

Why Paris 2024 Will Be Riskiest Olympics Ever

Why In News

- **Paris Olympic Games** will be one of the most high-risk in history owing to a combination of internal strife within France and **heightened global geopolitical tensions**. These things could make it more likely that there will be violence and protests at the event, so strict security measures are needed.



Security Measures

- **France is grappling with deep internal divisions:** the country's volatile political climate and the potential for demonstrations or violence pose significant challenges for organisers.



- The **current global geopolitical landscape**, marked by heightened tensions between major powers, further amplifies the security threats. These Olympics could serve as a **potential target for state-sponsored actors** seeking to exploit the event for their own agendas.
- In response to these elevated threats, organisers are implementing unprecedented security measures, including deploying a record number of security personnel.
- **About 30,000 police**, increasing to a record 45,000 at peak times, will work on the four-week Olympics and Paralympics across the Ile-de-France region covering Paris. They will be supplemented with police forces from across Europe to bolster security efforts.

Reasons

Internal Strife in France

- France is going through a lot of **political instability** right now, and its people are very divided. This unstable climate makes things harder for the people planning the Games and makes it more likely that there will be protests or violent incidents during the event.



Global Geopolitical Tensions

- There are higher levels of **tension between big powers in the world** as a whole. This mood could make people working for the government want to target the Olympics for their reasons, which would make the total security threat stronger.



Threat of Islamist Terrorism

- One of the most important security issues right now is the threat that **Islamist terrorist networks offer**. Attacks on sports events in the past and recent flare-ups in the conflict **between Israel and Hamas** make these threats even more serious. Terrorist groups could use the Games to put themselves in the context of a larger war against the West.



Daesh and Hamas Dynamics

- **Officially, Daesh (ISIS)** is seen as a major threat because it brings together different radical groups and could start violent acts. There is also worry that Hamas and Daesh might work together, especially since October 7, 2023, when things changed in the world's politics.



Deadly Threats

- **Hostage-taking, suicide bombings,** and planted explosives are among the potential threats.
- Although suicide bombings have become less common in Europe, they remain a possibility. The complexity of monitoring and gathering intelligence requires international cooperation to thwart such attacks.



- The recent attacks **by ISIS-affiliated militants in Moscow** demonstrate the deadly potential of shooting sprees in crowded areas, while France's experience with knife and vehicle attacks adds another layer of concern.
- The **worst-case scenario involves multiple**, simultaneous attacks across various locations, employing diverse methods and targets, extending beyond athletic venues to include churches and synagogues.



Beyond Paris

- **Social media** plays a crucial role in amplifying **extremist narratives** and providing a platform for radicalisation.
- The **interconnectedness of the digital world** means that even attacks far from Paris, such as at a public viewing event, could have a significant impact on the Games.



- But **security considerations** extend beyond the immediate vicinity of Olympic venues, encompassing all media-related and public events associated with the games. The **global reach of the Olympics means** that any security breach, regardless of location, could have far-reaching consequences.
- The **spirit of the Olympics lies in peaceful competition**, reminiscent of their ancient Greek origins. The 2024 Paris Olympics present a unique set of security challenges, requiring a comprehensive and multifaceted approach that addresses both internal and external threats.
- **International cooperation, intelligence gathering**, and a thorough understanding of the evolving threat landscape are crucial for safeguarding athletes, spectators, and the public.