

# Ministry of Home Affairs

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## Ministry of Home Affairs: Reforms, Roles and Realities

### Context

The **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)** plays a crucial role in safeguarding **India's internal security** and maintaining **federal harmony**. Over the decades, the MHA has transitioned from a **reactive crisis manager** to a **strategic policy-making body**. This transformation is central to understanding the evolving nature of **India's internal security apparatus**, especially for UPSC aspirants studying governance, internal security, and polity.

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### Basis and Role of the Ministry of Home Affairs

- The MHA serves as the **nerve centre of India's internal security and federal governance**.
- Unlike many other nations, India's MHA integrates **security and administrative coordination**, making it a **pillar of national stability**.

### Constitutional Backing:

- 'Public order' and 'police' are State subjects under **Entries 1 & 2, List II (State List), Seventh Schedule**.
- However, Centre's role is justified through:
  - **Article 355**: Union's duty to protect States from external aggression and internal disturbance.
  - **Article 256 & 356**: Ensure constitutional governance and Centre-State cooperation during emergencies.

## Key Functions:

- Monitoring internal security and issuing advisories.
  - Sharing intelligence, providing **financial and manpower support** to States.
  - Ensuring law and order **without violating State autonomy**.
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## Evolution of MHA's Role

The expansion of MHA's functions is a direct response to emerging **national security threats** and **state-level incapacities**.

### Key Drivers of Change:

- **Rise of terrorism and insurgency** since the 1980s.
- Inadequate response by States to threats in **Punjab (militancy)**, **Kashmir (terrorism)**, and **Central India (Maoist insurgency)**.
- Increased dependence on **Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs)** like **CRPF** and **CISF**.
- Industrial unrest during the 1970s-80s led to the creation of **CISF** for securing critical infrastructure.

### Organisational Changes:

- **Addition** of departments: **Disaster Management** and **Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB)**.
  - **Separation** of the **Department of Justice** and **North-East affairs** from MHA.
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## Key Challenges Faced by MHA

Despite its strategic position, the MHA has faced several historical and structural limitations:

### 1. Narrowed Focus:

- Prioritised insurgency, terrorism, and border security.
- Neglected areas like **police modernisation, inter-agency coordination, and disaster management.**

## 2. Frequent Leadership Changes:

- Example: **Indira Gandhi's third term and Rajiv Gandhi's tenure** saw **4 different Home Ministers**, leading to policy instability.

## 3. Reactive Legislation:

- Laws enacted **after crises**, e.g.:
  - **TADA** (post-Punjab insurgency)
  - **POTA** (after 2001 Parliament attack)
  - **NIA Act** (after 26/11 Mumbai attacks)

## 4. Crisis Ministry Mindset:

- Stepped in **only during emergencies**, rather than focusing on **long-term structural reforms.**

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## Recent Reforms and Strategic Initiatives

The past decade has witnessed a **paradigm shift** in the approach of the MHA:

### 1. Budgetary Strengthening:

- MHA's budget crossed **₹1 lakh crore in 2019.**
- **2025 allocation: ₹2.33 lakh crore**, with **₹97,000 crore** for **CAPFs** (up from ₹38,000 crore in 2013-14).

### 2. Legislative Overhaul:

- Since 2019, over **27 legislative reforms** have been introduced.

- Key reforms:

- **Amendments to UAPA and NIA Act**
- Clear **definition of terrorism** under Indian criminal law
- Emphasis on **terror financing prevention**

### **3. Institutional and Technological Strengthening:**

- Expansion of **National Investigation Agency (NIA)**
- Revamp of **Multi-Agency Centre (MAC)**
- Push for a '**duty to share**' intelligence culture
- Establishment of **National Forensic Sciences University (NFSU)**

### **4. Criminal Justice Reforms:**

- Enactment of **3 new criminal codes**:
    - **Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita**
    - **Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita**
    - **Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam**
  - Full implementation of **Crime and Criminal Tracking Network & Systems (CCTNS)** - integrates **17,130 police stations, courts, and forensic labs**.
  - Promotion of **forensic-led investigations**.
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## Significance of These Reforms

These reforms have had a **measurable impact** on India's internal security:

- **Violence in conflict zones reduced by 70%.**
  - **Stone pelting incidents in Kashmir** have nearly stopped.
  - **Insurgency in the North-East** has weakened significantly.
  - **Naxal-affected regions** are witnessing **economic and social development.**
  - Boost to **political stability and governance** in previously disturbed areas.
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## Way Forward

### 1. Strengthen Institutional Coordination:

- Regular training for better Centre-State-Police-Judiciary synergy.
- Creation of **Joint Command Centres** for coordinated action.

### 2. Federal Support Model:

- Provide States with **modern equipment, training, and funds.**
- Encourage **merit-based policing and autonomy** in law enforcement.

### 3. Policy Continuity and Vision:

- Reduce political interference and ensure **long-term planning.**
- Shift from event-based policies to **proactive and preventive governance.**