

New Framework to Combat International Terrorism

Syllabus: Role of external state and non-state actors in creating challenges to internal security.

In News

- UN has launched a new framework to combat the scourge of international terrorism and coordinate efforts across the peace and security, humanitarian, human rights and sustainable development sectors.
- The new framework has been termed as the **UN Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact**.

Key Highlights

- The framework is an agreement between the UN chief, 36 organizational entities, the International Criminal Police Organisation (INTERPOL) and the World Customs Organisation.
- It aims to better serve the needs of Member States when it comes to tackling the scourge of international terrorism
- The implementation of the framework and monitoring of its implementation will be overseen by the Coordination Committee of the United Nations.
- Currently, this committee is chaired by UN Under-Secretary-General for counter-terrorism, Vladimir Voronkov.
- The UN Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact Task Force will replace the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, which was established in 2005 to strengthen UN system-wide coordination and coherence of counter-terrorism efforts.

Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT)

- Proposed first by India in 1996 at UN general assembly, the ratification of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism is in a limbo due to opposition from the US and OIS countries.
- The CCIT provides a legal framework which makes it binding on all signatories to deny funds and safe havens to terrorist groups.
- Major objective:
 - To have a universal definition of terrorism that all 193-members of the UNGA will adopt into their own criminal law
 - To ban all terror groups and shut down terror camps
 - To prosecute all terrorists under special laws
 - To make cross-border terrorism an extraditable offence worldwide.

Why CCIT is Facing Opposition?

- Despite India's efforts to push a global intergovernmental convention to tackle terrorism, the conclusion and ratification of the CCIT remains deadlocked, mainly due to opposition from three main blocs – the US, the Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC), and the Latin American countries.

- All three have objections over the “definition of terrorism” (the most divisive of the issues) and seek exclusions to safeguard their strategic interests.
- For example, the OIC wants exclusion of national liberation movements, especially in the context of Israel-Palestinian conflict. The US wanted the draft to exclude acts committed by military forces of states during peacetime.
- Although consensus eludes towards adoption of the terrorism convention, but discussions among member states have yielded three separate protocols that aim to tackle terrorism. These are:
 - International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings, adopted on 15 December 1997;
 - International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, adopted on 9 December 1999; and
 - International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, adopted on 13 April 2005.

9-Point agenda on Fugitive Economic Offenders

Syllabus: Money-laundering and its prevention

[Also refer the topic *Fugitive Economic Offenders Bill 2018* form July issue of CA magazine]

In News

- India presented a nine-point agenda to G-20 countries.
- It calls for "**strong and active cooperation**" among these countries to comprehensively **deal with fugitive economic offenders**.

Key Highlights

- **Cooperation in legal processes** such as effective freezing of the proceeds of crime, early return of the offenders and efficient repatriation of the proceeds of crime should be enhanced and streamlined.
- It called for **joint efforts by G-20 countries** to form a mechanism that denies entry and safe havens to fugitive economic offenders.
- Principles of *United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC)*, *United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime (UNOTC)*, especially related to 'International Cooperation' should be **fully and effectively implemented**.
- It suggested that the **Financial Action Task Force (FATF)** should be called upon to **assign priority and focus** to establishing international cooperation that leads to timely and comprehensive exchange of information between the competent authorities and financial intelligence units.
- According to it, FATF should be tasked to **formulate a standard definition of fugitive economic offenders**.
- FATF should also develop a **set of commonly agreed and standardized procedures** related to identification, extradition and judicial proceedings for dealing with fugitive economic offenders to provide guidance and assistance to G-20 countries, subject to their domestic law.
- It also advocated **setting up of a common platform** for sharing experiences and best practices including successful cases of extradition, gaps in existing systems of extradition and legal assistance, etc.

- According to the agenda, G-20 forum should consider **initiating work on locating properties of economic offenders** who have a tax debt in the country of their residence for its recovery.

Analysis

- G-20 is an effective platform to wage a war against the menace of money laundering and addressing the issue of fugitive economic offenders.
- India has increased its effort to apprehend a number of such offenders, including Vijay Mallya, Nirav Modi and Mehul Choksi. In this context, a global cooperation, in the form of 9-point agenda, would be very helpful for India.
- However, many critics have term this agenda as futile as according to them the **problems lie at home, not abroad**.
- Indian economic offenders **hardly flee to any G-20 nations**. In that case, what is the point to ensure cooperation among these countries.
- And even if they choose G-20 nations, their preferred place is the United Kingdom. In such scenario, the question we Indians should ask is: **what is the problem in getting the UK to extradite our citizens?**
- In India, human right conditions, overcrowding of jails, quality of justice and the quality of investigation by top investigating agencies remain inadequate in the eyes of foreign countries. This makes the **extradition more difficult**.
- Hence, these analysts suggest to **follow our own laws and processes properly so that we are respected by the world as a rule of law state**.

Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR)

Syllabus: Security challenges and their management in border areas

In News

- Indian Defence Minister has launched **the Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR)**, at Information Management and Analysis Centre (IMAC) Gurugram.
- The center aims to **‘practicalise’ the interactions at sea** in order to improve maritime security in the region

Key Highlights

- The IFC-IOR aims to engage with partner nations and multi-national maritime constructs to develop comprehensive maritime domain awareness and share information on vessels of interest (i.e. **information on “white shipping”, or commercial shipping**).
- The intention of this collaborative endeavour shall be to secure the global commons for a peaceful, stable and prosperous region towards the well-being of all.
- IFC-IOR will also help foster bonds of trust, camaraderie and partnership; ingredients that are vital for relationships between nations to transcend from being merely transactional to ones that are transformational.
- The information exchange at the IFC-IOR would be initially undertaken by virtual means, using telephone calls, faxes, emails and video conferencing over internet.
- Subsequently, to enable better interaction, quicker analysis of information and provide timely inputs, the IFC-IOR would host Liaison Officers from partner countries.

- Additionally, towards enhancing capability building, the IFC-IOR would undertake conduct of exercises and training capsules in maritime information collation and sharing.

Need For Such Center

- The Indian Ocean Region is vital to world trade and economic prosperity of many nations as more than 75% of the world's maritime trade and 50% of global oil consumption passes through the IOR.
- However, maritime terrorism, piracy, human and contraband trafficking, illegal and unregulated fishing, arms running and poaching pose myriad challenges to maritime safety and security in the region.
- The scale, scope and the multi-national nature of maritime activities, make it difficult for countries to address these challenges individually. Hence, collaborative efforts between maritime nations in the IOR, is essential.

About Information Management and Analysis Centre (IMAC):

- Information Management and Analysis Centre (IMAC) has been established as the nerve centre of the Navy for coastal surveillance and monitoring.
- This center has been commissioned after the glaring gaps in maritime security was brought out by 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks.
- It is located in Gurugram and was made operational in November 2014.
- It is manned by the Navy and function **under the National Security Adviser (NSA).**

White Shipping Information:

- The seas of the entire world are inter-linked and vessels can sail routinely around the globe in pursuit of cargo.
- Thus a vessel that is in Indian waters today maybe sailing towards a distant destination and similarly several vessels set sail from ports around the globe could be bound for India.
- Having advance information of the vessel, its destination and planned itinerary, etc. is thus extremely helpful towards collating an effective Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) as it can then be properly identified when detected.
- This information is likely to be available with the country from whose port it sails. The information is equally relevant for the destination country and those it passes enroute. Thus mutual exchange of such information, called **white shipping information.**

India Joins Trans Regional Maritime Network

- India has signed an ascension pact to the 30-member Trans Regional Maritime Network.
- This will provide India an access to the information on ships passing through the Indian Ocean Region.
- The pact will give India the access to information on ships which pass through the Indian Ocean region that will greatly help the security forces in keeping a tab on any suspicious activity.
- India already has bilateral **White Shipping Agreements with 36 countries.**
- **Trans Regional Maritime Network (T-RMN)** facilitates information exchange on the movement of commercial traffic on the high seas through the Automatic Identification System (AIS) fitted on merchant ships with more than 300 gross registered tonnage as mandated by the International Maritime Organisation.

Demography along Pakistan Border Changing

Syllabus: Security challenges and their management in border areas

In News

- The Border Security Force (BSF) has flagged concerns over increasing radicalisation of Muslim population in the border district of Jaisalmer in Rajasthan.
- There has been rising prevalence of "Arab customs" even as Hindus and Muslims admit to a shrinkage in dialogue between the communities.
- The BSF "study of demographic pattern in the border areas of Rajasthan and its security implications" has examined demographic changes along the Pakistani border.

Key Highlights

- The study has found a departure from traditional Rajasthani culture in terms of personal grooming such as hairstyles and dress.
- It also found a high 22-25 per cent growth rate in Muslim population as compared to 8-10 per cent of other communities. There is a rise in religiosity with higher attendance of children at mosques for more frequent namaz.
- While **warning of radicalisation**, the study says there is **no evidence of any "anti-national" activity** and there is **no discernible soft corner for Pakistan** among the minority population.
- Also, both communities have not had any problems so far and they conduct business and are cordial to each other
- It also talks about an increase in the membership of Hindu right-wing organisations, which are opposed by Muslims.
- BSF asserts that there is also an aggressive investment in land, which has now become a bone of contention for the Hindu community.
- It has recommended a check on activities of clerics, a task force comprising police, administration, intelligence and BSF, to assess any rise in the communal temperature.

About BSF:

- The Border Security Force (BSF) is a Border Guarding Force of India. Established on December 1, 1965, it is a paramilitary force charged with guarding **India's land border during peace time and preventing transnational crime**.
- It is a Union Government Agency under the **administrative control of Ministry of Home Affairs**.
- It is one of many law enforcement agency of India. It currently stands as the world's largest border guarding force.
- Currently, both the Indo-Pakistan and Indo-Bangladesh borders are guarded by the Border Security Force (BSF).

Permanent Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee

In News

News:

- In order to improve 'jointmanship' the three services are taking steps and have agreed on the appointment of a Permanent Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee (PCCoSC).
- The proposal has been forwarded to the Defence Ministry and is being examined there.

Key Highlights

- The PCCoSC is envisaged as a single-point military adviser to the government.
- The PCCoSC will be a four-star officer, who will be equivalent to chiefs of Army, Airforce, and Navy.
- The Chairman would look into joint issues of the services like training of troops, acquisition of weapon systems and joint operations of the services.
- He would also be in charge of the tri-services command at Andaman and Nicobar Islands, the strategic command of nuclear weapons along with the upcoming cyber and space command.

Facts:

- An expert committee set up under the chairmanship of K Subramanyan to look into all aspects of national security; also recommended the appointment of a Chief of Defense Staff.
- The Naresh Chandra Task Force, formed in May 2011 to review the national security management system, recommended the creation of permanent post of chairman, chiefs of staff committee (CoSC).
- Lt Gen (ret'd) D B Shekatkar, who is the Chairman of Committee on Combat Capabilities Enhancement of Armed Forces, in his report is also believed to have also recommended creation of such a post.

Issues With The Current System

- Currently, India follows Joint Chief of Staff (JSOC) model similar to that of USA, with the senior most chief (Army, Navy and Air force) appointed as Chairman JSOC.
- However, the senior most chief usually gets appointed to this post towards the end of his career. As a result, he does not get sufficient time to bring the necessary changes.
- Also, this system is considered to be inadequate since he has dual role as he is also the Chief of his own service. Combined responsibility is not only overwhelming, often resulting in neglect and delay, but it can also place two roles in conflict.
- There is a turf war between the three wings with each seeing things with its own perspective and requirement. Effective coordination among the three is missing.
- In current system, Defense Secretary is responsible for the defense of the country. This invariably leads to greater gap between the civilian and military bureaucracy.

Limitations Of The Proposed System

- Can the proposed PCCoSC bring synergy within the three services when he has no operational powers over the military?
- The current proposal provides the equal voting rights to PCCoSC as the service chiefs. In case of disagreement, MoD will arbitrate. However, if a PCCoSC is to be a "single point advisor", where is the question of two chiefs not agreeing?

Indian Advanced Towed Artillery Gun

In News

- Indian heavy artillery gun – Advanced Towed Artillery Gun System (ATAGS), has advanced to a stage where user-assisted trials of the gun are likely to start by June 2019.
- The ATAGS is a 155mm, 52 calibre gun being developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation on two parallel tracks: one prototype is being built in partnership with TATA Power (Strategic Engineering Division), and the other is in collaboration with Bharat Forge.

Firing on all cylinders



- Advanced Towed Artillery Gun System (ATAGS) is a 155mm, 52 calibre gun, developed by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) in a consortium model
- One prototype has been built in partnership with Tata Power (Strategic Engineering Division) and another with Bharat Forge
- Two guns from each company

- are undergoing trials; two more guns to join trials later
- There is a sanction for production of 10 guns as part of the development process
- The gun currently weighs about 18 tonnes while the ideal weight is 14-15 tonnes

- The defence Ministry has approved purchase of 150 guns at an approximate cost of ₹3,365 crore
- The Army is in the process of finalising the Preliminary Specifications Qualitative Requirements (PSQR) which details the essential parameters, which should be ready by July 2019
- The gun is presently undergoing development trials. User assisted trials will begin from May-June 2019

KEY FEATURES

- Electric drive
- High mobility
- Quick deployability
- Auxiliary power mode
- Advanced communication system
- Automated command Control system
- Six round magazine instead of a standard three round magazine

- The gun has several significant features including an all-electric drive, high mobility, quick deployability, auxiliary power mode, advanced communications system, automated command and control system.
- It also sports a six-round magazine instead of the standard three-round magazine. This necessitates a larger chamber and is a major factor in pushing up the overall weight of the system.

Indian Navy's Deep Submergence Rescue Vessel

In News

- The Indian Navy has inducted its first '**Deep Submergence Rescue Vehicle (DSRV)**' into service.
- With this, the Indian Navy has joined the select league of world navies that have an integral submarine rescue capability.
- The inducted submarine -- a third generation product of Scotland-based JFD, a part of James Fisher and Sons Plc -- has the latest technology and capability
- The Indian DSRV has the capability to rescue personnel from a distressed submarine up to a depth of 650 m and it is the latest in terms of technology and capabilities.
- The DSRV is currently deployed on mother ship INS Sabarmati.
- **INS Nistar** was the first submarine rescuer followed by **INS Nireekshak** which carries out dual role of diving support and submarine rescue vessel.