Defence & Security · GS - III

Insider threats and cyber-enabled espionage pose a serious challenge to India's national security. Examine the vulnerabilities in sensitive defence establishments and suggest measures to strengthen counter-intelligence mechanisms.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
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MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Human intelligence, honey-trapping, social engineering, insider threats, classified information, cyber espionage, personnel vetting, access control, counter-intelligence, cybersecurity audits, institutional accountability.

Model Answer

Introduction

National security threats increasingly exploit both technological vulnerabilities and human weaknesses. Insider threats are particularly dangerous because individuals with authorised access can compromise sensitive defence information.

Major Vulnerabilities

- **Human manipulation:** Honey-trapping, financial inducements and coercion can compromise personnel.
- **Digital infiltration:** Malware, phishing and compromised devices enable unauthorised access to classified networks.

- **Weak access controls:** Excessive privileges and inadequate monitoring increase the risk of information leakage.
- **Security culture:** Insufficient awareness and delayed reporting can weaken institutional vigilance.

Measures to Strengthen Security

- **Personnel safeguards:** Regular background verification, security awareness and confidential reporting mechanisms.
- **Technical protection:** Multi-factor authentication, encryption, network segmentation and least-privilege access.
- **Counter-intelligence:** Stronger intelligence coordination, behavioural risk assessment and timely investigation.
- **Accountability:** Periodic security audits and strict enforcement of classified-information protocols.

Conclusion

India must adopt an integrated human-and-technology-based security framework. Protecting defence secrets requires continuous vigilance, institutional integrity and robust counter-intelligence.

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