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MAINSTORMING 2019

NATIONAL SECURITY

Shankar IAS AcademyTM

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MAINSTORMING 2019

NATIONAL SECURITY (JUNE 2018 TO JULY 2019)

1. LINKAGES BETWEEN DEVELOPMENT AND SPREAD OF EXTREMISM

A. Left Wing Extremism

1.1 Greater Militarisation by Maoists

What is the issue?

Recent attacks by Maoists suggest that they are focussing on greater militarisation, which needs attention given the past record.

What are the recent developments?

- There has been an uptick in attacks by Maoists, indicating that their ability to strike remains strong.
- In two recent attacks in Chhattisgarh, five persons were killed in a blast in Dantewada district and one BSF sub-inspector was killed in Kanker district.
- Maoists have also owned up responsibility for the killing of TDP MLA Kidari Sarveswara Rao and his predecessor Siveri in Andhra Pradesh in September.

What is the emerging driving factor?

- These attacks come amid a series of military setbacks to the Maoists in the Andhra Pradesh-Odisha border regions.
- Government is using military force while earmarking funds for infrastructure and welfare programmes in left-wing extremism-affected districts.
- Clearly, this strategy of the government has weakened the Maoists.
- Also, paramilitary and police actions have resulted in the death of some senior leaders of the Maoists group.
- Welfare measures, despite haphazard implementation, have enabled outreach into tribal areas.
- These actions have forced the Maoists to retreat further into the forest areas of central and south-central India.
- They are using these as bases to launch attacks, seeking to invite state repression on tribal people and to get recruits.

How has the CPI (M) evolved?

- The People's War Group and the Maoist Communist Centre of India merged into the CPI (Maoist) in 2004.
- It managed to consolidate its presence across a "Red Corridor".
- It spanned across the central and north-central India, marked by rural deprivation.
- The CPI (Maoist) has sought to project itself as a revolutionary political movement led by peasants and tribals.
- It sought to rebuild after the failures of the earlier Naxalite movement.
- Rather than focussing on socio-economic struggles, the Maoists relied on waging a military battle against the state to capture power.
- But this was largely due to a gross and mindless misreading of the nature of the Indian state and its democratic institutions.
- As, these actions have resulted in the militarisation of these areas.
- It led to repression of tribal people both by state actions such as the creation of the Salwa Judum (disbanded by judicial order) and Maoist authoritarianism.
- The change of guard in the CPI (Maoist) leadership now suggests that it has moved towards further militarisation to secure its guerrilla forces' influence.

- So perceptibly, there is no end in sight to this insurgency in the near term, a sad reality for tribals caught in the crossfire.

1.2 Measures Taken to Develop LWE Hit States

Why in news?

Government actions on Naxal hit areas has resulted in shrinkage of violence in a great geographical spread.

Who are Naxalites?

- The term Naxal derives from the name of the village Naxalbari in West Bengal, where the Naxalite peasant revolt took place in 1967.
- Naxalites are considered far-left radical communists, supportive of Mao Zedong's political ideology.
- Their origin can be traced to the split in 1967 of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) following the Naxalbari peasant uprising, leading to the formation of the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) two years later.
- Initially, the movement had its epicenter in West Bengal, in later years, it spread into less developed areas of rural southern and eastern India, such as Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana through the activities of underground groups like the Communist Party of India (Maoist).
- Some Naxalite groups have become legal organizations participating in parliamentary elections, such as the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) Liberation and the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) Janashakti.
- As of April 2018, the areas where Naxalites are most visible are:
 - **Andhra Pradesh** -Visakhapatnam, East Godavari District
 - **Bihar** -Gaya, Jamui, Lakhisarai
 - **Chhattisgarh** - Bastar, Bijapur, Dantewada, Kanker, Kondagaon, Narayanpur, Rajnandgaon, Sukma
 - **Jharkhand** -Bokaro, Chatra, Garhwa, Giridih, Gumla, Hazaribagh, Khunti, Latehar, Lohardaga, Palamu, Ranchi, Simdega West, Singhbhum
 - **Maharashtra** -Gadchiroli, Gondia, Yavatmal
 - **Odisha** -Koraput, Malkangiri
 - **Telangana** -Bhadrachari, Kothagudem

What are the measures taken to develop Naxal hit areas?

- The Government is committed for holistic development of LWE affected areas at par with other areas of the country.
- Apart from flagship/developmental Schemes being implemented by the line Ministries/ Departments, some specific schemes are also being implemented in LWE affected areas.
- **Action Plan 2015** - The Government of India has a holistic, multi-pronged strategy envisaged in Action Plan-2015 to combat LWE, which include development as an important prong.
- Apart from flagship/developmental Schemes being implemented by the line Ministries/ Departments, some specific schemes are also being implemented in LWE affected areas. Details are as follows:
 - **Special Central Assistance (SCA)** – This scheme aims to fill critical gaps in public infrastructure and services of emergent nature in the most LWE affected districts.
 - This Scheme is for 3 years i.e. from 2017-18 to 2019-20 with an outlay of Rs.3000 crore.
 - Rs.163.33 crore was released to Government of Bihar till now.
 - **Security Related Expenditure Scheme** - To assist the States to combat LWE, support is being given to 90 districts under Security Related Expenditure (SRE) scheme.
 - Government of India provides funds for Police Modernization to all the States.
 - Funds are also being provided under 'Special Infrastructure Scheme (SIS)' for strengthening the Special Forces of the States and State Intelligence Branches (SIBs) to LWE affected states.

- Construction of 250 Fortified Police Stations in LWE affected States is also envisaged under the scheme.
- **Road connectivity Plans** - Road Requirement Plan-I scheme envisages construction of 5,422 km roads for LWE affected areas, of which 4,809 km have been constructed, including 674 km in Bihar.
- Road Connectivity Project for LWE affected Areas scheme envisages for improving road connectivity in 44 LWE affected districts of 10 States.
- It aims for construction of 5,412 km roads including 1050 km for Bihar, of which 644 km have been completed as a whole in the nation.
- **Skill development and Education Initiatives** - Union government has sanctioned 7 New Kendriya Vidyalayas and 6 new Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas in the most LWE affected districts, which did not have any KVs/JNVs.
- Under RMSA, 1590 new/upgraded Schools and 349 girl's hostels have been sanctioned in most LWE affected districts.
- Skill Development in LWE affected districts is being implemented by the MoSDE in 47 LWE affected districts of 10 States.
- The Scheme envisages construction of 01 ITI in each of 47 districts and 02 Skill Development Centers (SDCs) in each of 34 districts
- **Other Infra developments** - Installation of Mobile Towers in the LWE affected districts is being implemented by the Department of Telecom.
- **Financial Inclusion** -627 new bank branches & 947 ATMs have been opened in 30 most LWE affected Districts in last 4 years between.
- In addition 1759 Branch Post Offices have been opened since 2017 in core LWE affected districts.

What are the potential outcomes?

- Steadfast implementation of the Action Plan-2015 has resulted in consistent decline in LWE related violence and considerable shrinkage in geographical spread.
- In 2018 LWE related violence was reported in 60 districts in the year 2018 with 10 districts accounting for 2/3rd violence.

1.3 Gadchiroli Maoist Attack - C-60 Wing

Why in news?

A recent Maoist attack in Gadchiroli in Maharashtra left 15 police commandos of the C-60 wing dead.

What happened?

- Maoists torched 25 vehicles at a road construction site in Kurkheda of Gadchiroli early in the morning.
- A team of the Quick Response Team of the Gadchiroli police was on way to inspect this.
- While on road in a private vehicle, these fifteen policemen and their driver were killed by a powerful explosion set off by Maoists.
- An improvised explosive device (IED) blast was set off.
- The slain fighters were members of the elite C-60 wing.
- This is the fourth Maoist attack, since the national election began in April, 2019, in Gadchiroli which borders Chattisgarh.



What is the C-60 wing?

- Naxalite activity first expanded into Maharashtra from then-Andhra Pradesh in the 1980's.
- The Gadchiroli district, carved out of Chandrapur district in 1982, was the most affected, with series of violence.

- Veteran police officer KP Raghuvanshi was given the charge of creating an elite commando force of the state police in 1990.
- The C-60 was thus created as a batch of 60 commandos to counter Maoist violence in Gadchiroli.
- As Naxal activities heightened in the coming years, a second branch was also created in 1994.
- They are similar to the Greyhound forces in Telangana and the SOG (Special Operation Group) units in Andhra Pradesh.

How has C-60 wing's role been?

- The contribution of C-60 has been a notable one, and they have been alternatively referred to as 'crack commandos'.
- The commandos were recruited from the same regions where the Naxals enlisted their own fighters.
- Having the same roots, the C-60 had operational advantages compared to other units of the state police.
- These include faster maneuvering, and the greater ability to converse with the local population.
- The C-60 is qualified for combat in difficult battlegrounds, such as dense forests and over hilly terrain.
- Apart from actual combat, the C-60's task also includes facilitating Maoists to surrender and join the mainstream.
- For this, members of the unit meet the families of Maoists to apprise them of government schemes made for ex-Maoists.

What does the recent attack imply?

- The death of security personnel in the landmine attack in Gadchiroli is another reminder of India's continued failure to crush naxalism.
- This attack has occurred despite the deployment of -
 - i. 30 companies of the Central Reserve Police Force (a company comprises 135 personnel)
 - ii. 13 companies of the State Reserve Police Force
 - iii. 5,500 personnel of the local police in Gadchiroli and neighbouring Chandrapur district
- This exposes the lack of preparedness of the security forces on the one hand, and the boldness of the perpetrators on the other.
- The ease with which the extremists torched so many vehicles and how the response team went there without proper planning are alarming.
- In the process, standard operating procedures, including letting a road-opening team lead the way, seem to have been ignored.

What is the way forward?

- It is some comfort that the polling percentages in both Gadchiroli and Chandrapur districts have risen, compared to the 2014 elections.
- But the path of the voter to the polling booth in the naxal-dominated districts is still not an assuring one.
- The security forces deployed in the region too have not been able to instil in them a greater level of confidence.
- Notably, most of the police personnel who were killed in the latest attack seem to have been local citizens.
- India cannot afford to take the challenges of internal security lightly and needs concerted measures at tackling naxalism.

1.4 Decision on Red Corridor Region

Why in news?

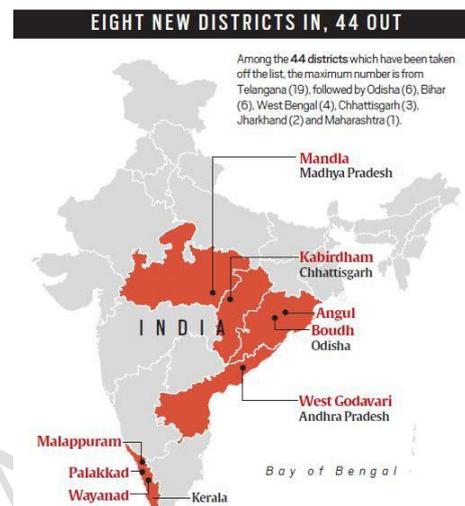
Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) has redrawn the red corridor region which are affected by Left-wing extremism.

What is a red corridor region?

- Red corridor region is demarcated by the union government to notify the districts which are affected by left wing extremism.
- It is spanning across 106 districts in 10 States, namely Bihar, Jharkhand, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Telangana, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Chhattisgarh.

What is the recent decision on red corridor region?

- A recent report of MoHA classifies the red corridor region with respect to the severity of the Naxal influence.
- The three main categories are -
 1. **Severely affected** - Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Odisha and Bihar
 2. **Partially affected** - West Bengal, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh
 3. **Slightly affected** - Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh
- 44 districts have been removed from the list and eight new districts which could be slightly or partially affected has been added to the list.
- The recent decision is taken since only 30 worst affected districts account for 90% of the LWE violence.



What were the actions taken by government to tackle LWE?

- The National Policy & Action Plan constituted by the MoHA had been introduced to reduce the concentration of Naxal affected districts.
- All expenses incurred by the affected areas were covered under the Security Related Expenditure (SRE) Scheme.
- This provides funds for projects related to development such as infrastructure, transportation, communication, bridges and schools.
- Under which mobile towers, boarding schools and roads were installed in LWE affected areas.
- Government also aims for a multi-pronged strategy which primarily includes development and security aspects of affected districts.

1.5 CRPF's Bastariya Battalion

What is the issue?

- CRPF has constituted a new battalion of local recruits to deal with the Naxals.
- While some see this as an innovative approach to address the problem, other fear that the battalion might is a refurbishment of the violent Salwa Judum.

What is the Bastariya Battalion?

- Bastariya Warriors is a newly formed battalion of the CRPF that consists of 549 recruits, all of whom are exclusively from the 4 districts of Bastar region.
- Notably, several physical and educational relaxations were granted to aspirants to facilitate recruitment.
- Following the completion of the 44-week training programme, the battalion is expected to be deployed soon.
- According to the CRPF, the battalion will be immensely helpful in operations, as its recruits are familiar with the local terrain and language.
- This battalion is expected to act as a bridge between the local populations in the Red Corridor and other CRPF personnel (mostly from elsewhere in India).
- Nevertheless, this force has evoked the troubling memories of Salwa Judum.

What is Salwa Judum?

- Salwa Judum was an armed force that was mobilised in 2005 (informally by politicians) and deployed in parts of Chhattisgarh.

- Local tribal people were armed to counter Maoists in Bastar, and those who supported the idea stated that it was a spontaneous uprising of tribals.
- Hence, with tacit support of the government, Salwa Judham was initiative that turned tribal youth into a vigilant but ill trained army.
- But as the force took ground, it established a reign of terror in the region, and was subsequently banned by the Supreme Court in 2011.
- Notably, allegations against Judum were numerous, with attack against civilians ranging from –killings, torching of villages, sexual assaults etc...
- Also, as the face-off between the Maoists and Judum intensified, both sides showed little sensitivity to the locals caught in cross fire.

What are the views of detractors against the battalion?

- Activists argue that like the Judum, the Bastariya Battalion seeks to pit tribals against tribals and could again cleave tribal society.
- If a villager was to join the Battalion, then their families run the risk of attracting the ire of Maoists (recorded threats already aplenty).
- Data also indicates that during and immediately after the end of Judum's activities, there was an unusual spike in Maoist recruitments.
- This is probably a case of villagers seeking to safeguard themselves from crude government sponsored violent insurgents – a trend that could repeat itself.
- Notably, 'District Reserve Group' (DRG) of Chhattisgarh Police is also majorly constituted of former Maoists and Judum soldiers.
- Activists point out that DRG too has had a poor track record in human rights and anti-naxal operations.

What is the government's argument for raising the battalion?

- The government argues that the battalion will give the security forces an operational dimension, which is currently being provided by the state police.
- CRPF officials also vouch that the major difference between the Judum and Bastariya Battalion is in the intensity and holistic nature of CRPF training.
- The 44-week training is said to cover not just modules on jungle warfare and weapons training, but also civic responsibilities and human rights.
- Hence, it has been argued that Bastariya recruits are regular CRPF constables like a personnel from any other battalion.
- Officials also argue that the presence of locals will increase the sensitivity of the CRPF - especially with one-third of the recruits being women.
- While one has to wait to know if the battalion is a success, it is important for the warriors to realise that they will be rated for human rights too.

1.6 Dealing with Conflicts

What is the issue?

Increasing conflicts around the world call for a different approach in dealing with them beyond the intervention of the armed forces.

What are the different forms of conflict?

- Conflict could be external or internal to the country.
- Internal conflicts can be further classified into two categories - conflict against the state and people-to-people conflict.
- Conflict against the state may include separatist movements, and suicide bombings.
- Suicide bombings are an extreme manifestation of conflict, carried out by a relatively organised group of non-state actors.

- Their ultimate goal is the destabilisation of the state and these incidents are generally referred to as terrorism.
- The people-to-people conflict could be between different ethnic, religious and social groups.
- This could include religious riots, homicides, domestic violence, common violence, and other crimes.

How has the trend changed?

- Over the period, internal conflict has replaced external conflict.
- Within this, people-to-people internal conflict has declined, and internal conflict against the state has increased.
- The adverse economic and social impact of internal conflict against the state is much greater compared to people-to-people conflict.

Why do conflicts need attention?

- The world has made rapid progress in reducing poverty but regions affected by conflict have been left behind.
- In the last decade, various global conflicts have affected nearly 2 billion people and resulted in a loss of more than 10% of the global economic activity.
- Perceivably, international ideological movements merge with local grievances, and different forms of violence get linked to each other.
- When economic changes become a concern for local community, local grievances can escalate into acute demands for change.
- In this context, unemployment, corruption and social exclusion increase the risks of violence.
- Clearly, conflict is not just one-off events, but cycles of repeated violence.
- Hence it needs due attention given the multifaceted implications.

What are the driving factors for conflicts?

- **Economy** - Internal conflicts are largely related to the economic dynamics.
- Global evidence supports a strong inverse relationship between conflict and per-capita income level.
- Conflict increases due to adverse economic shocks, such as famines and rural distress.
- Youth unemployment has been and is a key motive for many joining both rebel movements and urban gangs.
- **Exclusion** - Political exclusion and inequality affecting different ethnic groups result in higher risks of civil war.
- It is easier for terrorists and rebels to recruit people to their cause in such areas because their opportunity cost is low.
- In ethnically-based or separatist conflict, recruitment can be easily made on ethnicity or religion basis.
- **Poverty** - Conflict is concentrated in areas that have higher poverty rates, weak institutions and that are poorly integrated.
- These have experienced more than three times the number of terrorist incidents per capita, compared with the well-off regions.
- Poorer regions also have poorer state capacity, and hence the government is not able to deal with the rebels effectively.
- The poverty-conflict interlink can thus slow down the pace of poverty reduction and achievement of multilateral development goals.
- **Geographic conditions**, such as the presence of forest cover, can also be associated with the incidence of conflict.
- States in India that have a higher forest cover have experienced higher conflict intensity.
- This is consistent with numerous accounts of Naxalites using forest cover to hide effectively from law enforcement forces.

Have measures at tackling this been effective?

- Development efforts from the ancient times have focussed on reducing conflict through collaboration, with the formation of village communities.
- In modern times, the most common approach is to use police forces to establish law and order in the affected areas.
- In areas where police forces are insufficient, the armed forces are called in to deal with the insurgency.
- But in most cases, this has not been a successful strategy.
- Even when successful in defeating the insurgents, the human costs associated with military operations are very high.

What are the other better options?

- **Peace agreements** - A different approach to dealing with conflict is to conduct negotiations and sign peace agreements with the insurgents.
- To be effective, this approach needs two requirements -
 - i. the government must conduct coordinated negotiations
 - ii. the insurgent group must be genuinely interested in joining the political mainstream
- E.g. Indian government has signed peace deals with several separatist groups in the north-eastern states
- Similarly, negotiations with some Tamil groups in Sri Lanka have resulted in their integration into mainstream politics.
- **Economic solution** - Complementary to the security-based solution is an economic solution.
- In this, the government takes measures to expand social and welfare programmes.
- It thereby reduces poverty in the conflict-affected areas to undercut the support for insurgency.
- **Regional cooperation** - Many internal conflicts in South Asia have cross-border dimensions.
- E.g. the Taliban in Afghanistan has support in Pakistan's border areas, Maoists in Nepal have links with Maoist movements in India
- Likewise, many separatist groups in India's north-eastern states had training camps and cells in neighbouring countries.
- The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and other Tamil separatist groups in Sri Lanka have traditionally enjoyed support from the Tamil diaspora.
- In such a context, cross-border regional cooperation is an essential part of any counterinsurgency strategy and a more effective one.
- Regional Partnership Forums should be formed with support of donors and national policymakers.
- Besides, it must have the flexibility to work with the local communities.

What should the approach be?

- Policy choices are critical for reducing repeated conflicts.
- In this context, economic policies should be geared not just to maximise growth, which could take time.
- It should also focus on proactively engaging the local communities, and addressing the distributional or political factors that led to the conflict.
- Policy choices must be structured to reduce both real and perceived inequities.
- It should focus on short-term economic and social goals first, and then on medium and longer-term efficiency considerations.
- This approach calls for humanitarian and community-based treatment for conflict-affected people.
- This includes closure of refugee camps, and reintegration of refugees within the society.
- Policies should have plans for post-conflict development and reducing poverty too, to have sustainable results.

B. North East Insurgency

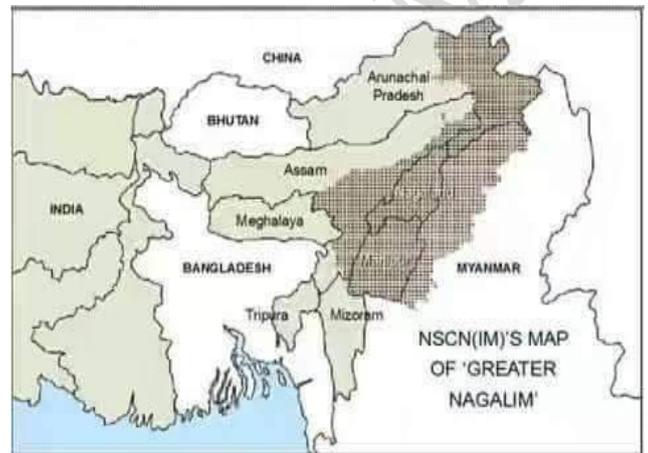
1.7 Delaying Naga Peace Accord

What is the issue?

- A Framework Agreement was signed in 2015 to end the decades-old Naga insurgency.
- However, the Naga peace process (accord) is yet to be finalised.

What is the Nagaland issue?

- Few sections of the Naga people are particular of forming a separate new country.
- This 'Greater Nagalim' incorporates the entire state of present Nagaland and some Naga-inhabited parts.
- These include parts of Manipur, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh and Myanmar.
- While the area of Nagaland is around 16,500 sq km, Greater Nagalim sprawls over 1,20,000 sq km.
- The demand for Nagalim has always agitated Assam, Manipur and Arunachal.
- Peace talks with Nationalist Socialist Council of Nagaland (Isak-Muivah) [NSCN(I-M)], the then most lethal insurgent group started in 1997.
- In 1997, the insurgent group leaders agreed to a ceasefire.



What is the 2015 agreement?

- The Framework Agreement was a culmination of so many rounds of negotiations over the years.
- It was signed by the Centre's interlocutor for Naga peace talks, RN Ravi and leader of the NSCN (I-M).
- It aimed at facilitating stronger ties among Nagas across the region.
- However, it does not change substantially the jurisdictional and administrative authority of neighbouring states.
- The framework agreement did accept special status for the Nagas.
- This gave due regard to the uniqueness of Naga history.

How has the progress been?

- The Centre's interlocutor recently made a submission before a Parliamentary Standing Committee.
- He noted that it was implied in the agreement that "some special arrangement" would be made for the Nagas.
- With respect to Nagaland there is already a special arrangement.
- Article 371A of the Constitution makes this very clear and a special status has been accorded to them.
- The Nagas initially insisted on the unification of Naga inhabited areas - "no integration, no solution".
- But they have now reached an understanding with the government.
- Accordingly, the current boundaries of Northeastern states will not be touched.
- Besides the NSCN-IM, the government also held discussions with six other groups.
- The NSCN-K, which violated the ceasefire in 2015, was not part of the peace process.
- It was declared an unlawful association under The Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967.

Why is the delay in finalising the accord?

- All stakeholders other than the government appear keen on a conclusion.
- Many details of the 2015 agreement are concealed in mystery.
- The Naga groups have given up the demand for sovereignty and redrawing of boundaries.
- But the issues like a separate passport, flag and armed Naga battallions are still unresolved.

1.8 Committee on Extra-judicial Killings in Assam

Why in news?

- The Gauhati High Court has recently quashed the appointment of a committee that had probed the alleged extra-judicial killings in Assam.

What is the case about?

- It relates to the extra-judicial killings in Assam during 1998-2001, often described as “secret killings”.
- Close relatives of a number of United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) members were shot by unidentified killers.
- A committee headed by Justice K N Saikia was formed in 2005 to look into this.

What were the Saikia panel findings?

- The committee submitted its report in 2006-07.
- It blamed the Home Department and sections of the government machinery of being involved in the killings.
- The report alleged a nexus between police and certain surrendered ULFA members.
- It coined the term “ulfocide”, and defined it as a general plan for killing of ULFAs, their families and relatives.
- It claimed that these were caused after ULFA families failed to persuade their relatives to come for peace talks.
- It noted that the similarities in the killings indicate the remote planning from higher authorities.
- Also, the weapons used were of a type generally used by police or the military.
- Besides, there was police patrolling on the spot prior to and after the killings, but not during the time of the killings.

Why was the committee quashed?

- Four successive panels probed the killings and the Justice Saikia headed committee was the last.
- Notably, the earlier J N Sarma Commission probed six killings and submitted an interim report on three.
- The Saikia committee was thus challenged on the ground that the previous panel was still active.
- As, under Sec 7 of Commissions of Inquiry Act, a gazette notification for discontinuation of an inquiry commission is mandatory.
- But no such notification was issued for the Sarma Commission.
- The court has now held that the Saikia panel was legally invalid.

What are the other concerns?

- The Saikia Commission’s report was said to be self-contradictory in parts.
- This is because at one point it says that “there is no evidence to pinpoint responsibility”.
- But at another, it blames the then Home department of remotely orchestrating the killings.
- The investigation was also alleged to be politically motivated.

1.9 Concerns surrounding Tinsukia killings

Why in news?

Five men were gunned down and one injured by suspected extremists in Assam’s Tinsukia district recently.

What is the aftermath?

- According to the Assam Police, a group of assailants with sophisticated weapons came to the village near Dhola-Sadiya bridge and called out five-six people from their house.
- They then opened indiscriminate fire upon those people before fleeing under the cover of darkness.
- Police officers said they suspect the gunmen belonged to the Ulfa(Independent) faction as they were in battle fatigue.
- However, the United Liberation Front of Asom (Independent) (Ulfa-I) has denied its involvement in the issue.

What are the larger concerns?

- The gunning down of **five Bengali men** is viewed as a part of periodic eruptions against non-Assamese people in the State, rather than an isolated act of violence.
- The killings deepen the fault lines between the Assamese and Bengali communities because of two major reasons prevailing in the region.
- The first one related to an ongoing exercise to update the National Register of Citizens(NRC) and the second related to the Centre's plan to secure parliamentary passage for the Citizenship (Amendment)Bill, 2016.
- The Citizenship (Amendment) Bill make illegal migrants who are Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan, eligible for citizenship.
- The Bill makes illegal migrants eligible for citizenship on the basis of religion.
- The Citizenship Bill grants protective cover to them on grounds of persecution in her country of origin.
- The National Register of Citizens (NRC) is meant to identify a bona fide citizen and to detect Bangladeshi nationals who might have entered the State illegally after the midnight of March 24, 1971.
- The date was decided in the 1985 Assam Accord, which was signed between the then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and the AASU.
- The NRC was first published after the 1951 Census in the independent India when parts of Assam went to the East Pakistan, now Bangladesh.
- The first draft of the updated list was concluded by December 31, 2017 and the second draft was released recently.
- Four million people didn't make it to the second NRC draft and it raises concerns on the fate of those people.
- While the final numbers will be known only when the elaborate process of claims, objections and verification draws to a close, there are certain known things at this point already.

How will the Bill affect the updated NRC list?

- While the Bill is designed to grant citizenship to non-Muslim refugees persecuted in neighbouring countries, NRC does not distinguish migrants on the basis of religion.
- It will consider deporting anyone who has entered the State illegally post-March 24, 1971, irrespective of their religion.
- Hence if the Bill becomes an Act, the non-Muslims need not go through any such process, meaning this will be clearly discriminating against Muslims identified as undocumented immigrants.
- Also, the Statement of Objects and Reasons of the Bill does not explain the rationale behind differentiating between illegal migrants on the basis of the religion and hence they violate Article 14.
- The ethnic Assamese nativist groups also advocating an even-handed approach in this issue.

What should be done?

- The politics ensuing over this issue has left the State polarised.
- The issue has spilled over to civil society, with calls for a separate State and harassment of Bengali speakers in Lower Assam towns, including Guwahati.
- While the ULFA (Independent) denies responsibility, investigations thus far suggest it was the group's handiwork.

- In the town of Sopore, which is under Baramulla district (administrative), 10 local militants are currently active, as per police records.
- So there is a possibility of militants from neighbouring areas moving to Baramulla.
- The presence of overground workers (OGWs) and militant sympathisers who could help to recruit for militant outfits also remains a challenge.

1.11 Report on Human Rights Violation in J&K

Why in news?

- The UN Human Rights Council (HRC) recently sent submissions on the alleged human rights violations in Jammu and Kashmir.
- In reaction to this, India has decided to shut down communication with UN HRC's Special Rapporteurs.

What was it about?

- The current Special Rapporteurs on Extrajudicial Executions, Torture, and Right to Health had referred to an earlier report of the Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights (OHCHR).
- The OHCHR's was the first-ever such report on J&K as well as Pakistan-occupied Kashmir that came out in June 2018.
- In this context, Special Rapporteurs had written to the Indian government asking about steps taken to address the alleged human rights violations.
- In addition, the Special Rapporteurs had listed "13 cases of concern" from 2018 alone.
- In this, 4 children were among 8 civilians killed by members of the security forces.
- The UN report had come at the same time when another report was released from two NGOs in the State on the alleged cases of torture.
- It was endorsed by a former UN Special Rapporteur.

What is India's stance?

- India has rejected all the claims, and accused the Special Rapporteurs preparing the report of "individual prejudice" against India.
- India had also rejected the OHCHR's report on the 'Situation of Human Rights in Kashmir'.
- In its objections, the government said the report was "false and motivated".
- Its conclusions and recommendations were violative of India's sovereignty and territorial integrity.
- India also drew notice to the Pulwama attack, calling terrorism the "grossest" violation of human rights, not the allegations against the security forces.
- India refused to respond to questions about deaths of 69 civilians between 2016 and 2018 in violence in the Valley.
- The Indian Permanent Mission to the UN in Geneva replied to the OHCHR that India did not intend to engage further on the issue.

Is India's response justified?

- India's response is largely in line with its reaction to such international reports over the last few years.
- Demands for action against Indian officials and amendment of laws can cross the line on Indian sovereignty.
- The previous OHCHR has called for UNHRC to set up an independent and international tribunal to investigate the matters.

Spat over reports

June 2018: OHCHR publishes report on 'Human Rights Situation in Jammu and Kashmir' and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir

- India slams report, says it shows individual bias of Commissioner of Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein

January 2018-March 2019: UN says Special Rapporteurs sent 34 communications (27 in 2018 and 7 in 2019 to date), 20 pending requests for Special Rapporteur visits, including to Jammu and Kashmir

- India doesn't reply, declines to clear visits by Special Rapporteurs

March 2019: Three UN Special Rapporteurs send submission to India, ask for action taken on human rights violations

- India rejects submissions, says it will no longer engage with them on the issue

- This was seen to be invasive, and could be dismissed by New Delhi as well.
- However, the government cannot suppress the troubling questions that the UN report and Special Rapporteurs' submissions raise.
- Notably, most of the sources for the OHCHR report are -
 - i. official Indian authorities
 - ii. State and national human rights commissions
 - iii. international human rights agencies
 - iv. reputed Indian NGOs
- This is therefore a view from within India, and not some disengaged UN official.
- Also, two Kashmiri NGOs report has documented 432 specific cases of alleged brutality by security forces in Kashmir.
- These include electrocution, 'water-boarding' and sexual torture of civilians.
- Of these, only about 27 cases were taken up by the State Human Rights Commission.
- It is fair if the government press for due process and justice in each of the cases of human rights violations in J&K.

1.12 First UN report on J&K

What is the issue?

- The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) recently published its first ever report on Jammu and Kashmir including PoK.
- This report has opened up controversies over the territory dispute between India and Pakistan.

What prompted this report?

- This report has been in production since 2016, after a new wave of violence hit the Kashmir Valley.
- About 51 protesters and civilians were killed in the months that followed, while more than 9,000 were injured by pellets and bullets.
- Consequently, the OHCHR asked India and Pakistan to allow its teams' access to the State, a request that was refused.

What are the controversies in the report?

- The report has criticised India on how it handled the protests and extra judicial killings, using hard tactics.
- The report has also used less harsh terms such as armed group and leader of armed group, instead of militant group and terrorist as regarded by the Indian Security Forces.
- The report has also recommended removal of the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act for its alleged human rights violations.

How India has reacted to the report?

- India has officially announced that the OHCHR report undermines the UN-led consensus on zero tolerance to terrorism.
- The report violates India's sovereignty and territorial integrity as terms such as "Azad Jammu and

UNHRC

- It is an inter-governmental body within the UN system, made up of 47 States.
- It was established in 2006 as part of the UN's reform process and replaced the UN Commission on Human Rights.
- Members are elected by the UNGA with 3-year terms, with a maximum of 2 consecutive terms.
- They are responsible for promotion and protection of human rights.
- Its resolutions are not legally binding but carry moral authority.

OHCHR

- The role of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) is not to be confused with the UNHRC.
- OHCHR is a separate institution which presents reports independent of the HRC. E.g. the June 2018 report on Kashmir
- The HRC and the OHCHR have separate mandate and functions, but both are part of the UN system for human rights protection.

Kashmir” and “Gilgit Baltistan” were used to describe the part of the State under Pakistani control.

- Also, India has criticised the report on the indirect and remote basis through which information was collected in the region.

1.13 Irish Way for Kashmir

What is the issue?

- Northern Ireland witnessed some of the messiest violence in the 20th Century.
- With sustained peace having been restored for over 2 decades now, the Irish case presents a good model for Kashmir’s future.

What is the history of conflict in Ireland?

- **Independence** - Ireland as a whole was a British colony from the Tudor conquest in the 17th century till the 1922 Anglo-Irish Treaty.
- Under the treaty, the island of Ireland was divided into two territories namely “Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland”.
- While former became an independent nation, the later was to remain an autonomous region within the U.K.
- Underlying this divide was a clear demographic divide between the English colonisers and the Gaelic Natives (people of the Irish lineage).
- English settlers were predominantly Protestants and were concentrated in Northern Ireland and the natives were predominantly Catholics.
- **Tensions** - Within the Northern Ireland, Catholics of Irish dissent, were a big minority and accounted for about 40% of the population.
- Due to various forms of political polarisation in the society, demographic tensions were ranging in the Northern Ireland in the 1980s.
- Violent riots and clashes between the government forces and dissenters were common in those years, resulting in numerous deaths.
- The dissenters were called Irish nationalists and argued for integration of the “Northern Ireland” with the “Republic of Ireland”.
- Contrarily, pro-government forces were called unionists who wanted to remain within the U.K. administration.



How were the tensions resolved?

- Eventually, sectarian politicians in Northern Ireland adopted the “greater autonomy” card over complete secession to negotiate with the U.K. authorities.
- Finally, the “Good Friday Agreement” was reached in 1998 and while Northern Ireland remains a part of U.K. still, peace was restored, which still holds good.
- Key to the peace process was the emergence of honest but clever brokers who understood the contradictions of the difficult process.
- This crafty diplomacy piloted by British PM Tony Blair’s government went alongside strong grievances redressing mechanisms of the affected citizenry.

How does Kashmir’s case read against Northern Ireland’s?

- **Similarities** - Kashmiri conflict, like Northern Ireland’s, is also rooted in ethno-religious context and both have seen numerous violent episodes.
- In Kashmir’s case, “Kashmiri Pundits” (Hindus) are pitted against “Islamic Extremists”, much like the Catholic - Protestant divide in Northern Ireland.
- Further, it was during strongly rooted cultural right wing regimes that sectarian tensions got fuelled more in these regions.
- Much like the nationalists in Ireland, the Hurriyat leadership in India has been towing a secessionist line all along.

- **Future** - While Northern Ireland saw the emergence of witty negotiators who were trusted by both sides, Kashmiri conflict awaits them.
- But an international negotiator is likely to be an anathema to any Indian government for the fear of internationalising the issue.
- In this context, there is a need for the emergence of a local hand that is trusted by all including the hardliner Hurriyat leadership.
- While the Hurriyat demand is currently “independent Kashmir”, talks might help in mellowing down the tenor to something like greater autonomy.

What is the way ahead?

- A close look at separatist movements shows that the problem is lesser about territorial control and more about a fight for self respect.
- Interlocutors and diplomats piloting settlements should go into this aspect in detail if they are to address the roots of the problem.
- In Kashmir’s case, both Muslims and Hindus has been emotionally brutalised due to years of political polarisation and suppression.
- Pakistan might want to play spoiler in any Indian effort to address the Kashmir issue, and only a strongly committed diplomacy can overcome this.
- While the masses in Northern Ireland continue to display polarised loyalties, violence has disappeared and expressions have taken softer conducive modes.

2. BORDER MANAGEMENT

A. Maritime Border Management

2.1 INS Arihant Launch - Strengthening India's Nuclear ‘Triad’

What is the issue?

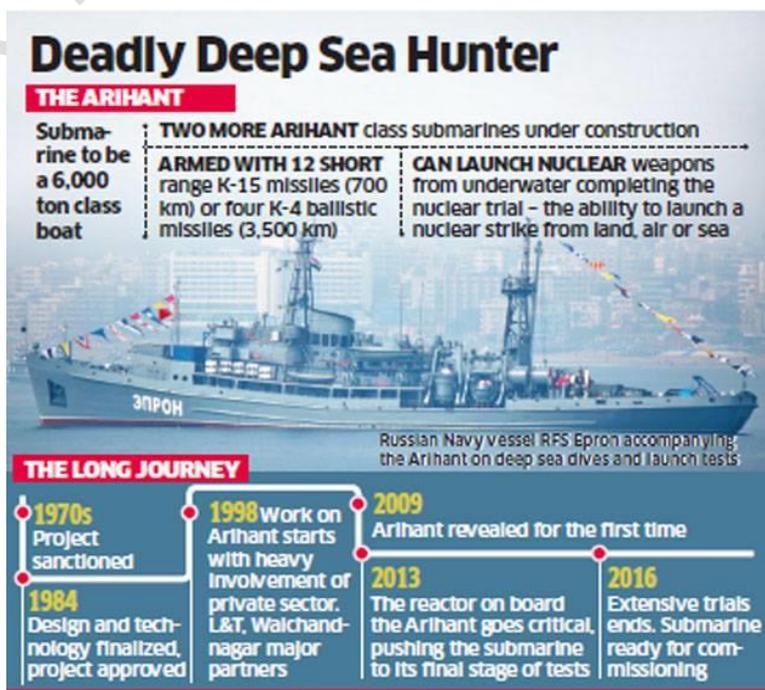
- India’s first nuclear propelled submarine, INS Arihant, was recently announced to be operationally ready.
- With Pakistan’s India-aimed nuclear doctrine and China’s ambiguity, India needs to boost its nuclear arsenal.

What is India's nuclear vision?

- India earlier had the capabilities to launch nuclear weapons from the air, mounted largely on its Mirage 2000 and Jaguar Aircraft.
- The similar land based missile range from Agni 1 missile (range of 700-900 km) to Agni 5 Missiles (range of 5500 km).
- India's aim has been to develop a “credible nuclear deterrent” with capabilities to deliver nuclear weapons from multiple locations on land, air and sea.
- The targets are all strategic areas and centres in India's two nuclear-armed neighbours - China and Pakistan.

Why is INS Arihant significant?

- The Arihant provides India with a capability to hit either neighbour (China, Pak) from 300 meters under the sea.



Deadly Deep Sea Hunter

THE ARIHANT

- Subma-rine to be a 6,000 ton class boat
- TWO MORE ARIHANT class submarines under construction
- ARMED WITH 12 SHORT range K-15 missiles (700 km) or four K-4 ballistic missiles (3,500 km)
- CAN LAUNCH NUCLEAR weapons from underwater completing the nuclear triad – the ability to launch a nuclear strike from land, air or sea

Russian Navy vessel RFS Epron accompanying the Arihant on deep sea dives and launch tests

THE LONG JOURNEY

- 1970s Project sanctioned
- 1984 Design and technology finalized, project approved
- 1998 Work on Arihant starts with heavy involvement of private sector. L&T, Walchand-nagar major partners
- 2009 Arihant revealed for the first time
- 2013 The reactor on board the Arihant goes critical, pushing the submarine to its final stage of tests
- 2016 Extensive trials ends. Submarine ready for com-missioning

- The sea-based missiles envisaged for this purpose are
 - i. the Sagarika with a range of 750 km
 - ii. the K-4 with a range of 3500 km
- While land-based missile sites can be attacked and destroyed, a submarine-based deterrent is virtually secure against a missile attack.
- India is the only country having a sea-based nuclear deterrent, which is not a Permanent Member of the UN Security Council.
- India will soon operationalise a second nuclear submarine the “Arighat”.
- It is expected to have a fleet of four such submarines by 2022.
- According to US Federation of Nuclear Scientists, India currently possesses 130-140 nuclear weapons, Pakistan 140-150 and China 280.
- While India tested its first nuclear weapons in 1998, Pakistan’s first weapons test was in 1990, on Chinese soil.

What are the countries' nuclear principles?

- **India** - India’s nuclear doctrine stated that its nuclear weapons would only be used in retaliation.
- It could be against a major attack on Indian territory or on Indian forces anywhere, in which nuclear weapons are used.
- India also retains the right to use nuclear weapons in the event of major attacks in which chemical or biological weapons are used.
- **Pakistan** - Pakistan, on the other hand, does not have a formal nuclear doctrine.
- However as stated before by its officials, Pakistan’s nuclear weapons are “aimed solely at India”.
- Accordingly, Pakistan would use nuclear weapons if India conquers a large part of its territory, or destroys a large part of its land and air forces.
- The possibility of nuclear weapons use if India tries to “economically strangle” Pakistan, or pushes it to political destabilisation also exists.
- Pakistan’s statements in recent years have, however, indicated that it would not be averse to using tactical nuclear weapons in a conventional conflict with India.
- **China** - China, like India, had proclaimed that it would not be the first to use nuclear weapons.
- But China has maintained a measure of ambiguity on whether its “no first use” pledge will be applicable to India.
- China's deliberate maintenance of this ambiguity is seen as a signal of its support to Pakistan on any of its nuclear exchange with India.
- Chinese ambiguity only adds to India’s determination to strengthen its “Triad” of land, air and sea-based nuclear weapons.

What is China's role in Pakistan?

- It is said that the Chinese did a massive training of Pakistani scientists.
- Without China’s help, Pakistan’s bomb would not exist.
- China has also provided Pakistan the designs of its nuclear weapons.
- It upgraded Pakistan's “inverters” for producing enriched uranium in Kahuta.
- It provided it with Plutonium reactors and separation facilities, for building tactical nuclear weapons.
- Pakistan’s ballistic and Cruise Missiles are also replicas of Chinese missiles.

What are the bureaucratic shortcomings in India?

- India has a well-organised nuclear command structure headed by the Prime Minister and Cabinet Committee on Security.
- However, India needs to address serious issues on the archaic structure of the Ministry of Defence.

- E.g. the key military figure in the Nuclear Command structure, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, generally holds office for less than a year
- This is hardly the time adequate to become fully familiar with the complexities of India's Strategic Nuclear Command.
- There have been repeated proposals for appointment of a full time “Chief or Defence Staff”, or “Chairman Chiefs of Staff Committee”.
- S/he will hold charge of the Nuclear “Strategic Forces Command” and report to the political authority.
- But the proposals have gathered dust for years in the offices of the generalist bureaucracy of the Defence Ministry.
- Recommendations for such change even from the Parliament Standing Committee of Defence lie unimplemented.
- The present set up of the Defence Ministry thus needs to be drastically reorganised.

2.2 Assessing the Relevance of Nuclear Submarines

What is the issue?

- India's first indigenous ballistic-missile armed nuclear submarine (SSBN), Arihant, had successfully completed its first deterrence patrol.
- But the pursuit of nuclear-armed submarines reflects a security assessment that is becoming increasingly irrelevant.

How did SSBNs evolve?

- SSBNs (Ship, Submersible, Ballistic missile, Nuclear) were first deployed during the Cold War.
- It was justified then as a tool of last resort to counter any attack destroying land-based missiles and paralysing air force.
- The submarine, undetected at sea, could deliver a counter-strike, assuring the “mutual destruction” of both countries.

Why are SSBNs not very relevant now?

- The strategic function of SSBN mentioned above makes little sense in the modern Indian context.
- There is no realistic threat that could wipe out India's existing nuclear deterrent, which the Arihant could counter.
- The range of the missiles carried by the Arihant is about 750 km, and so it can only target Pakistan and perhaps China.
- **Pakistan** - Pakistan government has threatened to use “tactical nuclear weapons”.
- This is to counter India's cold-start doctrine that envisions a limited invasion of Pakistan.
- However, these are relatively small nuclear weapons that could devastate a battlefield.
- It would not certainly affect Indian military's ability to launch a counter-strike using its existing land or air-based forces.
- **China** - China has consistently pledged that it will never be the first to use nuclear weapons in a conflict.
- However, even if China were to suddenly change its policy, any attempt would have unacceptable risks regardless of whether India possesses SSBNs.
- **Global** - Even the U.S., which maintains such a large nuclear stockpile, is unwilling to militarily engage a limited nuclear power such as North Korea.
- This is because it understands that it cannot reliably disable North Korea's land-based deterrent.
- Much of the rest of the world has moved to outlaw nuclear weapons.
- Last year, 122 nations voted in favour of the “Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons”.

- The Indian government skipped these negotiations but claimed that it was committed to universal nuclear disarmament.
- So the government's active pursuit of nuclear-armed submarines undermines India's stated international position.

What are the concerns?

- **Risks** - In fact, nuclear-armed submarines increase the risks of an accidental conflict.
- Traditionally, nuclear weapons in India have been kept under civilian control, and separate from their delivery systems.
- However, the crew of a nuclear-armed submarine will have both the custody of nuclear weapons and the ability to launch them at short notice.
- Reportedly, nuclear weapons on Indian SSBNs will be safeguarded by electronic switches, called "permissive action links".
- However, such a setup can dangerously weaken the civilian command-and-control structure.
- E.g. Cuban missile crisis
- During the crisis, U.S. warships recklessly attacked a Soviet submarine with practice depth charges to force it to surface.
- The captain of the submarine, sailing under difficult conditions, was out of radio contact with the Soviet leadership.
- He thought that war had broken out and decided to respond with nuclear torpedoes.
- But with intervention of another senior officer on the submarine, Vasili Arkhipov, the outbreak of large-scale nuclear hostilities were prevented.
- For averting a civilisation-threatening event, Arkhipov was posthumously awarded the "Future of Life" award last year.
- **Costs** - Reportedly, the Indian Navy would eventually like about four SSBNs.
- The government has not released precise figures, but the international experience reflects the costs of such a fleet.
- E.g. British government recently estimated that the cost of four new SSBNs would be about Rs. 70,000 crore per submarine.
- The lifetime costs of operating such submarines are even larger than the initial costs.
- British and American estimates suggest that each SSBN requires between Rs. 2,000 crore and Rs. 5,000 crore in annual operational costs.

B. Land Border Management

2.3 Smart Fencing Project

Why in news?

Union Home Minister inaugurated two pilot projects of smart fencing along the Indo-Pak International Border in Jammu.

How does it work?

- The two projects have got hi-tech surveillance system that would create an invisible electronic barrier on land, water and even in air and underground.
- It uses a number of different devices for surveillance, communication and data storage.
- Sensors like Thermal Imager, UGS, Fiber Optical Sensors, Radar, Sonar have been mounted on different platforms like Aerostat, tower, poles etc.
- The signals reach the Unified Command and Control Centre where the BSF can monitor the border on real-time basis.

- It is designed to guard stretches where physical surveillance is not possible either due to inhospitable terrain or riverine borders.
- It also enables round-the-clock surveillance under different weather conditions like dust storm, fog or rain.
- With this smart fencing, the number of casualties of soldiers is expected to get minimised.

2.4 Border Area Development Programme

Why in news?

Nearly Rs 400 crore has been released by the Centre to 10 states, having international borders.

What are the projects?

- The BADP covers 111 border districts in 17 states to meet special needs people living within 50 km of the International Border.
- The current fund is used for developing forward areas as part of an ambitious plan to reduce the problems of those living in these isolated locations.
- The states include Jammu and Kashmir, Assam, Himachal Pradesh, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and West Bengal.
- The BADP schemes include construction of primary health centres, schools, supply of drinking water, community centres, connectivity, drainage, to enable sustainable living in border areas.
- It now covers schemes or activities relating to Swachhta Abhiyan, skill development programmes, promotion of sports activities, border tourism, protection of heritage sites, construction of helipads etc
- India shares borders with Pakistan (3,323 km), China (3,488 km), Nepal (1,751 km), Bhutan (699 km), Myanmar (1,643 km) and Bangladesh (4,096 km).

C. Airspace Border Management

2.5 Concerns on drone regulations

What is the issue?

Lack of clarity on the recently published drone regulations might affect competitiveness on this nascent field.

What are the concerns?

- India's regulations separate drones into five categories — nano, micro, small, medium and large.
- There is very little regulation for flying a nano up to 50 metres height, except for not flying near airports, military sites or in segregated airspace.
- From the micro category, every drone must obtain a unique identification number (UIN) from the aviation regulator.
- It will be followed by a long list of documentation including security clearances from the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) in several cases.
- Once the UIN is obtained, drone operators have to apply for an Unmanned Aircraft Operator Permit (UAOP) which includes more forms, more annexures and more submissions.
- Even for the micro drones that climb only up to a height of 200 feet, users have to intimate the local police station 24 hours prior to the flight.
- Manufacturers of drones, technologists and researchers making applications using drones have to test fly drones frequently, often several times a day.
- This makes the structure of these regulations paving the way for possibility of red tapism.
- With so many government authorities involved in allowing permission, it is inevitable that operators could be slapped easily with real and perceived violations.

- To avoid this, the regulation provides a list of identified areas for testing and demonstration so that flying drones in these areas comes with less paperwork.
- However, the locations provided are far from technology and development hubs that further complicates practical testing of these drones.
- For example, in Karnataka, the identified areas are Chitradurga, Coorg and Ganimangala village, all of which are around 200 km from Bengaluru entailing nearly four hours of travel one way.

What is the case with other countries?

- According to Global Market Insights, China's drone economy, including manufacturing and development, will be worth \$9 billion in 2020.
- The commercial drone market of US is also expected to be \$2.05 billion by 2023.
- Switzerland has an enormous number of people interested in flying drones and developing drone-based applications.
- One of their drones helps analyse which plants are deficient in nitrogen, enabling farmers to add corrective fertilizer only where necessary.
- This has resulted in higher yield and significantly lower usage of fertilizers and herbicides, which attracts customers all around the world.

2.6 National Drones Policy - Drone Regulations 1.0

Why in news?

The National Drones Policy drafted by the Ministry of Civil Aviation came into effect from December 1, 2018.

Click here to know more on DGCA's guidelines on drone operations.

What is the policy on?

- The new policy called "Drone Regulations 1.0" clarifies where, when and how drones can operate within India.
- With the policy coming into effect, flying drones or remotely-piloted aircraft have become legal in India.
- Also, the Ministry of Civil Aviation has kick-started the online registration of drones in India through its Digital Sky portal.

What was the need?

- A few businesses have managed to manufacture or operate drones in India, without attracting hostile government attention.
- They provided products and services primarily for the cinematography, agriculture, and infrastructure sectors.
- However, there were no regulations in place that guarantee the legality of their products and services.
- So it has been difficult for these businesses to attract investors, limiting their ability to grow.
- It is also to be noted that India has no indigenous drone manufacturer capable of competing on the global stage.
- So the national policy on drone would go a long way in addressing these concerns.

What are the highlights of the policy?

- **Categories** - The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has designed five different categories of drones as Nano, Micro, Small, Medium, and Large.
- Under the new policy, Nano drones which weigh less than 250 grams or equal does not need a registration or license.
- However, drones that belong to remaining categories will need to be registered on the Digital Sky portal.
- **Digital Sky portal** - It is an online platform as part of an enforcement system designated as No Permission No Takeoff (NPNT).
- Here, a drone operator can obtain all the necessary paperwork required.

- It includes procedures to conduct a drone operation, including final flight permission immediately before the operation.
- **Permission** - Following registration, DGCA will issue a Unique Identification Number (UIN) or Unmanned Aircraft Operator's Permit (UAOP).
- The fee for a fresh UIN is Rs 1,000. The fee for a fresh UAOP is Rs 25,000 and is valid for 5 years.
- To get permissions to fly, RPAS (Remotely Piloted Air System) operators or remote pilots will have to file a flight plan.
- **Zones** - Flying in the 'green zones' will require only intimation of the time and location of the flights via the portal or the app.
- But permissions will be required for flying in 'yellow zones', and flights will not be allowed in the 'red zones'.
- The location of these zones will be announced soon. Permission, if granted, will be available digitally on the portal.
- DGCA has also designated a set of test sites for drone manufacturers and operators to innovate in a safe and secure environment.
- **Drone Policy 2.0** - The ministry has constituted a task-force on the recommendation of Drone Policy 2.0.
- This task-force is expected to release their final report by the end of this year.
- Drone 2.0 framework for RPAS are expected to include
 - i. regulatory architecture for autonomous flying
 - ii. delivery via drones
 - iii. beyond visual line of sight (BVLOS) flights

What are the concerns?

- The current regulations make it legal for non-governmental agencies, organisations and individuals to use UAVs.
- But the high costs put them beyond the reach of NGOs and rural communities.
- The processes and fees render it difficult for them to conduct drone operations without hiring companies, which again would increase the costs.
- Besides this, some activities with the potential for market transformation are not currently permitted.
- E.g. functional drone-based delivery is not allowed
- It's because it requires the operator to conduct BVLOS operations and for the drone itself to release payloads while in flight.
- But this is considered to be a major growth area for the drone industry.
- It is also a focus for research and development as it will have a significant impact in online retail and healthcare.

What lies ahead?

- Drone applications are extremely relevant to India's large rural population.
- E.g. farming communities could cooperatively use drones to map vegetation stress, prevent crop-raiding by wild animals, conduct precise spraying of fertilisers and pesticides
- So the necessary infrastructure must be put in place for the implementation of regulations without delay.
- Aside from technical issues, the societal concern of making drone operation inclusive should be addressed.
- More representatives from outside the drone industry including civil society organisations and advocacy groups should be involved in framing the subsequent versions of regulations.

2.7 'Virtually Impregnable' Airspace

Why in news?

India is working on a mega defence project to make the airspace over almost all its major cities virtually impregnable.

How does it plan to achieve it?

- The government is procuring a variety of air defence systems, including missiles, launchers and command-and-control units from the US, Russia and Israel.
- The US has already approved sale of 22 Sea Guardian drones to India at an estimated cost of USD 2 billion.
- It is for the first time the US is selling the drones to a country which is not a member of the NATO.
- India is also deploying indigenously developed missiles as part of the project.
- It is also looking at the US' National Advanced Surface to Air Missile System-II to bolster its own missile shield.
- In the last few years, China has significantly ramped up its air power and sources said that the government was determined to equip the Indian Air Force with capabilities on par with its adversaries.
- "Missile shield over the national capital and many other cities are being strengthened considering the evolving security scenario. Procurement of missile systems, radars and weaponry is part of the initiative," a senior military official said.
- India is engaged in talks with the US for procuring components of air defence systems, including missiles, radars and drones, and attack helicopters.
- In its missile armoury, India currently has Agni-1 with a 700 km range, Agni-2 with a 2,000-km range, Agni-3, Agni-4 with 2,500 km to more than 3,500-km range and Agni 5, with a strike range of 5,000 km, and is capable of carrying nuclear warhead.
- A very few countries, including the US, China, Russia, France and North Korea, have intercontinental ballistic missiles.
- India also successfully test fired air-launched variant of the Brahmos, the world's fastest supersonic cruise missile, from a Sukhoi-30 combat jet.

2.8 Shortfalls in Fighter Jets - IAF

What is the issue?

The Indian Air Force (IAF) does not have enough fighter jets and hence there is an immediate requirement to address the shortfall.

What is the background?

- The IAF is now left with only 30 fighter squadrons and in a couple of years, it will be down to 26 squadrons.
- The reason for this include –
 1. Gradual decommissioning of obsolete aircraft over time
 2. The loss of aircraft in crashes
 3. Massive delays in purchases of new aircraft
- In comparison, the Pakistan Air Force will have 25 squadrons of fighter aircraft, while China will be able to unleash as many as 42 squadrons upon India in case of a conflict.
- The government's mandate for the IAF is to be prepared for a two-front collusive threat from China and Pakistan.
- For this, the IAF is authorised 42 squadrons of fighter aircraft, which is the bare minimum it needs to dominate a two-front conflict.
- But the last time the IAF had the full complement of 42 squadrons was nearly 17 years ago, and the numbers have only fallen since.

What should be done?

- **Tejas** is the first advance Fly-by-wire (FBW) fighter aircraft designed and developed indigenously by Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA) and produced by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL).
- Tejas is a 4th Plus generation aircraft with a glass cockpit and is equipped with state of the art Satellite aided Inertial Navigation System.
- It has a digital computer based attack system and an autopilot.
- It can fire Air to Air Missiles, Bombs as well as Precision Guided Munitions.
- The IAF is committed to get six squadrons from HAL, four of them of the Tejas Mark1A version.
- While HAL hopes to provide 18 aircraft per year, it has not been able to ramp up capacity to even half that number so far.
- This situation can impinge on the availability of fighter squadrons in the near future.
- The other option is to import more fighter aircraft.
- IAF will get two squadrons of Rafale by 2023, and it has plans for six squadrons of another foreign fighter within a decade.
- But the latter is still a proposal on the planning board, and a long way away from getting implemented.
- Thus, the IAF is looking at a scenario where it will have to undertake emergency imports, perhaps at an exorbitant cost, to make up the demand for fighter jets.

How do other major powers tackle situations like these?

- The US, Russia and the Europe, all have highly developed defence industries that can design, develop, produce and supply fighter jets to their air forces.
- Countries like Pakistan and Israel can depend upon their allies, wherein Pakistan Air Force earlier got F16s from the US and now it gets the JF17 from China.
- Since India has no such option, the long-term answer is to promote indigenous manufacturing in a major way.
- But in the immediate term, there is a need to take steps to ensure that this shortfall is made up quickly as a national security imperative.

3. TERRORISM AND ORGANISED CRIME

3.1 Easter Attacks in Sri Lanka - Expansion of IS in South Asia

What is the issue?

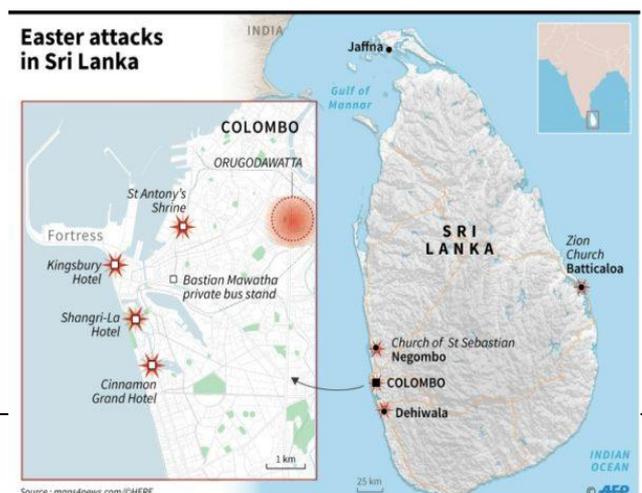
- A series of bomb blasts took place in Sri Lanka, killing close to 300 people and injuring many more.
- The bombings confirm the Islamic State's potent reach in South Asia.

What happened?

- Powerful explosions struck in quick succession at three hotels in the capital Colombo on Easter Sunday.
- Three churches were also targeted in that wave of blasts -
 - i. Colombo's historic St. Anthony's Shrine
 - ii. the St. Sebastian's church in the town of Negombo on the western coast, north of the capital
 - iii. the Zion Church in the east coast town of Batticaloa
- Early reports suggest that two suspects involved in the attacks are Islamic State (IS) returnees from Syria and Iraq.

What does it suggest of IS?

- The 'Caliphate' that Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi established across the Iraq-Syria border has been destroyed.



- So IS, which controlled huge swathes of territory in Iraq and Syria, is now trying to establish itself in other new territories.
- The Sri Lanka bombings too confirm that the destruction of the physical Caliphate doesn't end the threat the group poses.
- It has raised concerns about the Islamic State's expansion into the South Asian region.
- The targets chosen as well as the occasion suggest that the bombings were aimed at gaining maximum global attention.

How is IS expanding?

- From early 2015, when it started losing territories, the IS started shifting its strategy from expanding territorially to expanding insurgency and terror.
- Significantly, South Asia has been one of its key targets.
- In Nangarhar in eastern Afghanistan, the IS set up a wilayat (province).
- From here, it controls its South Asia operations, mainly recruitment of young men from the region.
- Over the last few years, the IS has carried out dozens of attacks in Afghanistan, mostly targeting the Shia-Hazara minority.
- In Pakistan, the Jamaat-ul-Ahrar, a splinter group of the Pakistan Taliban with IS links, carried out several terror attacks.
- It includes the 2016 Easter Sunday bombing in Lahore, targeting Christians.
- In Bangladesh, the IS claimed the July 2016 Holey Artisan Bakery attack.
- In India, it has not carried out any attack but has found dozens of recruits.

What are the emerging challenges for the States?

- **Young recruits** - The IS had recruited thousands of youth from South Asian nations such as Afghanistan, Pakistan, India and Sri Lanka.
- Some of them joined the wilayat in Nangarhar and others travelled to Iraq and Syria.
- **New havens** - Now that the Caliphate has been destroyed, thousands of trained militants are left without a place to hide.
- Many of the recruits have retreated to pockets on the Iraq-Syria border or to the deserts in Syria, Iraq and Jordan.
- Several others returned to their own home countries, as in the case in Sri Lanka.
- Another challenge is that the IS still controls some territory in Afghanistan.
- The U.S. had not made much progress on its declared goal two years ago of defeating the IS in Afghanistan.
- **Ideology** - An equally difficult challenge is to counter the ideological narrative of the IS.
- The old conception that lack of education and poverty breed terrorism does not hold good in the case of the IS.
- Among the Sri Lankan bombers were some from one of the country's wealthiest families.
- Most of those who travelled to Afghanistan's IS territories from Kerala were also from upper middle class families.
- So it is the ideology of puritanical Salafi-jihadism that continues to attract the young, disaffected people.
- Thus, any counter-terror strategy, for it to be effective, should have a counter-narrative to the IS worldview, besides the security measures.

3.2 United Nations Global Counter-terrorism Coordination Compact

Why in news?

UN launches new framework named the United Nations Global Counter-terrorism Coordination Compact to strengthen fight against terrorism.

What is the framework about?

- It is the largest coordination framework at the United Nations across the organization's three pillars of work: peace and security, sustainable development, human rights and humanitarian affairs.
- It replaced the UN Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF), which was established in 2005.
- It is an agreement between the UN Secretary-General and 36 UN entities plus the INTERPOL and the World Customs Organization (WCO).
- WCO was developed as part of Secretary-General Guterres's reform of the UN counter-terrorism architecture
- The objective is to increase the impact of the UN's work on the ground to promote the balanced implementation by Member States of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, as well as other relevant resolutions of the UN General Assembly and Security Council.
- The new eight inter-agency working groups are:
 1. Criminal justice, legal responses and countering the financing of terrorism
 2. Border management and law enforcement relating to counter-terrorism
 3. Emerging threats and critical infrastructure protection
 4. National and regional counter-terrorism strategies
 5. Preventing and countering violent extremism conducive to terrorism
 6. Promoting and protecting human rights and the rule of law while countering terrorism and supporting victims of terrorism
 7. Adopting a gender sensitive approach to preventing and countering terrorism
 8. Mobilizing resources for UN counter-terrorism efforts and monitoring and evaluation.

3.3 Christchurch Call to Action

Why in news?

India recently signed the 'Christchurch Call to Action'.

What is the agreement about?

- It is an initiative to fight the spread of hateful and terror-related content online.
- It is aimed at stopping abuse of the Internet by extremists.
- The agreement came in the backdrop of the attacks on mosques on March 15
- It is intended to keep up the pressure on social media companies to prevent their platforms from becoming stages for broadcasting extremist violence.
- The US government has not endorsed the Christchurch Call.

3.4 Islamic State (IS) in India

Why in news?

- Indian intelligence agents have confirmed the arrest of an Islamic State (IS) operative.
- This was ahead of a planned plot to bomb New Delhi.

How is IS presence in India?

- The arrest throws the spotlight on the IS's presence in India.
- The National Investigation Agency (NIA) and state police have so far arrested 75 individuals with alleged IS links.
- The highest number is from Kerala (21), followed by Telangana (16), Karnataka (9), Maharashtra (8).
- Other states include MP (6), Uttarakhand (4), TN (4), UP (3), Rajasthan (2), J&K (1) and WB (1).

How does IS recruit?

- IS propaganda and recruitment depends largely on social media apps such as WhatsApp and Nimbus.
- Recruiters and trainers use the Internet, the phone and one-on-one meetings for indoctrinating Indian youth.
- They then get them travel to Syria, Libya or Iraq.
- Of late, recruiters have been using the “dark web”.
- This is a class of Internet content that is not visible to general browsing and is not indexed by search engines.

How have IS's activities in India been?

- So far, IS has not directly claimed responsibility for any attack in India.
- The 2014 blast on **Church Street, Bengaluru** was however allegedly triggered by an IS-linked individual.
- As per NIA reports, he had acted on directions from handlers in Syria associated with the IS.
- The target was Israeli tourists in Bengaluru.
- He was earlier with SIMI (Students Islamic Movement of India) and then Indian Mujahideen.
- IS is also suspected to be behind the low-intensity blasts on **Bhopal-Ujjain passenger train** in 2017.

How is it in South India?

- Generally, the North India regularly sees communal clashes.
- States such as Jammu and Kashmir, MP and UP in North India have seen some IS influence on the youth.
- But strikingly, it is the southern states which have sent maximum recruits to IS.
- Reportedly, almost 90% of all recruits who have gone to Syria are from the southern States.
- A majority of those arrested while preparing to launch an attack are also from southern States.
- These include Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Telangana, Karnataka and Maharashtra.
- In fact, the first recruit from India to join Islamic State in 2013 was Cuddalore (Tamil Nadu)-born Haja Fakhruddin.
- He joined the IS and migrated to Syria while working in Singapore.
- Most recruits from Kerala who joined the Islamic State were working in the Gulf.
- Otherwise, they had come back from the Gulf with an already developed liking for IS's extreme ideology.

How is IS role in J&K?

- The security establishment believes that the IS does not have any defined organisational structure in J&K.
- 4 militants recently killed in South Kashmir belonged to Islamic State of Jammu and Kashmir (ISJK).
- However, this outfit is believed to have no organisational links with ISIS.
- ISJK recruits are mostly former operatives of other groups such as Hizb-ul Mujahideen and Lashkar-e-Toiba.

How does IS operate in India?

- Bhatkal (Karnataka)-resident Shafi Armar is said to be highest-ranking IS operative in India.
- He is designated a global militant by the United States.
- Shafi Armar was earlier with the Indian Mujahideen.
- He claims to have been tasked by IS chief al-Baghdadi to set up a Caliphate in India.
- However, intelligence agencies doubt if he has a direct association with al-Baghdadi.
- Officials suspect that Armar uses the name of ISIS on directions of Pakistan.
- As, it is learnt that IS prefers Arab fighters for jihad and engages Indians mostly in administrative work.

Does IS provide any organisational support?

- The IS had not provided any kind of organisational support to its recruits in India.

- It has largely focused on inspiring the youth to either migrate to Syria and Iraq or carry out attacks in India with their own resources.
- Many Indians have not even had a handler and have merely come together on their own to allegedly carry out attacks in the name of IS.
- They have formed various groups such as the Ummat E Mohammadiya, Harkat ul Harb-e-Islam, Ansar ul Tawheed fi Bilad Al Hind and Junud Al Khilafa e Hind.
- However, none have had any influence beyond their close-knit group.
- Most of these groups were made to arrange for explosives and arms on their own with members contributing from their pockets.

What is the government's response?

- In 2015, the Home Ministry notified Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) as a banned terrorist organisation.
- This was under the provisions of Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967.
- It stated that ISIS was involved in radicalisation and recruitment of vulnerable youths.
- Recently, the government included ISIS-K, also known as Islamic State in Khorasan Province (ISKP) or ISIS Wilayat Khorasan.
- This is a branch that is active in Afghanistan and Pakistan.
- The Indian security establishment has approached the issue of IS influence with caution.
- Some of the youth who were learnt to be eager to join IS are merely swayed by the IS online propaganda. It has attracted restless youth with video-game-like macabre videos.
- So realising the fact that they may not be fully radicalised given their clean background, India has taken the counselling approach.
- Many IS recruits have been counselled, made to go through a de-radicalisation programme and let off with a warning.
- These were done on slight detections of surfing IS's online material or apprehended while trying to migrate to Syria.
- India's approach had been positive given the fact of less recruits to the IS despite a very large Muslim population in India.
- Only those who were in the process of carrying out an attack or had made multiple attempts to go to Syria despite counselling were arrested.

How is Afghanistan becoming significant?

- The recently arrested Islamic State operative is an Afghan national.
- The IS is looking for new bases as its territory is shrinking in Iraq and Syria.
- Significantly, Afghanistan is one of the targeted countries.
- Afghanistan's Khorasan province, where many have migrated from Kerala, is being eyed.
- Notably, in 2016, 22 residents of Kerala, including 6 women and 3 children, reached an IS establishment in Afghanistan.
- Also, Pakistan-backed militant groups are suspected to use Afghanistan nationals to attack India in the name of the IS.
- In 2015, such groups had allegedly tried to make use of medical visas granted to Afghan nationals.

3.5 Pulwama Terror Attack - India's Security and Diplomatic Response

What is the recent attack?

- A CRPF convoy of 78 vehicles, carrying more than 2,500 jawans, was attacked on the Jammu-Srinagar highway.
- The Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) has claimed responsibility for the attack.

- It was carried out by a lone Jaish-e-Muhammad suicide bomber, who rammed a car carrying about 350 kg of explosives into the CRPF bus.
- JeM is also reportedly behind the 2001 Indian Parliament attack, 2016 Pathankot airbase attack that killed 7 security personnel, and 2016 Uri attack that killed 20 soldiers.
- A similar attack in Iran around the same time calls for waking up to the ideological powers at play in the region.

What is India's response?

- India has withdrawn the '**Most Favoured Nation**' (MFN) status given to Pakistan.
- The withdrawal decision is intended to isolate Pakistan diplomatically and restrict the country's industry.
- It is negative in terms of the bilateral relations between the two neighbours.
- But the impact on trade is less likely to be substantial as the volumes of merchandise trade are low.
- On the downside, it would give a push to the illegal trade between the two countries through border gaps and via third countries.

- It could also drive the extremist elements in Pakistan to promote the rhetoric against India.
- It was also indicated that the Ministry of External Affairs would initiate all possible diplomatic steps to ensure that Pakistan is isolated from the international community.

Restricting Civilian Movement in Jammu-Uri Highway during the movement of convoys of security forces.

- The Jammu-Srinagar-Uri national highway is the only road link between Jammu and Kashmir. It runs for nearly 370 km.
- It is estimated that over 9,500 vehicles including around 5,000 LMVs (Light Motor Vehicles) move on both sides on the highway every hour.
- Every day, at least 4 security convoys move on the highway. It increases during summer and it move only by day because of security concerns around night movement.
- If movement of civilian traffic were to be halted during convoy movement, it would mean closing each stretch, southern and northern, for at least 5 hours.
- **Other Alternatives - Airlifting** security forces personnel from Jammu to Kashmir would save travel time from 10 hours to 30 minutes, but would be very costly.

- Also, even in that case, the security personnel would have to be sent in convoys from Srinagar to South Kashmir or North Kashmir.

Rail - Currently, rail service is an eight-coach train that connects Banihal in Jammu to Baramulla in Kashmir.

- A train route would not only reduce travel time from over 5 hours to two-and-a-half hours, but also be relatively safer.
- The challenge is that security forces would have to maintain very tight vigil against any possible attacks.
- The railway line is secured by the Railway Protection Force, but the CRPF and Army personnel can possibly be deployed to secure the line for travel of security personnel.

MFN status

- It is given to an international trade partner, to ensure non-discriminatory trade between all partner countries of the WTO.
- A country which provides MFN status to another country has to provide concessions, privileges, and immunity in trade agreements.
- India had granted MFN status to Pakistan in 1996.
- Pakistan is yet to transition fully to MFN status for India.
- Instead of MFN, Pakistan came up with a dissimilar but globally popular Non-Discriminatory Market Access (NDMA) agreement.
- The reason Pakistan has chosen to adopt the NDMA with India is the political mistrust and a history of border conflicts.



- Now, 22 companies of CRPF and Army personnel in about the same numbers guard the Jammu-Srinagar-Baramulla highway during the day.

What does it call for from Pak and China?

- The attack's intent seems to be to provoke and polarise India.
- The Pakistan-based terrorist organisation Jaish-e-Mohammed has claimed responsibility for the attack.
- Pakistan bears the onus to explain why Masood Azhar, the leader of the Jaish-e-Mohammed, enjoys such freedoms on its territory.
- Certainly, diplomatic backing by Pakistan and China has defeated India's and others' efforts at the UN to put Azhar on the list of banned global terrorists.
- China now cannot evade questions about its previous blocking of action at the UN against Azhar.

What should India do?

- **Security** - The attack has perhaps taken the highest toll of security forces in any attack in the State.
- It has raised serious questions on intelligence gathering, dissemination and coordination in the Kashmir Valley.
- Investigations should yield a better picture on the security lapses.
- Effectively upgrading intelligence gathering and plugging security gaps, and winning the confidence of the local population in the Valley are vital.
- **Diplomacy** - India's response must not play into the perpetrator's plans with reflexive and precipitate official action.
- India has withdrawn the Most Favoured Nation status to Pakistan in a signal that could economically hamper Pakistan to an extent.
- While coercive diplomacy is likely to continue, to be effective, the effort needs a wider net.
- The effort must be to isolate Pakistan at the international arena for its support to the Jaish and seek substantive action.
- This is more crucial at a time when the U.S. is seeking Pakistan's help in concluding a deal with the Afghan Taliban.

What is the larger regional significance?

- A day before the Pulwama attack, there was an almost identical attack in Iran's Sistan-Balochistan province, which borders Pakistan.
- Troops of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, an elite arm of the Iran armed forces, were attacked and nearly 30 people were killed.
- The Jaish ul Adl (JuA) has claimed responsibility for this.
- While there are no apparent connections, JuA and JeM (behind Pulwama attack) are both ideologically linked, being Sunni extremist groups.
- Both have been mentored in Pakistan and both are based in Pakistan.
- JuA, with other Sunni sectarian groups, target the Shia Iran on religious grounds.
- Likewise, Sunni sectarian groups like Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, which operate in Pakistan's Balochistan target Shia minorities in the province.
- They have flourished in the region in the shelter provided by Afghan Taliban strongholds.
- Much like India's call for Pakistan shutting down Jaish-e-Mohammed, Iran has repeatedly asked Pakistan to crack down against the JuA.
- Both JeM and JuA deploying the well-known Taliban method of suicide car bombing indicates a complex jihadist networks working to destabilise the region.
- Both Iran and India now have crucial reasons to be attentive of the Pakistan-aided US-Taliban talks.

3.6 UN Statement on Pulwama Terror Attack

Why in news?

The UN Security Council (UNSC) adopted a 'statement' on February 21 condemning the Pulwama terrorist attack.

What was the February 21 statement?

- The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) strongly condemned the Pulwama terror attack.
- The Council mentioned the name of Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) terror group in the statement.
- It emphasized the need to hold the perpetrators, organizers, financiers and sponsors of these acts of terrorism accountable and bring them to justice.
- Reportedly, China made attempts to stall the statement for its reference to Jaish e Mohammed (JeM).
- However China too finally went with the statement.

What are the different actions that the UNSC can take?

- **Addressing the media** - The least forceful action the Council can take is to authorise the current President to speak to media representatives about the proceedings of the Council.
- There is no official record of these remarks.
- **Statement** - The second level is when the Council adopts a presidential statement.
- A lot of negotiations are undertaken as informal consultations in a Council chamber where only members of the Council are present.
- Of necessity, it has to be a 'consensus' document, and not a 'unanimous' one.
- This means that not all the members support everything included in it but go along since they do not have a serious problem with the text.
- Even if one member has strong objections to the text, the statement cannot be approved.
- The draft of the text could be prepared either by the President or by one of the members who, in most cases, is the representative of one of the permanent members.
- Also, the statement could be issued either in the name of the Council or in the name of 'members of the Security Council'.
- The former is generally regarded as carrying more weight than the latter.
- **Resolution** - The third level is the resolution, which is the most authentic voice of the Council, carrying maximum weight.
- Again, the resolution can be under Chapter VI or Chapter VII of the UN Charter.
- Resolutions adopted under Chapter VII are enforceable unlike those under Chapter VI (Resolutions regarding Kashmir are under Chapter VI).

What effect do these have?

- In practice, the country against which the resolution or statement is aimed cares a lot about the contents in it.
- This is because countries care about their image in the international community.
- E.g. Israel has the maximum number of resolutions critical of its actions.
- It makes tough efforts, through its protector, the U.S., to have the resolutions moderated to make them less critical.
- Notably, hours of time are spent on negotiations, discussing whether to 'condemn', 'deplore' or 'strongly deplore' something.

How significant is the February 21 statement?

- The UN Security Council has only adopted a presidential 'statement' on Pulwama attack and not a 'resolution' as is reported by some.
- The statement was in the name of the members of the Council.

- Though not ineffective, it is relatively lower in state than a statement that is issued in the name of the Council.
- A statement in the name of the members might also suggest that not all of them were in full agreement with the entire text.
- The fact that China went along with the statement does not signify much of a shift in its position.
- It's because, the Council had already declared the JeM as a terrorist organisation.
- The statement does not name JeM chief Masood Azhar whom India wants to list as a "global terrorist" at the UNSC.
- With these proper perspectives, India should take further its fight against terrorism, at the United Nations Security Council.

3.7 India's Air Strike on Pakistan

Why in news?

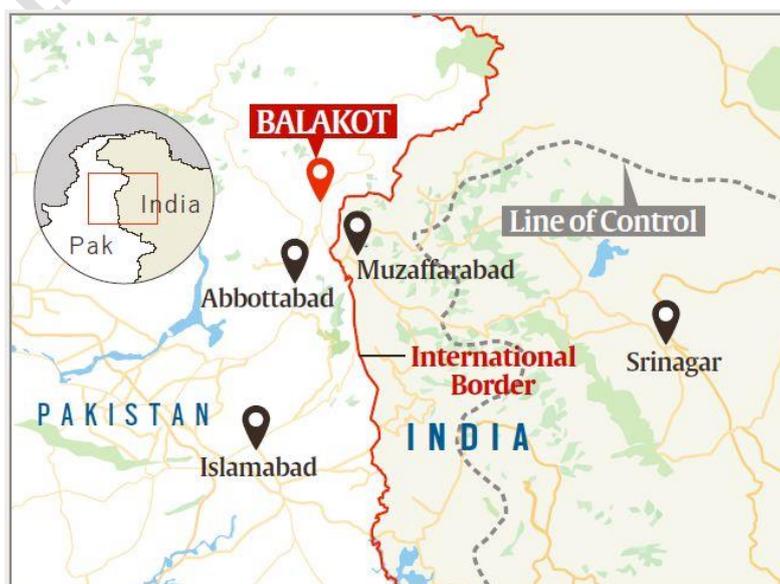
The Indian Air Force bombed the Jaish-e-Mohammad's biggest terror-training camp in Pakistan's Balakot.

What happened?

- Indian Air Force took a "non-military pre-emptive action" specifically targeted on a Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) terror training camp in Pakistan's Balakot.
- The camp is based 70 km inside the Line of Control (LoC), in the Pakistani province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.
- The operation was carried out by 12 Mirage-2000 fighter jets, which unleashed five one-tonne bombs on the camp.
- A large number of JeM terrorists, trainers, senior commanders and groups of jihadis who were being trained for fidayeen action were eliminated.
- The attack comes few days after 40 CRPF jawans were killed by a JeM suicide bomber in Pulwama, Jammu and Kashmir.
- Following this, Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan asked the armed forces and the people of Pakistan to remain prepared for all eventualities.

What is a "non-military pre-emptive strike"?

- Hitting a military target would be construed as an act of war; a "**Non-military**" non military strike means that a military target has not been hit.
- So Pakistan's military personnel and infrastructure were not targeted, and civilian casualties were avoided.
- - By calling it a pre-emptive action, India clarifies that it was an act of "**Pre-emptive**" self defence and not that of revenge.
- It indicates that the action was based on an assessment of an imminent threat.
- It was said that credible intelligence was received that JeM was attempting suicide terror attack in various parts of the country.
- In effect, the operation was an intelligence-driven counter-terror strike rather than escalatory military aggression.



Does this signal a shift in India's stance?

- The present strike was carried out in Pakistani territory, not in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir which had usually been the target for retaliatory action in the past.

- The decision to send Mirage jets across the Line of Control (LoC) to fire missiles 70 km inside Pakistan represents a major shift.
- Notably, during the 1999 Kargil war, Indian PM Vajpayee had drawn a red line over the IAF crossing the LoC, to avoid international accusation.
- It is yet to be seen how far the JeM has been set back by the present strike.
- But the strikes mark a shift in India's willingness to push the war against terror into Pakistan territory.
- All other options had been exhausted in making Islamabad keep its commitments since 2004 on curbing the activities of terror groups like the JeM.
- India takes note of the shift in global opinion and there is little tolerance today for terror groups that continue to find shelter on Pakistan soil.

What could Pakistan do?

- Pakistan PM Imran Khan has called for a joint session of Parliament and for its diplomats to raise the matter at international fora.
- He has convened a meeting of the National Command Authority that oversees Pakistan's nuclear policy.
- However, Pakistan's options are limited.
- It could continue to deny that the Indian strike caused any damage on the ground, and rule out the need for retaliatory strikes.
- Otherwise, it could escalate the situation with a military response.
- It could also make a break from its past, and begin to shut down the terror camps on its soil, which can certainly invite international appreciation and ensure peace in the region.

3.8 Waking Up to New Variants of Terrors - 26/11 Attack

What is the issue?

- It is ten years since the 26/11 Mumbai terror attack carried out by Pakistan in 2008.
- It is imperative that a relook at the Indian security establishment is taken, given the emergence of new variants of terror.

What are the recent instances of terror?

- India and Mumbai city are no strangers to terror.
- In 1993, over 250 people were killed in Mumbai in a series of coordinated bomb explosions.
- It was attributed to Dawood Ibrahim, reportedly as retaliation for the demolition of the Babri Masjid.
- In July 2006, bomb explosions in a number of suburban trains in Mumbai killed over 200 people and injured several more.
- The most audacious terror attack till the 26/11 Mumbai terror incident was the attack on the Indian Parliament in 2001.
- It was carried out by the Pakistan-based terror outfits, Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM).

What is the 21st Century scenario?

- Most of the 21st century terror attacks reflect a paradigmatic change in the tactics of asymmetric warfare, and the practice of violence.
- Terror attacks are being carried out across the world by al-Qaeda and its affiliates, the Islamic State, al-Shabaab, and similar terror outfits.
- They are certainly very different from those witnessed in the previous century.
- The 26/11 Mumbai terror attack is one of this kind and was an unprecedented exercise in violence.

What is the case with 26/11?

- It involved not merely a well-trained terrorist group, but also backed by the resources of a state, viz. Pakistan.

- It was a case of ‘war by other means’, in which the authorities in Pakistan, the Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate, the Pakistani armed forces, were involved.
- Seldom has any terrorist group used such highly sophisticated, state-of-the-art communications, including Voice over Internet Protocol.
- Planning for the attack involved the use of a third country address.
- Handlers in Pakistan were given unfettered freedom to provide instructions to the terrorists during the entire four-day siege.
- The choice of the sea route aimed at deception and avoiding detection was again dictated by official agencies.
- The training regimen dictated by the Pakistani Special Forces involved
 - i. psychological indoctrination by highlighting atrocities on Muslims in India and other parts of the globe
 - ii. basic and advanced combat training
 - iii. commando training, training in weapons and explosives, swimming and sailing
- A more unusual feature of the Mumbai attacks was the involvement of two U.S./Canadian nationals of Pakistani origin.
- They are David Headley (who at the time was a LeT operative) and Tahawwur Hussain Rana.
- The Mumbai terror attack went on for nearly four days, from the evening of November 26 to the morning of November 29.
- Seldom has a terrorist incident lasted this length of time, since the Munich Olympics massacre in 1972.
- From an Indian standpoint, it was perhaps for the first time that an operation of this nature involved
 - i. Rapid Action Force personnel
 - ii. Marine Commandos (MARCOS)
 - iii. the National Security Guard (NSG)
 - iv. the Mumbai Police
- As is now known, the Mumbai terror attack was not based on a sudden impulse.
- Several years of planning and preparation had preceded the attack, even as the Pakistani President, Pervez Musharraf, was talking peace with then Indian Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh.

What were the shortfalls?

- The Indian security establishment had failed to anticipate an attack of this nature and was not adequately prepared to deal with the situation.
- Secrecy was the very essence of this operation as plans were limited to a mere handful of persons.
- In the LeT hierarchy, apart from Hafiz Sayeed, only a few like Zakiur Rehman Lakhvi (chief military commander), Sajid Mir and Zarar Shah (communications chief) were privy to the operational plans.
- U.S. intelligence is said to have penetrated Zarar Shah’s computer and possibly had far more details of the operation than were actually shared with Indian intelligence.

What are the subsequent measures?

- In the wake of the terror attack, several steps were initiated to streamline the security set-up.
- Coastal security was given high priority, and it is with the Navy/Coast Guard/marine police.
- A specialised agency to deal with terrorist offences, the National Investigation Agency, was set up and has been functioning from 2009.
- The National Intelligence Grid (NATGRID) has been constituted to create an appropriate database of security related information.
- Four new operational hubs for the NSG (National Security Guard) have been created to ensure rapid response to terror attacks.

- The Multi Agency Centre, which functions under the Intelligence Bureau, was further strengthened and its activities expanded.
- The Navy constituted a Joint Operations Centre to keep vigil over India's extended coastline.

What lies ahead?

- Newer methodologies, newer daringly-executed concepts, and deeply laid plans of terrorist groups are a ground reality.
- So terrorism continues to be a major threat with modern refinements and terrorism mutating into a global franchise.
- One new variant is the concept of 'enabled terror' or 'remote controlled terror', viz. violence conceived and guided by a controller thousands of miles away.
- Internet-enabled terrorism and resort to remote plotting is thus the new threat.
- There are no ready-made answers to this; vigilance is important, but being ahead of these new age terror is even more vital.

3.9 India's anti-Terror laws

What is the issue?

- Recently, Maharashtra police arrested 5 prominent human rights activists on charges based on the stringent "Unlawful Activities Prevention Act" (UAPA).
- In this context, it would be pertinent to look into how India's anti-terror laws evolved over the years.

What are the main anti-terror laws in India?

TADA

- Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act, 1987, was at one time the main law used in cases of terrorism and organised crime.
- But due to rampant misuse, it was allowed to lapse in 1995.
- The Act defined what "terrorist act" and "disruptive activities" mean, and put restrictions on the grant of bail.
- It also gave enhanced power to detain suspects and attach properties.
- The law made "confessions given to a police officer" admissible as evidence.
- Separate courts were set up to hear cases filed under TADA.

POTA

- In wake of the 1999 IC-814 hijack and 2001 Parliament attack, there was a clamour for a more stringent anti-terror law.
- This came in the form of "Prevention of Terrorism Act" (POTA), 2002.
- A suspect could be detained for up to 180 days by a special court.
- The law made fundraising for the purpose of terrorism a "terrorist act".
- A separate chapter to deal with terrorist organisations was included.
- Union government was mandated to maintain a list of organised that would fall under the act's radar and had full authority to make additions or removals.
- However, reports of gross misuse of the Act by some state governments led to its repeal in 2004.

UAPA

- **Strengthening** - In 2004, the government chose to strengthen the "Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967, in accordance with international standards.
- It was amended to overcome some of the difficulties in its enforcement and to update it to match "Financial Action Task Force" (international) guidelines.

- By inserting specific chapters, the amendment criminalised the raising of funds for a terrorist act, and holding of the proceeds of terrorism.
- Membership of a terrorist organisation, support to a terrorist organisation, and the raising of funds for a terrorist organisation were also made a crime.
- It increased the time available to law-enforcement agencies to file a charge sheet to six months from three.
- **Further** - The law was again amended in 2008 after the Mumbai Serial attacks, and again in 2012 to make it more comprehensive.
- The definition of “terrorist act” was expanded to include offences that threaten economic security, and counterfeiting Indian currency.
- Procurement of weapons was also made a crime under the act.
- Additional powers were granted to courts to provide for attachment or forfeiture of property or the proceeds of terrorism involved in the offence.

What is “Financial Action Task Force” (FATF)?

- FATF is an inter-governmental organisation set up in 1989 to develop policies to combat money laundering and terrorist financing.
- India got FATF membership in 2010 on the assurance that it would make suitable amendments in the Act by March 2012.

3.10 India's Shifting Position on Taliban

What is the issue?

- India sent two former diplomats as “non-official” participants at the recent “Moscow format” multilateral meeting that included Taliban delegates.
- Indian government-nominated representatives sharing the table with a Taliban delegation for the first time is notable.

What is Afghanistan's stance?

- Afghanistan did not send delegates from its foreign ministry, but from the Afghan High Peace Council (HPC).
- They were joined by the Ambassador to Russia.
- The HPC is a government-appointed forum tasked with the peace and reconciliation process.
- India is understood to have consulted Kabul about the level of its participation.
- The Indian representatives did not make a statement at the meeting.

What was India's traditional position?

- India was among the countries that had refused to recognise the Taliban regime of 1996-2001.
- India watched Taliban's growth with concern, assessing early that it was being driven by Pakistan's army and the ISI.
- The Kandahar hijack of Indian Airlines flight IC-814 forced India to negotiate.
- At other times, it supported anti-Taliban forces in Afghanistan.
- Throughout the 1990s, India gave military and financial assistance to the Northern Alliance fighting the Pakistan-sponsored Taliban regime in Afghanistan.
- Meanwhile the 9/11 attacks and the US crackdown leading to the fall of the Taliban regime took place.
- When the Taliban re-emerged in 2006-07 to once again challenge US forces, India maintained it was not going to talk with the Taliban.

What was the further development?

- The Taliban grew in strength, and the US decided to withdraw troops by 2009.
- So the Afghan government reached out to the Taliban with a peace and reconciliation process.

- In the International Conference on Afghanistan in London in 2010, India made a quiet shift.
- It said it is for the elected Afghanistan government to draw the “red lines” - the terms for negotiating with the Taliban.
- [The red lines are the rights of the people, especially women’s rights, the right to education, the democratic process all of which are enshrined in constitution.
- The “red lines” had defined the Kabul-Taliban negotiations and these will not be compromised during the talks.]
- The Afghan government had stated that the Taliban must accept the Afghan Constitution.
- It called for it to renounce violence and sever all ties with al-Qaeda and other terrorist organisations.
- This was endorsed during the International Conference. That was the first diplomatic opening.
- Although India would not directly talk to Taliban, this shift meant it was approving the outreach if the Taliban adhered to these red lines.

What is the significance of the recent move?

- Over the last couple of years, the US, China and Russia brokered reconciliation and peace talks between the Afghan government and the Taliban.
- With this, India stopped public articulation and insisting on the “red lines”.
- It just insisted that the peace process be “Afghan-led” and “Afghan-owned”.
- But it is felt that the current efforts as the Moscow format meeting are not being “Afghan-led”; Russians or the Americans are taking the lead.
- India’s participation, however, is crucial, even though it is at a non-official level.

3.11 Extension of Ban on LTTE

Why in news?

The Centre recently extended the ban on the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) for another 5 years under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 (UAPA).

What is the UAP Act?

- The Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 (UAPA) is India’s primary anti-terror law.
- It provides for effective prevention of certain unlawful activities of individuals and associations.
- It helps deal with terrorist activities, and for matters connected therewith.
- Section 3 of the UAPA deals with the declaration of an association as unlawful.
- It specifies that notifications by the government making such a declaration shall specify the grounds on which it is issued.
- The notification shall also contain such other particulars as the Central government may consider necessary.

What is the recent decision?

- The ban on LTTE is extended under sub-sections (1) and (3) of Section 3 of the UAPA with immediate effect.
- The notification noted that LTTE's continued violent and disruptive activities are prejudicial to the integrity and sovereignty of India.
- It continues to adopt a strong anti-India posture as also continues to pose a grave threat to the security of Indian nationals.
- Organisations banned by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) under Section 3 of the UAPA are listed in the First Schedule of the Act.
- The latest version of the list contains 41 entries, including, apart from the LTTE, Khalistani terrorist organisations, Pakistan-based terror groups, Islamic State or Daesh, and Indian Mujahideen.

- It also includes some Northeastern militant organisations, Kashmiri separatist organisations, Maoist groups, and the Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI).

Who are the LTTEs?

- The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) was founded in 1976 by Velupillai Prabhakaran.
- The goal of the organisation was creating an independent Tamil Eelam out of Sri Lanka.
- With this motive, the LTTE constantly clashed with the Sri Lankan military.
- In the early 1980s, it launched a full-scale nationalist insurgency in the north and east of the country.
- It carried out a string of major terrorist attacks against both military and civilian targets.

How has India and LTTE been?

- India's relationship with the LTTE had been complex.
- It has ranged from providing support to the guerrillas initially to sending the Indian Peacekeeping Force (IPKF) to support Sri Lanka from 1987 to 1990.
- The LTTE pioneered suicide bombing as a weapon of terror.
- In 1991, an LTTE suicide bomber killed former Indian PM Rajiv Gandhi in an attack on Indian soil.
- India first banned the LTTE after the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi; the ban was last extended for five years in 2014.

How is the terrorist orientation?

- Among the other high-profile assassinations carried out by LTTE was that of the Sri Lankan President Ranasinghe Premadasa in 1993.
- The LTTE is also said to have freely used women and children in combat.
- At its peak, the LTTE covered over three-quarters of Sri Lanka's northern and eastern provinces.
- The organisation was finally crushed in a military offensive by the government of President Mahinda Rajapaksa in 2009.
- The LTTE was designated as a terrorist organisation by 32 countries, including, besides India, the U.S., Canada, and the EU.
- The US designated the LTTE as a Foreign Terrorist Organisation (FTO) in 1997.

4. ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND INTERNAL SECURITY CHALLENGES

4.1 Facebook Data Breach

Why in news?

Facebook has put out more details about the data breach that happened between July 2017 and September 2018.

What is the recent picture on data breach?

- Facebook has claimed that fewer users - 30 million, not 50 million - had their access tokens stolen by exploiting 400,000 accounts.
- But crucially, the new revelation is that 15 million of the 30 had their name and contact details (phone numbers or e-mails) stolen.
- This was depending on what people had on their profiles.
- Another 14 million had details like gender, relationship status, their birth date, recent searches, and the last 10 places the person had checked into or were tagged in stolen.
- This was along with name and contact details like others.
- Just 1 million of the 30 had none of their data compromised.
- But Messenger, Messenger Kids, Instagram, WhatsApp, Oculus, Workplace, Pages, payments, third-party apps, or advertising or developer accounts have not been affected.

How was it done?

- The attackers moved from account to account using an automated script collecting tokens.
- This was done by repeatedly exploiting the vulnerability using access tokens for about 400,000 people.
- The attackers then used the list of friends they collected to “eventually steal access tokens for about 30 million people.
- So starting with the accounts they controlled directly, they moved to their friends and to their friends’ friends, and so forth.
- The attackers could see things about users like-
 - i. posts on their Timelines
 - ii. their list of Friends
 - iii. groups they’re members of
 - iv. the names of some recent Messenger conversations
- Facebook claims that the message content was not available to attackers.
- But even this could have been seen if the person was Page admin and had received a message from someone.

4.2 Facebook Takedown of Indian Pages

Why in news?

Facebook recently removed four networks of groups, pages and accounts from India and Pakistan.

What are the proposed reasons?

- Three of the four networks removed were taken down for “coordinated inauthentic behaviour” (CIB).
- Two of the India networks, one each linked to the Congress and BJP, had been on Facebook’s radar for over two months because of this.
- CIB refers to an orchestrated set of platform violations operated by a single common entity or source.
- Another Indian network was taken down for what Facebook describes as a “civic spam”.
- In this case, there were no common linkages between the individual pages, and these pages were not “coordinated”.
- But regardless of the existence of a common source, the signals and violations in both categories are similar, which included-
 - i. single user with multiple accounts (SUMA)
 - ii. spamming behaviour
 - iii. clickbait behaviour
 - iv. location obfuscation
 - v. content or ad farms
- Content or ad farms are websites and pages with large amounts of low-quality content, typically to make money, which appear high on search engines.

What were the networks taken down?

- **Congress’s Gujarat IT cell** - Facebook linked one CIB India network to the Congress’s Gujarat IT cell.
- Initially the platform’s algorithms repeatedly flagged and took down multiple accounts.
- The company traced these accounts to an IP hub in the party’s Gujarat IT Cell.
- Most of the accounts exhibited bot-like behaviour, rather than human efforts.
- **Silver Touch Technologies** - The other Indian CIB network was linked to the company Silver Touch Technologies, with special focus on a BJP-leaning page called India Eye.

- Facebook says the page, with 2.6 million followers and \$70,000 in ad spending, was hiding its location and using a fake name.
- Facebook matched the admins to Silver Touch, and took down the page.
- Facebook saw no formal connections between Silver Touch and BJP in the back-end network.
- But Silver Touch has worked for both the ruling party and the government on IT solutions.
- **Civic scam** - In this case, Facebook's algorithms did most of the detection of violations and displayed the number of violations per page.
- With little human investigation, the technologists looked at those numbers and decided which pages to take down.
- As the violators in this category are often small players with a small number of followers, Facebook's policy is to not disclose their identity.
- But a majority of the pages in this category were political.
- **Pakistan** - The CIB takedown in Pakistan was of a network that linked back to the country's military media wing.
- Amongst other tactics, an online group of Pakistanis disguised themselves as Kashmiris who were aggrieved by the Indian Army.
- This violated the location policies according to Facebook.

What are the concerns with the move?

- **Free speech** - Facebook's decision was based on its assessment that the people involved coordinated with one another and used fake accounts.
- They misrepresented themselves with the objective of manipulating people.
- It may seem to be a credible step by the social media platform to deal with fake news and communal propaganda.
- But the problem with this approach is that it could suppress the right to free speech.
- **Wrong precedent** - While taking down the pages, Facebook has based its action on user behaviour, and not the content they posted.
- In future, pages related to political dissent or a social campaign could be taken down just because they do not comply with Facebook's rules.
- This could set a disquieting precedent, and defeat the very purpose of the platform being a medium for exchange of ideas.

Who should regulate these?

- **Media platforms?** - Social media platform owners can have the right to decide what goes in and what's taken down.
- But a media outlet like Facebook cannot be treated like any other private entity.
- Facebook exerts immense influence on the social, economic and political outcomes of a country.
- So such a platform cannot be trusted to do its own policing.
- **Government?** - As the government is armed with draconian powers such as defamation and sedition laws, free speech has already taken a hit.
- India has been among the top countries in blocking politically inconvenient websites of foreign NGOs, UN organisations and activists.
- In China, the government lays down the rules for social media, and this has not been conducive to free speech in any way.

What can be done?

- Facebook's decision exposes the systemic flaws when it comes to policing social media platforms.
- The challenge of the day is to strike a balance between free speech and hate speech.

- So an independent regulatory body, rather than the media platform or government, should monitor content on social media platforms.
- If Facebook is allowed to increase its censorship powers on its own, it could lead to inconsistency and duplicities.
- If it is really serious about fighting spam and fake news, it should first remove the cover of anonymity of users.
- The shroud of anonymity gives anti-social elements the courage to spread hate and disharmony.
- Moreover, there should be no ambiguity regarding the grounds for taking down an account.
- The guidelines for this should be clearly spelt out in the interest of transparency and consistency.

4.3 Need for Institutional reform – Facebook

What is the issue?

Individual users' privacy cannot be safeguarded on platforms such as Facebook without institutional reform.

What is the recent criticism made against Facebook?

- The New York Times recently documented that Facebook had granted its business partners, including Microsoft and Amazon, more intrusive access to user data than it had divulged.
- Some deals permitted access even to private chats, allowing data access without users' permission.
- These Business partners were given more intrusive access to user data than Facebook has ever disclosed.
- In turn, the deals helped Facebook bring in new users, encourage them to use the social network more often, and drive up advertising revenue.

What were the larger concerns made earlier?

- **Free Basics issue** - Free Basics is an open platform launched by the Facebook that allows free access to certain websites and internet services to those users who cannot afford internet access.
- However, free access is limited to selected partner websites and applications.
- Facebook says that Free Basics was launched with a philanthropic motive to provide free digital access to poorer sections of the society in India.
- However, this deal was opposed on grounds of net neutrality by those who recognised that Facebook would become a gatekeeper to the Internet.
- Facebook was also not clearly stating how it would use the personal data of users on the Free Basics platform.
- Subsequently, the telecom regulator imposed ban on Free Basics in India.
- **WhatsApp acquisition issue** - Facebook changed its privacy policy after acquiring WhatsApp, with effect from September 2016.
- The change allowed sharing a user's metadata between WhatsApp and Facebook, without clearly explaining what was being shared and how it was being used.
- These changes to the terms of service were challenged in a public interest petition in the Delhi High Court.
- However, the HC dismissed this legal challenge, since the fundamental right to privacy was not upheld as a fundamental right at that point in time.
- The judgement was appealed against in the Supreme Court and subsequently the SC announced that a Constitution Bench would be constituted in this regard.
- The government submitted that it had constituted a data protection committee headed by B.N. Srikrishna, on the same issue.
- This has created delay in the hearing and the WhatsApp-Facebook case is still pending in the Supreme Court.
- **Cambridge Analytica issue** - Cambridge Analytica, a data analytics company, managed to harvest data from Facebook users.
- This was used to build psychological profiles of more than 50 million individuals.

- A whistle-blower has uncovered it all, highlighting the commercial nexus between Analytica and US politicians.
- This was particularly aimed at influencing their voting preferences and the outcome of elections.
- A company called Global Science Research (GSR) used a personality App with the permission of Facebook, for supposedly academic research purposes.
- With the help of this, a psychology lecturer at Cambridge University managed to harvest data.
- Data of millions of FB subscribers who used the personality App was sold for presidential campaign.
- FB admitted that though GSR gained access in a legitimate manner, it allegedly violated the rules of agreement.
- A Cambridge Analytica whistle-blower also pointed suspicion to the Indian elections by the Indian National Congress.
- The matter was referred to the Central Bureau of Investigation, which launched a preliminary investigation in September 2018.
- Till date, there is little public information on movement in this investigation.

What should be done?

- India has the second highest number of Internet users in the world.
- Facebook, despite its unethical conduct, is of enduring value to millions of Indians.
- However, India has little to show as a country in investigatory outcomes, measured regulatory responses or parliamentary processes which safeguard users.
- Lack of institutional capacity to respond to these challenges is the underlying cause for our deficient national response.
- Thus, to properly harness digitisation, India needs to develop and prioritise institutions of governance to protect users.
- This must start immediately with a strong, rights-protecting, comprehensive privacy law.

4.4 Easing Online Data Anxiety

What is the issue?

- The breach of multiple data bases and the increasing frequency of online theft have created a fear psychosis among the masses worldwide.
- Dispelling anxieties on sharing data online is vital for enhancing internet's utility as a tool for progress.

What are some metrics on cyber security?

- According to a digital security report, a 783% increase in cases of data theft in India was noticed in 2017.
- Most compromised or stolen records belonged to the government, which was followed by the retail and technology sectors.
- Globally, sectors which were hit the most by data theft in 2017 were healthcare (27%), financial services (12%), education (11%) and government (11%).
- The most number of records lost, stolen or compromised was noticed in data bases of - government (18%), financial services (9%) and technology (16%).
- Additionally, RBI reported a 35% increase in credit, debit card and net banking related fraud since 2013-16 (12,000 cases in 2016).

What are the implications of these incidences?

- The cumulative effect of reported security breaches is that a sense of mistrust is taking shape among Internet users regarding data.
- Reports suggest that a significant number of users have shown unwillingness in sharing basic data like name, location etc, on 3rd party applications.



- A considerable number of people are said to have reduced sharing data across platforms after the “Facebook - Cambridge Analytica” fiasco.
- Also, 6% stopped Internet transactions while 28% of users reduced such transactions and 42% reported that they had become “more cautious”.

What is the way ahead?

- India’s Internet users expected to hit the 500 million mark this year, and the fear of sharing data online is also growing.
- Government’s potency to prevent data abuse and cyber crime should build confidence among the masses for them to overcome their anxiety.
- As a first step, the government should implement the Supreme Court verdict that upheld privacy as a fundamental right.

4.5 Fake News Crackdown - The Flaws

What is the issue?

- The onus for curtailing the fake news menace is disproportionately being shifted on the social media platforms.
- It needs to be recognized that a collaborative approach addressing both the technology and social sides is needed.

Why is the government’s approach to address the problem flawed?

- Fake news and rumour mongering through social media has reached epic proportions in recent times with deadly consequences.
- In this context, the government has adopted a flawed approach in resolving the ongoing security crisis due to fake news being circulated on social media.
- Notably, social media platforms like WhatsApp are being disproportionately pressured into accepting the blame for the malice.
- They are also being burdened with finding a solution for mob lynching incidences, which isn’t their main domain.
- Further, in their focus to trace the origin of fake news, government has been calling for undoing the encryption, which might violate the privacy of millions.
- Notably, as user data is highly sought after by unscrupulous elements, it is important to have a system that is completely encrypted end-to-end.

What is the government’s stand on data privacy?

- Policy makers have taken a contradictory stance with regard to data issues.
- On one hand they want digital players such as Facebook to plug data leaks but on the other they are asking WhatsApp to give access to specific user data.
- Even more dangerous is the attempts by the Centre to block applications such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram and Telegram on security grounds.
- If such a mechanism is put in place, there is always the possibility of regimes misusing the system to bulldoze privacy and freedom of speech.

What is the way ahead?

- Rather than deploying strong-arm tactics on technology providers alone, the Centre needs to try addressing problem at the consumer end too.
- The Centre itself needs to send strong signals that it is serious about addressing rumour mongering and lynching incidences.
- This can be done by seriously pursuing those who have already been caught pushing out fake messages to cause social disharmony.
- The State policing machinery has to be empowered to catch anyone responsible for circulating fake messages, irrespective of political affiliations.



- On their part, technology companies should do more in creating awareness and educating users about fake messages.
- WhatsApp is coming up with various innovative ideas to curtail the spread of fake news, but much remains to be done in this regard.

4.6 Preventing Misuse of WhatsApp

What is the issue?

- There has been a spate of mob violence and lynching across the country due to fear generated by rumours shared on social media platforms.
- Of all the platforms, WhatsApp is proving the most challenging for investigators due to its strong privacy policy.

What makes WhatsApp different?

- All social media platforms struggle with rumours and misinformation, which are spread through posts as well as direct messages.
- **Messaging** - While posts can be tracked, messaging services do not leave a trail, making it difficult to track the origin and spread of data.
- Nonetheless, in most messaging services, information is stored in the parent server and police can request companies to share IP details if needed.
- But contrarily, WhatsApp communications are “end-to-end encrypted” and information is stored in the devices of users and not on a common server.
- **Instant** - This means, WhatsApp’s servers handle only “encoded messages in transit”, which can be decoded only in the receiver’s device.
- Also, even the encrypted messages are deleted once they are delivered at the receiver’s end, thereby leaving no trace within WhatsApp’s apparatus.
- This implies, even WhatsApp doesn’t know what is being disseminated through its platform and hence can’t provide investigating agencies with information.
- **Delayed** - If a message cannot be delivered immediately (e.g. if the receiver is offline), then WhatsApp’s servers are said to retain messages for 30 days.
- But if a message is still undelivered after 30 days, it is nonetheless deleted without a trace.

How have WhatsApp based cases been handled thus far?

- Maharashtra Cops claim to have tracked down the source in a few cases where the posts had been shared just a few times.
- Their “modus operandi” was largely conventional (non technological), and they followed the sender-receiver trail manually by interrogating the entire chain.
- Such an approach has already proved futile when forwarded messages had gone viral with millions of shares.
- Hence, if metadata is deleted like in WhatsApp, it is almost impossible to track the trail of forwards beyond a few users.
- Notably, metadata means – information like “user name, device info, log-in time” and other specifics, which are used for enabling the service function.

How is WhatsApp trying to prevent the misuse of its platform?

Research:

- WhatsApp has stated that the company is trying to learn more about the way misinformation spreads on its platform.
- **Data Analysis** - Its current spree of research is through the amount of metadata that the company gets access to while transmitting messages.
- The drive is largely focused on understanding when spam is being spread intentionally and when it is happening unintentionally.



- **Collaboration** - WhatsApp is also seeking to collaborate with various other organisations and governments to arrive at a solution to the current malice.
- Nonetheless, WhatsApp has asserted its unfettered commitment to user privacy and encrypted instant message delivery without data retention.

Framing Fixes:

- At the moment, WhatsApp is working on a mix of in-platform fixes and off-platform intervention.
- **Internal Fixes** - Within the platform it planning to give more authority to group administrators for restricting publishing in the group.
- A forward label (which marks forwarded messages) is in beta testing, and an option for flagging doubtful forwarded content is also being considered.
- Resources like fact-checking websites for verifying content are also being developed in parallel.
- **External Fixes** - Off-platform, it is expected to initiate measures to educate people about the perils of misinformation and ways to identify them.

What are some actions governments worldwide have taken?

- **Liability** - In India, authorities can book group administrators if they are found endorsing false malicious content.
- But as the admin has no control over what other people in the group will post, he/she is not liable for action if he is a mere spectator.
- **Awareness** - Group admins are expected to inform any member posting misinformation about the consequences and restrain them from doing so.
- Government officials too have taken out awareness campaigns to educate the masses on the perils of fake information.
- In Mexico, private groups collaborated to set up Verificado 2018, a fact-checking initiative, to disrupt the spread of fake news.
- **Curtailments** - Many nations (including India) have restricted internet during times of unrest, primarily to block ill intentioned WhatsApp campaigns.
- Uganda has introduced a social media tax as check on online gossip.

5. CYBER SECURITY

5.1 Countering the Surveillance State

What is the issue?

- Over the past few years, the government has taken several steps to enhance its capacity to monitor citizens through various structures.
- This has led to apprehensions of India becoming a surveillance state due to the government's growing powers to spy on citizens.

What are the significant government moves to establish surveillance?

- **Home Ministry** - The ministry recently stated its intention to create a centralised nationwide database of fingerprints of criminals.
- This is part of the proposed "Crime and Criminal Tracking Network System" (CCTNS), which also plans to include face recognition capability.
- There are also reports of the ministry seeking access to the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) biometric database.
- **SEBI** - Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) had set up a panel to review the regulatory powers of it and recommend improvements.
- The panel recently recommended that SEBI be given powers to wiretap and record phone calls in order to enhance its ability to monitor insider trading.



- **Cyber Space** - The Netra (Network Traffic Analysis) system for internet monitoring has been operational for several years.
- But its exact capabilities are unknown since it is shielded from the Right to Information Act owing to security implications.
- Further, the government had also mooted creating a social media monitoring hub in order to enable “360-degree monitoring” of the social media activity.
- This was put on hold only after the Supreme Court (SC) observed that it would be akin to “creating a surveillance state”.

What are the implications?

- The above cases effectively mean that the SC judgment recognising the right to privacy as a fundamental right is being undermined in practice.
- Until there are specific laws limiting the surveillance powers of governments, the surveillance activities of the state will likely proliferate.
- But the recent data protection legislation as suggested by the Srikrishna Committee provides too much leeway for the government for surveillance.
- More significantly, even already existing rules limiting the state’s powers to infringe on a citizen’s privacy are not followed in letter and spirit.
- For instance, although wiretaps are supposed to be authorised only by senior officials for specific purposes, they are done on a truly massive scale.

What is the way ahead?

- As the years roll by since technological advances are likely to make surveillance systems even more invasive and efficient.
- But technical solutions are also being evolved to better rationalise our ability to share data online like the MIT’s “Social Linked Data (Solid)” project.
- However, the mere existence of technology will not prevent the government from coercively collecting data, and laws are needed for curbing them.
- While the state needs to create such capabilities for legitimate reasons, each case of surveillance must be justified by high profile requests.
- Moreover, the right to forget regulations need to be strengthened so that citizens can ask for data to be deleted from government databases.

5.2 Cybersecurity concerns – Huawei case

What is the issue?

The Huawei episode raises serious concerns over issues that are relevant to international business and trade.

What is the background?

- One of the world’s largest telecom companies, Huawei, is at war with a few powerful western nations led by the United States.
- Recently, the chief financial officer (CFO) of Huawei Ms. Meng was arrested in Canada for allegedly breaking U.S. sanctions on Iran by way of bank frauds.
- The CFO is alleged to have tricked financial institutions into making transactions that violated US sanctions against Iran.
- Thus, the U.S had asked Canada to detain her.
- A Canadian court has granted her bail, but she could face extradition to the U.S.
- The incident, which has led to an uproar in China, has left Canada embarrassed, as any decision will have a bearing on its ties with Beijing.

What are the charges made against Huawei?

- China, along with Russia, has long been suspect in the eyes of the West for spying.
- The basis for this being proven instances of online attacks and unestablished cases of breaches in western computer systems.
- In the case of Huawei, the western line is that as it is a corporation close to the Chinese establishment, its activities cannot be purely technological and commercial.
- They had also alleged that the founder of Huawei has links with the People's Liberation Army (PLA).
- The specific charge against Huawei is that in every piece of hardware sold by it, there are microchips and devices that provide substantial information to the Chinese authorities.
- However, there has been no major irrefutable evidence communicated to the rest of the world to substantiate this charge.
- Western agencies say that Huawei is so smart and skilful that it is impossible to find out such evidence.
- But Huawei has dismissed the charges against it as fanciful and motivated by the U.S.

What does the conflict reveal?

- The conflict between China and the West, especially the U.S., raises serious concerns over issues with respect to international business and trade.
- The first is its impact on the troubled state of international relations and international law that operates in such cases.
- Some experts cite the concept of 'long-arm jurisdiction' in support of the U.S. action.
- Such jurisdiction empowers a nation to enforce its laws and rules over foreign entities, generally through courts.
- However, this concept has a political colour to it and, therefore becomes questionable in cases such as Ms. Meng's arrest.
- There is also the issue of the apparent ease and arbitrariness with which a nation determined to outwit a rival can hit the latter hard.
- The detention of Ms. Meng was obviously meant to send out a signal not only to China but also to prospective violators of U.S. sanctions.
- The case also reveals that a nation acting so peremptorily may have to brace itself to meet retaliatory action by the targeted nation.
- Also, there does not seem to be an ethical set of rules, if one country violates the permitted sanctions.
- Thus there is a need for a protocol between nations in the area of criminal justice.
- Also, there is a continued fragility of cybersecurity as far as the average computer user is concerned.
- Breaches even in highly protected environments across the globe hardly instil confidence in ordinary customers.
- There is, therefore, a growing reluctance on the part of many large corporations to invest more in cybersecurity.
- This has led to a view that one should not be unduly agitated over inevitable cyberattacks, as long as they do not cause major loss, economic or reputational.

5.3 Surveillance in India

What law covers tapping phones/computers?

- Lawful interception of phones and computers can be done by the governments at the Centre and in the states under Section 5(2) of the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885.
- If it is done illegally, it is punishable under sections 25 & 26 that provide for imprisonment up to three years, with or without a fine.

When is tapping by the government lawful or illegal?

- The Supreme Court laid down the following guidelines in this regard in the **PUCL vs Union of India** case.
- Section 5(2) of ITA,1985 does not confer unguided and unbridled power on investigating agencies to invade a person's privacy.
- Tapping of telephones is prohibited without an authorising order from the Home Secretary of the Union government or of the state government concerned.
- The order unless is valid for two months and if renewed, it cannot remain in operation beyond six months.
- Phone tapping or interception of communications must be limited to the address specified in the order or to addresses likely to be used by a person specified in the order.
- All copies of the intercepted material must be destroyed as soon as their retention is not necessary under Section 5(2).

Who oversees if interception is done without misuse of powers?

- There is no judicial or parliamentary oversight to review cases of lawful interception.
- However, the orders of the competent authority clearing lawful interception are reviewed by a review committee at both the central and state levels under Rule 419-A of the Indian Telegraph Rules, 1951.
- The review committee investigates whether its passing is relevant within two months of an order.
- Rule 419-A also provides for the procedure and precautions for handling lawful interception cases to ensure that unauthorised interception does not take place.

What are the rules for monitoring of emails and social media content?

- This is done by invoking the provisions of “public emergency”, “interest of sovereignty” or “integrity of India”.
- Under Section 69 of the IT Act, 2008, the central and state governments are empowered to issue directions to intercept, monitor, or decrypt any information generated, transmitted, received or stored in any computer resources.
- Accordingly, the Ministry of Home Affairs in 2011 issued standard operating procedures (SOPs) to law enforcement agencies.
- The Department of Telecom has also issued SOPs for lawful interception to the telecom service providers.

What does the SOP contain?

- It requires setting up of an internal evaluation cell that will examine a monthly statement from law-enforcement agencies on the fifth of succeeding month.
- These statements are to detail the authorisation orders received for interception, numbers and emails intercepted including period of interception, number of telephones and emails authorised but not intercepted, etc.
- The SoPs also mention the need for destruction of data and phone-tapping records beyond six months.
- It further says that for surveillance in remote areas, the competent authority should be informed within 3 days and permission must be obtained in 7 days, failing which the interception will not be valid.

5.4 MHA Notification on Computer Surveillance

Why in news?

Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) recently issued a notification authorising 10 central agencies to intercept information related to computer resource.

What does the notification say?

- The government authorised 10 central agencies to intercept, monitor and decrypt any information generated, transmitted, received or stored in any computer in the country.
- These agencies include Intelligence Bureau, Narcotics Control Bureau, Enforcement Directorate, Central Board of Direct Taxes, Directorate of Revenue Intelligence, CBI, NIA, Cabinet Secretariat (RAW), Directorate of Signal Intelligence and the Commissioner of Police, Delhi.

- The order is facilitated under sub-section 1 of the section 69 of the IT Act, read with rule 4 of the Information Technology Rules, 2009.
- The IT Act allows the authorities to decrypt information if it is in the interest of –
 1. The sovereignty or integrity of India
 2. The security of the State
 3. Friendly relations with foreign States
 4. Public order
 5. Preventing incitement to the commission of any cognisable offence.
- The IT rules states that a competent authority can authorise a government agency to intercept, monitor or decrypt information generated, transmitted, received or stored in any computer resource.
- However, opposition leaders and experts have called it “unconstitutional” and “an assault on fundamental rights”.

What is the clarification given by the Home Ministry?

- The notification is aimed at ensuring that any interception, monitoring or decryption of any information through any computer resource is done in accordance with due process of law.
- It is also aimed at preventing any unauthorized use of these powers by any agency, individual or intermediary.
- All agencies will have to take the approval of the Home Secretary before intercepting or monitoring data stored in computer.
- These powers are also available to the competent authority in the State governments as per IT Rules 2009.
- The order is in accordance with rules already framed in 2009 and hence no new power has been conferred to any of the security or law enforcement agencies.
- Also, similar provisions and procedures already exist in the Telegraph Act along with identical safeguards.
- The present notification is analogous to the authorisation issued under the Telegraph Act.

What are the concerns?

- The existing surveillance framework is carried out by -
 1. Telephone surveillance is sanctioned under the 1885 Telegraph Act (and its rules)
 2. Electronic surveillance is authorised under the 2000 Information Technology Act (and its rules)
- **Bureaucratisation** - Under both these acts, surveillance requests have to be signed off by an official who is at least at the level of a Joint Secretary.
- However, these decisions about surveillance are taken by the executive branch (including the review process), with no parliamentary or judicial supervision.
- **Opacity** - An individual will almost never know that he/she is being under surveillance.
- Thus, finding out about surveillance and then challenging it before a court, is a near-impossibility.
- **Provisions** - Phrasing of “intercept” in the rules might include traffic diversion, which may permit code injections and malware attacks.
- The notification also permits decryption, which might require the service provider to break their encryption protocols.
- **Clearance** - The home ministry says that each case will continue to be approved by the Union home secretary.
- But a specific clearance on each case is obviously meaningless because the record shows about 100 clearances daily on average.
- The scrutiny is therefore remains only on paper, and there is no safeguard against misuse.
- Also, the rules provided that the home secretary’s clearance should be obtained within a week.
- This could make the agencies to tap at will without clearance.

- **Safeguards** - There is a blanket authorisation being given to security agencies, without any safeguards regarding its misuse.
- This was given even to foreign-focused agencies that have no business on surveillance of Indian citizens such as the Research & Analysis Wing.
- **Control** - Many of the agencies named in the order from the home ministry are neither under parliamentary scrutiny nor are their actions subject to judicial control.
- Content streams are getting much richer, pervasive and personal.
- Hence the order is unconstitutional and in breach of the telephone tapping guidelines, the (Right to) Privacy judgment and the Aadhaar judgment.

What should be done?

- The right to privacy is not absolute and hence surveillance is essential to ensure national security and pre-empt terrorist threats.
- However, there must be a parliamentary oversight over the surveillance agencies that conduct surveillance.
- All surveillance requests must necessarily go before a judicial authority, which can apply an independent legal mind to the merits of the request.
- Every surveillance request must mandatorily specify a probable cause for suspicion and the proposed target of surveillance.
- Also, evidence obtained through unconstitutional surveillance must be statutorily stipulated to be inadmissible in court.
- Also, surveillance requests can be subject to judicial review, provided a lawyer to present the case on behalf of the target of surveillance.
- Reason should be given before taking up any case and responsibilities should be assigned for the surveillance agencies.
- Such cases also need authorisation from a magistrate, who has to record the specific reasons in each case.
- Any well-constructed system of surveillance should balance both public security and individual rights.
- Thus, this should be considered an opportune moment to reform India's intelligence apparatus and bring it on a sound legal and constitutional footing.
- The Right to privacy judgment has taken a firm stand on the side of fundamental rights.
- Citizens' initiatives such as the Indian Privacy Code have also proposed legislative models for surveillance reform.
- Thus, it is right time for the parliament to take these measures forward and ensure a balance between security of the state and privacy of the individual.

5.5 Response to cyber attacks

What is the issue?

Publicly attributing the cyber attacks to a state or non-state actor is vital for building a credible cyber deterrence strategy.

What are the recent incidents?

- The US Department of Justice filed a criminal complaint in September indicting North Korean hacker Park Jin Hyok for playing a role in at least three massive cyber operations against the US.
- This included the Sony data breach of 2014, the Bangladesh bank heist of 2016 and the WannaCry ransomware attack in 2017.
- This indictment was followed by another complaint on Russia's military agency for persistent and sophisticated computer intrusions in U.S.
- Evidence adduced in support included forensic cyber evidence like similarities in lines of code or analysis of malware and other factual details regarding the relationship between the employers of the indicted individuals and the state in question.

- The above criminal complaints will not necessarily lead to the prosecution of the indicted individuals across borders.
- However, indicting individuals responsible for cyber attacks is in itself an attractive option for states looking to develop a credible cyber deterrence strategy.

What is the importance of attributing cyber attacks?

- There are technical uncertainties in attributing attacks to a specific actor.
- It has long fettered states from adopting defensive or offensive measures in response to an attack and garnering support from multilateral fora.
- Cyber attacks are multi-stage, multi-step and multi-jurisdictional, which complicates the attribution process and removes the attacker from the infected networks.
- Experts have argued that technical challenges to attribution should not detract from international efforts to adopt a robust, integrated and multi-disciplinary approach to attribution.
- It should be seen as a political process operating in symbiosis with technical efforts.
- A victim state must communicate its findings and supporting evidence to the attacking state in a bid to apply political pressure.
- Clear publication of the attribution process becomes crucial as it furthers public credibility in investigating authorities.
- It enables information exchange among security researchers and fosters deterrence by the adversary and potential adversaries.
- Also, a criminal indictment is more legitimate as it needs to comply with the rigorous legal and evidentiary standards required by the country's legal system.
- Further, an indictment allows for the attack to be conceptualised as a violation of the rule of law in addition to being a geopolitical threat vector.

What are the lessons for India?

- India is yet to publicly attribute a cyber attack to any state or non-state actor.
- This is despite an overwhelming percentage of attacks on Indian websites perpetrated by foreign states or non-state actors, with 35% of attacks emanating from China, as per a report by CERT-IN.
- Along with the National Critical Information Protection Centre (NCIIPC), CERT-IN forms part of an ecosystem of nodal agencies designed to guarantee national cyber security.
- There are three key lessons that policy makers involved in this ecosystem can take away from the WannaCry attribution process and the Park indictment.
- First, there is a need for **multi-stakeholder collaboration** through sharing of research, joint investigations and combined vulnerability identification among the various actors employed by the government, law enforcement authorities and private cyber security firms.
- Second, the standards of attribution need to **demonstrate compliance** both with the evidentiary requirements of Indian criminal law and the requirements in the International Law on State Responsibility.
- The latter requires an attribution to demonstrate that a state had 'effective control' over the non-state actor.
- Finally, the attribution must be **communicated to the adversary** in a manner that does not risk military escalation.
- Improving attribution capabilities is as equally important as building capacity to improving resilience and detecting cyber attacks.
- Thus India will need to marry its improved capacity with strategic geopolitical posturing.
- Lengthy indictments may not deter all potential adversaries but may be a tool in fostering a culture of accountability in cyberspace.

5.6 Social Media Communication Hub

Why in news?

The government has withdrawn its proposal to create a 'Social Media Communication Hub' (SMCH) for monitoring online data

What was the plan about?

- The hub was planned to be setup in every district across the country.
- They were supposed to be the "eyes and ears of the government" and report back with real-time updates from ground zero.
- Around 20 social media analytics executives per hub will provide 'reports on sentiment, reach, details relating to trending topics and hashtags and compile six reports per day.
- The platform is expected to use predictive analytics

What was the reaction?

- The government had come under severe criticism for its move.
- The proposal was brought under challenge before the Supreme Court.
- The Court termed the move "as creating a surveillance state".

6. NUCLEAR TERRORISM

6.1 Towards Global No-First Use

What is the issue?

- India's first indigenous ballistic-missile armed nuclear submarine (SSBN), INS Arihant, recently completed its first deterrence patrol.
- In this context, it is high time that India makes a reassessment of its policy on nuclear weapons.

Why is SSBN so significant?

- The capability to launch nuclear-armed missiles from nuclear-powered submarines is a greatest form of deterrence a country can possess.
- It requires a very high degree of technological sophistication -
 - i. to be able to manufacture such submarines indigenously
 - ii. to equip them with missiles of the desired range
 - iii. to fire them safely
- The ability to operate one or more SSBNs requires the highest possible degree of professionalism.
- It covers a wide range of functionaries as
 - i. the prime minister
 - ii. the national security advisor
 - iii. the commander of the strategic forces
 - iv. the commanding officer of the submarine
 - v. every single member of the crew

What is the larger need?

- It is paradoxical that nuclear submarine provides the fullest deterrence only when the captain and his senior officers have the ability to press the symbolic red button on their own.
- However, despite the government's claims, there are reasons to believe India is not yet there, but is getting closer.
- The completion of the triad thus calls for a profound **review of India's policy on nuclear weapons.**
- India is close to achieving credible second strike capability.

- Given this, it must shift focus from negotiating its way through international nuclear weapons control regimes.
- It should certainly move to shaping a world where these weapons of mass destructions are not used.
- India must go from the defensive to the assertive and must champion a global no-first use (GNFU) treaty.

How has the global scenario so far been?

- The 20th century method of trying to prevent more countries from possessing a nuclear weapon has failed.
- The great powers first selectively proliferated nuclear weapons technology to their allies.
- Meanwhile, they tried to keep it away from their adversaries.
- They then foisted an unequal treaty on the rest of the world.
- It aimed at promising to disarm, in return for the rest of the countries committing not to build their own arsenals.
- They then failed on this promise too and decided that they would keep their bombs in perpetuity.
- However, they insisted that the rest forever keep to their no-bomb commitments.

What should the approach be?

- Non-proliferation might not be dead, but it's a 20th-century idea that has run its course.
- A realistic idea for the 21st century would be the prevention of first-use of nuclear weapons.
- Global no-first use (GNFU) can co-exist with, and can even reinforce, the movement towards disarmament.
- Getting the world's powers to commit verbally and textually to no-first use will be the first step.
- The strategies to verify, to have assurance, and to deter potential defectors from GNFU and so on will have to be worked out.
- India should take the lead in changing the international narrative to GNFU, move towards working out strategies and mechanisms to make it work.
- GNFU can cause China to make new calculations and there is scope here for India and China to collaborate at international security level.

6.2 SIPRI Yearbook 2019 - Nuclear Arsenals

Why in news?

The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) has released, SIPRI Yearbook 2019 on the current **state of armaments, disarmament and international security**.

What are the key findings of the report?

- **Nuclear weapon-possessing countries** - The United States of America, Russia, the United Kingdom, France, China, India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea.
- The report states that the all 9 nuclear weapon-possessing states are reducing nuclear warheads but are modernising their arsenals.
- These 9 nuclear-armed countries had a total of some 13,865 nuclear weapons at the start of 2019
- This is a decrease from 14,465 at the start of 2018.
- It attributed the decrease mainly to Russia and the US (together still account for over 90 per cent of the total nuclear weapons) in pursuant of implementing the **New START treaty** of 2010.
- **America** - Focuses on its **non-strategic nuclear arsenal** and this could push other nations in the same direction.
- China, India and Pakistan - **Increasing the size** of their nuclear arsenals.
- **India and Pakistan** - Expanding their **military fissile material production capabilities**.
- **North Korea** - Continues to **prioritize its military nuclear programme** as a central element of its national security strategy.

- The report sites that the **absence of transparency** on the status of the nuclear arsenals and capabilities of the nuclear-armed states.
- The report separately counts

1. Deployed warheads (warheads placed on missiles or located on bases with operational forces) and
2. Other warheads (stored or reserve warheads and retired warheads awaiting dismantlement).

WORLD NUCLEAR FORCES, JANUARY 2019

COUNTRY	DEPLOYED WARHEADS*	OTHER WARHEADS**	TOTAL 2019	TOTAL 2018
USA	1,750	4,435	6,185	6,450
Russia	1,600	4,900	6,500	6,850
UK	120	80	200	215
France	280	20	300	300
China	—	290	290	280
India	—	130–140	130–140	130–140
Pakistan	—	150–160	150–160	140–150
Israel	—	80–90	80–90	80
North Korea	—	—	(20–30)	(10–20)
TOTAL	3,750	10,115	13,865	14,465

*Deployed warheads refers to warheads placed on missiles or located on bases with operational forces. **Other warheads refers to stored or reserve warheads and retired warheads awaiting dismantlement. Total figures include the highest estimate when a range is given. Figures for North Korea are uncertain and are not included in total figures. All estimates are approximate.

How the countries are rated?

• India and Pakistan:

1. For India, figure of 130-140 other warheads in 2019, the same as in 2018.
2. For Pakistan, figure of 150-160 warheads.
3. Both nations are estimated to have increased their arsenal by 10 to 20 warheads in 2018.

• US and Russia: Reduction in the strategic nuclear forces of US and Russia is due to

1. Implementation of the **New START 2010** (Treaty on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms)
2. Unilateral reductions by both the countries.
3. Programmes under way to replace and modernize their arsenal.
4. Both are concentrating on the development of their non-strategic nuclear arsenal.

• North Korea: Figures for North Korea were not added to the total on account of uncertainty.

• China: It's working to expand its nuclear forces. It's also committed to a no-first-use policy, however has also taken steps to improve its retaliation response.

SIPRI (The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute):

- SIPRI is an independent international institute and a **think tank** established in 1966.
- **Headquarter:** Stockholm.
- **Vision:** A world in which sources of insecurity are identified and understood, conflicts are prevented or resolved, and peace is sustained.
- It **researches** into conflict, armaments, arms control and disarmament.
- SIPRI **provides data, analysis and recommendations**, based on open sources, to policymakers, researchers, media and the interested public.

New START (New Strategic Arms Reduction treaty):

- Signed by Russia and the United States
- Purpose: **Reducing U.S. and Russian strategic nuclear arsenals** by a bipartisan verification of the reduction.
- Signed: 2010
- Entered into force: 2011
- Replaced the 1991 START I treaty, which expired December 2009
- Superseded the 2002 Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty (SORT), which terminated when New START entered into force.
- Both Russia and the United States announced that they met New START limitations by Feb. 5, 2018.

- New START will expire in 2021 unless both parties agree to extend it.

NUCLEAR WEAPON TYPES

Non-strategic weapons or Tactical Nuclear Weapons (TNW)

- May be **shorter-range** delivery systems with lower yield warheads that might be used to attack troops or facilities on the battlefield.
- For use in battle, as part of an attack with and often in close proximity to friendly conventional forces possibly on contested friendly territory.
- They have included nuclear mines; artillery; short-, medium-, and long-range ballistic missiles; cruise missiles and gravity bombs.

Strategic nuclear weapons

- **Longer-range** delivery systems that is designed to be used on targets often in settled territory far from the battlefield as part of a strategic plan,
- Targets may include military bases, military command centres, arms industries, transportation, economic, and energy infrastructure, and heavily populated areas such as cities and towns, which often contain such targets.

7. COMMUNAL VIOLENCE

7.1 Resolving Mob Violence

What is the issue?

- Mere anti-lynching laws are less likely to be enough to curtail the menace effectively.
- Battling the mob phenomenon needs conscious political campaigning against discriminatory and xenophobic attitudes.

What are the recent developments regarding mob violence?

- **SC Verdict** - The Supreme Court (SC) has expressed shock over the spree of mob violence incidents that have occurred in various regions.
- The SC observed that it is the responsibility of the States to prevent untoward incidents and issued certain guidelines to be implemented.
- Further, the court noted that what may have started out as isolated acts by fundamentalist right-wing groups has now become a widespread malaise.
- **Guidelines** - The preventive guidelines of the SC require every State to designate a senior police officer as the Nodal Officer in each district.
- This officer has to collect intelligence regarding the spread of hateful provocative ideas and fake news and also stop their dissemination.
- Additionally, governments have been directed to carry out publicity campaigns against mob vigilantism and violence through media channels.
- The guidelines have also made an effort to streamline and fast-track investigations into future incidences and to support the family of the victims.

What is way ahead?

- Most cases of lynching seem to be premeditated acts attempting to change the social and cultural narrative in India on polarising lines.
- Lack of employment opportunities is helping deep-seated insecurities to take root among young people, aiding the spread of a fundamentalist agenda.
- Considering the context, there is a need to comprehensively deal with the deep-rooted hate which appears to have set in with an innovative approach.
- This malicious phenomenon cannot be fought merely through court directives or laws.
- Nurturing an inclusive political agenda is the need of the hour.

7.2 Responding to Lynchings

What is the issue?

There has been a recent series of mob lynching, fuelled by rumours circulated through social media.

What are the recent happenings?

- Across the country, more than 20 people have been lynched due to fake news of child lifting.
- Moreover, dozens of other attacks on strangers, including on 24 individuals in Odisha alone.
- In Tripura, a man sent by the government to stop lynchings was himself lynched by villagers.
- Mobs are increasingly driven by viral rumours of child-kidnappers.
- Free messaging service, the Whats App, provided the platform for spreading disinformation.

What does it imply?

- Across the country, lynching and mob vigilantism appear to have got acceptance.
- This indicates a deep sense of insecurity among so many ordinary Indians.
- The state's security apparatus failed to use the same social media platform to counter the rumours.
- More than being a law and order issue, the incidents also imply a deeper societal crisis, especially in cases of cow slaughter that emerges from religious intolerance.
- A sense of "other" is seemed to have gripped the Indian society.
- There is failure on part of the political establishment to censure such incidents also sends a signal of tolerance towards lynching.
- It is more pronounced in the case of minorities, tribals and Dalits who are at the receiving end.

What is the government response?

- **Centre's directive** - The Centre has advised states and UTs to take steps in this regard by keeping a watch for early detection of such rumours.
- Home Affairs Ministry has directed states and UTs to initiate measures to counter them.
- **MEITY** - Ministry of Electronics and IT is holding WhatsApp responsible for such incidents.
- The platform has been advised to take remedial measures to prevent fake message proliferation.
- It has asked WhatsApp to ensure that their platform is not used for malafide activities.

What are the concerns?

- The government response to go after WhatsApp is misplaced.
- In WhatsApp, messages are said to be encrypted, which makes it impossible for any to intercept.
- Given this, methods to limit the spread of sensational messages is unclear.
- Also, such checks would amount to legitimising surveillance and a loss of privacy.
- Besides, the messaging medium is not the issue with the recent incidents.
- The government response seems to be an abdication of responsibility.

What does the US experience show?

- In US, the first amendment rejects making any law prohibiting and abridging the freedom of speech.
- When they had to deal with lynchings in their past, they responded by strengthening the State.
- They increased policing, bettered law enforcement and invested more in the justice system.

What is the way forward?

- Banning news, internet blackouts and letters to WhatsApp may not address the root cause.
- Factors such as demonisation of communities - Muslims, tribals, outsiders - should be addressed.

- Stringent condemnation, and timely prosecuting of the perpetrators are essential.
- Political messaging and administrative alerts are key to stopping the string of lynchings.
- District administrations and gram panchayats can be asked to reach out to locals to persuade them against falling for rumours.

8. SECURITY FORCES

8.1 Proposal for Integrated Theatre Commands

What is the issue?

- Military reforms and creation of "Integrated Theatre Commands" (joining Army, Navy and Air force) is being debated widely now.
- In this context, there is a need for clear policy-driven directives that meet India's national security needs and challenges.

What is the context of the proposed defense reforms?

- "Naresh Chandra Committee report", prepared in the aftermath of Kargil War focused on a restructuring of "higher defense organization" as the first step.
- This was intended to improve synergy among different state departments - bureaucracy, military, research and development, intelligence etc.
- While little progress has been made to institutionalize these recommendations, the debate has now gone towards reforming the operational realm.
- Here, the proposal is to set up joint theatre commands where interoperability across services like "army, navy and air force" is being sought to be enhanced.
- Unfortunately, in this regard too there has been no progress, with services getting pitted against one another in a series of turf wars for operational control.

What are the concerns?

- The proposal for standalone theatre commands like the pilot in Andaman & Nicobar Islands lacks clarity on the overall picture.
- The discussion of the kind of integration envisioned at the higher echelons (like the post of "Chief of Defense Staff") hasn't been having a clear direction.
- Whether theatre commands would reduce the powers of chiefs of the various services over their resources is also not known currently.
- The Indian Air force has also expressed operational problems in being delegated under theatre commands, due to shortage of resources.
- Notably, with a sanctioned strength of 45 squadrons, the Air force currently operates with just about 32, due to shortage of fighter jets.
- Further, during all previous military initiatives, the Air force under the current command structure has delivered clear and appreciable results.

What is the way ahead?

- The evolving nature of the warfare has changed the way combat is carried out and the focus on integrated commands might actually be redundant.
- Further, it's only for far off offensive missions that theatre commands are more suited to and home defense is largely done through conventional commands.
- With technological advancements in weaponry, the focus should be more on upending the defense arsenal and its operability.
- The future battle field is lesser about mobilizing large armies and more about better surveillance, and cyber capabilities to pre-empt attacks.

- In this context, reducing the tooth-to-tail ratio (combatants-to-support staff) and improving the potency of the tail operators is vital for the military.

8.2 National Security Advisor to chair Strategic Planning Group

What is the issue?

- The National Security Advisor (NSA) will now chair the Strategic Planning Group (SPG) as well, with Cabinet Secretary only as its member.
- The decision reflects a lack of understanding of the nature and complexity of security challenges the country faces.

What is the existing security architecture?

- Soon after India became a nuclear-weapon state in May 1998, the national security architecture underwent a significant change.
- At the apex, a National Security Council (NSC) was set up with the Prime Minister (PM) as the chairman.
- Its permanent members included ministers of home, defence, external affairs and finance.
- The NSC was provided with a secretariat.
- A new post of National Security Advisor (NSA - currently Mr. AjitDoval) was created to serve as the Secretary of the NSC.
- In addition, a Strategic Planning Group (SPG) was established under the chairmanship of the Cabinet Secretary.
- The SPG included
 - i. all the key secretaries to the government
 - ii. the three armed forces chiefs
 - iii. the head of the external intelligence (R&AW)
 - iv. the Director of the Intelligence Bureau
- A National Security Advisory Board (NSAB) was also set up.
- It comprised of a number of retired civil and military officials, and it had direct access to the PM.
- After the Kargil war in 1999, a Defence Intelligence Agency was set up to coordinate military-related intelligence.
- Also, a Nuclear Command Authority (NCA) was set up to manage India's nuclear weapon arsenal.
- In essence, the stress was on providing political leadership with multiple sources of information on security issues.

How is the NSA's role evolving?

- The role of the NSA was that of a key advisor to the government on longer-term strategic issues.
- The NSA did not have a say in the day-to-day security issues.
- However, in recent years, the NSA, by virtue of location in the PM's Office, has become an influential figure.
- This remains the case even though there is no constitutional sanction for the post.
- The NSA's responsibilities have been expanded sharply.
- He now chairs the Defence Planning Group, with responsibility for military planning, even as the NSAB's role has been downgraded.
- Further, the role of the chairman of the Joint Intelligence Committee, too, has been downgraded.
- The NSA is also the head of the Executive Council of the NCA.
- So in essence, the political leadership will have intelligence inputs and security assessments processed at the level of NSA.

8.3 Opening Roads in Military Cantonments

What is the issue?

- Government recently ordered the opening of all roads in military cantonments.
- Families of Army officers and retired Army personnel are increasingly opposing this move.

What are military cantonments?

- Cantonments are designed as places of residence of both civilians and military personnel.
- There are nearly 60 cantonments across the country.
- Cantonment Boards are elected bodies.
- They run schools, hospitals, and vocational training centres.
- They cater to a civilian population of more than 21 lakh.
- Moreover, cantonments are notified in the gazette and governed by an Act of Parliament.
- Any change in the governance of cantonments needs an amendment to the Act by Parliament.
- This includes barring civilians from using the roads within them.

What was the problem?

- Some cantonment roads are closed for the general public.
- There were instances in which places of worship could not be reached due to closure of these routes.
- Other incidents highlighted the cemetery becoming inaccessible due to these restrictions.
- Some roads were closed by the local military authorities without following the existing procedure.

What is the government's decision?

- A government order for opening all roads in cantonments was issued.
- Also, a procedure for closing any road was also formally given by the Defence Ministry.
- It will be based on intelligence inputs and for security considerations.
- The Ministry proposes to undertake a review of the state of roads in cantonments soon.

What are the concerns?

- The major objection to the opening of roads is related to the security of military installations.
- Also, the families of Army personnel staying inside the cantonments.
- There is also a fear that the land mafia might try to encroach on defence land in the cantonments.
- Retired officers complain that the decision was taken without consulting the Army.
- The issue has suggested a deterioration of civil-military relations.

What is the government's response?

- The order was issued only after a litany of complaints to the Ministry.
- The government argues that its orders do not affect the security posture.
- This is because they do not deal with military stations but only with cantonments.

8.4 First Batch of Reforms in Indian Army

Why in news?

The government approved reforms within the Indian Army to enhance the combat capability of the forces.

What are the reforms?

- The committee headed by Shekatkar was given the mandate to recommend measures for enhancing the Combat Capability and Rebalancing Defence Expenditure of the Armed Forces.

- The committee had given 99 recommendations in its report in 2016.
- Out of which the government has decided to implement 65.
- It involves redeployment and restructuring of approximately 57,000 posts of officers in a gradual manner.
- The officers will be used for improving operational preparedness and civilians will be redeployed in different wings of the armed forces for improving efficiency.
- The government will do away 39 military farms and several Army postal departments in peace locations.
- There will be optimisation of signal establishments to include Radio Monitoring Companies, Corps Air Support Signal Regiments, Air Formation Signal Regiments, Composite Signal Regiments and merger of Corps Operating and Engineering Signal Regiments.
- The government will also undertake restructuring of repair echelons in the Army to include base workshops, advance base workshops and station workshops in the field Army.
- The reforms will also aim for better utilisation of supply and transport echelons and animal transport units.
- It will also seek to enhance the quality of clerical staff and drivers engaged with the Army and improve the efficiency of National Cadet Corps.

8.5 Standing Committee Report Working Conditions of CAPF

Why in news?

The Standing Committee on Home Affairs submitted its report on 'Working Conditions in Non-Border Guarding Central Armed Police Forces'.

What does it say?

- **CISF** - The Committee noted severe stagnation at various ranks of Group B and C personnel of the CISF, due to lack of cadre review.
- These include ranks such as constable, head constable, and sub-inspector.
- Lack of cadre review is a demoralising factor for CISF personnel and recommended that the must be expedited.
- Modern equipment such as drones, night vision devices, and patrolling equipment should be provided to the CISF.
- It recommended that all 59 airports guarded by the CISF must have operational Bomb Detection and Disposal Squads.
- **CRPF** - The Committee questioned the rationale for reserving 37 posts for IPS officers in the CRPF, when they were not opting for such posts.
- It recommended that not more than 25% of posts should be reserved for IPS officers.
- It observed that states are over-dependent on the CRPF for maintaining various law and order situations.
- It affects their operational efficiency as well as denies them training and rest.
- **NSG** - The Committee noted that NSG does not have its own cadre, and draws personnel from the Army, CAPFs, and other police organizations for a short period of deputation.
- So the Committee recommended that a working group should be formed to examine the pros and cons of a longer tenure.
- It also recommended that steps must be taken to commission a dedicated air wing for the NSG.

8.6 Supreme Court on Police Reforms

Why in news?

The Supreme Court recently passed a number of directions on police reforms in the country.

What were the directions?

- The directions came on a plea of the Centre seeking modification of the judgment rendered in the Prakash Singh case on police reforms.
- It ordered all states and Union territories to not appoint any police officer as acting Director General of Police (DGP).
- It directed all the states to send names of senior police officers to the UPSC for being considered as probable candidates to be appointed as DGPs or Police Commissioners as the case may be.
- The UPSC, in turn, will prepare a list of three most suitable officers.
- The states will be free to appoint one of them as police chief.
- The bench also said that a person, who had been selected and appointed as DGP, should have a reasonable period of service left.
- It also ruled that any rule or state law on the subject of appointment of police officers "will be kept at abeyance" (temporary pause).
- The bench, however, granted liberty to the states, which have made laws on police appointments, to move before it seeking modification of its order.
- The court was hearing the Centre's plea seeking modification of one of its directions, which were part of its historic 2006 verdict on police reforms, recommending steps like a fixed two-year tenure for DGPs.
- Earlier, the apex court, on September 8 last year, had agreed to hear a clutch of pleas claiming that its historic 2006 verdict on police reforms, , has not yet been implemented by states and Union territories.
- BJP leader Ashwini Kumar Upadhyay had sought urgent hearing on his interim plea saying the directions passed by the 2006 verdict have not been implemented by authorities concerned.

What was the Prakash Singh Case about?

- A PIL was filed by two former DGPs Prakash Singh and NK Singh in 2006.
- Deciding on this, the apex court, had said the appointment of DGPs and police officers should be merit-based and transparent.
- Officers like DGPs and Superintendent of Police (SP) should have a minimum fixed tenure of 2 years.
- The court had recommended separation of police functions of investigation and maintaining law and order.
- It had ordered setting up of a Police Establishment Board to decide and make recommendations on transfers, postings, promotions and other service-related matters of police officers of and below the rank of DSPs.
- It had also ordered setting up of a Police Complaints Authority in each state to look into complaints against officers of and above the rank of SP in cases of serious misconduct, including custodial death, grievous hurt or rape in police custody.
- A National Security Commission needed to be set up at the Union level to prepare a panel for selection and placement of chiefs of the Central Police Organisations with a minimum tenure of 2 years.
- Contempt pleas alleging non-implementation of these directions are still pending.

8.7 Status of Policing in India Report

Why in news?

The 'Status of Policing in India Report, 2018' was published recently by the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies and the NGO Common Cause..

What are the highlights?

- It offers a comprehensive survey of the performance and perceptions of the Indian police.
- Especially, the relation between Indian Muslims and the police was brought out by the report.
- **Fear** - The report highlights that all minorities feared the police more than Hindus.
- Notably, the apprehension is more acute in the case of Muslims.
- This is the case even with no reference to lynching of Muslims in the name of cow protection.

- **Cases** - The fear is because police often implicates Muslims under false terrorism charges.
- Indeed, many young Muslims have been in jail for years for this reason, before the judiciary released them.
- Muslims in Bihar, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu increasingly feel that police discriminate on the basis of religion.
- This may be partly explained by the social profile of the policemen.

How is the Muslim representation in law enforcement agencies?

- Muslims are dramatically under-represented in the Indian Police Service (IPS).
- Their share was already lower than 5% in the 1950s.
- This is less than half the proportion of Muslims in India according to the 1951 census.
- Their share in the population subsequently increased, reaching nearly 15% in 2011.
- However, the proportion of Muslims in the IPS decreased, falling below 3% in 2016.
- It is even as low as 2.5% if Jammu and Kashmir is excluded from the calculation.
- But the situation is slightly better if policemen at lower levels are taken into account.
- In this case, Muslims roughly made up 6% of policemen in India.
- Nevertheless, their strength is on a decreasing trend over the years.
- Overall, Muslims are underrepresented in law enforcement agencies.
- But the situation is a little better if the armed services as a whole are accounted.
- In the army, Muslims made up 2.5% of the people in uniform in 1990-2000.
- Similar figures are found in the navy and in the air force.
- There too, the proportion is slightly less in higher ranking categories and more in others.

Why is it significant?

- The report shows a quasi-absence of the largest minority in a key institution like the police.
- The fact that Muslims are underrepresented in police increases their vulnerability.
- Moreover, there is no effort being made to address this situation.
- The scenario clearly affects the national character of a nation-state.
- It undermines the idea of a multicultural India enshrined in the Constitution.

8.8 Automated Facial Recognition System (AFRS)

Why in News?

The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) released a Request for Proposal for an Automated Facial Recognition System (AFRS) to be used by police officers across the country.

What is AFRS?

- AFRS works by maintaining a large **database with photos and videos** of peoples' faces.
- Then, a new image of an unidentified person is compared to the existing database to find a match and identify the person.
- **Neural networking** is the artificial intelligence technology used for pattern-finding and matching.

What does the NCRB request call for?

- The National Crime Records Bureau's (NCRB) Request for Proposal calls for **gathering CCTV footage**, as well as **photos** from newspapers, raids, and sketches.
- The project is aimed at being compatible with other biometrics.

- It will be a **mobile and web application** hosted in NCRB's Data Centre in Delhi, but used by all police stations in the country.
- AFRS will play a very vital role in **improving outcomes** in the area of Criminal identification and verification.
- It facilitates easy recording, analysis, retrieval and sharing of Information between different organisations.

Are there any AFRS in use in India?

- The current facial recognition in India is done **manually**.
- AFRS (**automatic**) is a new idea the country has started to experiment with.
- "DigiYatra" using facial recognition for airport entry was trialed in the Hyderabad airport recently.
- State governments have also taken their own steps towards facial recognition. E.g. Telangana police launched their own system in 2018

How will the new database fit in what already exists?

- As NCRB has proposed integrating AFRS with multiple existing databases, there will be an improvement in the outcome.
- The databases to be integrated with AFRS are -
 1. NCRB's Crime and Criminal Tracking Network & Systems (CCTNS),
 2. Integrated Criminal Justice System (ICJS),
 3. Immigration, Visa and Foreigners Registration & Tracking (IVFRT),
 4. Koya Paya portal on missing children,
 5. State-specific systems.

How far has CCTNS progressed?

- This project is accessible to the CBI, IB, NIA, ED and NCB.
- Following the Mumbai terror attacks, CCTNS was envisaged as a countrywide integrated database on crime incidents and suspects.
- It also plans to offer citizen services such as passport verification, crime reporting, online tracking of case progress, etc.
- There was a proposal for integrating CCTNS's database with the database of the Central Finger Print Bureau (CFPB).
- NCRB is currently rolling out the National Automated Fingerprint Identification System (NAFIS) and its integration with CCTNS.

What are the concerns?

- Cyber experts have cautioned against **government's abuse** of this technology.
- There is an ongoing **privacy debate** in the US regarding the use of facial recognition technology.
- Indian citizens would be more vulnerable in the **absence of a Data Protection Law** in the country.
- Use of surveillance cameras and facial recognition constrict the rights of particular class of people.

8.9 Problems surrounding police stations in India

What is the issue?

Police stations in India are suffering from lack of personnel, funds and motivation, which pave the way for improper enforcement of rule of law in the country.

What are the structural flaws in the system?

- **Appointment** - The police stations in India are suffering from lower number of police staffs and higher vacancies, despite a huge administrative area under its jurisdiction.
- Hence, it was simply not enabled to enforce the rule of law.

- The police personnel were expected to investigate crime, maintain law and order, and were frequently deployed on VIP duty.
- The personnel were subjected to frequent transfers and rapid rotations within these duties.
- Also, postings were based on patronage, and it was not possible to deploy the best people for the most difficult tasks.
- **Burden** - Though the police personnel were entitled to take certain days of leave in a year, this was never actually sanctioned.
- Some of them were reported being overworked, on duty 24 hours a day, with high stress, neglecting their families.
- **Infrastructure** - In some of the tribal belts, a majority of the constables lived in the nearby city because of lack of housing, schools and health facilities in that area.
- They travelled to the police station every day, though they need to be present immediately in case of a crisis.
- This has made them to spend out-of-pocket expenditures and hence they saw themselves as underpaid and not respected.
- Also, the police stations were always short of money, and personnel spent from their pocket on stationery and other needs.

What are the concerns with the working styles?

- Though a police station is expected to respond to the needs and events of the area, it was generally assigned targets, such as for seizing a certain amount of liquor and issuing a number of challans.
- Every year, the targets were increased irrespective of the situation at the ground level.
- For example, some stations were asked to achieve its targets for issuing challans in the case of people riding without helmets.
- The targets were impractical to achieve because there were few motorcycles in the area and people simply did not have money to pay the fine.
- Also, the police personnel hold poor understanding about enforcing the law, wherein the problem of gender-bias while registering complaints and the brutality on investigation is still getting witnessed.
- Thus, the shortage of personnel, the sorry working conditions and their ignorance created a system not capable of upholding the rule of law.

How does corruption take deep roots here?

- The corruption is deep-rooted in the system making people to fear and avoid the police on the allegation that the police listen only to those who had money.
- The police personnel indulge in both collusive (bribe giver and receiver both benefit) and coercive corruption (facing pressure from senior officials as well as local leaders to accept bribes by forcing citizens).
- Thus, the problem of corruption in the police system was more systemic than merely because of individual greed.
- These deep rooted issues symbolises the pervasive lawlessness in the police system which warrants scrutiny and action by the government to go for systemic reforms.

9. DEFENCE

9.1 Self Reliance in Defence Production

What is the issue?

- The Defence Production Policy (DProP) 2018 has set ambitious goals for 2025.
- There is a need for some fine tunings in defence industry to achieve the goal of self reliance.

What does the policy provide for?

- It includes provisions for boosting production, exports, and investment.

- It would, thereby, create two-three million jobs domestically.
- It also aims to achieve global leadership in artificial intelligence and cyberspace technology.
- To drive this policy, the government has identified 13 product categories.
- It has permitted 74% FDI in “niche” technologies.
- It plans to develop two defence production corridors.
- It also plans to constitute private sector units and to establish defence innovation hubs.
- Given all these, there are some misconceptions as to the strategies adopted for self-reliance in defence manufacturing.

Why is the FDI route less likely to work?

- There is a mistaken belief that production companies decide on transfer of technology.
- But it is the governments, not manufacturers that decide technology transfer.
- It is based on political and military considerations, geopolitical factors and long term business commitments.
- It is also believed that foreign manufacturers would be attracted by the mega Indian market for their products.
- However, certain cutting-edge technologies are closely guarded.
- Foreign companies will not part with them under any circumstances.
- Also, no government can assure the foreign companies that orders will continue to be placed for all time to come.
- Clearly, the FDI route is no salvation for self-reliance in defence production.

What is the challenge?

- Military needs reliable combat/combat support systems to counter threats.
- Technology of the equipment should match, or preferably be better than, the technology of the adversaries.
- The military expects product support, trainers and simulators.
- It also requires mid-life upgrades during the equipment life cycle which typically will be about 20 years.
- Importantly, research, design and development and manufacture are closely coupled.
- However, in reality, domestic industry lacks the capability, domain knowledge, skill, expertise and experience or capacity.
- It includes adequate trained manpower, specialised test facilities, test ranges, etc.

What could be done?

- **DRDO** - Industry could be the lead agency for development of new products.
- However, it may sub-contract development of certain sub-systems to a DRDO laboratory.
- The industry’s managerial expertise and DRDO’s technical expertise could be coupled for optimum results.
- **Funding** - Presently, the MoD funds the DRDO for development of new products.
- It results in minimal interaction between the armed forces and the developer.
- Instead, the armed forces should fund these developments from their own budgets.
- This would be an essential structural change which would give them a sense of “ownership”.
- It will give the armed forces an incentive to
 - i. monitor the progress at regular intervals
 - ii. participate in inevitable trade-offs between conflictual requirements
 - iii. make-buy decisions
 - iv. trials at sub-system stage

v. authorise release of funds based on accomplishment of milestones, etc

- It would also minimise time and cost overruns and shortfall in specifications.
- The armed forces would need to develop project monitoring skills.
- **Manufacturing ecosystem** - The manufacturing industry is organised into a three/four tiered structure.
- Tier one companies are “integrators”.
- The whole chain forms an “ecosystem” which the DProP 2018 recognises.
- However, it is industry which can create and nurture such ecosystems, not the government.
- To assure long term loyalty and commitment, tier one companies have to necessarily support MSMEs initially.
- The defence production sector would need about 20 tier one companies and several lower tier companies.
- All these in conjunction can make the DProP 2018 a successful one towards self reliance in defence production.

National Security Council

- The NSC is an executive government agency tasked with advising the Prime Minister's Office on matters of national security and strategic interest.
- It is the apex body of the three-tiered structure of the national security management system in India.
- The other two tiers are the Strategic Policy Group (SPG) and the National Security Advisory Board (NSAB).
- The SPG is the first level of the three tier structure and forms the nucleus of the decision-making apparatus of the NSC.
- The NSAB consists of a group of eminent national security experts outside of the government.
- It provides a long-term prognosis and analysis to the NSC, and recommends solutions and address policy issues referred to it.

9.2 Information Fusion Centre

Why in news?

Defence Minister inaugurated the Indian Navy's Information Fusion Centre (IFC) -Indian Ocean Region (IOR).

What is IFC?

- It aims to collaborate with partner countries and multinational agencies to develop maritime awareness and share information, especially on commercial cargo vessels.
- It aims to work towards keeping the global commons safe.
- It would work towards capability-building in the region, coordination of incident response and disaster relief, and also share submarine safety information.
- The information exchange at the IFC-IOR would be initially undertaken by virtual means, using telephone calls, fax, emails and video-conferencing.
- Subsequently, to enable better interaction, quicker analysis of information and provide timely inputs, the IFC-IOR would host Liaison Officers from partner countries.
- India and France are also working to launch a constellation of maritime surveillance for the Indian Ocean Region.

What is the need?

- The IOR is vital to world trade and economic prosperity of many countries.
- More than 75% of the world's maritime trade and 50% of global oil consumption passes through it.
- Maritime piracy and maritime terrorism are the two major ways in which the non-state actors threaten to jeopardise the security of the maritime domain with a direct influence on land affairs.
- The proliferation of violent non-state actors and networks at sea demands a recalibrated outlook to collective maritime security.

9.3 Empowering DRDO

Why in news?

The Centre has recently devolved greater financial power to the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).

What are the new powers?

- The defence ministry has reposed greater decision-making powers with the secretary, defence research and development and its seven directors-general (DGs).
- The DRDO chief can now sanction projects/procurements up to Rs.150 crore (75 crore earlier).
- DGs can sanction projects up to Rs.75 crore (from 50 crore).

What is the need?

- Parliament's standing committee on defence, headed by BC Khanduri, hauled up the DRDO for serious delays in projects and wastage of tax-payers' money by ditching projects mid-way.
- The panel said that it "understands that research activity is an open-end programme and closing a project midway is a possibility", but, this should not be allowed to become a regular practice.
- The DRDO is also hampered by lack of adequate funding.
- It receives just 5-6% of the defence budget, while the comparable figure for China is 20%.
- So, greater decentralisation is certainly welcome.
- Rama Rao Committee, in 2008, had asked the government to limit the DRDO's research focus to just "core technologies" of "strategic importance".

9.4 New Guidelines for Start-ups

Why in news?

The defence ministry has specified new rules for home-grown start-ups to take part in military projects.

What are the rules?

- The new rules seek to encourage start-ups to undertake research projects to develop or upgrade weapon systems and work on ways to reduce imports.
- Under the new rules, start-ups recognised by the Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion (DIPP) under the following categories will automatically qualify to take part in specified defence projects.
- These categories range from
 1. Aeronautics,
 2. Nanotechnology
 3. Virtual Reality
 4. Renewable Technology,
 5. Robotics,
 6. Green technology
 7. Internet of Things (IoT) etc.
- For relatively smaller R&D projects, the government has simplified rules by removing several regulations.
- For projects with estimated cost of prototype development phase not exceeding Rs 3 crore, no separate technical or financial criteria will be defined.
- These new rules apply to the 'Make II' category of defence procurement where the private industry funds the research for the product on its own.
- There will be no government funding for developing the prototype but there is an assurance of orders on successful development and trials of the prototype.



9.5 Need for Defence Reforms

What is the issue?

The state of India's national security and defence is getting worse than before and are in a dire need of reform.

What are the recent measures?

- The government set up a Defence Planning Committee (DPC) to assist in the creation of national security strategy, international defence engagement strategy and a roadmap to build -
 1. Defence manufacturing ecosystem
 2. Strategy to boost defence exports
 3. Priority capability development plans.
- It has also decided to revive the Strategic Policy Group (SPG) within the overall National Security Council (NSC) system.
- It has recently appointed the National Security Adviser (NSA) as the chairman of the Strategic Policy Group (SPG) of the National Security Council (NSC).

What are the concerns?

- **Centralisation** - There are concerns that appointing NSA to SPG would lead to further centralisation of decision making.
- The post of the NSA is also not a legally-mandated one and he has no parliamentary accountability.
- **LOC** - Overall violence in Jammu and Kashmir and ceasefire violations on the Line of Control reached a 14-year high in 2017, and did not subside in 2018.
- There are far more attacks on security forces and security installations in J&K, and militant recruitments and violence against civilians in the State are rising at an alarming rate.
- **Neighbourhood policy** - Though the government claims that the surgical strikes of 2016 gave a befitting response to Pakistan, it hardly made any significant gains in reality.
- A report of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs recently revealed that the Chinese forces are back in the Doklam plateau with more force.
- The report goes on to fault the government for continuing with its conventionally deferential foreign policy towards China.
- India's neighbourhood policy holds a clear absence of vision on how to balance, engage and work with the many great powers in the regional and the broader international scene.
- **Defence preparedness** - India spends close to \$50 billion annually on defence and yet might still be ill-equipped to fight the wars of the modern age, especially in the neighbourhood.
- India also suffers from almost non-functional higher defence organisation and the defence policy doesn't hold any political oversight or vision.
- **Defence management** - There is little conversation between the armed forces and the political class, and even lesser conversation among the various arms of the forces.
- Our doctrines, command structures, force deployments and defence acquisition continue as though each arm is going to fight a future war on its own.
- **Institutional lacuna** - In India, talk of appointing a Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) has died down and the key post of military adviser in the National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS) remains vacant.
- The NSC almost never meets and the National Security Advisory Board, initially set up to seek 'outside expertise' on strategic matters, has become a space for retired officials.
- **Modernisation** - The state of modernisation and domestic defence industry in the country are in a sorry state.
- Under the present system, where the ratio of revenue to capital expenditure in defence is roughly 65:35%, any serious attempt at modernisation would be impossible.

What should be done?

- The country should have an overall national security document from which the various agencies and the arms of the armed forces draw their mandate.
- It should also enable them to create their own respective and joint doctrines which would then translate into operational doctrines for tactical engagement.
- In the absence of this, national strategy is broadly a function of ad hocism and personal preferences.

9.6 Reforming Defence Acquisition in India

What is the issue?

India has taken many initiatives on its defence acquisition policy landscape, yet it has failed in its implementation.

What were the initiatives taken on defence acquisition?

- The Defence Production Policy 2018 had set targets for getting India into the world's top five defence producers and creating 3 million jobs in the defence industry by 2025.
- It has promised to increase defence exports ten-fold to \$5 billion, while becoming self-sufficient in building fighter aircraft, helicopters, warships, armoured vehicles, missiles and other systems.
- A draft offsets policy was issued later which proposed that vendors will be allowed to discharge offsets by creating defence manufacturing infrastructure. (such as testing laboratories, ranges and skill centres)
- This will be made through sponsoring projects that generate high-technology, and through transferring critical technologies that do not exist in India.
- It has also proposed special incentives for investments in two defence industry corridors in Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh.
- Also, Raksha Mantri's Advisory Committee on Ministry of Defence Capital Projects (RMCOMP) was set up to review critical weapon procurements and to identify why they were facing delays.
- All these initiatives, though had grand objectives to promote defence acquisition, have failed to make a mark in its implementation.
- This has created the need to form a defence procurement organisation in India.

What are the progress made in forming DPO?

- The Dhirendra Singh Committee in 2015 articulated the need for setting up a Defence Procurement Organization (DPO) outside Ministry of Defence.
- Another committee constituted under Vivek Rae in 2016 told that it would be better to refashion and strengthen the existing defence acquisition structure.
- The committee under Pritam Singh in 2017 recommended the creation of a central, autonomous and an empowered professional organization.
- This organisation will help building up indigenous defence capability as a strategic imperative for long-term self-reliance.
- However, the implementation of these committee's recommendations is getting delayed.

What should a DPO contain?

- **Focus** - The new DPO must holistically focus on defence acquisition, not just procurement.
- Procurement involves the straight purchase of existing defence equipment from global or domestic "original equipment manufacturers (OEMs)".
- Acquisition includes meeting the military's need through channels such as indigenous development.
- The DRDO is currently pursuing 52 mission-mode projects (MMPs) involving an outlay of over Rs 370 billion.
- But since the military is not a stakeholder in these MMPs, it does not seriously consider MMPs as acquisition options.
- To overcome this, the military must take financial stakes in MMPs and participate in their oversight.

- The reformed DPO must be empowered to meet a service requirement through direct purchase, manufacture under technology transfer, or through an MMP nearing fruition.
- **Specialisation** - The requirements for each acquisition must be met through purpose-built Integrated Programme Teams (IPTs).
- Each IPT should include the specialists needed for that specific task.
- The specialist requirement will vary not just from project to project, but also at different times within the same project.
- The IPT, therefore, must be constituted and re-constituted continually, in order to optimise the use of manpower to contribute to IPTs when required.
- Such flexible IPT structures should eliminate the rationale for a rigid and centralised DPO.
- **Roleallocation** - A refurbished DPO must focus exclusively on equipment acquisition.
- At present, the defence secretary spends 60% of his time on procurement rather than focussing on long-term strategy and defence diplomacy.
- To overcome this, the defence acquisition wing should be upgraded, which is currently under the Department of Defence, into a full-fledged department under a secretary-level official.
- Also, the dilemma regarding chairing the DPO either with a cadre of specialist acquisitions managers or with the serving bureaucrats needs to be resolved.

9.7 Indigenous Defence Production - Tejas Case

What is the issue?

- The polarising debate in recent times over defence acquisitions has raised questions about indigenous defence production.
- A key proposal in this regard, is Tejas, the indigenous Light Combat Aircraft, which is getting delayed due to procedural challenges.

How is Tejas developed?

- The Tejas, or 'radiance', is an indigenous fighter aircraft.
- It is the smallest lightweight, multi-role, single-engine tactical fighter aircraft in the world.
- It is designed jointly by the Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA) in partnership with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL).
- This works as per the Air Staff Requirement (ASR) issued by the Indian Air Force (IAF) in 1985.
- At all stages, the IAF has wholeheartedly participated and supported in this vital indigenous design and development project.

Why is the delay in production?

- The ADA, the design authority for Tejas, incorporates design changes based on observations made during test flights.
- The ADA makes all such changes in consultation with HAL and other agencies.
- These changes are issued as "change notices" with requisite documentation and manufacturing technology.
- While the IAF participates in all these consultations, it is not authorised to issue "change notices".
- But Tejas production is getting delayed due to the IAF changing specifications.
- HAL blames the IAF for changing specifications as the IAF is a customer and it can only issue the ASR.



India's first indigenously designed and developed

LIGHT COMBAT AIRCRAFT *Tejas*

Project first conceived and launched in 1983	Maiden test flight took place on Jan 4, 2001	Designed for air-to-air, air-to-ground and air-to-sea combat roles	Intended to replace the phased out MIG-21 fighter jets
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Specifications

Crew One	Length 13.2 m	Height 4.4 m	Wingspan 8.2 m	Max speed 1.6 mach	Engine F-404-GE-IN20
Project development cost ₹ 17,269 crore		Unit cost ₹ 220-250 crore		Max take-off weight 13,200 kg	

KBK InfoGraphics

- It is the HAL, as the original equipment manufacturer, which has to issue the specifications of the aircraft and its components.
- [The IAF has not changed the 1985 ASR, except for granting concessions after limitations were encountered during the design and development of the aircraft.
- So, many design changes were incorporated in the Tejas to bridge the shortfall from ASR.
- Other changes were incorporated to enhance the safety of flight, based on lessons learnt from recent accidents and incidents.]

What are the challenges and the way forward?

- The production of Tejas aircraft is very different and complex because the aircraft is still at the design and development stage.
- The standard of preparation of an aircraft defines its capability, which is just evolving for Tejas.
- This requires a production capability with a robust supply chain supported by competent sub-vendors to help HAL production line to quickly adapt to such changes.
- So HAL needs to bring in institutional flexibility to quickly adapt its production line to such evolving changes during the design and development phase of Tejas or any subsequent aircraft.
- In all, the IAF and HAL have to work together for indigenous aircraft production process to be smooth.

9.8 CAG Report on Rafale Deal

Why in news?

The report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General of India on acquisition of 36 Rafale fighter jets from France was recently tabled in Parliament.

What is the deal on?

- Rafale is a twin-engine Medium Multi Role Combat Aircraft (MMRCA).
- Tenders for 126 MMRCA fighters were issued by India in 2007.
- It was an open competition between companies, including Dassault Aviation of France.
- Dassault was announced as the lowest bidder in 2012.
- But on Indian PM's visit to France in 2015, India's intention to buy 36 Rafale aircraft in "fly-away" condition was announced.
- The Defence Minister announced the previous 126 fighter jet deal to be dead.

What is the audit report on?

- The CAG report has examined the €7.87-bn deal for 36 Rafale aircraft signed between India and France in 2016.
- The purpose is to assess if the objectives of Indo-French joint statement and the objectives set out for INT (Indian Negotiating Team) by DAC (Defence Acquisition Council) were achieved in the deal.
- The CAG had to compare the latest deal for 36 Rafale with the price bid by Dassault for 126 Rafale jets in 2007.
- It did this by converting the earlier deal into an equivalent cost for 36 aircraft in 2016.
- The question of 50% offsets in the deal, which has been at the centre of a major controversy, has not been dealt by the CAG.
- It will form part of a separate report by the CAG on offsets in all the deals.

What are the report highlights?

- The CAG report concludes that the 2016 agreement is slightly better in terms of both pricing and delivery than the 2007 deal.
- **Price comparison** - The 2016 deal through IGA (Inter-Governmental Agreement) is 2.86% cheaper than the earlier UPA (United Progressive Alliance) regime deal.

- On the Rafale's India Specific Enhancements (ISE), which cost more than €1.3 billion of the €7.87 billion deal, the CAG stated that there was a saving of 17.08%.
- **Delivery schedule** - There was an improvement of one month in the 2016 contract (71 instead of 72 months for the earlier bid).
- **Absence of bank guarantee** - The 2007 offer from Dassault had costs of bank guarantee embedded in its offer.
- But there is no such guarantee in the 2016 contract which is a "saving" for Dassault.
- This sum should have been passed on to the Indian government, the audit observed.
- **126 to 36** - By reducing aircrafts to be bought from 126 to 36, there is a wide gap in the operational preparedness of the IAF.
- But the CAG could not find any proposal with the Defence Ministry for filling this gap.
- Ministry of Defence had reportedly informed CAG that it had issued a fresh Request For Information (RFI) for new fighter aircraft to fill this gap.
- **Government claims** - One of the government's claims was that each basic aircraft (without enhancements) was 9% cheaper in the 2016 deal.
- But the audit concluded that there was no difference between the 2007 and the 2016 offer in this regard.

What are the concerns?

- The report comes amidst varied revelations about possible lapses and deviations in the Rafale deal.
- But the audit report is less likely to bring closure to the controversy over the deal as it does not clarify all the doubts about the deal.
- The original issue of bringing down the total acquisition from 126 to 36 aircraft was not given much attention.
- The CAG's assessment of savings in India Specific Enhancements (ISE) to be around 17% is also not properly documented and needs deeper examinations.
- The report, in all, stresses on the fact that the defence acquisition processes in India require reforms and streamlining.

9.9 Promoting Indigenisation in IAF

What is the issue?

IAF must stop ignoring domestic manufacturers and instead promote more indigenisation in the defence sector.

What are the concerns with functioning of IAF?

- The Indian Air Force (IAF) has long preferred to import rather than build its own aircraft through the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL).
- This is done especially by delaying the placement of manufacturing orders to the HAL.
- This has happened in the recent cases of the Tejas Mark 1A and the HTT-40 basic trainer aircraft that were to be made by HAL.
- Hence, this is disrupting the smooth and uninterrupted flow of HAL's aircraft assembly lines.
- The IAF cites the resultant delay and expense of these actions to further criticise HAL and argue for more imports to meet critical needs.
- IAF also engages in non-payment of bills for aircraft and services already delivered by HAL, adding cash-flow issues to them.
- This neglect of indigenous manufacturers, combined with the IAF's poor force planning, has resulted in its fleet consisting of seven different types of fighters so far.
- This logistical nightmare in peacetime could become an operational nightmare during war.



What should IAF learn from naval logistical operations?

- In contrast, the navy has embraced indigenisation half a century ago and now operates mostly Indian warships.
- It has systematically created the ecosystem needed for designing and building warships in the country.
- It has instituted its own design bureau, a directorate of indigenisation, and ensures that carefully chosen admirals head the four DPSU shipyards that build its fleet.
- Unlike the navy, which has taken ownership of the process of designing, developing and manufacturing warships, the IAF prefer to move away from HAL.
- Hence, the IAF should ensure a steady flow of recently retired air marshals to head the organisation and make them conform to the its own requirements.

What should be done?

- India has long been the world's largest importer of defence equipment.
- However, unlike other large importers such as Saudi Arabia and the UAE, India has a well-developed industrial base, skilled workers and a large and well-qualified pool of scientific manpower.
- As one of the world's largest automotive component manufacturers, and as a leading space power, India has demonstrated its ability to conceive, plan and achieve high-technology outcomes.
- And as the navy has demonstrated, this can be done in the field of defence.
- However, in the field of aviation, it has failed to leverage its large defence budget to build capacity within Indian industry.
- The situation has changed now and India now actively promotes initiatives to boost indigenous production.
- The defence ministry has ordained that Indian-designed, developed and manufactured weaponry will be top priority for procurement.
- A "Defence Production Policy" has declared that India will become one of the world's top five defence producers by 2025, with defence exports multiplying 10-fold to \$5 billion that year.
- But this will remain on paper until the IAF follows the navy's lead and starts developing an ecosystem of domestic aerospace vendors by ensuring the flow of indigenous projects.
- India holds a defence budget as high as the US, China, Russia or the European nations, yet ignoring its key domestic manufacturers.
- Thus, the situation must change by reducing our reliance on defence imports and pave the way for more indigenisation.

9.10 Russia's S-400 Triumph

Why in news?

S-400 Triumph is in the middle of an ongoing stand-off between Russia and Western nations.

What is S-400 Triumph?

- S-400 Triumph is one of the world's most advanced air defence systems.
- The system is a large complex of radars, control systems and different types of missiles.
- It can simultaneously track numerous incoming objects in a radius of a few hundred kilometres.
- The objects may include all kinds of aircraft, missiles and UAVs.
- It can employ appropriate missile systems to launch the counter attack and to neutralise the objects.
- The system is potential of ensuring a high success rate.

How did it evolve?

- S-400 traces its origins to the demands of the Cold War period.
- It was an effort to find a credible counter to the threat from missiles and incoming enemy aircraft.

- The development of S-400 started towards the end of the Soviet Union in the 1980s.
- It was disrupted by the collapse of the Communist bloc in 1991.

What is the recent development?

- The acquisition of S-400 by countries has taken centre stage in the American diplomacy regarding Russia.
- U.S. believes that S-400 could access sensitive U.S. military technologies in service with the potential buyers.
- Russia has also deployed at least two S-400 systems in Syria.
- This is of much concern to observers who fear the system could contribute to a global conflict breaking out in Syria.
- Among the countries under pressure from the U.S. to not buy this weapon are India and Turkey.

10. MISCELLANEOUS

10.1 Dealing with the Discourse on 'Urban Naxals' and 'Anti-Nationals'

What is the issue?

- An Additional Sessions Judge in Punjab sentenced 3 young men to life in prison under an Indian Penal Code (IPC) provision on "waging war against the government of India".
- With constitutional principles being increasingly compromised for upholding the majoritarian rhetoric, it is crucial that courts remain free of the current discourse on 'urban Naxals' and 'anti-nationals'.

Why is the judgement disputed?

- The convicted men did not commit any physical violence, and nobody was harmed in any way.
- They were not caught in possession of weapons too.
- They were not overheard planning any specific terrorist attack, nor were they on their way to commit one when they were apprehended.
- The men were only caught with literature supporting the cause of Khalistan, a few posters that did the same, and some Facebook posts on the subject.
- The Additional Sessions Judge held that Facebook posts amounted to "direct incitement of violence".
- But mere possession of revolutionary literature is insufficient to sustain a conviction and hence, the verdict is likely to be reversed.
- The judgment indicates an apparent disregard for the constitutional and other safeguards enjoyed by a citizen.

What are the safeguards in place?

- **Constitutional** - A key fundamental right - Article 19 guarantees, among other things, the freedom of speech and association.
- The state may impose "reasonable restrictions" upon this freedom.
- But the Supreme Court has articulated the precise circumstances under which such restrictions would be "reasonable".
- **Judicial** - In the famous 2015 judgment in Shreya Singhal case, the court struck down Section 66A of the Information Technology Act.
- [Section 66A provides punishment for sending offensive messages through communication services.]
- The court made it clear that speech could be punished only if it amounts to 'direct incitement to violence'.
- This is decided in relation with the provisions of the Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act (TADA) and the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA).
- The court cautioned that vaguely-worded provisions of these statutes would have to be read narrowly and precisely, and in accordance with the Constitution.



- E.g. “membership” of a banned organisation (punishable under the TADA and UAPA) was to be understood as being limited to “active membership”
- Everything short of that (incitement to violence), including “advocacy” of any kind, is protected by the Constitution.
- **Tradition** - India has long had a notable tradition of civil liberties.
- In the early 1920s, Mahatma Gandhi opined that the freedom of association was truly respected when assemblies of people could discuss even revolutionary projects.
- Simply, in a pluralist democracy, no one set of ideas can be set as the universal truth and enforce its position through coercion.
- Indeed, the Supreme Court’s “incitement to violence” standard is in terms of this basic insight about civil liberties in a democracy.

What is the larger significance of the case?

- In the last few years, a discourse has arisen which projects a set of oppositional ideas as “urban Naxal” and “anti-national”.
- Notably, neither “urban Naxal” nor “anti-national” is a term defined by law.
- These terms have nothing to do with 'incitement to violence' or creating 'public disorder'.
- In this context, the judgment comes in a series of instances when court has abandoned constitutional values in favour of a majoritarian rhetoric.
- So, beyond recognising that the judgment is flawed, it is high time that the higher courts are aware of a dangerous moment for the judiciary.
- It is crucial that the courts remain free of the current discourse that put life and personal liberties of citizens at stake.

10.2 Myth of Urban Naxalism

What is the issue?

- History is replete with examples of people who were convicted for having had a questioning spirit and nurturing even peaceful non-conformist thoughts.
- The recent spree of arrests by the Indian government is a stark reminder that such prosecutions are still very prevalent.

What is wrong with the government’s approach?

- Anybody raising strong questions against the government is being perceived as an urban naxal, which is a very serious malice.
- This kind of approach might help the government curtail some dissenting voices, but will further the cause of the real naxals.
- Notably, violent dissent and insurgents also thrive on the psychological front, which will be greatly aided by government’s stringent actions.
- In this context, many Left-leaning activists have been wrongly linked with Naxals, while most of them are anathema to the insurgents.
- Even our PM Modi equated Arvind Kejriwal with Naxals in 2015, which even though just a rhetoric, was a jarring error in political terms.
- Naxals also opposed CPI leaders in Bastar — which eventually helped the BJP candidates win in the region.

How could insurgents gain from the government’s approach?

- **First** - It perpetuates a myth about their spread and might, something that is essential for an underground warrior.
- Notably, an insurgency is as much a reality as it is the product of myths that society weaves around the insurgent.



- **Second** - If students, politicians and writers across the spectrum are hounded as Urban Naxals, one need not be a psychoanalyst to gauge its consequences.
- The definitions a state invents for its political harvest come to ring true in unintended ways, and even drive people into the rebel ranks.

What is the way ahead?

- To paint overt and peaceful political rebellions as Naxalism is bad tactic, a political and moral blunder, which the government should avoid.
- Rather, the government should focus on curtailing the propaganda of the real Maoists in rural pockets of central Indian.
- Take up genuine counter campaigns and outreach programs are the best way to ideologically defeat the leftist insurgency.
- Currently, there is a lacklustre attitude to act against programs organised by banned outfits in remote areas, which is self defeating.