Defence & Security · GS - IV

Raman is a senior IPS officer and has recently been posted as D.G. of a state. Among the various issues and problems/challenges which needed his immediate attention, the issue relating to recruitment of unemployed youth by an unknown terrorist group, was a matter of grave concern.

It was noted that unemployment was relatively high in the state. The problem of unemployment amongst graduates and those with higher education was much more grave. Thus they were vulnerable and soft targets.

In the review meeting taken by him with senior officers of DIG Range and above, it came to light that a new terrorist group has emerged at the global level. It has launched a massive drive to recruit young unemployed people. Special focus was to pick young people from a particular community. The said organisation seemed to have the clear objective of utilising/using them for carrying out militant activities. It was also gathered that the said (new) group is desperately trying to spread its tentacles in his state.

A definite/reliable intelligence tip was received by the State CID and Cyber Cell that a large number of such unemployed youth have already been contacted by the terrorist outfit/group through social media and local communal organisations and other contacts. The need of the hour was to act swiftly and to check these elements/designs before they assume serious proportions.

Discrete inquiries made by the police, through the Cyber Cell, revealed that good numbers of unemployed youth are very active on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. On an average, many of them were spending 6-8 hours each day, using electronic devices/internet, etc. It also came to light that such unemployed youth were showing sympathy and endorsing the messages received from certain persons, allegedly the contact persons of that global terrorist group. Their social media accounts revealed their strong affinity to such groups inasmuch as many of them started forwarding anti-national tweets on their WhatsApp and Facebook, etc. It seemed that they succumbed to their ploy and started propagating secessionist ideology. Their posts were hyper-critical of the government's initiatives, policies and subscribing to extreme beliefs and promoting extremism.

(a) What are the options available to Raman to tackle the above situation?

(b) What measures would you suggest for strengthening the existing set-up to ensure that such groups do not succeed in penetrating and vitiating the atmosphere in the state?

(c) In the above scenario, what action plan would you advise for enhancing the intelligence gathering mechanism of the police force?

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EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
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MARKS	WORD LIMIT
20	~250 words

Answer Hint

Terrorist recruitment, unemployment, cyber-radicalisation, community outreach, intelligence gathering, preventive policing, de-radicalisation, constitutional safeguards

Model Answer

Introduction

The situation represents a convergence of unemployment, online radicalisation, communal vulnerability and organised terrorist recruitment. Raman must adopt a **preventive, intelligence-led and community-oriented approach** while protecting constitutional freedoms and avoiding profiling of any particular community.

(a) Options Available to Raman

Raman should immediately strengthen surveillance of identified terrorist networks, trace digital communication channels and coordinate with State CID, Cyber Cell and central intelligence agencies. Persons credibly linked with recruitment or terrorist financing should be dealt with under the law.

At the same time, mere criticism of government policies should not be equated with terrorism. Action should be based on evidence of violence, recruitment, incitement or unlawful terrorist association. Vulnerable youth should be identified for counselling, de-radicalisation and rehabilitation rather than indiscriminate criminalisation.

(b) Measures to Strengthen Existing Set-up

The state should establish an integrated **Counter-Radicalisation and Intelligence Coordination Mechanism** linking police, intelligence agencies, cyber experts, educational institutions and district administration. Cyber-monitoring capabilities, forensic laboratories and digital investigation skills should be enhanced.

Employment and skill-development programmes for vulnerable youth can reduce socio-economic susceptibility. Community leaders, teachers, NGOs and religious organisations should be involved in countering extremist narratives. Special attention should be given to grievance redressal, social inclusion and communal harmony.

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(c) Action Plan for Intelligence Gathering

The police should develop a multi-layered intelligence system involving:

1. **Human Intelligence (HUMINT):** strengthen local informant networks and community-level intelligence while ensuring accountability.
2. **Cyber Intelligence:** monitor legally accessible online indicators of recruitment, terrorist propaganda and financing, supported by digital forensics.
3. **Inter-agency Coordination:** establish real-time information sharing among State CID, Cyber Cell, central intelligence agencies and district police.
4. **Data Analysis:** create risk indicators for recruitment networks, suspicious financial transactions and repeated extremist contacts.
5. **Early-Warning System:** maintain district-wise assessments and periodically review emerging radicalisation patterns.

Conclusion

The objective should be to **prevent terrorism without alienating communities**. A combination of intelligence-led policing, cyber capability, employment opportunities, community trust, lawful intervention and rehabilitation can prevent extremist organisations from gaining a foothold while strengthening democratic resilience.

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