Defence & Security · GS - III

Counter-terrorism operations in densely populated and sensitive civilian spaces require a careful balance between operational effectiveness, civilian protection and the rule of law. Discuss the major challenges involved and suggest measures to strengthen India's counter-terrorism framework.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 19/11/2026	GS - III	Defence & Security

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

Intelligence-led operations, civilian safety, hostage situations, mosque and religious-site sensitivity, inter-agency coordination, human rights, UAPA, community engagement, accountability, rehabilitation.

Model Answer

Introduction

Counter-terrorism operations in civilian spaces present complex security challenges. Operations involving armed militants in religious or densely populated locations require tactical precision and sensitivity towards civilian life and religious sentiments.

Major Challenges

1. **Civilian protection:** Presence of civilians, hostages or worshippers increases the risk of collateral casualties.
2. **Operational complexity:** Restricted spaces and uncertain intelligence make surveillance, containment and intervention difficult.
3. **Religious sensitivity:** Operations at places of worship may create social tensions and require careful communication.
4. **Inter-agency coordination:** Intelligence gaps and delayed information-sharing can weaken operational effectiveness.
5. **Legal accountability:** Security operations must comply with constitutional safeguards and applicable laws.

Measures to Strengthen the Framework

- **Intelligence-led policing:** Improve human intelligence, technical surveillance and inter-agency information-sharing.
- **Specialised training:** Strengthen negotiation, hostage rescue and urban counter-terrorism capabilities.
- **Community engagement:** Build public trust and prevent extremist recruitment through local outreach.
- **Legal safeguards:** Ensure lawful detention, evidence-based prosecution and accountability for violations.
- **Technology integration:** Use drones, surveillance systems and secure communication networks for situational awareness.

Conclusion

Effective counter-terrorism requires more than neutralising immediate threats. A professional, intelligence-driven and legally accountable approach is essential to protect citizens while maintaining public trust and constitutional values.