Mains Practice Question

Q. The most difficult challenge for India is to tackle the fourth generation war, a warfare with an invisible enemy in which the civil society is both the battleground and the people that the State has to protect. Discuss in light of rising internal security challenges in India. (250 words)

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Introduction

- Recently the Maharashtra Government arrested activists on grounds of their links with the Naxal movement and role in Bhima Koregaon violence. This event raises an internal security concern wherein to identify and fight the enemy is more complex than ever for the threats and challenges are within the society itself, a characteristic of Fourth Generation Warfare.
- The fourth generation warfare primarily relies on creating unrest and fissures within the society in the garb of 'cultural struggles' which ultimately leads to the disintegration of the society and the state. It pits nations against non-national organizations and networks that include not only fundamentalist extremists but ethnic groups, mafias, and narco-traffickers as well that works through indoctrination, brainwash of the vulnerable, disenchanted sections.
- It becomes more potent as the power of media and the process of public opinion formation in a free society has undergone radical change due to the Internet. Viral videos and false updates of communal clashes, riots, terrorist attacks, etc. creating false frenzy and alarm. It has become easier to spread or even establish false narratives from anywhere in the world. This has equipped not only enemy states but also non-state actors to destabilize the country. E.g.: Indoctrination of youth through the internet and lone wolf attacks are becoming difficult to tackle.

Body

In this context, even traditional internal security challenges become more complex and potent.

- **Secessionist and separatist tendencies-** The pro-Khalistani militants in India as well as other countries want to revive militancy in Punjab. Similarly, the state of Jammu & Kashmir is in turmoil essentially because of difficulty in segregating militants from the society.
- **Naxal sympathisers:** In the garb of championing the human rights, a strong support mechanism has been built for overtly and covertly supporting the Naxals/Maoists who are waging a war against the country at the military, social, political and economic level.
- **Polarisation of the society**- The mushrooming of armed 'Senas' on caste and ethnic lines undermines the police and the administration. Loss of public confidence in the capacity of the state to protect their life and property is the primary cause of this dangerous development.
- **Hostile** neighbourhood- An unsettled border of India with China and Pakistan and increasing competition has the potential to turn competing influences and interests, into a rivalry.
- **Socio-political situation**- Discord amongst ethnic, religious and linguistic groups, criminalization of politics and demographic shift and movement add to the instability in the country.

However, Civil society is the only sphere that stands between the individual and the State. Here, individuals come together in webs of associational life. The overly broad concept of "internal security"

combined with counterterrorism legislation and measures, must not adversely impact India's civic space by alienating civil society actors as it not only hinders India's economic development, undermines India's security but also shrinks democratic space.

Conclusion

- Therefore, it is State intelligence, and police which must be employed to counter such threats. The police force must remain constantly in the state of self-training, emphasize connecting with people, to tackle the "fourth generation" warfare with an invisible enemy.
- Moreover, the internal security problems should not be treated as merely law and order problems. They have to be dealt with comprehensively in all their dimensions and at all levels — political, economic and social. They are all interlinked. Striking the right balance is the key to success in meeting these challenges effectively. A comprehensive security policy that will be implemented effectively at all levels is the need of the hour.