Strengthening of the Extradition Process under the Leadership of the Union Home and Cooperation Minister

India's Earlier Approach to Extradition

- Earlier, **India's approach** to the **extradition process was reactive**.
- **The biggest problem** → There was a **'vacuum' of political will regarding extradition**.
- **Unfortunately, this country has even seen a time when, let alone catching fugitive criminals, thousands of innocent Indians lost their lives because of them**
  - **They were helped to leave the country overnight (Bhopal Gas Tragedy)**
- **Extradition laws had become outdated → Extradition treaties exist with only 37 countries**.
- **There was no separate law** to **catch economic fugitives** and **seize their assets**.
- **The 'track record' of extradition was very poor**
  - Between **2004 and 2013 → On average only 4 fugitives were extradited per year**, while **110 requests remained pending**.
- The extradition process was very complicated due to **incomplete documentation** and **slow proceedings**.
- **Foreign courts did not permit extradition**.
- **Legal and judicial hurdles**, such as
  - **India's requests were rejected** due to protection against **double jeopardy** and the **principle of dual criminality**.
- There was a **lack of coordination and integrated strategy** among **ministries and departments**,
  - Tasks such as **information-sharing on fugitives, location tracking, and issuing "Red Corner Notices" moved at a slow pace**.

Reforms in the Extradition Process after 2018 under the Leadership of Modi ji

- **Prime Minister Shri. Narendra Modi ji, as a priority, implemented** the **Fugitive Economic Offenders Act in 2018**, which enforced strictness against fugitives and also paved the way for bringing them back.

- **Then, Home Minister Shri Amit Shah ji**, under the guidance of the Hon'ble Prime Minister, **made the extradition of fugitives a 'national priority'**.

<u>Contributions and Changes during the Tenure of Hon'ble Home Minister Shri Amit Shah ji</u>

- **Since 2019, under the leadership of Hon'ble Home Minister Shri Amit Shah ji, India has built an integrated, intelligence-led and technology-driven model against fugitives**.
- Carrying forward the **Hon'ble Prime Minister's vision**, Home Minister Shri Amit Shah ji emphasised three pillars against fugitives:
  - **Global operations, strong coordination, smart diplomacy**
- Through **policy reform**, **improvement in structural mechanisms**, and the **latest technology**
  - A **"whole of government" approach was adopted** and **inter-departmental coordination was established**
- The Home Minister clearly stated that the issue of fugitive criminals is linked to the country's sovereignty, economic stability, law and order, and national security.
  - **The NIA Amendment Act was brought in 2019**.
  - **The UAPA Amendment Act was brought in 2019**.
    - **Action was no longer limited to organisations alone**.
    - **The scope of action expanded to individual terrorists, handlers, funding networks, and support systems based abroad**.
- **After 2020**, the **process of bringing fugitives back to India** was pursued in **'mission mode'**.
- **In 2022, India hosted the 90th INTERPOL General Assembly**.
  - The Home Minister gave the message of **"communication, collaboration and cooperation"** in global policing at this meet.
- **In 2023, '3 new judicial laws'**: **Under the leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji**, **Hon'ble Home Minister Shri Amit Shah ji replaced 160-year-old colonial laws by adopting the '3 new judicial laws' →** This is **the biggest reform of the 21st century**.

  - Several **timely reforms were made** in this, such as:
    - **For the first time, in Sections 355 and 356** of the **Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita**
      - A **provision for <u>'trial in absentia'</u>** was also introduced,
    - Even in the **absence of fugitive criminals**
      - The **entire process** from **'trial to conviction' can be completed**.

<u>Provisions in the New Laws:</u>

- If **previously recorded evidence or witness statements** are **available in a case**
  - They **can be used in the ongoing trial against the fugitive accused**.
- **If the prosecution had recorded statements of certain witnesses before the accused absconded → Those statements remain valid**.
- The **BNSS has a provision to record the entire proceedings (especially witness statements) via video recording as much as possible**.
- **Section 356 has a provision to record witness testimony through audio-video means**.
- **If the absconding accused is arrested or voluntarily appears in court → There is a provision to re-examine the witnesses**.
  - **This means there will be no need to start the trial from the beginning again**.
  - **At the same time, the accused will be given an opportunity to present their side under the principle of 'natural justice'**.

<u>BHARATPOL: Increased Information-Sharing between India and the World</u>

- **Launched by the Hon'ble Union Home Minister in January 2025 to increase coordination, contact and dialogue between India and global agencies**.
- A **national-level portal was launched** for **coordination and information-sharing with INTERPOL**.
- **BHARATPOL** has created a **comprehensive information infrastructure** by **integrating the CBI, State Police Headquarters (ILO) and District Police Headquarters**.
- By **connecting more than 1,400 unit offices of state and central agencies** to the portal,
  - **A seamless flow of information is being ensured**.

- **Because of this, there has been a huge reduction in the response time for information-sharing between the CBI and other law enforcement agencies**.
- Today, **information sought by the CBI is shared by other law enforcement agencies** within
  - **10 to 20 days**, and **in some cases within just 3 to 10 days**.
- **The Hon'ble Home Minister has held a total of 5 important meetings in this direction**.
- **The Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) was strictly enforced**.
- **From 2019 to 2026**,
  - **Assets worth ₹17,874 crore were confiscated**
  - **Total Restitution: ₹18,762 crore**
    - **Out of this, ₹18,762 crore has been returned in cases involving Fugitive Economic Offenders, i.e. economic offenders who fled India**.
- **The CBI set up** a **special Global Operations Centre** to catch fugitives **at the international level**.
  - **This centre establishes real-time coordination with police forces around the world through INTERPOL**.
- **For the rapid exchange of information**, the **CBI appointed INTERPOL Liaison Officers in every state and central investigation agency**.
- **In addition, there has been an increase in the publication of 'Red Notices' by INTERPOL**.
  - **40 in 2022, 100 in 2023, 107 in 2024, 112 in 2025, and 182 Red Corner Notices published in 2026 (so far)**.
- **Between 2019 and 2026, 274 fugitive criminals have been brought back**.

Fugitives Brought Back – Yearwise

Crime Category	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026 (till July)	TOTAL
Fraud/Financial Crimes	-	-	-	01	-	04	03	01	09

Terrorist activity/Anti-national activity/ Narco Terror	-	-	01	04	02	04	05	01	17
Organized crime/Gangsters/Extortion	01	01	-	04	03	05	14	14	42
Murder/Robbery/Violent Crime	06	06	03	11	07	11	09	09	62
Sexual Offences/Rape/POCSO	02	-	04	13	04	15	13	02	53
Narcotics/NDPS/Drug Trafficking	-	-	02	01	-	01	07	05	16
Smuggling/Fake Currency/Cyber/Contraband	-	-	04	02	-	02	02	02	12
Human Trafficking /Kidnapping	-	-	01	01	04	01	08	03	18
Other,	-	-	08	03	17	00	09	08	45
Total	09	07	23	40	37	43	70	45	274

- **<u>'Operation Trishul'</u> was run to track the geo-location of fugitives**.
  - **With INTERPOL's cooperation**, the **location of the criminals in hiding was established** based on **satellite, surveillance, and digital footprint**.
  - **Fugitives had changed their names or identities abroad**, but **they were still tracked down through technology and profile-mapping**.
  - **Technologies such as hearing cases via video conferencing were also used to speed up the extradition process**.
- **Under the guidance of Hon'ble Home Minister Shri Amit Shah ji, extradition requests began to be prepared in a more professional and standardised format**.
  - **Written assurances were given**, keeping in mind the **documentation requirements** and **legal expectations** of each country.
- **In the last 3 years, Red Corner Notices have been published against 401 fugitive criminals**.

Crime Category	2026	2025	2024	Total
Fraud / Financial Crime	57	26	32	**115**

Terrorist Activity / Anti-National Activity / Narco-Terror	12	11	19	**42**
Organised Crime / Gangster / Extortion	15	11	10	**36**
Murder / Robbery / Violent Crime	42	30	18	**90**
Sexual Offences / Rape / POCSO	6	1	7	**14**
Narcotics / NDPS / Drug Trafficking	24	18	10	**52**
Smuggling / Fake Currency / Cyber / Contraband	2	2	1	**5**
Human Trafficking / Kidnapping	2	2	1	**5**
Other	22	11	9	**42**
Total	**182**	**112**	**107**	**401**

- **Fugitives were brought back from at least 36 countries/jurisdictions, and around 18 states/union territories received them**.
- Those brought back include individuals **wanted in terrorism, gangster, financial offence, narcotics, murder, rape and POCSO cases**.
- This campaign extends across terrorism, pro-Khalistan extremism, gangster-terror convergence, narcotics, cyber fraud and fake currency.
- The extradition of **Tahawwur Hussain Rana** from the USA is a major example of India's resolve and patient **legal-diplomatic effort** in complex terror cases.
- In cases related to Jammu & Kashmir, fugitives based abroad were being used to run terror, narco-terror and cross-border support networks.
- Cases such as **Mohammad Arshad, Mohammad Rafiq Nazar, Imtiaz Khandu and Farooq Naiku** struck directly at the external support system of the J&K terror network.
- The **return of fugitives linked to PFI** disrupted the ecosystem of funding, radicalisation and safe havens built abroad.
- Cases related to Abdul Rahman, Mohammad Sajjad Alam, Kodje Mohammad Sharif and Mohammad Ghouse Nayazi increased pressure on extremist networks.
- Action on the **overlap of pro-Khalistan, gangster-terror and organised crime** is a major achievement of **India's fugitive strategy**.
- Cases such as Rajbir Singh, Parminder Singh Pindi, Baljit Singh and Ramanjit Singh weakened networks supporting violence in India from abroad.
- In gangster cases, the return of Anmol Bishnoi, Aman Bhainswal, Akshay Bishnoi, Ankit Bishnoi, Sachin Bishnoi and Vikram Barad strengthened deterrence.

- These cases made it clear that orchestrating violence in India from a command centre set up in foreign location will not be allowed.
- The joint use of **law enforcement, intelligence and diplomacy** proved effective in **narcotics and narco-terror cases**.
- Cases related to Saleem Dola, Sheikh Nisar Ahmed, Taher Saleem Dola, Naveen Cheechkar and Lijo Jose established drug trafficking as a transnational security challenge.
- Cases linked to Nepal showed the importance of open borders, cross-border crime, and operational trust with neighbouring countries.
- 19 arrests and 15 deportations in a cyber-criminal network operating from Nepal marked a major success of intelligence-led coordination.
- Nepal-based coordination proved useful in cases of fake currency, money mules, robbery, narcotics, murder and gangster crime.
- In economic offences and fraud cases, the return of Akshit Khandelwal, Harshit Jain, Monica Kapoor, Angad Singh and Subhash Parab widened the scope of the strategy.
- The delay, distance and legal complexity used by economic offenders are now being weakened through effective coordination.
- Swift extraditions in serious crimes, such as the Luthra Brothers and Shahul Hameed cases, strengthened public and victim families' trust.
- The return of accused in rape, POCSO and other serious crimes proved the usefulness of LOC (Look Out Circular) and INTERPOL channels.
- Cooperation with the UAE, Nepal, Thailand, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, the USA, the UK, Germany, Qatar, Bahrain, Oman and other countries was important.
- **The basis of success is not mere coincidence, but credibility, legal preparedness, diplomatic persistence and sustained follow-up**.
- **In domestic coordination, the IB, CBI, RAW, NIA, ED, MEA, NCB, DGGI and state police → All shared a role**.
  - This model reflects a **"Whole of Government"** approach, where central and state agencies together deliver swift justice to victims.
- The formation of a Standing Focus Group under IB's **Multi-Agency Centre** (MAC) in January 2026 is an important institutional step.

- This group provides support on fugitive priorities, dossier standardisation, closing information gaps, following up with foreign partners, and giving national support to state-level cases.
- Fugitives based abroad are not inactive case files, but live operational threats.

- **Every successful return increases public trust, supports victims, strengthens prosecution, and breaks the morale of networks**.
- **The core message is clear → India will ensure accountability across borders too, with patience, professionalism and firm resolve**.