

Terrorism in India

[UPSC Notes]

What is Terrorism?

Terrorism is defined as the unlawful use of force or violence against people or property in order to frighten or intimidate a government or its populace into pursuing specific political or social goals. Domestic and international terrorism are usually recognized by law enforcement. Domestic terrorism is based and carried out in the country by its own residents, with no external guidance. International terrorism, which is linked to foreign governments or organizations, crosses national borders.

Who is a Terrorist?

A terrorist is an individual who uses or threatens to use violence for political purposes. This can be done either by posing as a threat to the people where a terrorist attack is being executed or at the terrorists themselves. Terrorists have been killed by their own bombs on several occasions in order for them to kill people and damage property in their vicinity.

Types of Terrorism

The ideology behind any act related to terrorism can be fueled by various beliefs or motives. Some of these are listed and explained below:

Terrorism Based on Ethnicity

Terrorism inspired by ethno-nationalist and separatist objectives emerged only after World War II. For more than 50 years, World War II and religious terrorism topped the terrorist narrative around the world and occupied the limelight. Daniel Byman defines ethnic terrorism as "deliberate acts of ethnic hatred."

A subnational ethnic minority uses violence to achieve its objectives. Such violence is frequently directed towards either the establishment of a breakaway state or the supremacy of one ethnic group over others. Ethno-nationalist terrorist actions are exemplified by Tamil Nationalist organizations in Sri Lanka and insurgent groups in North East India.

Terrorism Based on Religion

Terrorist operations in the modern world are mostly driven by religious prerequisites. According to Hoffman, terrorists who are motivated in whole or in part by a religious urge regard violence as a heavenly obligation or a holy deed. When compared to other terrorist groups, it adopts various methods of legitimization and rationalization, and these distinctive elements make religious terrorism more harmful in origin.

Left-wing Terrorism

Throughout history, violence against the governing elite, primarily by the peasant class, has been driven by so-called leftist beliefs. The writings of Marx and Engels, on the other hand, supplied the conceptual foundation for the left and later violent revolutions. This was confirmed by later communists' publications and speeches, such as Lenin and Mao Tse-tung (Mao Zedong).

Leftist ideologies hold that all current social arrangements and political structures in capitalist society are predatory in nature, and that a violent revolution is required to effect change. The most visible cases are the Maoist movements in India and Nepal.

Right-wing Terrorism

In general, right-wing groups strive to retain the status quo or revert to a prior state that they believe should have been preserved. Rightist ideology can sometimes take on an ethnic/racist tone. They can compel a government to acquire territory or interfere to safeguard the rights of a 'victimized' minority in a neighboring country (for example, the Nazi Party in Germany). Terrorist violence against migrant populations is also included in this category. It should be mentioned that religion can be used to encourage rightist aggression.

Narco-terrorism

Narco-terrorism is an intriguing concept that, depending on how it is defined, can fit under either 'Types of Terrorism' or 'Means of Terrorism.' The word was coined in 1983 by former Peruvian President Belaunde Terry to characterize efforts by drug traffickers in Colombia and Peru that used terrorist strategies such as vehicle bombs, killings, and kidnapping against anti-narcotics police. Though the phrase was first used in the scope of drug trafficking-related violence in South America, it has since come to be linked with terrorist groups and operations all over the world, particularly in Central and South-East Asia.

State-sponsored Terrorism

State-sponsored terrorism is as old as conventional war itself. Massive state-sponsored terrorism returned to international politics in the 1960s and 1970s, and today, alongside religious terrorism, state-sponsored terrorism has significantly transformed the nature of terrorist actions worldwide.

It is less constrained and produces more casualties on the target. From the standpoint of the offender, state-sponsored terrorism is the most effective form of terrorism in terms of cost-benefit ratio.

Terrorism in India

India faces Terrorism from secessionists in Kashmir from left-wing extremist groups in central, east-central, and south-central India.

- India is on the list of the countries which are most affected by Terrorism in the world.
- In 2018, India was the 7th most affected country by Terrorism, according to Institute for Economics and Peace.
- In India, Jammu and Kashmir are the most affected regions by Terrorism.
- According to the Global Terrorism Index 2019, India is in the 7th rank in terms of most affected countries by Terrorism.
- [National Investigation Agency](#) was formed after the 26/11 attack on Mumbai to fight Terrorism in the country.
- India also has Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), the Intelligence Bureau (IB), etc to fight Terrorism.

Steps Taken by Indian Government to Curb Terrorism in India

India has always been at the forefront of global counter-terrorism efforts and has been an active participant in the global advancement and safeguarding of human rights.

1. India, a victim of cross-border terrorism, recognized the problem long before the big world powers.
2. It is a crime against humanity and a violation of the most basic human right, the right to life (Article 21).
3. India has taken attempts to establish Joint Working Groups (JWGs) with other countries to discuss counter-terrorism and security issues. Bilateral treaties or agreements on Mutual Legal Assistance (MLATs) in Criminal Matters have been signed with other countries to facilitate the investigation, collection of evidence, relocation of witnesses, detection and prosecution against proceeds of crime, and so on.

4. At the 73rd session of the United Nations General Assembly in 2018, India emphasized its desire for a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT) (UNGA).
5. India proposed the adoption of CCIT to the UNGA in 1996 with the goal of providing a decipherable legal framework for counter-terrorism.
6. It had the following primary goals:
7. Having a universal definition of terrorism that all members would incorporate into their respective criminal laws.
8. To outlaw all terrorist organisations and to close terror camps.
9. All terrorists to be prosecuted under special laws.
10. To make cross-border terrorism a global indictable crime.
11. In the addressal to the UN High-Level Conference on Counter-Terrorism Leaders (2018), India extended its five-point formula.
12. On the 20th anniversary of UN Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1373 in January 2021, India presented an eight-point action plan to combat the blight of terrorism.
13. Comprehensive Integrated Border Management System: It vastly improves Border Security Force (BSF) capability in identifying and managing cross-border crimes such as illegal intrusion, contraband goods smuggling, human trafficking, and cross-border terrorism, among others.
14. The Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act of 1967 allows for more effective prevention of certain illegal acts of individuals and organisations, as well as dealing with terrorism and other related matters.
15. The National Investigation Agency is India's counter-terrorist task force, with the authority to investigate terror-related atrocities across states without the requirement of special permission from the states.
16. Zero-Tolerance Policy Against Terrorism: India advocates for zero-tolerance against terrorism and is working to develop a common strategy to combat it.
17. Counter-Terrorism Operations of Various Types:
 - In 1990, Operation Rakshak was a counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism operation in Jammu and Kashmir.
 - In 2003, the Indian army launched Operation Sarp Vinash to flush out the terrorists in the Pir Panjal range of Jammu and Kashmir.
 - In 2017, Indian security forces began a joint counterattack called Operation All Out, to flush out militants and terrorists in Kashmir.