Defence & Security · GS - III

Cyber-warfare increasingly threatens civilian digital infrastructure during armed conflicts. Examine its implications for national security, financial stability and civilian welfare. Suggest measures to strengthen cyber resilience in India.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
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MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Cyber-warfare, critical information infrastructure, digital payments, banking security, civilian infrastructure, national security, CERT-In, public-private coordination, redundancy, incident response, international humanitarian law.

Model Answer

Introduction

Growing dependence on digital networks has made financial services, communication systems and essential public services vulnerable to cyberattacks. During armed conflicts, such disruptions can extend beyond military targets and affect civilian populations.

Major Implications

- **Financial disruption:** Attacks on payment systems and banking infrastructure can interrupt transactions and undermine confidence.
- **National security risks:** Disruption of essential digital services can affect governance, communication and emergency response.
- **Civilian hardship:** Citizens may lose access to money, information and basic online services.

- **Strategic escalation:** Cyberattacks can intensify conflict while making attribution and accountability difficult.

Measures to Strengthen India's Cyber Resilience

India should strengthen protection of critical information infrastructure, conduct regular security audits and develop effective incident-response mechanisms. CERT-In, regulators and private operators should improve threat intelligence sharing and coordinated response. Redundant systems, offline recovery options, encryption, workforce training and public awareness are also essential.

International cooperation and adherence to applicable international law can help reduce risks to civilians.

Conclusion

Cyber resilience requires a coordinated approach combining technological safeguards, institutional preparedness, public-private cooperation and responsible state behaviour.

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