporting diplomatic de-escalation.

Conclusion

A sustainable resolution requires restraint from the parties, protection of civilians, regional dialogue and a UN-supported political process. Military escalation alone cannot ensure lasting stability in Yemen.

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