Growing Arc of Violence

Why in News?

The current global situation is unpredictable, with violence raging in Europe and West Asia, and various regions facing internecine conflicts, indicating irretrievable breakdown of the world order after 1945.

What is Terrorism?

- According to Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), 1967 Terrorism is defined as acts committed with intent to threaten the unity, integrity, security, or sovereignty of India.
- It causes death, injury, damage to property, or disruption of essential services and Use of bombs, dynamite, firearms, or hazardous substances to create fear or coercion.

What are the emerging ways associated with Terrorism?

- **Cyber Terrorism -** Cyber terrorism involves acts committed with the intent to threaten a nation's unity, integrity, security, or sovereignty, or to instill terror among its people.
- **Lone-Wolf Attacks -** Lone-wolf attacks are carried out by individuals acting independently without direct orders from terrorist organizations, making them challenging to predict and prevent.
- **Online Radicalization -** The internet plays a significant role in the self-radicalization of lone actors, who consume extremist content online without direct contact with terrorist groups.

What are the challenges to curb Terrorism?

- **Decentralized Networks -** Terrorist groups operate independently in small units, making them harder to track and counter.
- **Encrypted Communication -** They use secure messaging apps to plan attacks secretly, avoiding detection by intelligence agencies.
- **Covert Recruitment** - Recruitment happens in hidden online forums and private groups, keeping their networks undetected.
- **Financial Concealment -** They fund activities through cryptocurrencies and fake businesses, making it tough to trace their money flow.

- **Sleeper Cells -** Inactive members remain hidden for years, activating only when needed for attacks.
- **Social Media Influence** - Terrorist groups use social media to spread propaganda and attract followers worldwide.
- **Echo Chambers -** Algorithms reinforce extremist views, making radicalization easier.
- **Virtual Communities -** Online groups give isolated individuals a sense of belonging, drawing them into extremist ideologies.
- **Anonymity & Accessibility -** The internet allows users to explore extremist content without fear of exposure.
- **Gamification of Terror -** Some groups use game-like tactics to attract and radicalize young recruits.
- **Challenges in Detection -** Due to the solitary nature, lone-wolf attackers often leave minimal communication trails, complicating efforts by intelligence agencies to identify and monitor.

What are the measures taken to curb Terrorism?

Counterterrorism Measures at Global level

- **United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy -** Established in 2006.
- **Key Pillars**
  - Addressing conditions conducive to terrorism.
  - Preventing and combating terrorism.
  - Building state capacity and strengthening the UN's role.
  - Ensuring human rights and the rule of law.
- **Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF) -** Launched in 2011.
- GCTF is an informal, multilateral platform aimed at reducing global vulnerability to terrorism by mobilizing resources and expertise.
- **Focus Areas**
  - Criminal justice and rule of law.
  - Countering violent extremism.
  - Capacity-building in regions like the Sahel and Horn of Africa.
- **Financial Action Task Force (FATF) Compliance** - India aligns with FATF recommendations to prevent terrorist financing, including monitoring virtual currencies and online transactions.
- **Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism (GIFCT)** - Established by major tech companies, including Meta, YouTube, and Microsoft, to prevent terrorists from exploiting digital platforms.

Counter terrorism Initiatives in India

Cybersecurity Initiatives	
National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal	• The Ministry of Home Affairs operates this portal to facilitate public reporting of cybercrimes, enhancing law enforcement's ability to address cyber threats.
Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C)	• Established to combat cybercrime comprehensively, I4C focuses on research, training, and capacity building.
Cyber Swachhta Kendra	• Launched by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, this initiative aims to detect and clean malicious software from devices, promoting safer cyberspace.
Counter-Radicalization Efforts	
Counter Terrorism and Counter Radicalization Division (CTCR)	• The Ministry of Home Affairs established the CTCR Division to formulate policies and strategies aimed at preventing radicalization and enhancing counter-terrorism efforts.
Monitoring Online Content	• Agencies actively monitor online platforms to identify and remove extremist content, collaborating with service providers to curb the spread of radical ideologies.
Strengthening Intelligence and Law Enforcement	
National Investigation Agency (NIA)	Established in 2008. • It is a statutory body under the National Investigation Agency Act, 2008. • Chairperson - The Union Home Minister is the ex-officio chairperson of the NIA Governing Council. • The Director-General (DG) of NIA heads the agency. • Empowered to investigate and prosecute offenses related to terrorism, including those involving digital platforms.
Multi-Agency Centre (MAC)	• Facilitates intelligence sharing among various agencies to ensure timely dissemination of information regarding potential threats.
Legal Framework for Counter terrorism	
Arms Act, 1959	• Regulates possession, sale, and transport of firearms to prevent misuse in terror activities.

Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), 1967	• Prevents unlawful activities and terrorist organizations. • Allows banning of terror groups and designation of individuals as terrorists. • Provides for stringent punishment and preventive detention.
Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000	• Covers cyber terrorism, digital radicalization, and misuse of the internet for terror activities
Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002	• Prevents terror financing by monitoring suspicious financial transactions. • Empowers authorities to seize properties linked to terror funding.

What lies ahead?

- The international community must combat terrorism universally, establish a global definition of terrorism, and impose sanctions on state sponsors.
- Strengthening national security, curbing terrorist financing, and developing a robust cyber-defense mechanism are essential steps. These strategies ensure global security and peace.

Reference

The Hindu | Growing arc of violence

SHANKAR IAS PARLIAMENT
Information is Empowering