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Q19

What are the internal security challenges being faced by India? Give out the role of Central Intelligence and Investigative Agencies tasked to counter such threats.

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2023 · GS III · 15 marks · Internal Security and Extremism

Linkages between development and spread of extremism.

Core demand of the question

- Name India's internal security challenges
- Give the role of central intelligence and investigative agencies
- Mention Intelligence Bureau, Research and Analysis Wing only as the external service, National Investigation Agency, Enforcement Directorate, Central Bureau of Investigation, National Technical Research Organisation

Revision summary

Challenges include terrorism, left-wing extremism, some north-east groups, communal violence, drugs, fake currency, cyber crime, and borders.

The Intelligence Bureau is the Union internal intelligence service.

Research and Analysis Wing is external intelligence; it is not India's domestic investigator.

NIA takes scheduled terror cases; **CBI** takes specified special and corruption cases; **ED** follows the money under PMLA.

NTRO is a technical intelligence organisation supporting the others.

Introduction

India's **internal security** problems are several, not one insurgency. They include terrorism, left-wing extremism, some remaining north-east armed groups, communal and caste violence, drugs, fake currency, cyber crime, and coastal and border crime. **Central intelligence and investigative agencies** do not replace State police. They supply the all-India picture and the specialised case.

Body

Internal security challenges

- **Pakistan-linked and other terrorism**, including in Jammu and Kashmir, and modules in hinterland cities.
- **Left-wing extremism** in the central Indian forest belt, reduced but not gone.
- **North-east insurgency** remnants, extortion, and arms routes; much quieter than two decades ago, still live in pockets.
- **Communal, separatist, and organised street violence** that can scale into internal disorder.
- **Narcotics, arms, and fake Indian currency** as both crime and terror logistics.

- **Cyber attacks**, critical-infrastructure probes, and online radicalisation.
- **Coastal and border** infiltration, including drones.

Role of central agencies

- **Intelligence Bureau (IB)**: the Union's **internal** intelligence service. It collects and assesses threats inside India, supports the Ministry of Home Affairs, and feeds the Multi-Agency Centre. It is not a prosecution agency.
- **Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW)**: India's **external** intelligence service. It is not the lead internal-security police. It matters to internal security only where a threat is **planned or supported from abroad**; mention it as the foreign-intelligence counterpart, not as a domestic investigator.
- **National Technical Research Organisation (NTRO)**: technical and satellite/signals support to intelligence; a **capability** agency, not a street force.
- **National Investigation Agency (NIA)**: statutory investigator and prosecutor of scheduled **terror and related national-security offences** across States after the 2008 law (later widened).
- **Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)**: investigates specified corruption, special crimes, and some cases with inter-State or international character, usually with State consent except where law says otherwise. It is a **police** agency under the **Delhi Special Police Establishment Act**, not a spy service.
- **Enforcement Directorate (ED)**: enforces **Prevention of Money Laundering Act** and foreign-exchange law. In internal security it follows **terror finance and proceeds of crime**, not the bomb itself.
- Coordination sits in the **Ministry of Home Affairs, Multi-Agency Centre**, and, for money trails, **Financial Intelligence Unit - India**. State police and central armed police remain the mass of the response.

Flow diagram

Internal challenges -> IB internal intel internal intel
 Internal challenges -> NIA terror cases terror cases
 Internal challenges -> ED money trail money trail
 Internal challenges -> CBI special crime special crime
 Foreign link -> R and AW external
 Signals satellites -> NTRO

Conclusion

Internal security is terrorism, extremism, communal violence, drugs, cyber and borders. IB leads internal intelligence; **R&AW** is external and should not be described as a domestic police. **NIA**, CBI and ED investigate terror, special crime and dirty money; **NTRO** supplies technical take. None of them replaces the State police.

Facts & figures

IB

Intelligence Bureau: internal intelligence under the Ministry of Home Affairs.

R&AW

Research and Analysis Wing: external intelligence; not a substitute for State police or IB.

National Investigation Agency (NIA)

National Investigation Agency: federal investigator of scheduled terrorism and related offences, created after 26/11.

ED

Enforcement Directorate: PMLA and foreign-exchange enforcement, including terror-finance trails.

NTRO

National Technical Research Organisation: technical intelligence (including satellite and signals support).

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