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Date –18- February 2025

TERRORISM IN INDIA: CHALLENGES TO NATIONAL SECURITY

WHY IN THE NEWS?

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz has disapproved of US Vice President JD Vance's remarks at the Munich Security Conference, where Vance criticized European nations' stances on issues like free speech and immigration. Vance warned that the real threat to Europe comes from within, alleging a retreat from fundamental values shared with the United States. His comments, made on February 14, have sparked a larger debate about a potential rift in US-Europe relations. Scholz responded strongly, rejecting Vance's criticism as inappropriate among allies, highlighting a growing divergence in values between the two regions. This controversy highlights tensions surrounding political shifts in Europe and the US and raises questions about the future of transatlantic cooperation.

WHAT IS TERRORISM?

Terrorism is the use of violence or the threat of violence to create fear, typically aimed at achieving political, ideological, or religious goals. It often targets innocent civilians or symbolic sites, such as government buildings, embassies, or places of public gathering, to generate widespread panic and pressure governments or societies into making political changes. The key characteristic that distinguishes terrorism from other forms of violence is its intentional focus on creating fear among a larger audience rather than achieving direct military victory. Terrorism can be carried out by non-state actors, such as extremist groups or individuals, or by state actors (state-sponsored terrorism). The motivations behind terrorism can vary widely, ranging from resistance against an oppressive regime to religious extremism to nationalist or separatist movements. Modern terrorism often involves tactics such as bombings, hijackings, kidnappings, and suicide attacks and has evolved to include cyberattacks and the use of weapons of mass destruction.

TERRORISM AND INDIA

- 1. 1993 Bombay Bombings:** 13 bomb blasts in Mumbai, killing 257 and injuring over 700. Linked to Dawood Ibrahim's D-Company and Pakistan-based groups.
- 2. Parliament Attack (2001):** Militants attacked India's Parliament, killing 9 and injuring 18. Perpetrated by Jaish-e-Mohammed and Lashkar-e-Tayyaba.
- 3. Mumbai 26/11 (2008):** Coordinated attacks on hotels, restaurants, and a train station, killing 164 and injuring 300+ by Lashkar-e-Tayyaba.

- 4. Indian Airlines Flight 814 Hijacking (1999):** The hijacking of a flight, resulting in one death and 154 hostages, was carried out by Harkat-ul-Mujahideen.
- 5. Godhra Train Burning (2002):** The train fire killed 59, sparking Gujarat riots, with accusations of local Muslim involvement.
- 6. Delhi Bombings (2008):** Bomb blasts across Delhi killed 30 and injured over 100, orchestrated by the Indian Mujahideen.
- 7. Uri Attack (2016):** Attack on an army base in Jammu and Kashmir, killing 18 soldiers, claimed by Jaish-e-Mohammed.
- 8. Pulwama Attack (2019):** A suicide bombing killed 40 CRPF soldiers in Jammu and Kashmir, attributed to Jaish-e-Mohammed.

TERRORISM AS A THREAT TO NATIONAL SECURITY:

- 1. Loss of Life and Property:** Terrorist attacks cause casualties and infrastructure damage and instil fear, undermining national stability.
- 2. Governance Instability:** Terrorism weakens governments by challenging authority and creating political turmoil, potentially fueling extremism.
- 3. Economic Consequences:** Attacks disrupt markets, decrease tourism and investment, and lead to high-security costs, hindering economic growth.
- 4. International Relations:** Terrorism's transnational nature strains diplomatic relations, requiring international collaboration on counter-terrorism measures.
- 5. Radicalization and Recruitment:** Terrorist groups exploit grievances to recruit individuals, sometimes leading to homegrown terrorism.
- 6. Cyber Terrorism:** Terrorist groups target critical infrastructure through cyber-attacks, creating widespread disruption.
- 7. Human Rights Impact:** Counter-terrorism measures can infringe on civil liberties and human rights, potentially creating a backlash.
- 8. Long-Term Effects:** Recovery from terrorist attacks takes years, with lingering social divisions and trauma.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA'S INITIATIVE TO COUNTER TERRORISM:

- 1. Legislation:** The Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) allows for banning terrorist organizations and prosecuting individuals involved in terrorism. The National Investigation Agency (NIA) investigates terrorism-related cases across states.
- 2. Intelligence & Surveillance:** Coordination between agencies like the Intelligence Bureau (IB) and RAW enhances intelligence sharing. National Counter Terrorism Centre (NCTC) aims for centralized counter-terrorism coordination.
- 3. Security Forces & Military:** The Indian Armed Forces, National Security Guard (NSG), and anti-insurgency operations play key roles in neutralizing threats.
- 4. Border Security:** The Border Security Force (BSF) and ITBP prevent cross-border terrorism, with operations like "All Out" targeting militants in Kashmir.
- 5. Counter-Radicalization:** The government engages in community programs, monitors social media, and promotes rehabilitation to counter-radicalization.
- 6. International Cooperation:** India collaborates with countries like the U.S., and Russia, and through bodies like INTERPOL and SAARC to combat global terrorism.
- 7. Financial Measures:** It combats terrorist financing by monitoring financial transactions and working with organizations like FATF.
- 8. Public Awareness & Vigilance:** Campaigns encourage public vigilance, while emergency response systems ensure rapid action during attacks.

9. Technological Advancements: India uses surveillance tools and strengthens cyber defence to counter modern terrorist threats.

WHY DOES TERRORISM STILL PERSIST?

1. Political Grievances: Ongoing conflicts and weak governance create environments where terrorist groups thrive, exploiting political disputes and power vacuums.

2. Ideological Extremism: Radical ideologies, often fueled by religion or political beliefs, are spread through propaganda and social media, leading to recruitment and violence.

3. Socioeconomic Inequality: Poverty, lack of education, and limited opportunities make individuals vulnerable to radicalization, with extremist groups offering a sense of purpose.

4. External Support: State-sponsored terrorism and illegal funding sources like drug trafficking sustain terrorist organizations.

5. Technological Advancements: The internet and access to weapons enable terrorists to spread propaganda, recruit, and carry out sophisticated attacks.

6. Martyrdom Ideology: Some terrorists are motivated by the promise of martyrdom and the belief they are fighting for a greater cause.

7. Social Factors: Alienation and lack of identity, particularly among marginalized youth, make them more susceptible to extremist ideologies.

8. Ineffective Counter-Terrorism: Failure to address root causes and lack of global cooperation allow terrorist networks to persist.

WAY TO CONTAIN TERRORISM

1. Strengthen Security & Intelligence: Improve intelligence sharing, surveillance, and counter-terrorism operations to prevent attacks.

2. Counter Radicalization: Promote education, community programs, and rehabilitation for at-risk individuals to prevent extremist ideologies.

3. Address Socioeconomic Inequality: Invest in poverty reduction, job creation, and education to reduce vulnerability to terrorism.

4. Legislation: Strengthen anti-terrorism laws and ensure swift prosecution to deter terrorist activities.

5. Disrupt Financing: Monitor and block financial channels funding terrorism and combat money laundering.

6. International Cooperation: Collaborate with global partners for intelligence sharing and joint operations to disrupt terrorist networks.

7. Resolve Root Causes: Address political grievances and conflicts and promote good governance to reduce terrorist motivations.

8. Cybersecurity: Monitor and prevent online radicalization and protect against cyber-attacks.

9. Community Engagement: Build trust with local communities and encourage cooperation to identify threats.

CONCLUSION

The news highlights a controversy between German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and U.S. Vice President JD Vance, who criticized European nations on issues like free speech and immigration at the Munich Security Conference. Vance warned about Europe's retreat from shared values with the U.S., sparking a debate over a potential rift in U.S.-Europe relations. Scholz rejected these comments, emphasizing the importance of unity between allies, pointing to a growing divergence in values between the two regions. This ongoing tension reflects larger shifts in political dynamics, both in Europe and the U.S., with implications for future cooperation between the two regions.

PRELIMS QUESTIONS:

Q. Which of the following statements is correct about terrorism?

1. Terrorism is solely carried out by non-state actors.
2. Terrorism aims to create fear in a society to achieve political, ideological, or religious goals.
3. Modern terrorism may involve tactics like cyber-attacks and the use of weapons of mass destruction.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 2 and 3 only
- C. 1 and 3 only
- D. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: B

MAINS QUESTIONS:

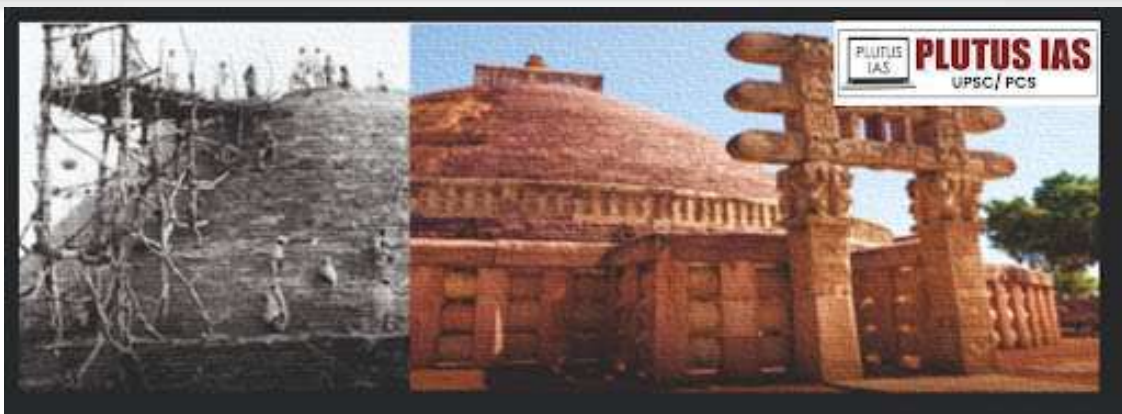
Q. In light of global terrorism, explain the measures India has undertaken to counter terrorism and how these initiatives contribute to national security. (250 words, 15 marks)

Munde Dhananjay Navnath

CONSERVING THE NATIONAL HERITAGE: SAFEGUARDING INDIA'S ANCIENT WONDERS

WHY IN THE NEWS?

Due to climate change and extreme weather events, India's cultural and archaeological heritage is under severe threat. According to **UNESCO reports**, rising sea levels are endangering coastal heritage sites, while heat waves and heavy rainfall are accelerating the decay of historical monuments. With the **2025 Kumbh Mela** approaching and increased government funding for conservation, protecting India's heritage has become a national priority, demanding urgent action.



THE RICH HISTORY OF INDIAN CULTURE IN ARCHITECTURE

1. Indus Valley Civilization (2500 BCE – 1900 BCE): The cities of Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro exhibit advanced urban planning, drainage systems, and grid-based street designs.

2. Buddhist Architecture: The stupas at Sanchi and the rock-cut caves at Ajanta and Ellora exemplify early Indian craftsmanship and religious devotion.

3. Hindu Temple Architecture: Temples such as the Brihadeshwara Temple in Tamil Nadu and the Sun Temple at Konark showcase intricate carvings, massive gopurams, and sacred symbolism.

4. Mughal Architecture: The Taj Mahal, Red Fort, and Fatehpur Sikri reflect Persian influences and artistic excellence.

5. Colonial and Modern Architecture: The Victoria Memorial, Gateway of India, and Rashtrapati Bhavan blend Indian and European styles, symbolizing India's colonial and post-independence identity.

Examples of Architectural Wonders Across India

Taj Mahal (Uttar Pradesh): A symbol of love and architectural brilliance.

Hampi (Karnataka): The capital of the Vijayanagar Empire with stunning temple ruins.

Khajuraho Temples (Madhya Pradesh): Known for their intricate sculptures and depictions of human expressions.

GOVERNMENT MEASURES TO PROTECT INDIA'S RICH HERITAGE:

Legislative Framework :

1. The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (AMASR) Act, 1958, protects monuments from encroachments.

2. The National Policy on Monuments, Antiquities, and Archaeological Sites guides conservation efforts.

GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES

Scheme	Date of Inauguration	Ministry	Features
Adopt a Heritage 2.0	2024	Ministry of Tourism & Ministry of Culture	Corporate involvement in the conservation of lesser-known monuments.
PRASAD (Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Augmentation Drive)	2014	Ministry of Tourism	Develops infrastructure and facilities at pilgrimage sites to enhance heritage tourism.
Swachh Iconic Places (SIP) Initiative	2016	Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs	Targets cleanliness and preservation of heritage sites like Taj Mahal, Ajanta Caves, and Golden Temple.
Mausam Project	2014	Ministry of Culture	Focuses on maritime heritage conservation along India's coastal regions, such as historic trade routes in Lothal, Gujarat.
Vibrant Villages Programme	2023	Ministry of Home Affairs	Enhances conservation and promotion of cultural heritage in border villages

			to boost tourism and local economy.
National Cultural Audiovisual Archives (NCAA)	2014	Ministry of Culture	Digitally archives India's rich cultural and architectural heritage for future generations.
Adopt a Heritage Scheme	2017	Ministry of Tourism	Private companies adopt heritage sites for maintenance and promotion; 25 monuments adopted as per PIB 2024.
HRIDAY (Heritage City Development and Augmentation Yojana)	2015	Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs	Focuses on urban heritage conservation with ₹500 crore allocated for development.
National Mission on Monuments and Antiquities (NMMA)	2007	Ministry of Culture	Over 3 lakh antiquities digitized for documentation.
UNESCO Collaboration	Ongoing	Ministry of Culture & UNESCO	India partners with UNESCO for site preservation and cultural awareness programs, with \$10 million allocated for 2024.



SIGNIFICANCE OF INDIA'S ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE:

1. Cultural Identity: Architectural sites connect citizens with India's historical legacy. For example, the ruins of Nalanda University represent India's ancient knowledge traditions and Buddhist heritage. As per the PIB report (2024), Nalanda has been included in India's priority list for UNESCO heritage conservation projects.

2. Tourism and Economy: Heritage tourism contributes nearly 2.1% of India's GDP, generating employment for 87 lakh people. The PIB (2024) highlights that the Taj Mahal alone attracted 7 million visitors last year, significantly boosting the local economy in Agra.

3. Educational Value: Structures serve as living classrooms for students and historians. The Rashtrapati Bhavan and Parliament House are examples of where modern governance meets historical architecture. The 2024 ASI report emphasizes the role of digital archives in making historical knowledge more accessible to students nationwide.

4. Spiritual and Artistic Value: Temples, mosques, and churches represent India's religious harmony and artistic excellence. The Golden Temple in Amritsar is a significant religious and architectural marvel, attracting millions of devotees each year. The Culture Ministry (2024) has allocated ₹500 crore for the restoration of religious heritage sites across India.

ISSUES CONCERNED WITH THE PRESERVATION OF INDIAN ARCHITECTURE

1. Urbanization and Encroachment: Rapid expansion of cities threatens historical sites with illegal constructions.

2. Pollution and Climate Change: Acid rain, pollution, and temperature fluctuations damage structures like the Taj Mahal.

3. Neglect and Lack of Funds: Insufficient government funding leads to poor maintenance of lesser-known monuments.

4. Theft and Smuggling of Artifacts: Illegal trade in antiquities leads to the loss of cultural treasures.

5. Unregulated Tourism: High footfall at sites like Hampi and Ajanta caves leads to wear and tear of ancient carvings.

WAYS TO PRESERVE INDIA'S RICH ARCHITECTURE

1. Community Participation: Local communities should be involved in preservation efforts through awareness programs. For example, the "Adopt a Heritage" initiative encourages local businesses and individuals to contribute to the upkeep of historical sites.

2. Sustainable Tourism Practices: Limiting visitor numbers and using eco-friendly restoration techniques. The Taj Mahal now restricts daily visitors to 40,000 to prevent damage, as per the latest PIB report (2024).

3. Technology Integration: Use of 3D mapping, AI, and laser scanning to digitally preserve structures. The ASI (2024) has mapped 500 monuments digitally to assist in long-term conservation.

4. Strengthening Laws: Enhancing penalties for encroachment and illicit trade in antiquities. The UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing Illicit Import, Export, and Transfer of Cultural Property (1970) supports India's efforts in protecting artefacts.

5. Corporate and NGO Partnerships: Collaboration with private organizations for funding and expertise. The "Adopt a Heritage 2.0" program has led to 25 major monuments being supported by corporate sponsors.



CONCLUSION

Preserving India's architectural heritage is not just a duty but a necessity to maintain the country's cultural identity and economic strength. Government policies, community participation, and technological advancements can play a significant role in safeguarding these wonders. India's historical structures are a testament to its glorious past, and proactive efforts must be taken to ensure that they continue to inspire future generations.

PRELIMS QUESTIONS:

Q. Which of the following initiatives is aimed at urban heritage conservation in India?

- (a) HRIDAY
- (b) PM Awas Yojana
- (c) Start-Up India
- (d) Digital India

Answer: A

MAINS QUESTIONS:

Q. Discuss the significance of architectural heritage in India and suggest measures to ensure its effective conservation in the face of modern challenges.? (250 words, 15 marks)

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