Status of Radicalisation in India

Why in News

The **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)** has, for the first time, approved a research study on **'status of radicalisation'** in the country.

Key Points

- Study will be conducted by **G.S. Bajpai,** Director of the Centre for Criminology and Victimology, National Law University, Delhi.
- The study will attempt to legally define **'radicalisation'** and suggest amendments to the **Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967.**

    - Radicalisation is yet to be defined legally, this **leads to misuse by the police.**
    - **Aggressive policing measures could be counter-productive** as the youth who were radicalised were "misguided" and not the culprits.
- A huge local population engulfed by systematic radicalisation can create a major security challenge for the state.

    - The United Nations' 26th report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team concerning the IS (Islamic State), al-Qaeda and associated individuals and entities had pointed out "significant numbers" of the IS and al-Qaeda members in Kerala and Karnataka.
- **Instances of Radicalisation in India:**

    - Cases have revealed instances of **internet-facilitated indoctrination** and active radicalisation in multiple states.
    - Instances of **Left Wing Extremism** (LWE) have grown despite the continued government intervention. Encounters, ambushes and arrests still occur with regular frequency in the red corridor districts.
    - Increased incidents of **mob lynching, cow vigilantism** and the string of assassinations of rationalists such as Narendra Dabholkar, Govind Pansare and Gauri Lankesh point towards rising extremism in the right wing cadres.
- **Maharashtra Model:**

    - The Maharashtra Government has rolled out a **Deradicalisation Programme** for the minority community to counter both **home-grown extremism** and the global Islamic State (IS) threat. The plan has been chalked out by the State Home Department that includes a **50-point socio-economic strategy.**
    - Deradicalisation is a process in which people reject the ideology they once embraced. This is a step further than disengagement, characterised by a change in behaviour (leaving the radical group, stopping violence) without giving up.

Radicalisation

- **Meaning:**

- The word "radical" refers to change in the fundamental nature of something, thus Radicalism is a set of beliefs or actions of people who advocate thorough or complete political or social reform.
- Radicalisation refers to the process of an individual's transformation from a moderate, law-abiding citizen into an active, anti-state, violent extremist.

- **Types of Radicalisation:**

  - **Right-Wing Extremism:**

    - It is characterized by the violent defence of a racial, ethnic or pseudo-national identity, and is also associated with radical hostility towards state authorities, minorities, immigrants and/or left-wing political groups.
  - **Politico-Religious Extremism:**

    - It results from political interpretation of religion and the defence, by violent means, of a religious identity perceived to be under attack (via international conflicts, foreign policy, social debates, etc.). Any religion may spawn this type of violent radicalization.
  - **Left-Wing Extremism:**

    - It focuses primarily on anti-capitalist demands and calls for the transformation of political systems considered responsible for producing social inequalities, and that may ultimately employ violent means to further its cause.
    - It includes anarchist, maoist, Trotskyist and marxist–leninist groups that use violence to advocate for their cause.

- **Factors behind Radicalisation:**

  - **Individual socio-psychological factors,** which include grievances and emotions such as alienation and exclusion, anger and frustration and a strong sense of injustice.
  - **Socio-economic factors,** which include social exclusion, marginalisation and discrimination (real or perceived), limited education or employment etc.
  - **Political factors,** which include weak and non-participatory political systems lacking good governance and regard for civil society.
  - **Social media,** which provide connectivity, virtual participation and an echo-chamber for like-minded extremist views, accelerates the process of radicalisation.

Way Forward

- At the primary level, the government needs to reinvest in educational institutions. The aim should be to decrease prejudice, stereotyping and discrimination and to increase knowledge about democracy. Collective sports and citizen programmes based on exchanges have been found helpful.
- The success of Kerala and Maharashtra programmes of deradicalisation indicates how community-based programmes may work in vulnerable states. The disaffected youth with no real job prospects and limited futures are vulnerable. The war on terror is to be countered more in the human mind, and requires different skills and tactics.

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