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Q9

Terrorism is a global scourge. How has it manifested in India? Elaborate with contemporary examples. What are the counter measures adopted by the State? Explain.

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2025 · GS III · 10 marks · Border Security and Organised Crime

Security challenges and their management in border areas - linkages of organized crime with terrorism.

Core demand of the question

- Define terrorism as political violence against civilians
- **Show Indian manifestations:** cross-border, J&K, hinterland modules, Northeast remnants, online radicalisation
- **State counter-measures:** law, intelligence, force, talks, FATF-type finance

Revision summary

Terrorism is political violence meant to frighten civilians and coerce a state.

India has faced it in Kashmir, in city bombings such as 26/11, in small hinterland modules, and online.

Some Northeast and Khalistani violence uses the same methods.

Counters include **UAPA** and the **NIA**, intelligence fusion, NSG, border and coastal security, and terror-finance rules.

Politics and deradicalisation lag force; rights costs of broad laws remain a live issue.

Introduction

Terrorism is the **deliberate use of fear** against civilians to bend a politics. It is a **global scourge** because the same methods - bomb, gun, propaganda - travel, even when the cause is local. India has met it as **cross-border jihad**, as **insurgent bombs**, and as **lone modules** on a phone. The State's reply has been force, law, and, unevenly, politics.

Body

How it has shown itself in India

Jammu and Kashmir has been the longest wound: militant groups, some with Pakistan-based backing, targeting security forces and civilians, with **Pahalgam 2025**-type shocks still in living memory as a reminder that a quieter map is not a finished peace. The **2008 Mumbai** attacks remain the textbook of urban, sea-borne terror. **Hinterland** modules (Indian Mujahideen and later small cells) hit cities with IEDs. **Khalistani** violence has a diaspora shadow. The **Northeast** has mixed insurgency and terror tactics; some groups have talked, some still extort. **Maoist** violence is often classed as LWE (the next question), but the civilian massacre is a terror method. **Online radicalisation** now recruits without a training camp.

Contemporary examples change by the year; the pattern is **asymmetric violence plus a camera**.

Counter-measures

• **Law:** UAPA, NIA, amendments after Mumbai, and State laws. **Intelligence:** Multi-Agency Centre, NATGRID-type data, state ATS. **Force:** NSG, CAPFs, theatre commands in slow motion. **Money:** FATF-driven terror-finance rules, NIA probes. **Borders:** fencing, riverine and maritime police after 26/11. **Politics:** talks, development packages, and, in Kashmir, a changed constitutional status whose security effect is still argued. **Community:** deradicalisation is weaker than it should be.

Effectiveness is mixed. Capacity is far above 2001. **Rights** can be bruised by a broad UAPA net. A scourge is **managed**, not magically ended, while sanctuaries and phones remain.

Flow diagram

Global method -> India
India -> J and K cross-border
India -> City modules
India -> Online
NIA UAPA intel NSG FATF -> India

Conclusion

Terrorism in India has been cross-border, urban-modular, and insurgent. The State has built law, intelligence, force and finance tools since Mumbai. Those tools reduce space. They do not delete ideology or a hostile sanctuary by themselves.

Facts & figures

26/11 Mumbai, 2008

A sea-borne attack that drove coastal security reform and a stronger federal investigation architecture.

National Investigation Agency (NIA)

The National Investigation Agency, created after Mumbai to probe terror across State lines.

Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA)

The principal central statute for terrorist organisations and related offences, often criticised for wide use.