STUDY NOTES · BASIC CONCEPT

# All about India's counter terror strategy PRAHAAR

Defence & Security

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## BACKGROUND

The Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) unveiled India's first comprehensive National Counter-Terrorism Policy and Strategy, titled PRAHAAR (meaning "strike" in Hindi). This marks a major milestone in India's approach to combating terrorism, as the country has long faced threats without a single, unified national doctrine until now.

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### Key Highlights of PRAHAAR

- Zero-Tolerance Stance: The policy reaffirms India's zero-tolerance approach to terrorism in all forms. It emphasizes that terrorism is not linked to any specific religion, ethnicity, nationality, or civilization.
- Main Threats Addressed:
    - Cross-border sponsored terrorism — Long-standing issue from across borders, involving Jihadi terror outfits (e.g., groups like those backed by Pakistan), their frontal organizations, and transnational networks.
    - Cyber-attacks — From criminal hackers and nation-states targeting India.
    - Emerging threats — Misuse of drones, emerging technologies, online radicalization (including from ISIS, Al-Qaeda), cryptocurrency funding, and potential use of chemical, biological, or nuclear material.
    - Threats across all domains: land, water, air, and cyberspace.
- Core Pillars / Principles (as outlined in the policy):
    - Prevention — Intelligence-led efforts to stop attacks before they occur and protect citizens/interests.
    - Swift & Proportionate Response — Military-grade, decisive actions against threats.

    - Whole-of-Government Approach — Synergy among agencies, capacity building, and aggregation of internal resources.
    - Rule of Law & Human Rights — All actions must respect legal processes and human rights.
    - Counter-Radicalization — Attenuate conditions enabling terrorism, including online recruitment and glorification.
    - International & Regional Cooperation — Align with global efforts, shape international responses, and counter transnational networks.
    - Recovery & Resilience — Whole-of-society approach for post-attack recovery.
- Focus Areas:
    - Criminalize terrorist acts.
    - Deny access to funds, weapons, and safe havens.
    - Protect critical infrastructure.
    - Counter online radicalization and misuse of internet for jihad glorification/communication.

The full policy document is available on the MHA website (mha.gov.in), providing a detailed, intelligence-driven framework.

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## Why This Matters

- India has been one of the biggest victims of terrorism for decades (e.g., Mumbai 26/11, Pulwama, Pathankot), yet lacked a consolidated national policy.
- PRAHAAR comes amid recent border incidents (e.g., Punjab police killings near Pak border on Feb 22, 2026) and evolving threats like drone smuggling and cyber-radicalization.
- It aims to make India's response more proactive, coordinated, and adaptive, while maintaining adherence to democratic values.