



CURRENT AFFAIRS



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TERRORISM: A GROWING CHALLENGE TO INTERNAL SECURITY

WHY IN THE NEWS?

The news highlights the reason behind Union Home Minister Amit Shah's review meeting on the security situation in Jammu and Kashmir it marks the first such review since the assembly elections were held in the region during September-October. The meeting, attended by key figures like J&K Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, senior officers from the Army, paramilitary forces, intelligence agencies, and the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), underscores the government's ongoing focus on maintaining security and stability in Jammu and Kashmir following the recent elections.



TERRORISM:

Terrorism is the deliberate use of violence, or the threat of violence, against individuals, groups, property, or systems with the aim of achieving specific ideological, political, religious, or economic objectives.

Forms of Terrorism

1. International Terrorism: International terrorism is driven by foreign terrorist organizations or external influences, often transcending national borders.

Indian Context: India has been a victim of cross-border terrorism, especially from Pakistan-based groups like Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM). Example The 26/11 Mumbai attacks (2008), carried out by LeT, involved coordinated assaults on public spaces, killing over 170 people.

2. Domestic Terrorism: Domestic terrorism arises from social, political, or ideological objectives within the terrorist's home country.

Indian Context: India faces domestic terrorism challenges such as Maoist insurgency (Left-Wing Extremism), which operates in states like Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, and Odisha. Example The Dantewada Naxal attack (2010), in which 76 CRPF personnel were killed by Maoist insurgents.

WHY TERRORISM IS A MAJOR CHALLENGE TO INTERNAL SECURITY

Challenge	Description
Threat to Safety	Terrorist attacks cause the loss of innocent lives, leading to widespread fear and insecurity in society.
Political Instability	Terrorism undermines government authority, challenges legitimacy, and erodes public trust in institutions.
Economic Impact	Destruction of infrastructure, disrupted commerce, and increased security costs harm the economy.
Social Division	Terrorism induces fear, trauma, and social divisions, leading to mistrust and potential radicalization.
Unpredictable Tactics	Terrorists use unconventional tactics, making it difficult for national security forces to predict or prevent attacks.
Radicalization	Terrorism fosters radicalization, especially among vulnerable groups, leading to the growth of extremist ideologies.
International Strain	Cross-border terrorism strains diplomatic relations and reduces international cooperation.
Long-term Effects	The aftermath of attacks continues to affect national security, with heightened security measures and public trauma.

WHY TERRORISM IS MORE PRELEVANT IN JAMMU & KASHMIR:

1. Geopolitical Conflict: Jammu & Kashmir is a disputed region between India and Pakistan, fueling cross-border terrorism.

2. Cross-Border Infiltration: Pakistan-based militant groups infiltrate the region, increasing terrorist activities.

3. Religious and Ideological Goals: Militant groups seek to establish an Islamic state or separate Kashmir from India.

4. Local Grievances: Political unrest, alienation, and dissatisfaction create fertile ground for extremism.

5. Youth Radicalization: Limited economic opportunities and political discontent led to recruitment by militant groups.

6. Strategic Importance: The region's location makes it a focal point for external and internal security concerns.

7. Article 370 Abrogation: The removal of Jammu & Kashmir's special status increased unrest and violence.

8. Security Operations: Military actions often lead to civilian casualties, further fueling radicalization.

9. Social Media: Terrorist groups use social media for propaganda and recruitment.

VARIOUS COUNTER-TERRORISM MEASURES:

Counter-Terrorism Measure	Purpose
UAPA (Unlawful Activities Prevention Act)	Designates organizations as terrorist groups and allows detention without charge.
NIA (National Investigation Agency)	Investigates terrorism cases, especially those with international links.
ATS (Anti-Terrorism Squad) – State Level	Focuses on preventing and responding to local terrorist threats.
NSA (National Security Act) – 1980	Allows preventive detention of individuals threatening national security.
Fencing of Borders	Prevents cross-border infiltration by terrorists.
Surveillance & Intelligence Sharing	Enhances monitoring of suspected terrorists and shares intelligence across agencies.
Counter-Radicalization Programs	Focuses on preventing recruitment by extremist groups through community engagement.

WHAT ARE THE ISSUES IN COUNTER-TERRORISM EFFORTS?

1. Lack of International Cooperation: Countries often prioritize different interests, hindering information sharing and global coordination.

2. Radicalization: Extremist ideologies spread through social media, leading to increased recruitment, especially among youth.

3. State-Sponsored Terrorism: Some nations support or shelter terrorist groups, complicating global counter-terrorism efforts.

4. Lack of Coordination Among Security Agencies: Fragmented agencies lead to inefficiencies, delays, and missed opportunities in responding to threats.

5. Human Rights Violations: Counter-terrorism measures sometimes infringe on human rights, causing distrust and alienation among communities.

6. Evolving Tactics of Terrorists: Terrorists adapt to new technologies and tactics, such as cyber-attacks and lone-wolf operations, complicating responses.

7. Funding and Resource Shortages: Terrorist groups often have significant funding, while counter-terrorism efforts face resource constraints.

8. Public Support: Heavy-handed tactics can erode public trust, making counter-terrorism less effective and potentially fueling radicalization.

WAY FORWARD:

- 1. Criminalizing Terrorist Offenses:** Strengthen laws to criminalize all terrorist activities and ensure effective prosecution.
- 2. Strengthening International Cooperation:** Enhance global intelligence-sharing and create unified legal standards for tackling terrorism.
- 3. Countering the Use of New Technologies:** Regulate online platforms and improve cybersecurity to prevent terrorist exploitation of technology.
- 4. Addressing the Threat of Foreign Terrorist Fighters:** Strengthen border control measures and develop reintegration programs for returning foreign fighters.
- 5. Promoting a Whole-of-Society Approach:** Engage communities, promote counter-narratives, and educate the public to prevent radicalization.
- 6. Counter-Terrorism and Counter-Radicalisation (CTCR) Division:** Coordinate efforts across agencies to prevent radicalization and ensure integrated counter-terrorism strategies.

CONCLUSION

Terrorism remains a significant threat to India, with both international and domestic dimensions. While the impacts are devastating, India continues strengthening its counter-terrorism framework through military, legislative, and diplomatic measures to ensure national security and regional stability. The country's focus on enhancing intelligence-sharing, improving border security, and countering radicalization has contributed to weakening terrorist networks. The evolving tactics of terrorists and cross-border challenges require constant adaptation of strategies. India must maintain a comprehensive approach involving both security and socio-economic initiatives to combat terrorism in the long term.

PRELIMS QUESTION:

Q. Consider the following statements:

1. Terrorism is primarily driven by the deliberate use of violence to achieve political, ideological, or religious objectives.
2. The Jammu & Kashmir region faces terrorism due to its geopolitical conflict, cross-border infiltration, and internal social grievances.
3. The National Investigation Agency (NIA) is responsible for addressing terrorism issues related only to international groups, not domestic ones.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

Answer: B

MAINS QUESTION:

**Q. Discuss the various challenges faced by India in its counter-terrorism efforts, particularly in Jammu & Kashmir, and suggest a way forward to enhance national security.
(250 words, 15 marks)**

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