



Antifa in USA

Why in News

The USA is experiencing a **'law and order' situation** due to the violent nationwide protests triggered by anger over **racial inequities and excessive use of police force**.

- The unrest began with peaceful protests over the **death of a African-American man** in police custody in Minneapolis city of USA.
- Subsequently, many cities across the USA remain under curfews **at a level not seen since** riots following the **1968 assassination of civil rights activist Martin Luther King Jr.**

Key Points

▪ Blame for Ongoing Violent Protest :

- The USA President has **blamed** an organisation namely, **Antifa** for the violent protest that erupted in the country.
- The antifa movement **gained more visibility in 2017** after a series of events that put a spotlight on anti-fascist protesters.

▪ Declaration as Terrorist Organisation:

- It has been also argued that the USA will be designating Antifa as a **terrorist organization** in the future.
- Although, the USA has **no statute that permits designating violent domestic groups terrorists**, as it has for international groups like Islamic State or Al-Qaeda.

Antifa

▪ Description:

- The word "antifa" was **first** used in **1946**, **Antifa stands for "Anti-fascism"**.
- The name comes from **early 1930s Germany**, where socialist "anti-fa" groups attempted to **stand up to the rise of Adolf Hitler's Nazis**.
- Antifa was started in the **Rose City Antifa of Portland**, Oregon (USA) in **2007** to shut down a neo-Nazi skinhead music festival called Hammerfest.

▪ Principles:

- The organisation covers a **range of social justice issues**. It believes in a world **free of fascism, racism, sexism, homo/transphobia, and islamophobia**.
- It also focusses on countering the **resurgence of neo-nazi and white supremacist groups**.
- It is also **only one** activist movement that has come together in the past few years **to oppose the far right**.

▪ Members:

- Antifa is more of a movement of activists whose followers **share a philosophy and tactics**.

- The **movement is secretive and has no official leaders.**
- It is organised into **autonomous local cells.**
- **Unique Ways to Protest:**
 - Antifa members typically **dress in black and often wear a mask at their demonstrations,** and follow **far-left ideologies such as anti-capitalism.**
 - What makes them stand out is the violence, although the group also participates in non-violent protests.
 - It **criticises mainstream liberal politicians for not doing enough,** and Antifa members have often physically confronted their conservative opponents.
 - Apart from public counter-protests, Antifa members run websites that track white extremist and ultra-right groups.

Fascism

- **Features:**
 - Fascism is a form of **authoritarian ideology which promotes ultranationalism.**
 - Opposed to Liberalism, Marxism, and Anarchism, Fascism is **placed on the far-right within** the traditional left-right spectrum.
 - It is usually characterized by **dictatorial power, forcible suppression of opposition, as well as strong regimentation of society and of the economy.**
- **Origin and Spread:**
 - The term 'fascism' is of Italian origin. It was first used for the movement which started in Italy under the leadership of Benito Mussolini.
 - It came to prominence in early **20th-century Europe.** The first fascist movements emerged **in Italy during World War I,** before spreading to other European countries.
 - Several other countries also have experienced fascist regimes or elements of them which include Adolf Hitler in Germany, Francisco Franco in Spain and Juan Perón in Argentina, etc.

[Source: TH](#)

PDF Refernece URL: <https://www.drishtias.com/printpdf/antifa-in-usa>