Masood Azhar as Global Terrorist

Why in news?

The United Nations has designated Jaish-e-Mohammed leader Masood Azhar as a "global terrorist".

What is the UN terrorist designation?

- The UNSC 1267 Committee of the UN Security Council was established as a result of resolution 1267 (in 1999).
- It is also known as the AlQaida and Taliban Sanctions Committee.
- The Committee comprises all 15 members of the UNSC and decides unanimously and secretly.
- It was established for the purpose of overseeing the implementation of sanctions measures imposed on Taliban-controlled Afghanistan for its support of Osama bin Laden.
- Eventually the committee has been modified and strengthened by subsequent resolutions.
- Now, if an individual/organisation is included in the 1267 list, it helps in restricting their movement, financial penalties and assets freeze among others.

Click here to know more on the past developments in listing Masood Azhar.

Why is it significant?

- The JeM chief had been behind many attacks on India including the 2001 Parliament attack, 2016 Pathankot airbase attack and the recent Pulwama attack.
- Masood Azhar's listing as a designated terrorist is a success for India's quest to bring the Jaish-e-Mohammad chief to justice.
- China's opposition to the listing has long been a thorn in India's side.
- Beijing's veto of the listing three times between 2009 and 2017 had driven a wedge in India-China relations.
- The designation now comes as a recognition to India's efforts and those of its partners in the Security Council.

What are the concerns?

- There is much disappointment, however, as the final listing made no mention of Mr. Azhar's role in any of the attacks against India.
- It neither mentioned his role in directing insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir.
- A specific reference to Pulwama attack, which was in the original proposal, was also dropped.

What are the challenges?

- Masood Azhar is one of about twenty 1267-sanctioned terrorists who have Pakistani nationality, and more are based there.
- But Pakistan's actions against others on the 1267 list have been far from effective, and in many cases obstructionist.
- E.g. Hafiz Saeed, the 26/11 mastermind and Lashkar-e-Toiba chief, roams free, addresses rallies, and runs a political party without any government restrictions.
- Likewise, LeT's operations commander Zaki Ur Rahman Lakhvi was granted bail some years ago.
- These are despite the UNSC sanctions mandating that funds and assets to the sanctioned individuals must be frozen.
- With Masood Azhar listed as a global terrorist, India must now work to ensure the mandated sanctions.

What lies ahead?

- Constant focus from New Delhi and a push from the global community are essential in Masood Azhar's case.
- It must be ensured that he is starved of funds, arms and ammunition as mandated.
- Besides, prosecution in Pakistan for the acts of terror he is responsible for is also a priority.
- Global terror financing watchdog Financial Action Task Force will also be watching Pakistan's next moves closely.
- [FATF will decide soon if Pakistan has to be placed in "blacklist" or continue on the "greylist". Click here to know more.]
- In all, both financial and political pressure should be maintained on Islamabad.
- This is imperative to bring the hard-fought designation of Masood Azhar to its logical conclusion.

Source: The Hindu



SHANKAR
IAS PARLIAMENT
Information is Empowering