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1. White-Collar Terrorism

- **Prelims** - White-Collar Terrorism
- **Mains** - GS 3 - Internal Security

Why in the news?

- The Delhi Blast the growing trend of white - collar terrorism in India.

White-Collar Terrorism

- **Definition:** White-Collar Terrorism is a recently emerging term in internal security discourse, referring to the participation of highly educated, well-placed professionals (doctors, engineers, IT experts, professors) in terrorist activities.
- **Features**
 - **Technical Expertise:** Use of specialized knowledge (e.g., chemical engineers making explosives, IT professionals managing encrypted comms, doctors procuring restricted substances).
 - **Self-Radicalization:** Often radicalized online via "echo chambers" rather than physical training camps.
 - **Clean Financing:** Operations are often self-funded using legitimate salaries, bypassing "terror financing" watchdogs that look for hawala or illicit flows.
 - **Institutional Access:** Ability to infiltrate critical infrastructure (hospitals, universities, research labs) from within.
- **Causes**
 - **Ideological Rigidness:** High education does not immunize against radicalization. A search for "absolute truths" or identity can lead professionals toward extremist ideologies.
 - **Relative Deprivation:** A perceived sense of injustice against one's community, despite personal economic success.
 - **Digital Insularity:** Encrypted platforms allow professionals to interact with global terror networks without leaving their homes/offices.
- **Types**
 - **Operational Actors:** Professionals who physically carry out attacks (e.g., a doctor planting a car bomb). This is rare but rising.

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- **Logistical Enablers:** Those who use their status to rent safe houses, buy vehicles, or secure passes/IDs for restricted areas.
- **Silent Financiers:** Individuals who never meet a terrorist but fund them through anonymous digital transfers.
- **The "Insider Threat":** Employees in critical sectors (Nuclear plants, ISRO, AIIMS) who leak sensitive data to handlers.

- **Challenges To Detect**

- **Profiling Failure:** Traditional profiling methods are useless as perpetrators possess high social legitimacy and clean records.
- **Insider Threat:** Difficult to detect when the perpetrator is a trusted employee with valid security clearance.
- **Encrypted Comms:** Use of high-end encryption makes real-time intelligence gathering nearly impossible.
- **Legal Hurdles:** Balancing surveillance measures against ethical concerns regarding privacy and academic freedom.

- **Indian Steps to Counter the Issue**

- **Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), 1967:**

- ★ This is the primary anti-terror law used to prosecute individuals involved in white-collar terror modules, such as the recent incidents involving doctors and academics in the NCR region.
- ★ Amendment: Empowers the government to designate individuals as terrorists, which is vital for targeting "clean skin" white-collar operatives who act without a formal organizational tag.

- **Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002:** PMLA is invoked when legitimate income is turned into "proceeds of crime" by diverting it to terrorist activities. The Enforcement Directorate (ED) uses this to trace and attach assets derived from terror funding.

- **National Investigation Agency (NIA):** The primary central agency for UAPA cases, with dedicated cells like the Terror Funding and Fake Currency (TFFC) Cell.

2. Trade Intelligence and Analytics Portal

- **Prelims** - Trade Intelligence and Analytics Portal
- **Mains** - GS 3 - Economy

Why in the news?

- Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, launched the Trade Intelligence and Analytics (TIA) Portal.

Trade Intelligence and Analytics Portal

- **What is it?:** The Trade Intelligence & Analytics (TIA) Portal is a unified, data-rich digital platform designed to make complex national and global trade data accessible, transparent, and actionable for all stakeholders..
- **Aim:** The portal's primary function is to consolidate fragmented trade information and provide data-driven insights to enhance India's trade competitiveness, support evidence-based policymaking, and simplify trade for small businesses.
- **Features**
 - ➔ Centralized digital hub consolidating national and global trade databases, including UN Comtrade data.
 - ➔ Automated analytics, trade indices like Trade Complementarity Index, Revealed Comparative Advantage, and Trade Intensity Index.
 - ➔ Tools for country and commodity level intelligence to identify new market and export opportunities.
 - ➔ Data extraction modules for customized trade data analysis and automated monthly trade reports.
 - ➔ User-friendly with free public access to primary dashboards; authorized users can access detailed bilateral and global data.
- **Benefits**
 - ➔ Democratizes trade data access, especially benefiting small businesses and MSMEs previously limited by expensive or restricted data.
 - ➔ Enhances exporters' competitiveness by helping them understand global demand, tariff environments, and potential markets.

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- Strengthens policy formulation through evidence-based insights for identifying vulnerabilities, trade shifts, and aligning with national manufacturing and critical minerals strategies.
- Supports broader trade diversification and enhanced utilization of trade agreements for economic growth and foreign exchange earnings.

3. Biological Tilings

- **Prelims** - Biological Tilings
- **Mains** - GS 3 - Science and Technology

Why in the news?

- In a new study, published in PNAS Nexus by researchers in Germany, found that the prevalence of tilings in nature is surprisingly more widespread.

Biological Tilings

- **Definition:** Biological tilings are natural patterns in which biological structures arrange themselves into repeating, space-filling shapes with minimal gaps or overlaps.
- **Causes**
 - To minimize energy usage
 - To ensure optimal space utilisation
 - To provide mechanical stability
 - To improve structural strength
 - To enable efficient resource use or storage
 - To reflect growth dynamics during development
- **Types of Biological Tilings**
 - **Hexagonal Tilings (Most Common)**
 - ★ Honeycomb structures in bees
 - ★ Hexagonal packing of epithelial cells
 - ★ Ommatidia arrangement in insect eyes
 - ★ Reason: Hexagons provide maximum area for minimum perimeter → highest efficiency.
 - **Voronoi Tilings**
 - ★ Epidermal cells in plant leaves
 - ★ Fish skin pigmentation patterns
 - ★ Vascular network distribution
 - ★ Cells divide space based on proximity and competition.
 - **Foam-like Tilings**
 - ★ Lung alveoli

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- ★ Certain plant tissues and moss structures
- ★ Patterns formed where surface area maximisation is critical

→ **Spiral (Phyllotactic) Tilings**

- ★ Sunflower head arrangement
- ★ Pinecone scales
- ★ Fibonacci sequence-based spirals

4. Global Methane Status Report 2025

- **Prelims** - Global Methane Status Report 2025
- **Mains** - GS 3 - Environment

Why in the news?

- UNEP released Global Methane Status Report 2025

Global Methane Status Report 2025

- **Findings**

→ Revised Baseline & Projection

- ★ 2030 emissions under CLE scenario: 369 Mt, i.e., 14 Mt (4%) lower than the 2021 pre-Pledge baseline.
- ★ Reduction due to slower gas market growth + waste regulations in Europe & North America.

→ Ambition Gap

- ★ Full execution of current NDCs + Methane Action Plans → only 8% reduction below 2020 levels by 2030.
- ★ Far below the Global Methane Pledge (GMP) goal of 30% cut by 2030.

→ Maximum Technically Feasible Reductions (MTFR)

- ★ Implementing all MTFR measures → 32% reduction by 2030 (131 Mt).
- ★ Could avoid 0.2°C of warming by 2050 & prevent 180,000+ premature deaths per year by 2030.

→ Cost-Effectiveness

- ★ 80% of MTFR potential (109 Mt/year) can be achieved at very low cost.
- ★ Waste sector yields net savings of US\$9 billion/year through biogas capture and utilisation.

→ Sectoral Mitigation Potential

- ★ Energy sector: 72% of global technical potential (largest, cheapest).
- ★ Agriculture: 18%.
- ★ Waste: 10%.

→ Geographic Concentration

- ★ The G20+ group (which includes the EU-24, Norway, Switzerland, Iceland, and New Zealand) is responsible for 65% of emissions and 72% of the global mitigation potential.
- ★ Hold 72% of mitigation potential.

→ Policy Progress

- ★ 127 countries now include methane-related measures in NDCs (65% of Paris Agreement parties).
- ★ Only six countries have GMP-aligned, quantifiable methane reduction targets: Canada, USA, Japan, Norway, Moldova, Vietnam.

• Major Sources of Emission

- **Agriculture (42%, 146 Mt)**: Dominated by enteric fermentation from livestock (76% of agricultural emissions) and rice cultivation (21%).
- **Energy (38%, 135 Mt)**: Comprises oil and gas production (64 Mt from upstream, 17 Mt from downstream) and coal mining (43 Mt).
- **Waste (20%, 71 Mt)**: Primarily from municipal solid waste in landfills (37 Mt) and wastewater (30 Mt from domestic and industrial).

• Implication

- **Health & Productivity Loss**: CLE pathway → 24,000 extra deaths, 2.5 Mt crop losses, and 6.9 million labour hours lost annually due to ozone exposure.
- **Regional Disparities**: Non-G20+ regions may see methane rise: +16% by 2030 and +53% by 2050.
- **Data Integrity Crisis**: Fossil fuel methane is grossly underreported; measured levels often double official estimates.
- **Locked-in Emissions**: Waste methane lasts decades—lack of early landfill gas capture → lost mitigation opportunities after 2030.
- **Finance Gap**: Current finance: US\$13.7 bn/year vs US\$127 bn/year needed to meet MTFR.

• Recommendation

→ **Measurement-Based Regulation**

- ★ Expand satellite + airborne measurement for accurate MRV.
- ★ Follow EU Methane Regulation & OGMP 2.0 standards.

→ **Sector-Specific Policies**

- ★ Energy: LDAR mandates; ban routine venting/flaring.

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★ Waste: Source segregation + landfill gas capture.

★ Agriculture: Ban residue burning; alternate wetting-drying in rice.

→ **Finance Solutions**

★ Concessional finance & risk-sharing tools for developing economies.

★ Redirect part of the US\$635 bn global harmful agri subsidies.

→ **Stronger National Targets**

★ Convert GMP commitments into quantified, time-bound methane targets within NDCs.

→ **Integration with Decarbonization**

★ Link methane mitigation with deep energy transition + sustainable diets to reach 53% reduction by 2050.

5. Guru Tegh Bahadur

- **Prelims** - Guru Tegh Bahadur
- **Mains** - GS 1 - Modern Indian History

Why in the news?

- November 24 marks the death anniversary of Guru Tegh Bahadur.

Guru Tegh Bahadur

- Who is he?

- Guru Tegh Bahadur (1621–1675) was the ninth Guru of the Sikhs, known as the "Protector of Humanity" (Hind di Chadar).
- Born Tyaga Mal in Amritsar, Punjab in 1621, he was the youngest son of Guru Hargobind, the sixth Sikh Guru. He learned Gurmukhi, archery, swordsmanship, and horse riding.
- He played a significant role in promoting Sikh values of courage, sacrifice, and religious tolerance.

- Key Contributions:

→ **Religious Leadership**

- ★ Advocated for spiritual enlightenment and moral conduct.
- ★ Composed 115 hymns included in the Guru Granth Sahib, emphasizing inner peace and devotion to God.

→ **Social Reform**

- ★ Stood against caste-based discrimination and superstitions.
- ★ Encouraged equality and selfless service to humanity.

→ **Advocacy for Religious Freedom**

- ★ Opposed forced religious conversions under the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb.
- ★ Supported the Kashmiri Pandits who sought his help to preserve their religious freedom.

- **Death:** Martyred in 1675 at the Gurdwara Sis Ganj Sahib in Delhi by Aurangzeb for upholding the right to religious freedom.