

National Investigation Agency

September 12, 2020

The National Investigation Agency is the only truly federal agency in the country, along the lines of the FBI in the United States, more powerful than the CBI.

Features of the NIA

- NIA has been established under the **National Investigation Agency Act, 2008**, which is a central legislation under **Article 131** of the Constitution.
- The law governs the functioning of India's **premier counter-terror agency**. It was introduced in the **wake of the 26/11 Mumbai terrorist attacks**.
- It's headquarters is in Delhi.
- The law gives the NIA powers:
 - . to take suo motu cognisance of terror activities in any part of India and register a case
 - . to enter any state without permission from the state government, and to investigate and arrest people.
 - Terror attacks could cover following offences:
 - . challenge to the country's sovereignty and integrity
 - . bomb blasts
 - . hijacking of aircraft and ships
 - . attacks on nuclear installations
 - . smuggling in high quality counterfeit Indian currency
 - The ground staff of the agency in the national capital could be drawn from existing central staff and security organisations while in the states, permanent deputation from the state police could be taken.

- NIA has registered and investigated 315 cases as on 05.02.2020. After submission of charge sheets, 60 cases have been finally or partially decided in trial. Of these, 54 cases have ended in conviction giving NIA a **conviction percentage of 90%**.

Recent Amendments

- The 2019 NIA Amendment Act **expanded the type of offences** that the investigative body could investigate and prosecute, to include offences related to
 - . human trafficking
 - . counterfeit currency
 - . manufacture or sale of prohibited arms
 - . cyber-terrorism
 - . offences under the Explosive Substances Act, 1908.
- The amendment also enables the central government to **designate sessions courts as special courts for NIA trials**.
- Further, officers of the NIA will have the **power to investigate scheduled offences committed outside India, subject to international treaties and domestic laws of other countries**. The central government may direct the NIA to investigate such cases, as if the offence has been committed in India. The **Special Court in New Delhi will have jurisdiction** over these cases.
- The **Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Amendment (UAPA)**, also passed in 2019, allows an NIA officer to conduct raids, and seize properties that are suspected to be linked to terrorist activities **without taking prior permission of the Director General of Police of a state**. The investigating officer only requires sanction from the Director General of NIA.