

What does 'State sponsor of terrorism' mean?

April 18, 2022

In news— Recently, the President of Ukraine has asked the US President Joe Biden to designate Russia as a “state sponsor of terrorism” which would activate perhaps the harshest suite of sanctions available with the United States against Russia.

What is State sponsor of terrorism?

- It is a **terrorist violence carried out with the active support of national governments provided to violent non-state actors.**
- **States can sponsor terrorist groups in several ways, including** but not limited to funding terrorist organizations, providing training, supplying weapons, providing other logistical and intelligence assistance, and hosting groups within their borders.
- **During the 1970s and 1980s, state sponsorship of terrorism was a frequent feature of international conflict.**
- From that time to the 2010s there was a steady pattern of decline in the prevalence and magnitude of state support.

Terrorist designation by the USA-

- With respect to the USA, the US Secretary of State (the minister primarily in charge of foreign relations) has the power to designate countries that “have repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism” as “State Sponsors of Terrorism”.
- According to the State Department website, the US can place **four categories of sanctions on countries that are on this list:** restrictions on US foreign assistance; a ban on defence exports and sales; certain controls over

exports of dual use items; and miscellaneous financial and other restrictions.

- Sanctions can also be placed on countries and persons that engage in certain trade with designated countries.
- As of now, there are **four countries on the list** of state sponsors of terrorism – Syria (December 29, 1979), followed by Iran (January 19, 1984), and North Korea (November 20, 2017). Cuba was re-designated as a state sponsor of terrorism on January 12, 2021.
- Countries can be put and taken off the list from time to time.
- A country can be delisted if it is deemed by the US to have reformed its behaviour and returned to complying with the requirements of international law and conduct, or if it has undergone a change of leadership.