

London Lone Wolf Attack

Why in news?

A lone wolf attack at a park in Reading, London killed three people.

What was British government's move?

- It has been declared as a terror incident
- In November 2019, the British government reduced the official threat level from "severe" to "substantial".
- This reduction means attacks could happen but there was no intelligence of an immediate terror strike.
- Since then, the country has seen three major incidents, including the recent Reading attack.
- Lone wolf attacks are hard to detect and prevent.

Why does terrorist organisations use this tactic?

- These are attacks in which extremist **individuals** translate their beliefs into violent actions.
- In coordinated terror attacks, the chances of competent intelligence agencies detecting the perpetrators are much higher.
- In these attacks, the attacker either used vehicles to run over people or launched knife attacks.
- Terrorist organisations embraced this tactic to spread violence in countries where coordinated big attacks are impossible.
- The territories the Islamic States controlled in Iraq and Syria started shrinking in the wake of counter-attacks in 2015 and 2016.
- So, it urged its supporters first to launch attacks in western cities and then declare allegiance to the 'Caliph'.
- British authorities had foiled some knife attacks since the 2013 killing of a soldier in London.
- But, lone wolf attacks continue to pose a security challenge to the public and the government.
- In all the last three knife attacks, the attackers were known to the agencies.

What could be done?

- The government and the security agencies need to adopt a multi-pronged

approach towards radicalisation.

- There needs to be intense deradicalisation programmes.
- Enhancing surveillance and safety structures might help temporarily.
- But, building a broader acceptance for other cultures is key to liberal democratic ethos.

Source: The Hindu

