Reimaging Our National Security

What is the issue?

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- Our security discourse is focused primarily on special squads, better weaponry, satellite imagery, radars and transponders.
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- While these are indeed relevant, our counter-terrorist architecture needs to be flexible enough adapt to changing terror tactics.
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- A rational analysis of whether our preventive machinery is able to match the changing terrorist methodology is required.
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How has Terror Tactics Changed?

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- **Lone Wolf -** a helplessness is growing in countering the vehicle-mowing-down tactics of Islamic State (IS).
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- Starting in Nice (France), similar tactics were employed for attacks in Berlin, London, Stockholm, Barcelona and New York.
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- It is dreaded as it is more innovative as “low cost terror tactics” as compared to earlier ones ‘Al Qaeda’s on 9/11”.
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- Notably, Over 100 people from Kerala are suspected to have joined the IS and many have moved to Syria.
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- **Cyber Propaganda –** Counter Terror (CT) agencies are struggling to prevent the growing online terror propaganda.
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- Notably, none of the Western agencies or private watch groups could detect from where the IS sends their “online” messages.
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What are the challenges globally?

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- **Prevention –** Even stopping people already on the “Counter Terror (CT)” radar from committing carnage hasn’t been possible.
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- A majority of the lone-wolfs (solo uncoordinated attackers) were n the radars of law enforcement for some or the other reason.
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- This signifies that merely intercepting data in bulks is no guarantee to prevent attacks.
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- This is because analysing the collected data is not catching up with the wide scope of collection.
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- **Prosecution -** Yet another problem is the inability of national investigating agencies to successfully secure evidence.
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- Notably, thousands of IS fighters who had returned voluntarily or were forcibly repatriated from abroad haven’t been prosecuted yet.
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How is the scene in Indian?

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- **Linear Thinking -** Mumbai’s law enforcement was focused on commando style attacks in the aftermath of 26/11 attacks in 2008.
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- But IED attacks (timed devices) restarted - which was seen in Pune Bakery blast of 2010 and later in the Mumbai serial blasts of 2011.
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- **Lacking Coordination -** Notably, our air defence capabilities were exposed in the air balloon episode at Ahmadabad airport.
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- While it was merely an advertisement, it wasn’t coordinated with Air Traffic Control – and was mistaken for a spy drones.
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- Significantly, none of our security institutions took charge of the situation, which could’ve been a potential attack.

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- **Missing Focus –** We don’t have any reliable record of our overseas workers who are the source for terror recruitment.
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- Notably, the former Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA), which was trying to collect such data during the UPA government.
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- But MOIA has been merged with the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) after the present NDA government took over.
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- This has relegated the high-level attention that our overseas workers had to a minor wing of our vast MEA.
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Source: Indian Express

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