Mains
MARATHON

Important Q & A for Mains   2024

INTERNAL SECURITY

1. **What is the role of civil society and local communities in countering radicalization and violent extremism? Discuss the challenges and opportunities in engaging with them for internal security. (250 words)**

Approach:

➤ **Introduction:** Define radicalization and violent extremism, and their impact on internal security and brief role of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in countering them.

➤ **Body:** Discuss how CSOs can be crucial in countering such menaces and what are the challenges and opportunities related to the engagement with the CSOs

➤ **Conclusion:** Conclude with a way forward approach

Introduction:

Radicalization is the process of adopting extremist views and engaging in violent actions against the state or society. Violent extremism is the use of violence or threat of violence to achieve political, ideological, or religious goals. Both radicalization and violent extremism pose a serious threat to internal security as they undermine the democratic values, social harmony, and national integrity of the country.

The role of civil society and local communities in countering radicalization and violent extremism is crucial for promoting internal security. Their engagement offers unique opportunities to address the root causes of radicalization, build resilience, and foster social cohesion.

Body:

Civil society and local communities play a vital role in countering radicalization by:

➤ **Providing alternative narratives** and positive role models to counter extremist propaganda and recruitment by using various platforms, such as media, education, arts, sports, etc., to promote peace, tolerance, and diversity among different groups and sectors of society.

  ○ They can also highlight the voices and stories of victims and survivors of violent extremism to create empathy and awareness.

➤ **Addressing root causes of radicalization** includes advocating for social justice, inclusive development, and good governance. CSOs can provide basic services, livelihood opportunities, and empowerment programs to vulnerable groups to enhance their resilience and sense of belonging.

➤ **CSOs can promote social cohesion**, tolerance, dialogue, and non-violence among diverse communities by facilitating interfaith, intercultural, and intergenerational dialogues. They can also mobilize grassroots support for peacebuilding initiatives and conflict resolution mechanisms.

➤ **CSOs can empower vulnerable groups** to participate in decision-making and peacebuilding by enhancing their capacities and leadership skills, creating networks and platforms for collaboration, and amplifying their impact.

➤ **Providing psychosocial support**, rehabilitation, and reintegration services to former extremists and their families.

➤ **CSOs can provide counselling, mentoring**, education, vocational training, and more to help individuals renounce violence and reintegrate into society. They can also collaborate with the government and other stakeholders to protect human rights.

However, engaging with civil society and local communities for internal security also faces some challenges and opportunities, such as:

➤ **Challenges:**

  ○ Lack of trust, coordination, and communication between government and civil society

  ○ Insufficient funding, capacity, and protection for civil society actors

  ○ Legal and political constraints

  ○ Risk of stigmatization or backlash from extremist groups or communities.

➤ **Opportunities:**

  ○ Enhancing the legitimacy, effectiveness, and sustainability of Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE) efforts

  ○ Leveraging the local knowledge, networks, and influence of civil society actors

  ○ Fostering a whole-of-society approach that involves multiple stakeholders

  ○ Creating platforms for dialogue, collaboration, and learning among different actors.

Conclusion:

Civil society and local communities are crucial in

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countering radicalization and violent extremism. They require support and recognition from the government and other stakeholders. Strengthening their engagement requires regular consultations, adequate funding, capacity building, protection, enabling legal and political environment, multi-stakeholder partnerships, and recognizing contributions.

2. What are the causes and implications of the Khalistan issue in India? How can India address the Khalistan issue? (250 words)

Approach:

➢ Start your answer with a brief introduction of the Khalistan issue.

➢ Write Causes and Implications of the Khalistan issue.

➢ Explain India's measures to address the Khalistan issue.

➢ Conclude accordingly.

Introduction

➢ The Khalistan issue refers to a Sikh separatist movement that seeks to establish a Sikh homeland within the Punjab region.

➢ The movement has its roots in the historical, religious, linguistic and political factors that have shaped the Sikh identity and consciousness.

➢ The movement has caused violence, terrorism, communal clashes and human rights violations, affecting both India and the Sikh community.

Body

Causes of the Khalistan Issue:

➢ The partition of India in 1947, which resulted in the division of Punjab and the loss of Sikh holy sites in Pakistan.

➢ The linguistic reorganization of states in 1966, which created a Sikh-majority Punjab but also reduced its territorial size and economic potential.

➢ The Anandpur Sahib Resolution of 1973, which demanded greater autonomy and cultural rights for Punjab, but was seen as a secessionist threat by the central government.

➢ The rise of Jarnail Singh Bhindra Wale, a militant leader who advocated for a separate Khalistan and mobilized his followers against the perceived oppression and discrimination by the Hindu majority.

➢ The Operation Blue Star of 1984, which was a military assault on the Golden Temple, the holiest shrine of Sikhs, to flush out Bhindra Wale and his armed supporters. This resulted in heavy casualties and damage to the temple and sparked widespread anger and resentment among Sikhs.

➢ The assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi by her Sikh bodyguards in 1984, which triggered anti-Sikh riots across India, killing thousands of Sikhs and displacing many more.

➢ The emergence of various militant groups and factions that carried out violent attacks against the state and civilians, both in India and abroad, throughout the 1980s and 1990s.

Implications of the Khalistan Issue:

➢ The loss of lives, property and human rights due to violence, terrorism, counterterrorism and communal clashes.

➢ The erosion of trust, harmony and cooperation between different communities, especially Hindus and Sikhs, within Punjab and across India.

➢ The alienation and radicalization of some sections of the Sikh youth, who feel marginalized and discriminated by the mainstream society and politics.

➢ The interference and influence of external forces, such as Pakistan, which have supported and funded some Khalistani groups for their strategic interests.

➢ The damage to the image and reputation of India as a secular and democratic nation that respects diversity and pluralism.

Measures to Address the Khalistan Issue:

➢ **Dialogue:**
   ○ The Indian government should engage in dialogue with various sections of the Sikh community, including moderates, radicals, and diaspora groups, to understand their grievances, aspirations, and perspectives.
   ○ The dialogue should be based on mutual respect, trust, and goodwill, and should aim at finding common ground and building consensus on contentious issues.

➢ **Development:**
   ○ The Indian government should invest in the economic development of Punjab and ensure that it gets its fair share of resources, opportunities, and benefits.

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- o The government should also address the problems of unemployment, drug abuse, environmental degradation, and agrarian distress that plague Punjab.
- o The government should also promote Punjab's culture, heritage, and tourism potential.

➢ **Justice:**
- o The Indian government should ensure justice for the victims and survivors of the violence and human rights violations that occurred during the Khalistan movement.
- o The government should also punish the perpetrators and instigators of the anti-Sikh riots and other crimes.
- o The government should also offer compensation, rehabilitation, and reconciliation to the affected families and communities.

➢ **Aggressive Diplomacy:**
- o Government should adopt aggressive diplomacy to counter the propaganda originating on foreign soil such as Canada.

Conclusion

➢ The Khalistan issue is a complex and sensitive one that requires a holistic and inclusive approach from the government.

➢ The government should address the legitimate grievances and aspirations of the Sikh community in a peaceful and democratic manner while safeguarding the unity and integrity of India.

3. What are the internal security challenges being faced by India? Give out the role of Central Intelligence and Investigative Agencies tasked to counter such threats. (Answer in 250 words, UPSC Mains 2023)

Approach:
➢ Begin by introducing the context of internal security challenges in India. Briefly mention the diverse nature of these challenges.

➢ Explain Key Internal Security Challenges for India and discuss the role of Central Intelligence and Investigative Agencies.

➢ Conclude by highlighting the significance of a well-coordinated effort involving intelligence and investigative agencies.

Introduction:

A sovereign nation's foremost responsibility is the safety of its citizens from external as well as internal challenges. Since independence, India has tackled various internal security challenges including insurgency, militancy, and externally induced rebellions.

Body:

Internal security challenges for India

➢ **Separatist Movements:** Separatist feelings have been present ever since the birth of our nation and still continue to be a cause of misery for law and order. For example, Nagaland separatism, Kashmiri separatism etc.

➢ **Communalism:** The contentions between the two major religious groups have often led to brewing of hatred and fights. This further fuels separatist tendencies. Hate among groups makes our citizens easy targets to be motivated for terrorist activities.

➢ **Illegal Migration:** Over the years, illegal migration has led to a lot of associated problems such as demographic change and increased unemployment thereby straining the nation's resources.

➢ **Left-Wing Extremism:** It is noticed in the central and eastern parts of India and is marked by Marxism or Maoism as its political ideology. Socio-economic disparities and land alienation are the factors responsible for its emergence.

Various intelligence and investigative agencies work in India with different mandates of performing actions.

➢ **National Investigation Agency (NIA):** It is the premier counter-terrorism law enforcement agency of India, investigating offences that affect the sovereignty, security and integrity of India.

➢ **Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB):** It is the apex body to coordinate between various narcotics and drug law enforcement agencies. It works to prevent drug trafficking across India.

➢ **Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI):** This is the body dealing with intelligence of smuggling of contrabands and investigating cases related to it. It also looks to prevent proliferation of black money and money laundering.

➢ **Intelligence Bureau (IB):** It is the apex intelligence body responsible for collecting information within the country and executing counter-terrorism operations. It deals with matters of domestic intelligence and internal security.

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- ➢ **Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW):** It took the operations of handling foreign intelligence from Intelligence Bureau. It now collects foreign intelligence, conducts counter-terrorism operations and advises Indian policymakers.

- ➢ **Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI):** It is the premier investigating police agency made on the recommendation of the Santhanam Committee. It carries out investigations and also acts as the point of access for Interpol.

Conclusion:

Collaboration and coordination among agencies are vital to address India's internal security challenges. Investing in technology, international cooperation, and community engagement is essential for a robust framework against security threats.

4. **Give out the major sources of terror funding in India and the efforts being made to curtail these sources. In the light of this, also discuss the aim and objective of the No Money for Terror (NMFT)' Conference recently held at New Delhi in November 2022. (Answer in 250 words, UPSC Mains 2023)**

Approach:

- ➢ Begin with an Introduction that sets a context for the question.
- ➢ Discuss major sources of terror financing and efforts made by India to cripple those sources.
- ➢ Discuss the aim and objective of the No Money for Terror (NMFT)' Conference held recently.
- ➢ Conclude with the statement that, despite facing challenges from its neighbors, India stands firm against terrorism.

Introduction:

Ever since its independence in 1947, India has been a witness to various kinds of terrorist and insurgent activities. Over the years India has learned from its mistakes and evolved numerous ways to tackle terror funding and other related activities.

Body:

Major sources of terror funding

- ➢ **State Sponsorship:** The use of terror to further diplomatic interests is a known practice. States sponsor crimes and support terrorist to be able to use them when needed for their purpose.

- ➢ **Counterfeit Currency:** It involves directly printing and circulating fake currency in the market. Alternatively, this is a tool used by neighbouring states to destabilize the Indian economy.

- ➢ **Organised Crime:** Criminal organizations generally work in nexus and are often connected to bigger terrorist groups. The flow of resources is two-ways between these two.

- ➢ **Extortion:** This remains the biggest source of funding of terrorism in India especially in the North-East.

- ➢ **Hawala System:** This is an illegal method of transferring money, generally through international borders that is used by criminal networks.

Efforts to curtail sources

- ➢ **National Investigation Agency (NIA):** It is the premier agency in India for combating terror across states without special permission from the states.

- ➢ **Unlawful Activities Prevention Act:** This anti-terror legislation seeks to designate an individual as a "terrorist".

- ➢ **National Intelligence Grid (NATGRID):** It is a centralised data library of terror and crime related information.

- ➢ **SAMADHAN Doctrine:** Developed specifically for the Left-Wing Extremism problems, it also aims to curb the access of terror organizations to funds.

Recently, the third No Money for Terror (NMFT) Ministerial Conference on Counter-Terrorism Financing was held in New Delhi, India. It sought to:

- ➢ Collaborate with countries around the world to curtail terror and extremist funding.
- ➢ To set up a secretariat regarding the same in the country, which won't be an investigative body but operate on the concept of collaboration and cooperation.
- ➢ To investigate new and emerging threats and methods of propagating terrorism.

Conclusion:

Being surrounded by two hostile neighbours does not allow India any leeway for complacent behaviour on the question of internal security. Through several measures, India continues to fight the battle against terrorism.

5. **How can local community involvement enhance internal security measures and build resilience against radicalization and extremism? (250 words)**

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Introduction

Local community involvement refers to the participation and engagement of local actors, such as civil society organizations, religious groups, youth, women, and other vulnerable groups. Local community involvement is a key aspect of preventing and countering violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism (P/CVERLT).

Body

Local community involvement can enhance internal security measures by:

➢ **Eyes and ears on the ground:** Residents are often the first to notice suspicious activity, changes in individuals' behavior, or potential recruitment efforts. Open communication channels with law enforcement and security agencies help relay this information quickly, enabling early intervention.

➢ **Building trust and rapport:** Regular interaction between community members and security personnel fosters trust, encouraging people to report concerns without fear of retribution. This collaborative approach creates a network of vigilance.

➢ **Addressing root causes:** Community engagement can identify underlying issues like poverty, lack of opportunity, or social exclusion that make individuals vulnerable to radicalization. Addressing these concerns through social programs, education initiatives, and economic development can prevent recruitment.

➢ **Promoting counter-narratives:** Local leaders, faith-based organizations, and youth groups can engage in open dialogue, fostering critical thinking and promoting values of tolerance, diversity, and peaceful conflict resolution. This counters extremist narratives and empowers individuals to resist radicalization.

➢ **Strengthening social bonds:** Community events, interfaith dialogues, and cultural exchange programs build bridges between different groups, fostering a sense of belonging and shared identity. This reduces social isolation and undermines the divisive tactics of extremists.

➢ **Empowering communities:** Training programs can equip community members with skills to identify and counter extremist messaging, organize watch programs, and provide support to individuals at risk of radicalization. This fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility for security within the community.

Conclusion

Village Defence Committees (VDC), which were established in 1995 and played a significant role in combating militancy in the JnK region. The VDGs have been praised for their commitment to defending national security and instilling a sense of confidence among the people. Acknowledging their significance, the LG of JnK has recently declared to revive VDCs.

6. **Ransomware attacks and cyber espionage are growing threats to national security. Discuss the evolving nature of cyber threats faced by India and suggest potential solutions to enhance cybersecurity measures. (250 words)**

Introduction:

Ransomware is malicious software that **encrypts victims' data** and demands payment to restore access. **Cyber espionage** involves unauthorized access and theft of sensitive information, often by state-sponsored actors, for economic, political or military gains.

➢ They are indeed grave threats to national security, and India, like many other countries, is grappling with these evolving cyber threats.

Body:

The Evolving Nature of Cyber Threats Faced by India:

➢ **Increasing Ransomware Attacks:** India has witnessed a surge in **ransomware attacks.**

○ **Example:** The **2022** ransomware attack on the **All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Delhi.**

➢ **Cyber Espionage and Data Breaches:** Sophisticated cyber actors, including state-sponsored groups, are targeting India's critical infrastructure and sensitive data.

○ **Example**: the data breach at the **Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant.**

➢ **Deepfakes and AI-powered Attacks:** India faces risks from emerging cyber threats like deep fakes, AI-powered social engineering, and autonomous cyber weapons.

○ **Example:** Deepfake videos of Indian political leaders spreading disinformation during elections.

➢ **Internet of Things and Operational Technology Risks:** The proliferation of IoT devices and the convergence of IT and OT systems in industrial control systems create new attack surfaces.

○ Vulnerabilities in IoT devices used in **smart cities** or industrial control systems could be exploited for disruptive attacks.

➢ **Doxing and Hacktivism:** Indian entities face risks from hacktivist groups and individuals engaging in doxing (leaking sensitive information) for ideological or political motivations.

○ Hacktivist groups recently attempted a malware entrapment bid on the **Indian Air Force.**

Potential Solutions to Enhance Cybersecurity Measures:

➢ **Investing in Cyber Defense Capabilities**: Enhancing India's cyber defense capabilities by investing in advanced threat detection and mitigation technologies.

○ Developing a skilled cybersecurity workforce through specialized training programs and public-private partnerships.

➢ **Promoting Secure Software Development Practices:** Encouraging the adoption of **secure software development life cycle (SDLC)** practices to address vulnerabilities in software and systems.

○ Incentivizing the use of secure coding practices and vulnerability disclosure programs.

➢ **Cybersecurity Sandboxes and Deception Grids:** Implement sandboxes and deception grids to detect and analyze advanced cyber threats by luring and containing them in isolated environments.

○ The **Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In)** could create a honeypot network to attract and study the tactics of threat actors targeting Indian infrastructure.

➢ **Bug Bounty Programs:** The Indian government could launch a bug bounty program for its e-governance platforms, to incentivize ethical hackers and security researchers to identify and report vulnerabilities in critical systems and applications.

➢ **Cybersecurity Exercises and Simulations:** Conduct regular cybersecurity exercises and simulations involving various stakeholders to test incident response capabilities, identify gaps, and improve preparedness.

Conclusion:

Cybersecurity is a continuous battle. By proactively adopting a multi-layered approach that combines **technological solutions, user awareness, and international cooperation,** India can effectively counter evolving cyber threats and safeguard its national security.

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