

1. Security Categories in India

Prelims Level: Constitutional Bodies, Regulatory Bodies

Mains Level: GS-II Functions and responsibilities of the Union and the States, issues and challenges pertaining to the federal structure, devolution of powers and finances up to local levels and challenges therein

Why in News?

- The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has withdrawn the security cover of DMK president M.K Stalin and Tamil Nadu Deputy Chief Minister O. Panneerselvam recently.

About:

- In India, security details are provided to some high-risk individuals by the police and state government.
- Depending on the threat perception to the person, the category is divided into four tiers: **Z+ (highest level), Z, Y and X.**
- Individuals under this security blanket include the President, Vice-President, Prime-Minister, Supreme Court and High Court Judges, Service Chiefs of Indian Armed Forces, Governors of State, Chief Ministers and Cabinet Ministers.

SPG Category:

- Strength of security detail is classified (only provided to the Prime Minister of India.)
- The SPG (Special Protection Group), NSG (National Security Guards), ITBP (Indo-Tibetan Border Police) and CRPF (Central Reserve Police Force) are the agencies responsible for providing securities to VVIPs, VIPs, politicians, high-profile celebrities and sportspersons.
- The NSG is used extensively to guard VIPs and VVIPs, especially those in the Z+ category.
- Many NSG personnel are seconded to the Special Protection Group (SPG) which guards the Prime Minister.
- Recently, the Centre withdrew the Special Protection Group cover of Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi and replaced it with Z-plus cover of CRPF.

Z+ Category:

- It has a security cover of 55 personnel [Including 10+ NSG Commando] + [Police Personnel]
- The Z+ level of security is provided by National Security Guard commandos.

Z Category:

- It has a security cover of 22 personnel [Including 4 or 5 NSG Commando] + [Police Personnel].
- The 'Z' category entails security cover by the Delhi police or the ITBP or CRPF personnel and one escort car.

Y category:

- It has a security cover of 11 personnel [Including 1 or 2 Commando] + [Police Personnel]
- The 'Y' category encompasses two personal security officers (PSOs) and one PSO from the 'X' category.

X Category:

- It has a security cover of 2 personnel [No Commando, Only Armed Police Personnel]

How Security is Entitled?

- If there is any threat perception to VIPs then it is the responsibility of the government to provide security.
- A person facing a threat files an application at the police station nearest to his/her residence.
- Then, the case is forwarded to the intelligence agencies to find out the threat posed to the person.
- When the threat is confirmed, a committee comprising the Home Secretary, Director General and the Chief Secretary in the state decides which category of security is to be given to that person.
- After this, the details of the person are also given to the Union Home Ministry for formal Approval.