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Cabinet moves to strengthen anti-terrorism law, agency

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Seeks Ban On Individual Terrorists

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New Delhi: An amendment to the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act cleared by the Cabinet on Monday will allow individual terrorists to be included in the schedule of "banned" entities. The Cabinet also approved a proposal to amend the NIA Act to empower the agency to register a case and investigate terror acts on foreign soil if Indian nationals or interests are harmed.

The draft National Investigation Agency (Amendment) Bill seeks to widen the scope of cases the agency can investigate. New offences being added to the schedule of NIA Act include cyberterrorism cases registered under Section 66F of the Information Technology Act, 2000 as well as IPC crimes under Sections 370 and 371 relating to

PROPOSED CHANGES IN NIA ACT

- Draft NIA (Amendment) Bill seeks to empower agency to carry out searches in a state without DGP's consent
- While it is not mandatory for NIA even now to intimate DGP before a search, it does so where a law and order situation is anticipated
- NIA will be empowered to probe terror acts on foreign soil if Indian nationals or interests are harmed
- Cyberterrorism, human trafficking being added to Schedule of NIA Act

human trafficking that often have inter-state and international linkages.

The amendments to UAPA and the NIA Act will be put up for approval in Parliament in the current session. The draft NIA (Amendment) Bill also seeks to permit searches in a state without the top state police official's consent. While it is not mandatory for the

PROPOSED CHANGES IN UAPA

- Proposed amendment to UAPA will enable govt to declare top terrorists such as Lashkar chief Hafiz Saeed and Jaish head Masood Azhar, already designated as global terrorists by UN, as 'individual terrorists'
- Listing of an individual as 'terrorist' helps impose travel ban, restrict access to funds and other amenities
- Banning of individual terrorists under UAPA will add heft to India's request to other nations to designate them on similar lines

NIA even now to intimate a director general of police before a search, the agency does so where a law-and-order situation is anticipated.

The listing of an individual as a "terrorist" helps impose a travel ban and restrict such a person's access to funds and other amenities.

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JeM chief hurt in Rawalpindi hospital blast?

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

The Pakistan army on Monday remained tight-lipped about the blast that hit its Rawalpindi hospital where banned terror outfit Jaish-e-Muhammed's chief Masood Azhar was being treated for his renal ailment. There was no word on Azhar amid rumours that the Jaish chief may have been among the injured.

Indian intelligence agencies did not have an independent confirmation yet. But social media, particularly a Telegram channel which an intelligence official here said is "normally reliable" put out the update that Masood Azhar was among the 10 injured in the blast. It added that there was total media blackout by the authorities.

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NIA may probe terror acts abroad

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Financial Action Task Force standards require member nations to be in line with the UN law that provides for designating individuals as global terrorists. Apart from publicising most-wanted terrorists so as to get financial and other institutions to add them to blacklists, banning of individual terrorists under UAPA will add heft to India's request to other nations to designate them on similar lines.

The proposed amendment to empower NIA to register a case in India and probe terror acts abroad, such as the Easter Sunday bombings in Sri Lanka that left 11 Indians dead, are meant to add an enabling provision in the law, even though any such probe on foreign soil will have to be with the cooperation and coordination of the host nation.