

From the Editor's Desk

In India internal security has been debated extensively from the days of *Manu Smriti*, to present day. This was even discussed by Mahatma Gandhi in his *My Experiments with Truth*. In this entire debate stretching over 5,000 years, the concept of state has been looked upon as sacrosanct. The Indian history tells us that from time to time, in every period, there was dissatisfaction among a section of the sub nationalist groups, for one reason or other, against the ruling elite. In fact the sub nationalist groups felt that the concept of unity in diversity is not a feasible model for a nation state, as diverse as India, to exist, survive and prosper. With the result, the state has to acquire enormous powers to bring these sub nationalist elements in to the mainstream politics. Added to this unique Indian political experiment was least understood by the students of western literature.


When India became Republic in 1950, many of the divisive forces tried not to allow the India experiment to succeed. The problems of North – East India from 1950s onwards, are one example. Another is the Jammu & Kashmir terrorism and violence. In this category, we can also add the naxlite movement of late 1960s' and of the current phase. Many in the strategic community felt that the success of pacifist approach to achieve independence from the British rule and romanticization of the state craft in the 1950s' down graded the importance of security apparatus of the Indian state considerably. In addition, a changing society also requires effective mechanism to meet the security needs of the new environment. If a group of people object to a law passed by the Parliament, it cannot be considered as a draconian measure infringing on fundamental rights etc.

The Indian State adopted the terrorism and violence from sub nationalist groups, which have often been described as low intensity conflicts, freedom movements and guerilla warfare, by a Chanakya's strategy of *Saama*, friendship *Dana*, development assistance investments *Bedha* by dividing and *Danda* state power. In the process, some times the state acquired absolute powers to keep the nation together and tried to convince these extremist groups to adopt a peaceful and democratic channel to express their dissent instead of resorting to violent means.

In this issue we attempted to analyze the internal security of India which is posing new challenges to India's security. At this juncture an appraisal of it will present the issues involved in a proper perspective.

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Dealing With India's Internal Security

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Internal Security in India's Northeast: Evolving Discourses

Samir Kumar Das

This article seeks to trace the evolution of Indian state's thinking about internal security with particular reference to the Northeastern region since the colonial times. Security thinking in colonial times provides only the background and the

reference to it is therefore rather sketchy. The term 'evolution' has been used rather broadly to include both continuities and discontinuities in the colonial and postcolonial state's thinking – discourses as it has been called, about internal security. For, as I will argue, the state's thinking about internal security does not seem to have followed any simple and linear pattern. There have of course been breaks and discontinuities in the process, which as it has been elaborated, are too

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Internal Security: A Comprehensive Definition?

Before any further headway is made, it is necessary to sound at least two caveats of this otherwise preliminary exploration: First, there is a growing tendency on the part of a large number of scholars and analysts particularly in recent times to constantly widen the denotation of 'security' by way of including anything

that even remotely plays a role in conferring legitimacy on the state and its institutions. As a result, the concept of 'comprehensive security' has acquired new and unprecedented currency in the rich and albeit growing

body of literature on security. We seem to have reached a point where 'security' becomes only too synonymous with legitimacy of the state. Security today ranges from more conventionally understood protection against external attacks and deterrence capacity to public health and HIV-AIDS prevention of citizens and their enjoyment of human rights and ironically 'Fundamental Rights' enshrined and guaranteed by the Constitution of India, so on and so forth. In India for example, we know

of several voluntary research initiatives that are devoted to the task of formulating and explicating in more concrete and precise terms the contours of 'non-conventional' or what is often called, 'non-traditional' security.

While such endeavours may have been essential for salvaging security discourse from its otherwise narrow and overtly militaristic connotations, it is often unhelpful – if not, misleading, to deploy the term 'security' as a synonym for state legitimacy. These endeavours have their value only as a critique of the traditional formulations of security. Legitimacy is a critical term as it leaves scope for citizens' dialoging

and argumentation with the state – a democratic process that also holds the state accountable for whatever it does and as a result, makes it - wherever necessary, to pay for the wrongs committed by it.

Hence, it is important for the state to appear as legitimate in the eyes of its citizens. Its very survival is contingent on its ability to elicit and garner legitimacy from its citizens. The issue of legitimacy - as we know, led John Locke – the father of classical liberalism, to assert people’s ‘right to rebellion’ against the state, in case it abdicates the task of or fails in providing their right to ‘life, liberty and pursuit of happiness’. Perpetual violation of rights obviously puts state legitimacy at stake. This line of argument clearly keeps legitimacy separate from security.

On the other hand, security is a more state-centred term: it is primarily looked upon as an essential service that the state is expected to render to its citizens and the citizens can only claim it - not so much as a matter of right but more as members of the nation (that needs to be secured) the state claims to represent. This is what makes security national.

In its more non-traditional incarnations, there is a tendency to treat security as another right. The problem with these incarnations is that claiming security as a right has its implications for many other rights, which we consider as vital to our social existence. In the name of guaranteeing our right to security, the state may and more often than not does, curtail and abrogate these rights including the right to freedom of speech and expression or that of movement etc. The state in fact has abrogated the above rights in times of emergency. Unlike other rights – which are claimed against the state and its interference with our affairs, security is a positive right insofar as it concerns what the state does and can potentially do while ensuring it. Claiming security as a right has this problem of unwittingly widening the state’s sphere of influence and interference. Thus to cite an example, while polio inoculation campaign is universally perceived by the nation-states and other multilateral agencies as a powerful threat to health and global human security, it is considered as a form of encroachment on the right to freedom of religion by a section of religious minorities in India and therefore boycotted by them. The little headway such campaigns have been able to make in particularly some Islamic countries including Bangladesh is held responsible for the continuing menace of polio in the world. Security defined in this maximal sense lies at the root of a community’s perceived threat

to rights.

Human Development Index (HDI) posits both rights and security as the indices or criteria among others that the states are called upon to provide to their citizens and their performances are required to be judged in terms of the indices or criteria specified in the Index. It is true that the states are subjected to various forms of censure by the external powers and other multilateral agencies in case they perform poorly in terms of these indices or criteria. But, it is highly unlikely that the external powers and other multilateral agencies will necessarily be driven by the considerations of citizens’ rights alone and will not act in accordance with their own interests. The guarantee of citizens’ rights, according to this formulation, therefore depends not on an active citizenry claiming them but on the chance coincidence of the rights considerations with the agenda of the outside forces. Insofar as we keep broadening the scope of security, we tend implicitly to securitize spheres which had hitherto belonged to the realm of rights and popular action.

Hence, it is important that we keep security outside the threshold of our everyday exchanges and transactions with the state. Our everyday transaction and exchanges are supposed to be conducted in the language of rights. The state in its functioning according to the Constitution and laws of the land should not do anything that abrogates or curtails our rights and freedoms as much as our obligation is implicitly limited to the state that respects our rights and freedoms. We reserve the concept of ‘security’ to refer to those extraordinary situations in which the state feels it necessary to offer reasons in support of the abrogation and curtailment of the spheres of everyday exchanges and transactions with its citizens and their rights. The reasons are held as necessary by the state because it otherwise finds it impossible to ensure security without abrogating and curtailing the rights enshrined and guaranteed by the Constitution and laws of the land and also international law. It is an extraordinary situation that calls for extraordinary responses. Not all of us are always prepared to buy the reasons offered by the state. The security reasons – as we see, find their strongest critics amongst the human rights activists.

In simple terms, it is felt that the security reasons and the reasons of citizens’ rights are distinct and it is important that these two reasons are kept apart. In practice, it is not, however, easy to keep the two separate and the line that divides them is otherwise very thin.

But, our attempt at keeping them separate at least on a conceptual plane only makes us aware of the uncomfortable implications of growing securitization. It is thus proposed to define security only in this rather narrow and restrictive sense of the term.

The second caveat relates to the notion of internality of security. In its more traditional formulations, security is always assumed to be preceded by a threat perspective: we need to feel secure precisely because we face threat to our security and the threat is invariably sourced to an external power or any combination of them. It took years to come to the realization that the threats to our security are not necessarily to be sourced to forces remaining outside us – that is to say, the nation and the body politic. The physical location of these forces inside the borders of India is not so much important in order to establish their internality. These forces more often than not operate from what they consider as the outside of the Indian nation and the body politic. That the Indian state considers these forces as *potentially* internal to the Indian nation and the body politic imagined by it is what makes the threat internal. Since these forces are potentially internal, it feels that they should not have (although they actually have) posed any threat to our security. Since the state imagines them to be part of the Indian nation or the larger body politic that it claims to represent and there is the robust expectancy that they can be brought back under the compass of our nationhood, we are always taken by surprise whenever our security is threatened by internal forces. The use of such phrases as, ‘our boys’, ‘misdirected youth’, ‘misguided people’ and Northeast as ‘India’s soft underbelly’ is only reflective of the moral dilemma involved in our attempts at coming to terms with the internality of the threat to our security. The stark history of internal insecurity has always to painfully grapple with the imagined history of Indian nationhood.

Security Discourse in Colonial Times

The first British annexation took place in the region in 1826 with the conclusion of the Treaty of Yandabo although colonial rule took more than a century thereafter to establish itself in the entire region. Compared to most other parts of India, British annexation was not only slow but of very indirect nature. Colonial rulers defined security as that of their ‘subjects’ who as B. C. Allen – one of the British administrators-cum-ethnographers, puts it, “have submitted to our authority”. The Northeast as a frontier region predominantly inhabited by various tribal groups and

communities was always considered to be outside ‘British India’ and these groups and communities – according to the colonial rulers, were too ‘savage’, ‘ferocious’ and ‘primitive’ to be recognized as, ‘subjects’. Since the British never treated them as part of their ‘civilizing mission’, they were by and large kept outside the ambit of direct rule by the colonial authorities.

Since the colonial rulers were obsessed with the security of their ‘subjects’, they considered it as part of their moral duty to protect their ‘subjects’ from the raids organized and conducted from time to time by the tribals of the hills. The foothills of Upper Assam were the main points of contact between the ‘subjects’ of the plains and the tribals of the hills and provided the site of conflict between them. In the early years, colonial authorities tried to keep the raiding tribals at bay by way of organizing various forms of punitive expeditions against them almost at regular intervals. It was this abiding concern for their subjects that led the colonial authorities to organize permanent defences against the frequent ‘raids’ by way of raising Assam Rifles from various locally-based levies and building frontier outposts to keep a constant vigil on them. In other words, the British did not seem to try to establish any direct rule over this vast frontier tract that straddled between ‘British India’, Myanmar and China.

In March 1936, the King in Council passed necessary order to declare ‘North-East Frontier’ (Sadiya, Balipara and Lakhimpur) together with Naga, Lushai and North Cachar Hills as Excluded Areas of Assam. The order aimed at exercising some measure of control over people’s movements into and out of these areas. In 1937 the affairs of the tribal areas were transferred to a newly created establishment called the Governor’s secretariat, and the Chief Secretary of Assam was relieved of the Tribal Affairs Department. The Political Officers of the Eastern Frontier were thus placed under the immediate authority and direction of the Governor of Assam as a delegate of the Governor-General of India. During the Second World War a necessity to bring the Frontier Areas under more direct control was felt and a new post of Advisor to the Governor of Assam was created.

Internal Security in Post-Colonial India: The Early Years

As India became independent and her international borders were reorganized whether with East Pakistan, China or Myanmar, Northeast emerged as a separate

and completely land-locked region linked precariously with the rest of India by a narrow 22-kilometer *Siliguri corridor* – known popularly as ‘*the chicken neck*’. Although specificity of the Northeast as a region was recognized in policy circles, it was never perceived as an internal security threat by any of the nationalist leaders including Nehru and Patel immediately after the Independence. Its closeness to the countries not too well known for their friendliness towards India was considered as the main factor that made her vulnerable to outside interventions and covert operations by them. The problems of the Northeast are far too complex to be briefly summarized in broad terms. Yet, it may be said - at the risk of some overgeneralization, that the strategy that defined Indian state’s early response to the region consisted of the following broad planks:

1. The region’s integration into India was always regarded as *fait accompli* once India became Independent and the international borders in the region were reorganized. Their integration unlike say, in the case of princely states, was considered as final and non-negotiable. As a result, its problems were never treated as a ‘political’ question.

2. The nationalist leaders including Nehru were albeit aware of the independentist aspirations brewing in some sections of tribal groups and communities particularly on the eve of Indian Independence. But they preferred to attribute it to the machinations of external powers out to disintegrate and destabilize the newly born republic. The erstwhile colonial power and the Christian evangelists of diverse denominations were definitely the first to be blamed. As Nehru points out: “... *they never experienced a sensation of being in a country called India and they were hardly influenced by the struggle for freedom and other movements in India. Their chief experience of outsiders was that of the British officers and Christian missionaries who generally tried to make them anti-Indian. As Indian independence approached and it became obvious that British rule was coming to an end in India, some of the British officers and Christian missionaries induced them to think in terms of independence. This had some effect on some sections of the Nagas.*” Hence, what appears as the internal threat is spurred and ignited by the external powers not too well known for their friendliness to us. According to Subir Bhaumik, the 1971 war with erstwhile East Pakistan provided India with an opportunity of saving the Northeast from the political bickering and strategic maneuvers of both Pakistan and

China by way of putting a so-called ‘friendly’ government to power in newly born Bangladesh. The war of course bore fruits and was able to keep the region tranquil, although for a short while. While both Pakistan and Bangladesh continue to play a role in aiding and abetting violence and insurgencies in the region, China by all accounts has stopped playing the ethnic game any more.

3. The real challenge was to draw these forces and elements towards the Centre of India. Two steps that were widely considered as crucial in this connection were: first, the construction of border roads and appropriate infrastructure that would help them in overcoming the bane of landlocked existence and second, ‘sensitive’ and ‘competent’ bureaucrats willing to serve these regions. Bureaucratic highhandedness and insensitivity were primarily held responsible for the eventual accentuation of independentist demands in the region. While Nehru was certainly appreciative of the contributions of some of India’s great bureaucrats and administrative officers, he was absolutely critical of those who were insensitive and could not develop any commitment towards the people of the region in spite of being posted in there for years.

4. There was also an urge on the part of the nationalist elite to constantly experiment with the institutions and processes of free and democratic India. The Northeast was taken as the great laboratory for experimenting with various forms of institutional alternatives. Almost all our nationalist leaders were candid and open in this regard and receptive to the suggestions coming from various quarters. It seems that Nehru was prepared to give the Nagas everything they might have wanted short of independence. It sprang from the deep recognition that what applied to the rest of India might not work in the same way in the Northeast. It was reported for example that Mrs. Indira Gandhi – one of our former prime ministers, was even prepared to give ‘Bhutan-type status’ to the Nagas before the 1965 war with Pakistan.

The Era of Transition

It was since the mid-1990s that India’s policy-makers thought it imperative to take a fresh look at the state of internal security policy in India’s Northeast. Of course, the transition – like all other transitions in social and political life, can hardly be described in purely black and white terms. There were many vacillations and turnarounds in the process and these continue to haunt India’s Northeast policy even today. Yet, it is possible

to take note of some of the indications of these changes in very broad terms:

1. It was since the mid-1990s that the Indian state started looking at the independentist aspirations of the region as a political problem to be settled politically. The state increasingly felt the limits of a simple law-and-order approach and many of the police and army officers with the vast experience of having served the region for a long time also acknowledged in their writings that the approach of dealing with these problems with strong arms had become counterproductive. It often led to gross violations of human rights and thus triggered off large-scale alienation of people from the administration and security forces. Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (1958) has been one of the most contentious of all extraordinary legislations that is still in force in some parts of the region including Manipur where the Act elicited one of the strongest popular resentments in the wake of the controversial 'death' of Kumari Thangjam Manorama allegedly in the hands of 17th Assam Rifles. In the face of an exceptionally strong popular movement against the Act that showed signs of slipping out of the hands of state administration, it was referred to a Review Committee that met nearly all sections of the concerned parties including the army and reportedly gave its verdict in favour of 'repealing' it. The Report is yet to be tabled in Parliament and made public. It seems that the Government of India is still actively considering the recommendations of the report and apparently decides to replace it by what our prime minister calls, a more 'humane' Act. We will have occasion to examine this point in the next section of this paper.

2. As it became evident that the approach had already reached a dead end, there began an era of peace dialogues with forces, which were so far regarded as a threat to India's national security. For example, Government of India had entered into a ceasefire agreement with the National Socialist Council of Nagalim (IM) in 1997 and a few years later with the Khaplang faction while the two could not reach any ceasefire agreement between themselves. Sporadic violence occasionally erupting between them continues to be an unfortunate reality in an otherwise peaceful and tranquil Nagaland today. Peace talks with the NSCN (IM) are going to be a long haul and by all indications, require patient experimentation with brave, new institutional designs and alternatives. One must remember that it was not the first time that the Government of India had

been involved in a series of peace talks with any of the insurgent groups of the region. Shillong Accord (1975) serves as a case in point. Yet there is a significant difference. The excruciating brevity that marked the Shillong Accord left many of the substantive provisions un-spelt, which as history turned out, were never spelt out. The Accord ended up in a fiasco. On the other hand, the provisions of today's accords are much more elaborately spelt and as in the case of Mizoram, are well acted upon. Indeed, some documents are too detailed to be worked upon.

The Policy Options

The Northeast as a region has generated a rich and growing body of literature particularly since the late 1980s. Yet it is important to note that much of this literature is not focused on any exploration into policy alternatives in order to address the issues and problems of internal security mentioned above. Unfortunate but true, the region is still a long way from evolving what may be called, a policy culture where concerned people can continuously debate on policy alternatives. An attempt will be made in this section to review some of the hitherto suggested alternatives in this regard and briefly discuss their successes and limitations.

There are very few of us who continue to recommend *pure* 'law and order' solution to ethnic and minority problems. The measures suggested in this connection range from overhauling security structures in order to secure and protect the citizens' interests and greater deployment of security forces to legislation and implementation of 'emergency' laws (like the controversial Armed Forces Special Powers Act of 1958 presently in force in many parts of the region) often involving temporary suspension and abrogation of rights and liberties that are otherwise enshrined in and guaranteed by the constitution and laws of the land. All this is justified as the 'necessary cost' of fighting ethnic insurgencies resulting in serious deterioration of law and order. The emphasis has been to continuously refine and upgrade security structures and technologies to 'suitably deal with' and 'tackle' the insurgency phenomenon. This group of policy analysts believes that there should not be any letup in counterinsurgency operations, the militant organizations should be 'dealt with, with continued firmness' and that sovereignty of India is uncompromisable. The efficacy of 'multi-force operations' (popularly known as 'unified command') in Assam has already become a frequently referred topic of discussion. Gen. V. N. Sharma makes an advocacy

for the deployment of 'armed police units under the operational control of the army' (for, placing them under Home Ministry will pave the way to 'party interference') rather than the army per se as the army is not professionally trained to handle 'civic action'.

While law and order solution may be both desperately necessary and effective in the short run, it cannot be an answer to the region's ethnic and minority conflicts. As General Brar observes:

We need to remind ourselves that the 'gun' can never solve the problem; it is necessary to win the 'hearts and minds' of the people for which we will have to effect genuine socio-economic changes in their living conditions if we are to retrogress insurgency.

The paradox that democracies all over the world face today is how to respond to the problems of violence and insurgencies without renegeing on its commitment to rights and liberties of the citizens including those of the disaffected minorities.

But there are of course others who advocate a change in policy regime while addressing the problems facing the Northeast. The change, according to them, will have to be brought about predominantly – though not exclusively - by the state and an entire series of measures is suggested to make the state move in this direction. A change in policy regime is possible through 'an alternative institutional imagination' that calls for salvaging ethnic identity from any notion of fixed and territorially rooted collectivity and encourages constant experimentation with diverse institutional arrangements till the disentanglement of identity from territoriality can be achieved. Creating conditions for an 'alternative institutional imagination' where the state will not burden itself with the responsibility of carrying people's identities requires bringing in some form of 'instrumentalist conception of the state'. Indeed, the emphasis in policy interventions will have to be shifted from granting some form of politically enclosed and exclusive units or ethnic homelands (state, ADC and/or government by traditional institutions and in accordance with the customary laws etc.) to the smaller communities in recognition of their particularistic

identities to 'good neighbourliness and development'.

The debate on India's institutions has already begun. In other words, efforts are being made to break free from the paradox inherent in the early framework of state building in which consolidation of a particular ethnic community within a geopolitical space necessarily creates its minorities. The vicious circle in which a minority becomes a majority by way of getting the administrative borders redrawn and thereby creates its own minority and the circle continues to roll on with nauseating regularity is inherent in our established federal setup. Attempts are now being made to explore newer institutional alternatives. We may refer to at least three interesting strands, not necessarily of mutually exclusive nature, of this debate: First, reform-minded scholars and activists like B. K. Roy Burman recommend a Scandinavian SAMI-like multi-layered parliamentary system in which ethnic communities will have the right to represent themselves instead of being bound by the majoritarian commands of our existing parliamentary system. Secondly, some have argued that the 'first-come-first-served' electoral system in which the minorities dispersed over a large space are constantly under the subjection of the numerical, and therefore political, majority is incompatible with the pluralistic nature of our society. Even reservation of seats for them will not help the situation. Jayaprakash Narayan for instance, advocates introducing proportional representation as a means of protecting these groups from majority rule and retaining their autonomy. Thirdly, a case has been made for widening the consociational base of our democratic system. Lijphart for example, shows how the basic preconditions of a consociational (power sharing) democracy were met during the first few decades of our independence and how that base has been weakened as a combined result of 'centralization of the Congress Party and the federal system' in the 1980s and growing 'attack on minority rights' in different parts of India. He in fact pleads for resuscitating the institutions and practices of consociational democracy that, according to him, protected India reasonably well in the first few decades against inter-group violence and communal riots.

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Tracking Terror : National Security Through Redefinition

Arun Shourie

“This has not happened in six months’ time. In 2001, it was 131 districts; in 2003, it had gone up to 143, and in 2004, this number had gone up to 157. I would say that the number has gone up, but it has not gone up only in six months time; it has gone up in three years’ time. That has to be borne in mind.”

That was Shivraj Patil, the Home Minister, speaking in the Rajya Sabha in November 2004.

I had cited figures from official sources about the spread of Naxalite violence. Could it be any consolation that the sway of these violent groups had been spreading for a longer period than just six months? Quite the contrary: every year, year after year, the reach and lethality of Naxalites had continued to spread, showing that the rot in governance had continued to increase without let.

The situation continued to worsen. By October 2005, open sources were reporting that the number of districts affected by Naxalite violence and activity had risen to 165. The Rajya Sabha debated the matter again, in November 2005. Shivraj Patil improved on the reasoning. Though the figures I was citing are published by the Home

Ministry itself, he said that such figures give a misleading impression. If one village in a district is affected, the whole district is counted as being affected, he said. Hence, the figures gave an impression of large stretches

of the country being in the grip of extremist violence when that is not the case.

Why not disaggregate further, I had to inquire. After all, when the terrorists attack, they do not decimate the entire village. They kill just a handful from the village. They burn down just a few houses. Why not publish figures by household? And divide the number of households that have been attacked by the total number of households in the region, and thereby do even more to keep people’s morale up? Better still, why not disaggregate and count the number of individuals who have been killed, and divide that number by the total

population of the region or the country? Wouldn’t we feel even safer?

But the Home Minister is the Home Minister. His reasoning has prevailed. Faced with more lethal attacks over a wider area, his Ministry has just stopped giving

The criterion for understanding terrorism and violence, therefore, is not whether violence has actually been unleashed, nor whether the level of violence has become embarrassingly “bad”. That entire area must be taken to be affected by terrorist activity in which that group — say, Naxalites — is able to prevent officials of the State from carrying out their primary functions: of governance, of dispensing justice, of executing development works. The relevant questions to ask, therefore, are:

- *Do the people of the area look to the police for protection from the Naxalites, or are they now conducting themselves in such a way that the Naxalites would spare them?*
- *Have the contractors of the area to pay Naxalites a cut for the works they execute - say, on construction involved in “development projects”?*
- *Who is dispensing “justice” in the area? The regular courts, or the Naxalites’ mobile courts?*
- *Are the government officials themselves not paying protection money to the Naxalites?*

And remember, there are many types of insurgencies that are afoot in different parts of the country. The tests apply to the NSCN(IM) in Nagaland, to the score or so groups in Manipur, to the terrorists in Kashmir, as much as they apply to Naxalites.

figures of the total number of districts that are affected by Naxalite operations and activity. It now gives figures only of districts “badly affected” by Naxalite violence. This comes to 76 districts. Isn’t that reassuring? National security through redefinition!

A truer index of the extent to which this virus is spreading is the fact that, after all, the Home Ministry had been using the same criteria for decades. On that basis, in the early 1990s, 16 districts were affected. In 2003, 56 districts were listed as affected. In October 2005, the number had risen, as I said, to 165. Since then, the situation has become much, much worse.

That Naxalites are actually carrying out violent attacks on police stations, that they are actually executing people is not the index of their sway. Violence comes at a much later stage of their operations; in almost every case, years later. In an interview with The Telegraph (July 15, 2005), a member of the Maoist Central Committee, “Comrade Dhruba”, is reported as saying that, apart from Bankura, Purulia and Midnapur districts, “our mass base in Murshidabad, Malda, Burdwan and Nadia is ready.” He adds, and this is what has a bearing on the Home Minister’s way of measuring, “After five years, we will launch our strikes.”

By the time violence is unleashed, the Naxalites have entrenched themselves firmly in the area. They commence with surveys — a 56-page survey that was recently recovered of “Perspective Areas” in a targeted state is so proficiently done that it would put some of our best institutions to shame: pattern of holdings; crops; problems of each crop; issues relating to wages and tenure; caste composition and tensions. Then front organisations are formed to instigate people on these issues. Experts instigate the demonstrations into violence. Reprisals fuel polarisation. Sympathisers and agents are steered into “voluntary organisations”, local bodies, cooperatives. Only after years of such capture and consolidation are dalams and the like formed. Violence is unleashed thereafter.

By that time, the situation has gone so far beyond the reach of the State apparatus that it can only do what the Home Minister is doing now.

The Proper Criteria

The criterion, therefore, is not whether violence has actually been unleashed, nor whether the level of violence has become embarrassingly “bad”. That entire

area must be taken to be affected by terrorist activity in which that group — say, Naxalites — is able to prevent officials of the State from carrying out their primary functions: of governance, of dispensing justice, of executing development works. The relevant questions to ask, therefore, are:

- Do the people of the area look to the police for protection from the Naxalites, or are they now conducting themselves in such a way that the Naxalites would spare them?

- Have the contractors of the area to pay Naxalites a cut for the works they execute - say, on construction involved in “development projects”?

- Who is dispensing “justice” in the area? The regular courts, or the Naxalites’ mobile courts?

- Are the government officials themselves not paying protection money to the Naxalites?

And remember, there are many types of insurgencies that are afoot in different parts of the country. The tests apply to the NSCN(IM) in Nagaland, to the score or so groups in Manipur, to the terrorists in Kashmir, as much as they apply to Naxalites.

The Comprehensive Mechanism

Replying to the debate in November, 2005, the Home Minister had gone further in providing comfort. He had taken the House into confidence, and, going by the way he spoke, he had shared a deep secret of the State. The passage is worth reading in full. Shivraj Patil told the Rajya Sabha that, in fact, a comprehensive mechanism is already in place to tackle challenges to internal security. “This mechanism is already there”, he said. “Probably, it is not known to the Hon. Members because it is an internal matter that we are doing.” He shared this State Secret, the information about this “mechanism”: “We have a Special Security Secretary here. The responsibility given to the Special Security Secretary is to talk to the DIGs and other officers in the Naxalite-affected states every month or two months or whenever it is necessary, and decide as to what has to be done... Then there is a committee which is presided over by the Home Secretary, who talks to the Chief Secretaries of the states and DIGs of the states and they decide as to how the policy should be evolved to deal with the Naxalite activity or the terrorist activities in J&K or the North Eastern states. And, then, there are regional committees of the Home Minister and the

Chief Ministers who meet periodically to decide about the policies. And, then, the Chief Ministers have been talking to the Prime Minister and the Home Minister every now and then, whenever they want. There is coordination. There is institution for coordination. You don't think that we are not talking."

So there is a mechanism. There is committee upon committee. There are meetings after meetings. All concerned are talking. The result is before you — in the increasingly lethal depredations wreaked by Naxalites — by now in 14 states; they must have been visible in the trains in Mumbai.

100 Percent Implementation

In his statement on the Mumbai train blasts too, the Home Minister gave a long list of meetings that had been held in the wake of the blasts. The last time, there had been more. I had cited recommendations that had been made by the Task Forces on Border Management and Internal Security — two among four set up after the Kargil War. I had shown in detail how little had been done in regard to them.

The first reaction of the Congress Party and its props was, "Which reports? Where are the reports? Is he prepared to authenticate them?" As I had carried both the voluminous reports with me, I lifted them, and said I would authenticate them there and then. The attack shifted, "These are secret reports, how is he citing them?" Then, "But what did your Government do for three years?"

Uncharacteristically, the Leader of the Opposition, Jaswant Singh got provoked enough to state, "As a matter of personal knowledge, I do wish to say that I had the distinction and honour of simultaneously holding the portfolio of Defence at that time and I can state to the House that about 95 per cent of the recommendations of the Subramaniam Committee report and the Task Force on the Armed Forces were implemented."

He had, as is usual with him, been careful in his choice of words. He had referred only to the recommendations of the main report of the Subramaniam Committee and the Task Force on the Armed Forces — not to the Task Forces on Border Management and on Internal Security, whose findings and recommendations I had been reading out. But that was enough. The Home Minister built on what Jaswant Singh had said: "Sir", Shivraj Patil said, "The points

which were raised by Mr Shourie have been replied now by the Leader of the Opposition sitting over there. And, I can assure the House that the recommendations which have not been implemented are in the process of being implemented." The Home Minister returned to this later in his response, and remarked, "I am very happy to point out that when this point was made by Mr. Arun Shourie, the Leader of the Opposition was here in the House and he did get up and say that nearly 95 per cent of the recommendations of the Group of Ministers have been acted upon, have been implemented and I had no difficulty in getting up and saying that even 5 per cent recommendations which remained unimplemented, would certainly be implemented by the Government because they are good recommendations and we have no difficulty in implementing them."

One hundred per cent of the recommendations having been implemented — for we must assume that, months having passed, even those remaining 5 per cent have been implemented — the results should not surprise us! On 21 February, 2006, the Minister of State for Home told Parliament that in 2004, 653 had been killed in Naxalite-related violence. In 2005, 892 were killed. Going by open source compilations, in 2006, up to 23 July, already 550 have been killed.

But, as I mentioned, that is not even a partial index of the state of affairs. Captured documents indicate that Naxalites have already put in place "Regional Bureaus" for two-thirds of the country: including one for Delhi, Punjab, Haryana, Bihar and UP — and, a high authority on Left-wing violence tells me, the person who has been identified as heading this "Bureau" is one of the very best organisers among them. Further, barring the Northeast, J&K, Himachal and Rajasthan, "State Committees" are by now in place for every other state, "Special Area Committees" have been instituted for UP-Uttaranchal, Bihar-Jharkhand, and Bengal.

An "Urban Perspective Document" sets out detailed strategy for extending operations into and unsettling urban areas. Governance is weakening in many cities even now, it notes. And this weakening can only accelerate: urban population is expected to increase from 285 million to 540 million by 2020. A fertile field.

The point is that each such terrorist movement is proceeding systematically. Its programmes cover every aspect: land, caste-tensions, "courts", targets for raising finances, recruitment, training, capture and

production of arms, calibrated unleashing of violence. And on our side?

The Home Minister's "comprehensive mechanism". His "100% implementation". His redefinitions of the area that is affected.

And yet, the inattention to Left-wing violence is not the worst of the problems.

By the end of 2003, we were being told that our agencies had neutralised over 160 ISI modules — counting only those outside Jammu and Kashmir and the Northeast. Since then, up to July 11, 2006, again counting only those outside Jammu and Kashmir and the Northeast, another 75 modules are reported to have been neutralized.

These are substantial achievements — we can imagine how many more deaths and how much more dislocation would have been caused if these had not been got at and the persons caught or killed. But the figures have another side to them.

First, that there were that many cells to be neutralized shows that ISI had been able to set them up. Second, the cells that have been unearthed were found to exist across the entire country.

Going by the tabulation of the cells that have been located and finished just since January 2004, we see them having been found in state after state, town after town. In Andhra: Hyderabad (several), including one at the Begumpet airport, Nalgonda; in Karnataka: Alalmati, Hesaraghatta on the outskirts of Bangalore, Jelenabad area in Gulbarga district; Delhi (several separate ones in several localities across the city); in Bengal and neighbouring regions: Ghosepur, Darjeeling district, Rishra, Hooghly district, Chowgacha village, Nadia district, Kaliachak, Malda, Kolkata; in Uttaranchal: Dehra Dun; in Maharashtra: Mumbai, Aurangabad, Manmad, Malegaon; in Rajasthan: Jaipur, Ajmer, Jodhpur; in Punjab, where a serious effort is being made to stoke up Sikh militancy: Jalandhar, Amritsar, Nawanshehar, Ropar, Hoshiarpur, Batala, Malerkotla; in UP: NOIDA, Lucknow, Hardoi, Lalkurti; Goa; in MP: Gwalior; Faridabad; in Gujarat: Ahmedabad; and so on.

The list of these 75 modules apart, just look at the far-flung places from which suspects of the July train blasts in Mumbai are being picked up — that itself shows the long reach of the ISI and its terrorist limbs within India, of the faraway places at which they have been

able to set up sanctuaries.

Finally, that the blasts and other terrorist operations have continued unabated shows that the cells which have been located are but a fraction of the ones that have been set up. Several factors have afforded such easy access for the ISI. The principal one is the near collapse of law enforcement — from intelligence to investigation to combat to the courts.

As is well said, you cannot have a first class response to terrorism in a third class system of governance. Why should anyone be deterred from executing another round of blasts in Mumbai trains when he sees that those caught for the blasts executed 13 years ago are well and kicking; when he sees that their lawyers have been able, and with such ease, to ensnare Government prosecutors in the courts?

But the evaporation of governance and of the law-enforcement mechanisms is just one aspect, indeed it is in large part a consequence of complicity. In particular, of the perversion of public discourse — by which every action against terrorists, their sponsors and their collaborators is called into question and the national resolve dissipated; second, by the ever-strengthening nexus of rulers and criminal elements. And by the permissive atmosphere that has been fomented by these factors.

Which terrorist group, which potential recruit to terrorism will be deterred when he sees the solicitude with which the prime suspect of the blasts in Coimbatore, Abdul Nasser Mahdani, is being looked after? When he sees, as The Indian Express has reported (July 24-25, 2006) the comforts that the DMK Government has arranged for him, including Ayurvedic massages — with 10 masseurs and a senior physician labouring over him; and that too at the tax-payers' expense? When he sees that even the elementary restrictions on Mahdani's moving about in the prison have been cancelled in the face of opposition from security services?

When he sees that the representatives of the CPI(M) come calling on him in jail to seek his help in fighting elections? When he sees the Kerala Assembly pass a unanimous resolution on his behalf — and sees that that Assembly has not passed any comparable resolution for any other individual?

When he sees how doggedly the Government of

Karnataka holds up the investigation into Telgi's doings? When he sees a Chief Minister defend SIMI, an organization that has been banned for secessionist and anti-national activities? When he sees what happens in our Parliament — how members shout each other down and cannot speak in one voice even while discussing the blasts in Mumbai? When he sees how, even after the Supreme Court has struck down the IMDT Act as unconstitutional and as a threat to national security, the Government, the principal party of which depends on votes of illegal infiltrators from Bangladesh, incorporates those very provisions in the Foreigners' Act? Who would not feel emboldened to sign up for the greater glory of jihad and shahadat?

The Fatal Concession

Nor is it just the terrorist module that is encouraged. The organisers and controllers of these modules are given a free hand. In the statement that Mr Vajpayee and General Musharraf issued on 6 January, 2004, the words that Pakistan was made to agree to were very, very carefully chosen. There was great resistance from Pakistan. But, in the end, it had to agree to those words. By that declaration, Pakistan was made to commit that for sustaining the dialogue it would stop cross-border violence, and ensure that no part of the territory under its control — that is, including PoK — shall be used for terrorism.

By contrast, in the statement that Prime Minister Manmohan Singh signed with General Musharraf in April 2005, India agreed that to ensure that terrorism will not be allowed to thwart the “peace process”. This was a fatal concession — for by it Pakistan was in effect enabled to continue terrorist activities at will. The onus would henceforth be on India to continue the “peace process” and the “dialogue” in spite of the terrorist attacks.

In the concluding part of his analysis, Arun Shourie details how a weak-kneed government response, in terms of both administration and diplomacy, has cost India the momentum and the edge in the Kashmir issue

The result has been dramatically brought home in the wake of the Mumbai train blasts. The Prime Minister's address to the nation was anaemic. Perhaps that registered even in the Government. The second statement had a hue of firmness. And with much background briefing — “we won't put up with this nonsense forever” — the Foreign Secretaries' meeting

was called off.

And then? The Prime Minister goes to Moscow. Meets Bush. And suddenly, the official line becomes, “We won't let the terrorists succeed in their design to halt the peace process”!

So, Pakistan can pursue both limbs — talk peace, wage war! And all we can do is to go through the ritual again.

Blasts in Mumbai. Blasts in Srinagar. Another debate in Parliament. Another slew of statements — “We resolutely/ strongly/unequivocally condemn this dastardly/ cowardly/treacherous/barbaric act... It shows their desperation... Government remains committed to fighting terrorism in all its forms... We will not allow them to disturb communal harmony... We will not allow them to derail the peace process...”

The Home Minister repeated all the standard phrases in his statement to Parliament last week. He also implied that his ministry had done its job. “The Central Government has been sensitising the state governments/ UTs about the plans and designs of terrorist outfits. They were asked to streamline physical and protective security of vital institutions...”

And the Government is on the job even now, he assured. “The Government has made an assessment of the situation following these blasts,” he told Parliament. And what did the assessment yield? “The security apparatus has to focus greater attention and improve intelligence-gathering capabilities particularly at the local level to collect actionable intelligence... There is also a need to further enhance physical security and access control at airports, metros, vital installations... besides accelerated border fencing, overall coastal security... State Governments have been asked to improve coordination between the Railway Police Force and the Government Railway Police to enhance security of trains and railway stations...”

Should he not have said, “The Government has made yet another assessment of the situation following these blasts”? And did we really need yet another “assessment of the situation”? After all, what is new in this list? And what happened to that claim of 100 per cent of the recommendations of those Task Forces having been implemented?

Their Success

But while we keep repeating, “Terrorists will not

be allowed to succeed,” the fact is that through them Pakistan has already succeeded in several respects:

- It has succeeded in creating the impression — I dare say, in India too — that the status of Kashmir vis a vis India is not a settled issue. Indeed, that what will happen in the future, what some Government of India will do is an open question. When it is asked in Parliament, “Does the Government stand by the unanimous Resolution which Parliament had passed, namely that the only unfinished business relating to J&K is that we have to get back the parts of the state that Pakistan has usurped?,” the Government remains silent.

- Pakistan has succeeded in establishing that it shall have an equal say in what the final solution shall be.

- It has succeeded in establishing that the secessionists it has been patronising, arming, financing are the representatives of the Kashmiris, and so they are the ones to whom the Indian authorities must talk.

- And the Indian authorities must talk to them without the secessionists agreeing to anything in advance — in the Rajya Sabha, on July 26, the Home Minister was specifically asked by Yashwant Sinha, “Has Hurriyat agreed to give up violence?”; all he could claim was that they are giving the impression that they are willing to do so! As for their avowed goal of taking Kashmir out of India, they are not even giving any impression that they have diluted that goal one whit.

- Pakistan and its local agents have already accomplished the “ethnic cleansing” of the Valley, having driven the Hindus out. They are now systematically driving them out of Doda.

Equally ominous is the fact that, while India has always maintained that issues between Pakistan and India shall be dealt with bilaterally, that we will not agree to any third party mediation, now the US is the very visible third party in everything. Recall the change in the Prime Minister’s tenor after he met Bush in Moscow.

Moreover, the initiative has by now passed completely into the hands of Musharraf. He is the one who is forever proposing formulae, and we are put to reacting. Worse, he has succeeded in bringing the various political groups in Kashmir to talking his language. Omar Abdullah, the PDP leaders as well as the Mirwaiz are now lauding Musharraf’s formulations, and proclaiming that these — “Self Rule,” division into Regions — are the ones that show the way forward.

Fundamentalisation Of Discourse

It is because our media is so preoccupied with the “controversy” of the day, it is because it is so preoccupied with “life-style” journalism, it is because there is the censorship of “political correctness” that we do not realise how fundamentalist the discourse has become in Kashmir. We keep repeating nonsense about the great tolerant traditions of Kashmir, about the “Sufi Islam” of Kashmir, about the unique catholicity of “Kashmiriat”, about the incomparable blend of Shaivism and “liberal Islam” in Kashmir.

In fact, the very persons who are “people like us” are now taking positions that cannot but shock every Indian, and cannot but wreak a terrible outcome. Hari Parbat is sacred to every Kashmiri Hindu: how do you feel when Hindu refugees hear it being referred to in speeches and publications as Kohi Maaran — the hill of evil? Can you imagine a person who has held high office in the state telling Kashmiris that hey must learn from Hamas? Can you imagine his leading associate denouncing the Amarnath yatra as “a cultural intrusion”? Can you imagine a situation, when persons holding a peaceful observance against the massacres in Doda are killed, the Chief Minister proclaims in effect that the protestors invited the deaths upon themselves? Can you imagine a person who was till the other day Chief Minister telling the second “Round Table Conference” that we must accept “One country, two systems”? Can you imagine a leading political light of the Valley tell the same conference that the Kashmir Constituent Assembly was a “sovereign body”, that Article 370 was a “treaty between two sovereign bodies”?

How do you feel as you see the glee with which a Pakistani website reports a mainstream, “nationalist” Kashmiri politician proclaim that New Delhi “is responsible for the volatile situation in Kashmir, where its troops are killing Kashmiris unjustifiably and forcing them to take up arms”? How do you feel when you read him demanding to know, “Why is India killing innocents?,” and declaring, “By these evil designs, India forces our youth to take the gun and sacrifice their lives”? When he declares that the Indian Army has been given “a free hand to kill innocent people”? When you see that his charge against his political rivals, that is the current Government in the state, is that it is “in league with the occupation authorities to run a campaign of terror against Kashmiris”?

Such rhetoric is the staple today. And the results are brought home every other day. When a Lashkar man is killed these days, four to five thousand turn up for an ostentatious demonstration in his honour. The counter-insurgency groups which had been built up with such great effort have all been abandoned by Delhi. The killings by the terrorist bands become more and more brutal by the week — corpses are left with their heads hacked off, people are sent back to their homes with their limbs and parts sawn off... New technologies are introduced — car bombs; grenades — the man who throws it is paid when he produces the pin...

Has Pakistan not succeeded? Has its instrument, terrorism, not succeeded? And our Government applies itself to organizing yet another “assessment of the situation.” Actually, it does more. It is only by a hair’s breadth, it is only at the very last minute that the decision that had been taken — namely, to agree in the Indo-Pak meeting of May 21, 2006 to withdraw troops from Siachin — was abandoned.

The terrorist infrastructure remains intact in Pakistan, and securely in the hands of ISI and the Army. Lashkar-e-Tayyaba and other such groups have been allowed a free field to operate in POK after the earthquake — to organise relief, to open “educational institutions”. A better opportunity to pick up recruits for jihad and shahadat could not have been provided. Musharraf remains set in his singular aim.

Hence

The first thing that is required for standing up to what is in store can be put in the words that were used by a high-up in the present Government itself:

- The PM and others must see that this Government

does not have the mandate to make any fundamental changes in our foreign policy, certainly not in our defence policy; that it does not have the mandate to take decisions that will jeopardise our country’s territory;

- They must give up the delusion that problems that it has not been possible to solve in 55 years can be solved by “out-of-the-box thinking” in five weeks;

- Individuals must give up the delusions of what has been rightly called “the Gujranwala School of Foreign Policy” — the delusion, namely, that while others have failed, I will succeed because I am manifestly more sincere, because I am from that part of the sub-continent.

Next, the Government must spell out what the ultimate solution is that it has in mind for Kashmir. It must share with the people and Parliament what is happening in talks around Round and other tables.

In the alternate, Parliament must insist that it be taken into confidence. Once the deed is done, it will be too late.

Parliament must also get Government to specify what it understands by “Self Rule”; by “making borders irrelevant”; by “autonomy” - is “the sky the limit” still?; by the proposals that are being bandied about — joint management for power, tourism, horticulture...

Most important, it must rescind the fatal concession it made in the April 2005 statement — that we will continue the “peace process” irrespective of terrorism.

And a final plea — to the media: report in detail what the “nationalist”, mainstream political leaders of J&K are saying in the Valley. Unless the country is alerted now, obituaries will be all that will be left to pen.

(Courtesy – Indian Express)

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Democracy And Terrorism

Gnyanendra Pradhan

Most terrorist incidents occur in democracies and that generally both the victims and the perpetrators are citizens of democracies.

-William Eubank and Leonard Weinberg

The relationship between terrorism and democracy is a key concern. Are certain of regimes more likely to experience terrorism than others? In particular, are democracies more at risk than other types of states? Will democracy prevent terrorism?

If we compare India, the world's most populous democracy and China, the world's most populous authoritarian state, highlights the difficulty of assuming that democracy can solve the terrorism problem. For 2000-2002, the "Patterns of Global Terrorism" report indicated 203 international terrorist attacks in India and none in China. A list of terrorist incidents between 1976 and 2004, compiled by

the National Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism, shows more than 400 in India and only 18 in China.

A key point to recognize here is that 'democracy' is far too broad a term. Not all democracies are equally inclusive or pluralistic or respectful of minority rights. Many of the world's functioning democracies are limited or partial. Democracy and Terrorism are not polar opposites: saying 'yes' to democracy, unfortunately, does not mean saying 'no' to terrorism. Established liberal democracies with long traditions of free speech and tolerance of dissent have been the targets of both

domestic and foreign terrorism, both at home and abroad. We can point not only to the India, United States but also to Canada, Great Britain, Germany, France, Greece, Italy, Spain and Turkey.

In the case of terrorism that is generated within a democracy, the degree of social, ethnic, and political heterogeneity or fragmentation within the state appears to be a critical variable. Highly contentious polities and divided societies are likely to be associated with a greater risk of terrorism.

While the promotion of democratic values and institutions cannot always be a reliable antidote against the proliferation of terrorist organizations and practices, it is safe to say that the development of stable and consolidated democracies reduces the risk of terrorism developing into a critical problem. Therefore, at least where democratization is not demonstrably fraught with risks of strengthening terrorist networks, the international democratic community should step up its efforts to assist the advancement of democracy.

Thus we should ask not only where terrorism is likely to occur but also where it will have the most serious consequences for democracy. Transitional or new democracies are the most fragile, because their authority is weak and the legacy of past oppression may be strong.

Radical Islamic Terrorism and Liberal Democracy

Terrorism became a major concern for the international community following the terrorist attacks of September 11. These were perpetrated by a terrorist network that espoused an ideology based on the notion of radical political Islam.

Radical Islamic terror was an expression of resentment against the values of liberal democracy and the powers that represent them. According to that view, the ideology of radical political Islam is directed against the West and its institutions, and the West had become a target precisely because of its liberal democratic values.

Indeed, the emphasis on individual and women's rights, the power of the global market economy, and the influence of global civil society are regularly blamed by militant Islamists for disrupting traditional ways of life, leading to inequalities both within societies and globally. Furthermore, if radical Islamic terrorists aim to destroy the modern liberal order or at a minimum weaken liberal democratic states in order to prevent them from spreading their "pernicious" values and institutions, then they must be viewed as the latest version of anti-liberal reaction represented by Nazism, Communism or on a much smaller scale the leftist terrorist cells of the 1970's.

This vision of radical Islamist terrorism and its objectives was strongly challenged. Some scholars say that it was not liberal democracy per se but specific policies of western democracies which the terrorists objected to. Without attempting to justify terrorist means, it was argued that there were 'legitimate grievances' that had helped terrorist 'entrepreneurs' to recruit their followers and that the opposition 'terrorism vs. liberal democracy' was too simplistic and ideologically straightforward to be valid.

Despite the disagreement on the nature of radical Islamic terrorism, there was universal concern that democracies could be tempted to respond to terrorist attacks by curtailing civil liberties and weakening their own standards of accountabilities and transparency. If this was to happen, the terrorists' (real or hypothetical) aim of undermining democracy would, impart, be fulfilled. It was considered essential; therefore, for mature democracies to combine effective anti-terrorism strategies with measures aimed at preserving their democratic institutions indeed there was consensus that defending oneself against global terrorist entails not just the use of instruments of conventional security, but also taking a firm stand for one's values and institutions.

For a committed democrat, it may natural and 'intuitively appealing'. If we assume that terrorism is a response to inequality, exclusion, the disempowerment of certain groups and the impossibility to express legitimate grievances, then democracy (or, rather, consolidated, mature democracy) is the political system that comes closest to resolving these problems. In this

view, the lack of democracy is the major root cause of terrorism, and the promotion of democracy 'the best anti-terrorist policy framework'.

An empirical approach exposes the weakness of this argument. The historical record shows that consolidated democracies are not immune to internal terrorism. Examples include the wave of leftwing terrorism in Germany, Italy and Japan in the 1970, and the sustained campaigns of ethnic and sectarian terrorism in Spain and Northern Ireland. Even if we believe that strong, consolidated democratic regimes make it less likely for internal terrorism to turn into 'an overwhelming, unmanageable problem, the combination of weak or failing states and democratic or semi-authoritarian rule have turned out to be a dangerous breeding ground for terrorist networks. Whereas strongly repressive or totalitarian regimes possess clear advantages in fighting terrorist groups, weak states are to be found less among consolidated democracies or consolidated dictatorship, but rather among the numerous countries in the middle. In these countries, the process of democratization may turn out to be destabilizing, thus creating opportunities for terrorists to make political gains.

This generates a number of political dilemmas. In some states, elections are most likely to replace autocratic governments with extremist and irresponsible political groups, which may turn to supporting or sponsoring terrorist organizations. There can be little doubt that such scenarios influence the current political attitudes of American and European democracies. In the case of Pakistan, for example a delicate balance needs to be struck between undermining the autocratic rule of President Musharraf and paving the way for Islamist extremists to assume control of a nuclear state.

What autocratic government are nurturing terrorism rather than weakening it? In the Middle East, for instance, the exclusion of Islamist political parties from genuine political competition may push these actors to adopt more extreme agendas and methods.

Terrorist incidents in India accounted for finally 75% of the total. It is fair to assume that groups based in Pakistan carried out a number of those attacks,

particularly in Kashmir, but clearly not all the perpetrators were foreigners. A significant number of terrorist events in India took place far from Kashmir, reflecting other local grievances against the central government. And as strong and vibrant as Indian democracy is, both. A sitting prime minister and a former prime minister have been assassinated Indira Gandhi and her son, Rajiv Gandhi, respectively. If democracy reduced the prospects for terrorism, India's numbers would not be so high.

Hence, while the promotion of democratic values and institutions cannot always be a reliable antidote against the proliferation of terrorist organizations and practices, it is safe to say that the development of stable and consolidated democracies reduces the risk of terrorism developing into a critical problem. Therefore, at least where democratization is not demonstrably fraught with risks of strengthening terrorist networks, the international democratic community should step up its efforts to assist the advancement of democracy.

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Conflicts In North East India- An Overview

Anil Kamboj

Introduction

India's security is influenced by events in South Asia due to historical, geographical and demographic imperatives.

The biggest challenge for the South Asian countries has been the national consolidation into new identities, which generated its own external and domestic dynamics due to plural nature of the societies. This has been proved with the break up of the Pakistan and birth of Bangladesh. It is argued that mutual distrust is the natural bane of their relations. However, this does not exist in the same degree

and manner amongst all countries in the sub-continent. It is deep between India and Pakistan. This distrust influences not only the relationships between India and

Pakistan, India and other countries of the region but also relationship amongst the countries of the region.

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India's security is influenced by events in South Asia due to historical, geographical and demographic imperatives. The biggest challenge for the South Asian countries has been the national consolidation into new identities, which generated its own external and domestic dynamics due to plural nature of the societies. This has been proved with the break up of the Pakistan and birth of Bangladesh. It is argued that mutual distrust is the natural bane of their relations. However, this does not exist in the same degree and manner amongst all countries in the sub-continent. It is deep between India and Pakistan. This distrust influences not only the relationships between India and Pakistan, India and other countries of the region but also relationship amongst the countries of the region.

The relations with Bangladesh have gradually changed after 1975. This has influenced directly or indirectly on the security environment in the Northeast region. The insurgency in northeast has been there since independence and has affected the prosperity and the security of the region. The insurgencies in the northeast had a reflection of its social, cultural, ethnic and politico-economic milieu and changes in the environment of the area. This region is an extremely heterogeneous region with high level of ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious diversity. This is reflected in the pattern of the conflicts, which are varied in their nature and causes and the stance of the insurgent groups, which remained divergent and ever changing. This range from secession to autonomy, movements against foreigners and immigrants, ethnic integration and looking back to their roots as a reaction to perceived imposition of to be an Indian, the common factor is restoring to violence in articulation and mobilization for the same. Similarly, political evolution in the northeast is influenced by its divergent historical experience, social and cultural diversity and distinctiveness leading top socio-political tensions and instability, which again results in agitation which further leads to problems and violence. Of these, the recent phenomenon of ethnic mobilization automatically possesses a threat to adversaries resulting in a conflict situation. Most insurgent groups have been based on the competing demands of various ethnic groups, with conflicts not only between the insurgents and the government, but also between groups. The combination of anti-government and inter-communal violence shows little signs of ending. Although the Indian government has made progress in dealing with the largest groups, the continued existence of several dozen insurgent movements represents a significant security threat to internal stability in India. There are 200 tribal groups and sub-clans in the area, many of which have had long standing conflicts with other groups.

In some ways, in fact, these north eastern insurgent movements may prove to be an even more intractable problem. Given the extremely complex political and social environment, the competing political demands, the sheer number of various insurgent groups, each with different agendas and inter-linkages of these groups, is proving to be a challenging task for the Indian government. The counter insurgency operations in North Eastern Region have always suffered, be it 1971 (Indo-Pak war), 1989 (Punjab insurgency followed by terrorism in Kashmir) and 1999 (Kargil operation). Much needed troops for counter-insurgency have been taken from the North Eastern sector to deal with security threats in other regions. There has not been any constant continuation of counter measures in North Eastern Region, with a result that the insurgent groups in this region have taken the maximum advantage of this and have managed to spread their network/linkages in the area.

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General

To understand the insurgency in its correct perspective in the northeast region, it is important to understand certain ground realities about the region:-

a) Historically the region consisted of three highly evolved civilizations, namely, the Brahmaputra Valley Civilization, the Barak Valley Civilization and Manipur Valley Civilization.

b) Compulsions of geographical and historical factors isolated this region from the national main stream creating a deep psychological, emotional and physical divide.

c) Surrounded by not-so-friendly neighbours and narrow fragile link (22 Kms wide Siliguri corridor) with main land makes northeast states geographically and strategically very vulnerable as insurgents find easy access to out side support.

d) Lack of ethnic, linguistic and cultural homogeneity resulted in a slowed political growth making the society vulnerable to exploitation by insurgents.

e) Difficult terrain conditions have hampered speedy overall development along with the main stream India, which bred local dissatisfaction and generated unemployment leading to insurgencies. In addition, the ruggedness of the terrain suited the insurgent's modus operandi.

In the northeast states the above-mentioned realities gave enough opportunity to group of clever leaders to select a cause around which rebellion against the state could be engineered. The northeast states took the cue from the first rebellion that is the NSCN Insurgency. The success of Naga Insurgencies established a 'model' for other northeast states to follow, should they want to start an insurgency movement.

Using the forgoing Mao philosophy the other states such as Mizoram, Manipur, Assam and its autonomous counsels, Tripura and Meghalaya soon followed. They all logically leaned on NSCN for training, guidance and

support. As the insurgencies gathered momentum the Center and the State governments were left with no other option but apply force to quell them by bringing in security forces.

The ethnic minorities of Northeast India, particularly those of the mongoloid stock would deserve more attention. For, gone are the days when small bands of proud tribesmen fought and defended themselves with poison tipped arrows. Today, the ethnic minorities are wielding sophisticated weapons and engaging national armies in combat unceasingly. In brief they are all zealously guarding their ethnic identity. India's Northeast is one of South Asia's hottest trouble spots, not simply because the region has more than 50 armed insurgent organizations operating and fighting the Indian state, but because trans-border linkages that these groups have, and strategic alliances among them, have acted as force multipliers and have made the conflict dynamics all the more intricate. These linkages could be tactical, operational linkages or for financial benefits.

Assam

The scenario in Assam is presently blemished with uncertainty, with a number of events criss-crossing and overlapping the template that governs its conduct. Even the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) phenomenon begins to witness a complicated game. Organizations such as National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB) and United People's Democratic solidarity (UPDS) that have entered into ceasefire agreement with the governments are showing signs of belligerence over the delay in dialogue process. The group such as Dima Halam Daogah (Garlosa) (DHD(G)) which continues to hold their anti-dialogue position, are engineering alliances with organizations such as NSCN(IM), with ramifications for not only the area in which it operates, but with implications for the Indian Government and Naga leaders dialogue. The most critical aspect that is going to administer conflict in Assam in the future will be the groups interest that have emerged with the proclamation of *global Salafi movements* and one which is entering the country from India's neighbors particularly Bangladesh. Almost every ethnic group in the state is asserting their identity by either taking up arms or by demanding separation from Assam. Although ethnic assertion is a reality and has its roots in history, the fact of the matter is that the fault lines have become pronounced as a result of the neglect

that the ethnic minorities are heir to. In the hill Assam, conflict flared up between UPDS and DHD in North Cachar Hills and Karbi Anglong as a result of a jostle for space.

The continuing illegal migration from Bangladesh is fraught with serious national security implication. This is specially so because allegiance of Bangladeshi migrant continues to be informed by experiences from across the border. The ground situation is a witness to this, contrary to what certain intellectuals seem to argue about the creation of a Neo-Assamese social formation, or about the Assamisation of illegal migrant. The mere fact that Assamese is being censured as the mother tongue in certain areas which is occupied the illegal migrant, and the fact that more and more illegal migrants (especially in the post IM(DT) ACT era) are taking on working Assamese. It must however be understood that almost all illegal migration from Bangladesh into Assam and other parts of India are for economic purposes. The objective of Nizam-e-Mustafa is exploiting Islam in order to consolidate the annexation that is happening as a result. Today, Bangladesh has emerged as the crucial "mid-point" between the troubled spots of South East Asia and South Asia.

Now examining the ULFA factor, this is turning out to be a complicated issue. ULFA phenomenon possesses a complicated challenge which the Indian government has to deal with. Moreover the organisation has successfully created "Operation Confusion". You may like to turn a few pages of ULFA background. In 1985 itself, the ULFA opened shop in Bangladesh, setting up safe houses at Damai village in the Moulvi Bazaar district, bordering the North-eastern Indian State of Meghalaya. In 1990, the ULFA had its Pakistani contacts in place, and leaders like Munin Nobis (since surrendered) were instrumental in establishing the links.

ULFA had sent its representatives to attend a meeting of radical Islamist outfits, organized by the HUJI-BD, at a secret rendezvous in Bangladesh in the summer of 2002, which aroused curiosity. On May 9, 2002, 63 representatives of nine Islamist groups, including Rohingya forces, the Islamic Oikya Jote and the ULFA, met in Ukhiya and formed the Bangladesh Islamic Manch, a United Council under the HuJi's leadership. The ULFA is not an Islamist outfit and is rather secular in the sense that its cadres are drawn from diverse groups and communities, cutting across religions. But

what cannot be ignored is the possibility that ULFA would have to arrange for sanctuary for some of these Islamist militant leaders or cadres as a *quid pro quo* for its continued stay in Bangladesh, should the pressure against terror is to be increased by Dhaka. ULFA continues courses of action belied its sincerity for peaceful solution. It indulged in extortion recruitment and importantly Paresh Baruah was issuing statement that was clearly indicator of his belligerence. In an interview, Paresh Baruah was not only not appreciative of the gesture that the government and the army have shown, but in response to a question about the ongoing peace process, he stated, “so far, any peace process of peace talks with Indian government has not resolved any conflict satisfactorily, unilaterally suspension of operations by Indian forces is a tactic to divert attention from the main issue”. The reason for initial show of interest for a negotiated solution and indeed the constitution of the People’s Consultative Group (PCG) could have been a part of the foresaid Operation Confusion that Parvesh Baruah is perpetrating.

The recent bomb blasts have shown that ULFA was never serious about the talks and is working under the close supervision of the agencies operating from Bangladesh. The way the blasts were carried out it indicates that there could have been an attempt to create communal disharmony in Guwahati. The extortion is continuing in the State. In view of this it seems that there would be lack of investment and no big company would like to invest. TATA Tea is on its way out and seeing this, it would definitely discourage other companies to come in the State.

Nagaland

The NSCN, after its formation inside Myanmar and having established itself as a front-ranking insurgent group in India’s Northeast, started providing arms training and other logistic support to outfits such as the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA), formed in April 1979 to fight for a ‘sovereign, Socialist Assam.’ The ULFA started sending its cadres for advanced ‘military training’ at the hands of the Kachin Independence Army (KIA), an anti-Yangon rebel group in Myanmar, from 1988 onwards.

Though NSCN (IM) is in peace talks with the Government of India but it is maintaining its strong linkages with the groups in Thailand, Cambodia and in Bangladesh. It is still busy with its illegal business of

drugs and supply of arms to other groups in North East India. The extortion by its cadres still carries on. It always had a soft corner for all the underground organizations (except NSCN (K) in the North East. It wants that situation in this area to remain hot. It would not permit any other group to become stronger than its own group.

While the popular understanding is that Nagaland is now functioning like any other State, in reality NSCN (IM) is ruling Nagaland in totality having very cleverly marginalized the NSCN (K) and the HOHO group. Their writ runs at all levels – political, administrative, economic and on the society in general. While the common citizens of the state are alienated from them. In addition to their domination within the State the NSCN (IM) is also nurturing other militant groups in the North East region such as ULFA, KRA, HPC, PLA and so on. It has become an umbrella organization. The delay in peace talks between Government of India and the Naga leaders is helping Nagas leaders in consolidating their positions in Assam, Arunachal and in parts of Manipur.

Manipur

Events on the insurgency front in India’s Northeast have shown that rebel groups have often succeeded in neutralizing the reverses faced by them by entering into deals with other insurgent groups, and these alliances act as force multipliers. There are about thirty insurgent groups of which seventeen are active in this small state. The total strength of underground outfits concentrated in the valley districts is estimated to be 5,500 holding approximately 3,600 weapons of different brands like rifles of AK 47/56 series, G- series, self loading rifles, light machine guns, carbines/sten guns, pistols and grenades. The outfits that are active in the valley are assessed at around 1,800 cadres of People’s Liberation Army, 2,500 of the United National Liberation Front and its armed wing MPA, 500 of PREPAK and 600 cadres of KYKL. Besides these, there are other outfits operating in the hills.

For these insurgent outfits to survive and carry out operations they require over ground supporters. They not only provide vital information but also help in collection of funds. These supporters are of two types: one senior level type and the other junior level type. The seniors are well respected persons of the society like doctors, teachers, businessmen, lawyers, media

persons, politicians and even government employees. They not only provide vital information but also do the lobbying for their respective groups. The junior level supporters act as ears and eyes for their groups. They provide all types of information to their cadre like movement/routine of security forces, about the informers of the security forces, etc. They try to befriend the force personnel and try to get an access inside their camp for gaining information. The information so collected is passed on to the undergrounds.

The types of crimes committed by the insurgents are like killing of informers/surrendered insurgents and their relatives, abduction for ransom, looting of weapons, extortion of money from government officials/businessmen and ambushing the security force parties. The collection of funds is through imposing tax on bus and truck operators coming to Manipur, collection of taxes from contractors and local people at the rate of 2% to 20% of their income. They also indulge in drug trafficking, which is their main source of revenue earning.

The Government machinery functions from Imphal and from district head quarters. Government officials seldom go to tehsil or sub-tehsil head quarters because of fear of insurgent groups. Law enforcing agency is ineffective in interior areas due to the presence of large number of undergrounds. The interior areas are controlled by the insurgents. These insurgent groups are the government and they decree 'justice'. Some public distribution centers do exist but the quota of food grains is collected by the insurgents who sell the items in black market.

A few separatists like KYKL are trying to get masses on their side by assuming the role of moral police. While some groups are also taking extreme steps like harking back to their Mongoloid pre-Hindu, Sanamahi past. This is aimed at taking the masses away from the Indian mainstream.

The smaller groups appeared to have followed a carefully structured policy of keeping their activities localised. Thus the Zomi Revolutionary Army (ZRA) operates in Paithe dominated areas of Churachandpur district, the Chin Revolutionary Army (CRA) operates in Churachandpur, Mizoram and Myanmar. These groups simply sustain themselves through extortion,

drug trade and criminal activities. They have avoided killings both of civilians and security forces

The recent operation being carried out and pressure being exerted by Myanmar security forces on the camps of Indian insurgent groups based in Myanmar, especially on UNLF and NSCN(K), have made these groups to establish their links in other places also. The arrest of four UNLF leaders on October 1, 2006 near Dhoki on Indo-Bangladesh border, while trying to cross over to Bangladesh, later on October 4, 2006 arrest of its three leaders including two self-styled Lt. Colonel, one of them who handles finances of the group, confirms this hypothesis. The leaders arrested at Delhi Airport were on their way to attend meeting with UNLF chairman R K Meghem at Kathmandu. This indicates that UNLF is trying to establish its contacts in Nepal perhaps with Nepal Maoists. The group may also be planning to shift a space from Myanmar to Nepal and to also strengthen its bases in Bangladesh.

Tripura

Tripura is a state which is distinctly different, from other states of northeast India in respect of their culture, traditions and political setup. The main problem that has been plaguing the state is the communal violence, which originated due to demographic inversion wherein the local tribals who were in majority (70%) in the state in 1931 were reduced to a minority (30%) by 1991. This situation arose because of heavy influx of expatriates from Bangladesh both Bengalese and Muslims.

Within the changing global context of counter-terrorism and perspectives on South Asia, Bangladesh is certainly and increasingly on the back-foot, with its official position *vis-à-vis* Indian insurgent groups increasingly losing the cover of credible deniability. In addition to the volumes of evidence accumulated by Indian authorities, the case against Bangladesh is also gradually being independently validated. For instance, the location of the NLFT hideout that was reported in Bangladesh media as having been raided by the BDR on January 2, 2004 tallies with a location mentioned in the list of 194 Indian insurgent camps inside Bangladesh submitted by the BSF to its Bangladesh counterpart, the BDR, in January 2004. The Indian list stated that the NLFT had a transit camp at Thakurgaon under Chunarughat Police Station in the Habiganj District of Bangladesh. Again, the very fact that Dhaka did not

deny the raid and subsequent capture of six NLFT cadres goes against its official position that there are neither camps nor any Indian insurgent cadres operating from Bangladeshi territory.

Meghalaya

Meghalaya provides a transit route from Bangladesh for NSCN (IM), who has bases in Garo Hills. Most of the leading insurgent groups have some presentation in and around Shillong. Khun Henniewtrep National Awakening Movement (KHNAKM) is using its close nexus with NSCN(IM) and NDFB to regroup in Bangladesh. Anchi National Voluntary Council (ANVC) has provided sanctuary and safe passage to ULFA and NDFB cadres in the East Garo hills region.

Arunachal Pradesh

Arunachal Pradesh is providing a transit route from Myanmar for ULFA, NSCN(K), UNLF and PLA. Its neighbouring districts with Nagaland provide hiding places for NSCN and ULFA.

Mizoram

Mizoram is providing safe passage from Chitagong/Cox's Bazaar of Bangladesh to the NSCN (IM) for bringing in the weapons purchased from South-East Asia.

Development

Northeast region of India, because of its geopolitical disadvantages, has achieved an integrated insularity. Furthermore, its under-development is an aspect of the larger scenario of un-equal and un-even development in the various parts of the Indian Union.

Demands were many, resources were limited, leaders and policy makers were idealist agitators with good intentions, but lacked experience of state craft. Thus, there were many honest efforts to come to the expectations of the masses, but there were lapses too. But one thing must be noted that that was the age of the rising aspirations and exploding frustrations. There were many good reasons for not meeting at least some of the commitments to the masses, but political education to the masses was uneven and there were occasions, when the people lost patience with the democratic dispensation and took arms and rebelled. This way, the region remained far behind in development.

While all the frontier states have a series of silent and informal trade with their immediate foreign neighbours, officially they live behind a bamboo curtain

thinly separated from immediate foreign neighbour. None of these foreign countries have any office in the northeast region for either trade or visa purposes and for that one has to go to Delhi and in some cases to Kolkata. Every state in the region is doubly handicap, as they are economically either integrated within the sister states of the Indian Union, or they are officially permitted to trade with their next door neighboring foreign countries.

It is felt that there should be a three-pronged strategy for development in the region considering its peculiarities:

- a) State's own unique potential of resource base
- b) Inter-state sub-regional urban industrial corridor, for example, Dimapur – Bokajan – Golaghat – Jorhat corridor or Shillong – Guwahati – Bongaigong corridor in Assam
- c) Commercial and industrial access across the international boundaries

Here mention may be made of Nathula Border Training Mart with its linkage to Gangtok – Kalimpong – Darjeeling – Paro – Siliguri – Biratnagar – Katihar – Kolkata or could be Chittagong – Agartala – Silchur – Aizawl – Jiribam – Imphal – Moree. Trans-Asian Highways have immense potential for development of this region.

However, one potential, which remains untapped require some mention, and this is the potential of the hydel power generation. In this context, Bhutan has shown the way for generating power. There have been talks of generating power from Brahmaputra, Barak and Bihang rivers.

Response by the Government

The construction work of the border fence along the Indo-Bangladesh border has to be completed on priority so that a check is imposed on the in flow of Bangladesh nationals inside India. Constant pressure has to be mounted on Bangladesh government to take appropriate action against India's North East insurgents camps present inside their country. Nepal may also be informed to keep a look out for any new linkages being established by the North East Insurgents groups.

Conclusion

The groups from Bangladesh, have already entered Assam. Their attempt to pierce into other states should

be prevented immediately taking appropriate counter measures. There is also an attempt being made inside North Eastern Region by external forces to create a situation similar to Jammu and Kashmir. Unless innovative steps are undertaken to address the issue, the process could prove irreversible. It is expected that the Government of India should address the question

more forcefully. The imperative of development buttressed by a security angle for the North East Region should be uppermost in the Government's mind. Unless a pro-active role is taken by the government, this region could be infested by networked insurgent groups, shaking the edifice of Indian democracy.

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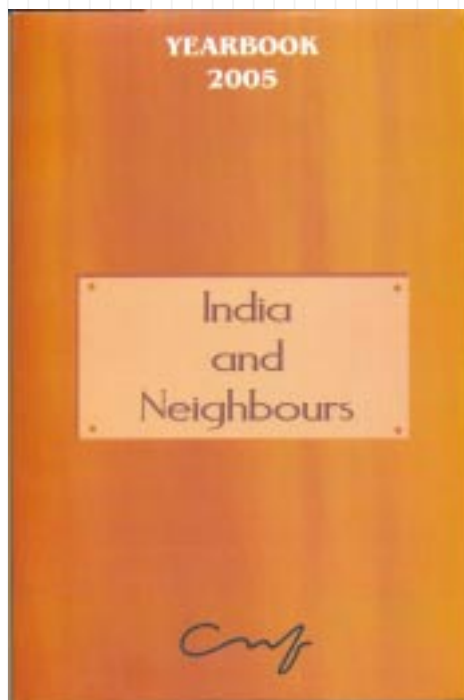
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Dealing with Naxalism

Vinod Anand

Genesis

Phenomenon of leftwing extremism has been recognised by the government to be not merely a law and order issue but also as a manifestation of socio-economic deprivation and other inequities. Prime Minister Mnamohan Singh, while addressing a meeting of Chief Ministers on Naxalism on April 13, 2006 observed “In many areas, the phenomenon of Naxalism is directly related to underdevelopment. It is not a coincidence that it is the tribal areas that are the main battleground of left wing extremism today. Large swathes of tribal territory have become the hunting ground of left wing extremists. Exploitation, artificially depressed wages, iniquitous socio political circumstances, inadequate employment opportunities, lack of access to resources, underdeveloped agriculture, geographical isolation, lack of land reforms – all contribute significantly to the growth of the Naxalite movement”.

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Lack of political will to implement land reforms, political expediency and sheer inertia in utilising allotted funds for development and disjointed approach to problems of the populace still remain the main causes promoting Naxalism. Though Government, with long experience of tackling insurgency has come out with good strategy to deal with Naxalism yet it is at the implementation level where concerted efforts are needed.

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The movement started almost 40 years ago by a charismatic personality Charu Mazumdar may have lost its intellectual and ideological moorings because of criminalisation of the movement yet it has now spread to over 160 districts all over the country. The ideological base of the movement has diminished and there are many lumpen elements now in the movement. But, there seems to be also some support from deprived and alienated sections of the population. Movement had its origins in a small village of Naxalbari in West Bengal where based on the ‘land-to-tiller’ programme of the state government, the poor peasants and landless labour who expected to get only a third of the produce (leave alone some land) were denied their just dues. From a small incident in Naxalbari in May 1967 which was suppressed ruthlessly by the police, the movement based on Charu Mazumdar’s ideas of agrarian revolution, has now become a force of worrisome proportions.

The PM of India has repeatedly referred to it as the biggest threat to internal security.

Charu Mazumdar was greatly influenced by the Maoist ideology and wanted to bring about an armed revolution based on the Chinese Communists' ideology and methods which led them to victory in China (In fact, during the height of Cultural Revolution in China, *People's Daily* described the uprising in May 1967 as "a peal of spring thunder"). He authored a series of articles in mid-sixties which formed the basis of Naxalism and these were referred to as "Historic Eight Documents". He (and his party Communist Party of India-Marxist and Leninist i.e. CPI-ML) had running fight with the Communist Party government of West Bengal on ideology and methods to implement his revolutionary ideas. He died in a police station in July 1972 which led to a temporary collapse of a central authority and respected figure in Naxalite movement. Pressure continued to be put on curbing Naxal activities during 1975 when emergency had been declared by Indira Gandhi. Meanwhile, there were many splits and mergers in the Naxalite groupings and leftwing parties.

The movement, thereafter, spread to many adjoining states and even to other areas which were far away and in some of these states the movement had somewhat different undertones. For instance, in Bihar, the left wing extremism became closely linked to caste differences and exploitation of the lower castes by the upper castes. But eventually, it boiled down to land related disputes and exploitation by the land owners of the landless labourers. Disputes regarding distribution of lands, minimum wages and related issues arose between the land owning upper caste class and the lower caste poor people. Resentment and disaffection of the lower castes motivated them to adopt left wing extremism. Around 1969, this resulted in the formation of a Maoist Communist Centre (MCC) which adopted extreme and violent methods to exterminate landlords. Phenomenon of forming private armies like Ranvir Sena of the upper castes also made appearance during this period. Both land lords and MCC indulged in massacres of each others groups.

Andhra Pradesh's (AP) revolutionary movement also began in the late sixties and their activities were coordinated with Charu Mazumdar group but they were

not comfortable with some of his extreme policies. Naxalite movement in AP had advantage of having been able to garner support among teachers, intelligentsia and civil liberties groups. The struggle was portrayed as a fight between good and evil by pointing out excesses of police forces and the failures of the state. Even popular Telugu cinema highlighted the justification of violence in the face of insensitive polity and governing class. Hero was always the one who sympathised with the people's causes and fought against scheming landlords and conniving government officials and politicians. A number of strongholds of leftwing extremism had made appearance by late seventies and Naxalism spread to Telangana region of AP. Off and on, the AP government had been banning and lifting ban on Peoples' War Group (PWG), the leftwing face of AP Naxalite movement because of political expediency. But by early Nineties, AP government seemed to have gained some control over the movement.

Similar leftwing extremist activity has enveloped in most of the contiguous areas of Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Jharkhand, Karnataka besides Bihar and AP. Naxalites have also established links with Nepalese Maoists who have recently joined mainstream politics though Indian Naxalites are nowhere near emulating the example of their Nepalese brethren. Earlier in July 2001, the PWG, the MCC and Nepalese Maoists had become members of the Coordination Committee of Maoist Parties and Organisation of South Asia. In January 2002, Nepalese Maoists had resolved to oppose jointly with the PWG and the MCC, and conduct a campaign against the Indian and Nepalese governments. However, now Nepalese Maoists are looking at Indian Government to solve the impasse between Nepal's Seven Party Alliance and the Maoists.

Meanwhile, in September 2004 both the PWG and MCC merged together to form Communist Party of India Maoist (CPI-Maoist) in order to form a unified organisation to coordinate their struggle and activities. By the time this merger took place, Naxalites' numbers and arms had grown manifold. It is estimated that there are 9,000-10,000 armed cadres with access to about 6,500 firearms and in addition they may further to 40,000 full-time cadres. In June 2004, AP government had concluded a cease fire agreement with the PWG.

The period was used by the Maoists to consolidate their position and they also acquired more prominence and respectability especially when they were called to Hyderabad and given almost a special treatment by the State Government. However, government's resolve to deal with them politically soon died down by mid-December 2004 and it returned to earlier harsh methods to crush them through repressive police action.

Current Situation

While reviewing the internal security situation during Chief Minister's Conference on September 2006, the Prime Minister of India observed that neglected areas were the main recruiting grounds for Naxalite outfits and while, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Bihar, Orissa and Andhra Pradesh are in the forefront of Naxalite related activity, many other states remained vulnerable and emphasised that "*Chief Ministers must personally take in hand what deliverables are possible even while preparing to meet Naxalite violence through effective law and order measures*". At present juncture, the Red Corridor stretching from Nepal through the most backward regions of the country up to Andhra Pradesh is an area where left wing extremists take on the state on daily basis.

Naxalite's main objective is to establish a base area in Dandakaranya forest, spanning Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Orissa and parts of Maharashtra. In fact, this area also known as Abuj Mand is a 10, 000 square metre km of un-surveyed forest zone that has a meagre population of 20,000 with hardly any surface communications. This area is as large as a small country like Israel or Belgium. Law enforcement agencies have hardly entered this area. It is fast becoming a firm base for the Maoists and its central location facilitates launching of operations, provision of training as well as rest and recuperation. Training camps in the area are spread across three to four square kilometres and even concrete bunkers have also been found there.

As a measure of increased violence, for instance in Bastar district (which has been divided into three districts; other two being Dantewada and Kanker) there have been 300 mine blasts between June 2004 and 2006. All these activities are handiwork of People's Guerrilla Army (PGA), the armed wing of CPI Maoist (PWG plus MCC). PGA has its origins in People's Liberation

Army of Charu Mazumdar. Naxals have been expanding scope and area of attacks. In October 2003, Chandrababu Naidu, AP's Chief Minister had a narrow escape when his convoy faced the blast of a Claymore mine. In February 2004, 180 guerrillas laid siege to Koraput. Naxals have also engineered jailbreaks and hijacked trains with passengers in Jharkhand.

Further, Naxals are against any development work inside the forest fearing that improved road communications would enable the police and the government authorities to carry out their operations against the cadres. Though tribals and poor peasants form the mainstay of the Maoists, increasingly educated persons swayed by the left wing ideologies are also joining up. Technical graduates from central and South India are providing technical support and know-how to the movement. Some of these graduates are also tribals who have been able to get higher education through reservation/quota schemes. Senior leadership of the movement has largely been assumed by leaders from AP.

Chhattisgarh is a major Naxal trouble spot. After an ambush on a CRPF party in September 2005, the state government banned the CPI-Maoist. But it turned out to be a catalyst for over dozen attacks from Dandakaranya base of the extremists. Government also launched a counter-resistance movement *Salwa Judum* (peace force) which was termed as a spontaneous and popular reaction to Naxal atrocities. However, innocent villagers get caught in the proxy battle between the government and the Naxalites. It can not be said that counter resistance movement has reduced violence or brought peace but it may have promoted some kind of a civil war.

The state government of Chhattisgarh has a series of laws to counter terrorism like the Public Security Act which contains very strict provisions for those who even harbour or give shelter to the Naxals or take recourse to Naxal justice to settle their disputes, yet this has not improved the situation on ground. In the year 2005, there were 516 civilian casualties, 223 Naxal fatalities and 153 police persons were killed in Naxal related violence. Further, the movement has also spread to adjacent districts of Maharashtra where the state government has sought Centre's help to provide

helicopters and a development package to counter the problem. There are also reports of Naxals in Maharashtra providing finances to Maoists all over the country. Maharashtra government has not launched any systematic crackdown on the Naxalites. Over the past few years, Naxal related violence in Maharashtra districts of Gondia, Gadchiroli, Chandrapur, Bhandara and two other districts has increased.

Another factor which exacerbates the phenomenon of left wing extremism is the extortion by the Maoists. For instance, in Jharkhand, the Maoists earn about Rs. 320 crores a year while police has an annual budget of Rs. 170 crores a year. Jharkhand rich in natural resources is a gold mine for the Naxal movement; they impose tax on contractors, petrol pumps, transporters, forest trade and sale of *tendu* leaves. They are well organised into platoons like the regular military platoons and have communication and technical support. This standing army is in addition to militia and local guerrilla squads. Revenue collected goes into paying regular salaries and for paying lump sum compensation to the families of those killed in action against the security forces. They have also acquired 7.56 mm guns, 9 mm pistols, sten guns and INSAS rifles besides the old .303 rifle. Explosives are obtained from mining /quarries contractors. Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) and mines were used to ambush former Chief Minister Babulal Marandi and another minister early this year. As mentioned above, strikes like hijacking of Barakana-Mughalsarai passenger train was carried out to showcase their increasing strength and to gain propaganda value. A total of 19 out of 22 districts are afflicted with Naxalite violence.

Similarly in Bihar, 20 out of 40 districts have direct involvement with the red terror. Bihar is original home to MCC philosophy though with mineral rich areas going to Jharkhand the Naxal activity may have comparatively decreased. But many splinter groups abound and they have potential to foment trouble and the new entity of CPI-Maoists claims to be running parallel government in around 250 villages.

Orissa is also witnessing an increased Naxal activity. AP Naxals who are on the run from the well trained police force find safe haven in Southern Orissa. Here again, they are well organised into Dalam (battalions)

and are armed with weapons like AK-47. Out of 30 districts 14 are Naxal-affected. In February 2004, People's Guerrilla Army raided Koraput and seized 530 weapons and in March this year 500 Naxalites attacked Udaygiri town and freed 40 jail inmates. Both Central and State governments have floated many schemes to develop the communication infrastructure and improvement in weaponry and equipment of the security forces including their training yet the result of such schemes are not visible on the ground. But some success seems to have been achieved in creating employment opportunities in mines and the police forces for the local youth to check the Naxal recruitment drive in the affected districts. Presently, the Maoists Naxalites are concentrating their activities in the backward hill tracts of Western Orissa.

AP remains as important from Maoists point of view since it provides most of the top leaders in Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Orissa. It is for no reason that AP is dubbed as the cradle of revolution by many analysts. According to intelligence reports, about 55 to 60 top Naxal leaders (including some Central Committee and Central Commission members) from AP are guiding the cadre to build up a mass base and wage war against the state governments. While the Naxal activity in AP is reduced the activity in other states like Orissa, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand has increased perhaps for this reason. This may be a tactical decision to build up cadre in other states till they achieve some degree of maturity before returning to increased activity in AP. There is a general belief that recruitment in AP has been drastically reduced because of well paid jobs in BPO industry as well as in other areas. However, left wing extremist movement still remains strong in AP despite the recent lull in their activities. The movement continues to draw its support from raising land related and rural issues and by highlighting government repression and exploitation. And as mentioned earlier, successive governments in AP have used Naxalism for vote bank politics. Organisation of the movement and methods of generating financial resources are similar to what is being done by the Maoists in other states.

As far as West Bengal is concerned the movement is confined to districts like Purulia, Midnapore, Bankura and Burdwan. CPI-Maoist strategy is to expand its base

in Bengal as part of its plan to build guerrilla zones in the country and then link up gradually with the bases being built up in Dandakaranya forests of Central India. Recruitment in West Bengal is on the increase where even college and university teachers and professionals are joining the ranks and arming the outfit. Because of the consistent policies of the state government the movement in the state is at low key. However, Maoists still receive support from the villagers either out of fear or for ideological reasons. Also security personnel do not enter the forests where Naxal intelligence network is the strongest. There is a widespread belief that Naxalism can not be wiped out unless there is adequate development.

Government Response

Real key to fighting Naxalites, as emphasized by the Prime Minister in his remarks on internal security at Chief Ministers Conference on September 5, 2006, is good and timely intelligence. Thus effective integration of strategic and tactical intelligence and information at police station level is of vital importance. Approach of the governments at both centre and state level is based on three pillars of strengthening the police forces, promoting development and improving the socio-economic conditions of the affected areas through a number of schemes.

In March 2006, the Union Home Minister Shivraj Patil had outlined 14-point strategy to deal with the Naxal problem. Conceding that Naxalism is not merely a law and order problem and therefore, the Government should address this menace simultaneously on political security, development and public perception management fronts in a holistic manner. Collective and coordinated approach, improved police response and no dialogue with the Naxalites unless they agree to give up violence and arms were some of the points stressed in the strategy document. Faster socio-economic development, distribution of the land to poor and speedy implementation of land reforms, restoration of government machinery, restoration of people's faith in the government and efficient use of mass media to highlight the futility of Naxal violence and loss of life and property were other key areas of attention in the government's strategy. However, when strategy often articulated remains unimplemented for long, then it starts

acquiring the shape of a mere rhetoric and repetition of platitudes.

The difficulties of coordination and adopting a unified approach by different state governments and the centre has been sought to be overcome by constitution of an 'Empowered Group' of Ministers headed by the Home Minister and select Chief Ministers to closely monitor the spread of Naxal movement, review special measures to be taken and improve inter-state coordination in exchange of intelligence, personnel and any other kind of assistance. An inter-ministerial committee would also look at work being done on providing livelihood and amenities to the deprived population. Ministries of Rural Development, Environment and Forests, Panchayati Raj and the Planning Commission would have their representatives on the committee with the main objective of bringing the alienated people into the mainstream. Development and security have been merged in an anti-Naxal division/cell being activated in the Union Home Ministry and headed by an Additional Secretary. Officials of the cell are expected to work on ground to monitor progress and would be part of improved interaction between the Centre and states.

The government had also started a Backward Districts Initiative in 2003-2004 under which 55 of the worst affected districts were to receive funds of Rs. 2475 crores over a period of three years. First, only Rs. 990 crores have been drawn by the states so far and second, only Rs 761 crores has been spent. In case of certain states, for example AP, the original battle ground of Naxals, has not even bothered to seek funds for eight of its districts which form the heartland of red terror. This not only highlights the apathy of the state governments but also their inability to implement the government strategy. Weak governance, political expediency and unwillingness or reluctance of the police to enter forested areas and strongholds of Naxals also impedes the development activities. Similar conditions prevail in other states.

The government has requested the Planning Commission to include other Naxal affected areas under their proposed Scheme of Backward Regions Grant Funds for which an outlay of Rs. 5,000 crores has been set apart from fiscal year 2005-2006 onwards.

Further, since Naxal problem has a deep connection with the tribal and forested areas, the government has been making efforts on the legislation front also in the direction of recognizing the right of forest dwellers on the forest produce. Other important area on which Central government has been pushing the states is in introducing land reforms which remains a political issue and various states have implemented the land reforms with mixed success. Whichever state has effectively implemented land reforms for instance, West Bengal and Kerala, the incidence of Naxalism in that state has relatively declined.

Funds under the Police Modernisation Scheme have been given to the states to modernize their police force in terms of modern weaponry, latest communication equipment, improvement of mobility and other infrastructure including provision for additional protection and fortification of vulnerable police stations in Naxal areas. The states are also being supplied with Mine Protected Vehicles to counter the land mine/IED attacks. However, Naxals, for example in Chhattisgarh have devised new means of defeating mine protected vehicles by placing extraordinary amount of explosive charge in the IEDs.

Further, the Security Related Scheme of February 2005 has been revised to include expenditure on account of new items like insurance scheme for police personnel, community policing, rehabilitation of surrendered Naxalites, publicity and many other items not covered earlier in the scheme.

Additional Central Para Military Forces have been deployed on a long-term basis to quell the Naxal violence. Naxal affected states have been sanctioned India Reserve Battalions not only to strengthen security apparatus but also to wean away the youth from rebel activity by providing them with gainful employment. In April 2006, the centre sanctioned raising of nine more India Reserve Battalions of 1000 personnel each thus recognizing the intensity of growing Naxal menace.

Plans are also afoot to set up three to four specialized anti-Maoist centres at strategic locations- mainly at inter-state borders- each equipped with about five helicopters. The centre would be manned by CRPF and pilots would from BSF/Army/ Air Force. The government has even approved the use of Indian Air

Force assets like UAVs for reconnaissance and gathering of intelligence in Naxal affected areas. The Army Chief General JJ Singh has suggested setting up of an auxiliary force of ex-servicemen drawn from the Naxal affected areas to carry out duties like detecting mines and explosive devices laid by Naxalites.

Training of police force is another facet which has been receiving greater attention in states like AP and Chhattisgarh which are imparting special training to counter the well trained and motivated Naxal guerrillas and fighters. Chhattisgarh has started a Counter Terrorism and Jungle Warfare College in Kanker about a year ago where police are given rigorous training in guerrilla warfare and trainees live in the open in the dense jungles of Bastar and learn to live off the land. Training is modelled on Army's Counter Insurgency and Jungle Warfare School at Vairengte in Mizoram. Even other states have started sending their police personnel for training to the college.

It is also quite evident that Army is not keen to be dragged into tackling Naxalism but that has not prevented from guiding the Home Ministry and governments in Naxal-hit states on training the police force and on procurement of explosive-detection equipment and sophisticated jammers. Army has trained 16 companies of central paramilitary and state personnel in counter-Naxalism operations and plans to train another 92 companies (around 9,000 personnel) by mid-2007. Based on the Army Chief's suggestion, around 4,800 ex-servicemen have already been inducted for raising an auxiliary force; by mid-2007 another 5,000 are expected to join. Seriousness of the growing Naxal menace can be gauged from the fact while J & K recorded 440 violent incidents with 724 fatalities this year, Naxalism – hit states recorded 628 fatalities till end September 2006. And there are still three months to go before the year closes. Figure of violent Naxal-related incidents for the year 2005, according to MHA was 1,539 while a total of 669 deaths occurred last year. All this indicates a heightened level of violent Naxal activity.

Concluding Observations

The government has adopted a two-pronged strategy to deal with leftwing extremism and while the first prong of modernising the police forces may be

progressing at the required pace, it is the second prong of development where there has not been much visible progress. Both security and development have an intimate relationship as development can not proceed without security and lack of development becomes a cause for alienation of the people leading to insecurity. Further, abrogation of government's own responsibility of governance, for instance the situation in Abuj Mand where rebels are running their own parallel government, further erodes the authority of government and the faith of people in the government. In the bargain Naxals gain respectability, strength and revenue resources to perpetuate their vested interests.

Further, movements like *Salwa Judum*, though they appear to be attractive on face of it yet the people

involved in such movements become isolated and sitting targets for the Maoists. However, such people require protection of the police and in case of this particular movement 45,000 to 50,000 people have been displaced, refugees in their own land, complicating the situation further.

Lack of political will to implement land reforms, political expediency and sheer inertia in utilising allotted funds for development and disjointed approach to problems of the populace still remain the main causes promoting Naxalism. Though Government, with long experience of tackling insurgency has come out with good strategy to deal with Naxalism yet it is at the implementation level where concerted efforts are needed.

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Jihad: A Threat to India?

Chintamani Mahapatra

Islamic extremism has become a global threat. *Jihad*, as a concept was almost forgotten for about a thousand years until it was revived after the Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan —a neighbouring country of India.

During ten years of Soviet military occupation of Afghanistan, Islamic militants were trained and equipped by Pakistan with direct assistance from the United States. They did not constitute a global threat then. They only threatened the Soviet Communists who militarily occupied the Islamic country of Afghanistan and put a Godless regime in power in Kabul.

India, the second largest Muslim country in the world, did not face any threat from Islamic extremism for decades

after its independence. Millions of Muslims stayed back in India after the partition of the country and the creation of Islamic Pakistan. Massive majority of them championed the cause of secularism and accepted and actively participated in the democratic system of governance in the country. Reflecting the diverse and multicultural fabric of the Indian society, the Indian Muslims also did not constitute a single cohesive community. Sufi, Deobandi, Shia and other belief

systems among Muslims co-existed and accepted India as their home. They realized that India is multi-religious and multicultural reality and considered themselves as an integral part of the Indian society.

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During the Muslim rule and the British colonial rule, the Muslims lived with the large number of Hindus with relative peace. Occasional communal riots and disturbances did not rupture the broadly peaceful co-existence. The British policy of divide and rule and Mohammad Ali Jinnah-led Muslim League's success in carving out a separate state on the basis religion could not prevent the emergence of a secular India, where Muslim and Hindus would live together in the Indian Union.

During the early decades of independence, there were several instances of communal riots in some parts of India and Indian secularism faced occasional challenges. Yet, such riots posed limited threat to the unity and internal security of India. Several Muslim organizations mushroomed in India to promote unity among Muslims, maintain an Islamic identity and preserve the religious and cultural life of people. But no

single nation-wide Muslim political party has ever emerged and sustained in India. There are some Muslim political parties which are regional in their reach and character. The Tablighi Jama'at, founded in 1927, still exists in India, but it is apolitical and its primary objective is to teach Islamic practice and encourage the expansion of Islam. The Jamaat-e-Islami Hind advocates fundamentalist thought and aims at uniting the Muslim community with a distinct identity from secular nationalism. But it is apolitical in nature, although its influence in politics is considerable. Other organizations, which are politically influential, but have not formed political parties are All India Muslim Majlis-e-Mushawarat (AIMMM), Jamiat-al-Ulema-I Hind, Jamiat-e-Ulema-Islami and the All India Milli Council. There are other organizations which aim at promoting the interests of the Muslim people, such as the All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB). It seeks to preserve a separate Muslim personal law grounded on Shari'a.

Existence of all these Muslim organizations and several others has enriched the democratic and secular character of the Indian polity. Indian Muslims have symbolized and vindicated that Islam and democracy are not antithetical as has been presumed by some analysts. Muslim citizens of India have cast their votes periodically to wide spectrum of political parties that include the Congress, Communist parties, regional parties and even the Bharatiya Janata Party, which champions the Hindu cause.

India has historically not experienced the birth and growth of fundamentalist Islam and even currently there is no large following of Islamic radicalism in India. However, since the end of the Soviet military presence in Afghanistan, India has begun to witness the slow spread of Islamic extremism. The terrorist attacks on Bombay Stock Exchange, Air India office, Shiv Sena headquarters in March 1993, the bombing of RSS headquarters in Chennai in August 1993, the bombings in Tamil Nadu in 1998, the attack on Kashmir Legislative Assembly in October 2001, the attempt to blow up the Indian Parliament in December 2001, terrorist bombings in Mumbai in 2003, Gujarat massacres, bombings in Delhi in 2005 and 2006 and many more clearly indicate the rising tide of Islamic radicalism in India.

Unlike in Kashmir, where terrorists brand themselves as so-called freedom fighters, terrorist

activities in other parts of India clearly leave the footprints of Islamic radicals. It must be highlighted at this point that all terrorist acts in India are not committed by Islamic radicals, but the nexus among various kinds of terrorist organizations in this age of globalization is beyond any body's doubt.

What are the factors that have contributed to Islamic radicalism waging so-called *jihad* in India. The first and foremost factor is Pakistan and more particularly the dreaded Inter-Services Intelligence or ISI. It was created in 1948 by a British Army Officer who happened to be the Deputy Chief of staff of the new Pakistani Army. Among other things, it was in charge of coordinating the intelligence functions of the three wings of the Pakistani military and its close links with the military goes back to its very inception.

It was soon hijacked and used by General Ayub Khan, who came to power by staging the first military coup, to sustain the military regime by keeping a watchful eye on all opponents of the military. But it soon grew into a monstrous organization and its officers were not answerable to military or political leaders. According to its critics, it became a "state within a state." But the ISI always prospered under military rulers and grew in its power and influence within the country under General Yahya Khan's and General Zia-ul-Haq's military rule.

General Zia incidentally rose to the highest rank because of the support of the ISI Chief General Gulam Jilani Khan and he was instrumental in giving a free hand to the organization during his entire rule. He retained Gulam Jilani Khan as the ISI Chief even after his retirement. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the decision of the US to turn Pakistan into a frontline state in waging a military struggle against the Soviet troops came as a golden opportunity for the ISI to expand its capabilities in covert and semi-military operations. As money and sophisticated weapons poured into Pakistan for training the anti-Soviet Afghan mujahedins, the ISI had a field day. According to an estimate, the ISI "trained about 83,000 Afghan Mujahideen between 1983 to 1997 and dispatched them to Afghanistan."

In the aftermath of the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan and the subsequent end of the Cold War with the disintegration of the Soviet Union, Pakistan

made full use of the ISI to engineer the rise to power of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and simultaneously ISI wanted to re-enact Kabul in Kashmir. It is a not a coincidence that the insurgency in Kashmir backed by Pakistan originated soon after the Soviet troop withdrawal from Afghanistan. However, Pakistan had actually begun to train Kashmiris in the 1970s by funding madrassas and its perceived victory against the Soviet troops in Afghanistan encouraged it give high momentum to remove Indian control over Kashmir. It was not easy for Pakistan to influence recruit the Sufi Muslims of Kashmir to wage *jihād*. Consequently Pakistan resorted to cross-border terrorism by Pakistan based *jihādī* groups, such as Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammad. Moreover, there was an incursion of multi-national *jihadis* from Afghanistan into Kashmir.

Pakistan's machination in Kashmir was not fruitful for Pakistan except giving a vicarious pleasure out of sufferings of ordinary people in Kashmir. Through ups and downs, Pakistan and its creation—the jihadi elements—had realized that Kashmir was not Afghanistan and that it could never snatch it from India by waging a low intensity conflict with deadly consequences for innocent people of the state. The deadly terrorist attacks on the United States in September 2001 by the Al Qaeda under Osama bin Laden's leadership bolstered the courage of the *jihadis* in many parts of the world. If the US could be so vulnerable, why not India? Several weeks after the 9/11 incident, the *jihadis* attacked the Kashmiri Legislative Assembly and a few months later attempted to blow up the Indian Parliament when it would be in full session!

Although there is a general belief that there was no trace of Al Qaeda in India, this belief is unfounded. Mohammad Afroz Abdul Razzak and his brother were arrested in Mumbai in October 2001 "for plotting to hijack a plane from Manchester ...and fly it into the parliament building in London on September 11, 2001." In the post-9/11 period, it was also found that some members of Tablighi Jamaa't, contrary to its goals and ideology, had developed connections with some of the international terrorist organizations and offered their service for networking purposes.

The international attention on terrorism after 9/11 and pressure upon Pakistan to cooperate in combating *jihadis* had a direct impact on anti-Indian *Jihadis*. The Indo-Pakistan peace process further obstructed the

terrorist groups operating in Kashmir. As Kashmir became intractable for *jihadis*, they expanded their operations to other parts of India. Mumbai, the finance capital of India and Delhi the political capital of India became the main targets, but terror threats and acts were not confined to these two cities.

Secondly, one cannot blame Pakistan for all the ills in India. Other developments in India are partly responsible for creating the ground for Islamic radicalism to take root and expand. There is a perception among the Indian Muslims that they have been discriminated in matters of housing, employment and education since independence. The All India Milli Council has pointed out that Muslims are under-represented in all India services, police and several other services. The recent Sachar committee report also says that Indian Muslims have little access to education, and suggests that Madarsas need to be brought into the mainstream, teacher training programmes and supporting Urdu.

Moreover, the report finds that Muslims have lowest representation in public and private sector jobs and argues in favour of allocating 15 per cent of all government funds to Muslims under all Central schemes. Socio-economic conditions of the Indian Muslims by and large prepared the ground for the foreign *jihādī* influence to penetrate the Indian society. A large number of Muslims send their children to madrassas depriving them of the opportunity to acquire knowledge and skill to enter the mainstream modern life style.

Thirdly, the Shah Bano case enabled the fundamentalist sections to promote their cause. The Indian Parliament had to reverse the Supreme court decision to accommodate the views of the fundamentalists, but in the process the extremists discovered a fertile ground to expand their base and membership.

Fourthly, the demolition of the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya and the Godhra incident culminating in the anti-Muslim riots in Gujarat played a significant role in expansion of Islamic radicalism and strengthening of the bond between the Indian radicals with international *jihādī* groups.

Conclusion

The persistent insurgency in Iraq and the inability of the US to stabilize that country, resurgence of Taliban forces in Afghanistan and inability of NATO

forces to bring order there, failure of Israel militarily to suppress the Hezbollah forces in Lebanon, victory of HAMAS in Palestinian elections appear to have boosted the morale of *Jihadis* around the globe. It will certainly have negative implications for India as well. While India continues to support the Palestinian cause, its cooperative approach to Israel and establishment of strategic partnership with the US will also have an impact in the growth of *Jihadi* elements in India.

Osma bin Laden is still alive. Al Qaeda has been constrained in many ways, but the organization has not been disbanded. The top Taliban leaders are still at large. Pakistani President has just begun to renew ties with some of the Taliban factions in the aftermath of his

unsuccessful misadventure in the North West Frontier Province to wipe out their influence. Stung by the US decision to establish a stronger cooperative relationship with India, he might move more slowly in containing anti-Indian *jihadis*, despite promises to the contrary. India's effort to establish a joint antiterrorism mechanism with Pakistan is a welcome step, but it is neither sufficient nor credible.

Last but not the least, the Indo-US strategic partnership and Indo-Israeli military cooperation may complicate India's fight against terrorism. Unless properly explained to the domestic audience, especially the potential *jihadis*, the latter may use it to intensify their propaganda and recruit more members to join them.

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Terrorism in India: An Assessment

Ashok Sharama

Today terrorism is a threat not only for the innocent human beings but also national security of India. The terrorism India is experiencing over the years has become hydra headed monster. India is faced with the terrorist attacks in Kashmir, insurgency in North-eastern states, increasing infiltration from Bangladesh and the Naxal movement questioning state authority in 13 states challenging the very existence of Indian Union and posing serious threat to internal security of the country.

The terrorists attack on Parliament, Akshardham temple, Sankatmochan temple in Varanasi, Delhi blasts on the eve of Deepawali, IT Conference in Banglore, Malegaon and serial blasts in Mumbai trains has brought the issues of countering terrorism on the forefront. These terrorist attacks, which has been

lodged against India, is well planned, meticulously calculated, and designed to target the country's political, economic and social fabric, thus threatening internal security of the country. These terrorist attacks have not only raised the questions on the credentials of intelligence agencies but the very policy framework of Indian government to deal with terrorism.

Terrorism in India can be attributed to India's many 'low intensity conflicts' within its borders. If terrorism can be defined as "peacetime equivalent of war crime", then these sites of low intensity conflicts are prime flash spots for terrorism in India. In fact India has been facing terrorism since more than six decades but the terrorism due to radical Islam can be traced from the early 1990s. The regions with

Today terrorism is a threat not only for the innocent human beings but also national security of India. The terrorism India is experiencing over the years has become hydra headed monster. India is faced with the terrorist attacks in Kashmir, insurgency in North-eastern states, increasing infiltration from Bangladesh and the Naxal movement questioning state authority in 13 states challenging the very existence of Indian Union and posing serious threat to internal security of the country.

The terrorists attack on Parliament, Akshardham temple, Sankatmochan temple in Varanasi, Delhi blasts on the eve of Deepawali, IT Conference in Banglore, Malegaon and serial blasts in Mumbai trains has brought the issues of countering terrorism on the forefront. These terrorist attacks, which has been lodged against India, is well planned, meticulously calculated, and designed to target the country's political, economic and social fabric, thus threatening internal security of the country. These terrorist attacks have not only raised the questions on the credentials of intelligence agencies but the very policy framework of Indian government to deal with terrorism.

This article looks into case of terrorism in India which has been instigated by the Pakistani intelligence agency (ISI) and various terrorist organizations active in India. Finally examines the overall approach of the Indian government to deal with terrorism and emphasizes on the need for a strong policy framework.

long term terrorist and extremist activities today are in Jammu and Kashmir, and a few poliets of north- eastern states of the country, both regions having international borders. In addition, there are 13 naxalite infested states threatening the sovereignty of the country.

The terrorist activities have increased significantly after 1980, following the involvement and direct encongragement of Pakistan government under the cover of its intelligence agency ISI and islamic militant groups armed, trained and financed by Pakistan in the plea of supporting 'freedom movement'. More recently these groups have been getting active support from Islamic fundamentalist groups from the neighbouring Bangladesh, too.

In the recent years, India has been facing some of the deadliest terrorist attacks in the world. Attack on the Parliament on December 13, 2001 was one such attacks that completely bared the sinister designs of the terrorists. A large number of terror outfits are being aided and abetted by Pakistan's ISI and provided safe havens in (POK) where these outfits have built operational bases.

The terrorist outfits even coerced the change in demography by forcing the Hindus to migrate from Kashmir and thereby destroying the shared traditions and cultural linkages among the Kashmiris. Islamic terrorism, which started on the plank of anti-India movement in Kashmir, rapidly gained the capability to mobilize resources in the name of Islam showing a transformation from "Kashmiriyat" to "Islam". Cross border terrorism from Pakistan went on for a long time, which was termed as undeclared war by Pakistan.

Although there are more than 30 terrorist outfits actively engaged in sbversive activities in India, until recently the Pakistan based outfits are mainly instrumental in organizing and carrying out terrorist attacks. These are Harkat-ul-Mujahideen(HUM), Harkat-ul-Jehad-al-Islami(HUJI), Jaish-e-Mohammad(JeM) and Lashkar-E-Toiba(LeT) which have active linkage with Al-Qaeda. Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI), which has followings in North India, Maharashtra and South, has been found actively participating and facilitating these terror attacks by

providing its network at the back and calls of these numerous terrorist outfits. Al Ummah, a terrorist outfit having base in Tamil Nadu is known for having linkages with Kashmiri and Pakistani terrorist outfits and at the same time remains connected with Islamic terrorist elements in Malaysia, Singapore to North East India and Bangladesh. Apart from these terrorist outfits, Dawood Ibrahim's gang and other trans-national crime groups reportedly working for ISI provide logistical support to these terrorist outfits.

Characteristics, Origin and Trends

Since 1990s terrorism in the name of Islam widely known as radical Islamic movement has emerged as a global challenge. This interpretation of Islam, which found its expression in its phenomenal rise allegedly on the basis of Sword in the middle ages, has its modern manifestation in Islamic Terrorism. The 9/11 incident has shown to the world that even the Super Power is not out of the reach of radical Islamic terrorists. The reach of the Islamic terrorism has become global with the capability to strike at any chosen location, from Southeast Asia to USA. The radical terror machine has its nerve centre in Al-Qaeda, which has not only emerged as a coordinating agency among the countless terror outfits; it has even acquired their leadership in recent years.

The present Islamic terrorism that is carried out to further the political and religious ambitions of a segment of the Muslim Community in the name of *Jehad* finds its genesis in response to Westernization and Modernization.

Radical Islamic groups arose in various Islamic states. As Western influence grew and the division of the Islamic world proceeded, progressive movements in the Middle East such as socialism or even nationalism could not come up. Islamic fundamentalism is a response to many factors, central among which are the domination by the West, the relative poverty and underdevelopment of the Muslim world, and the lack of political outlets to express discontents. The rise of radical Islamic groups in the 20th century and their phenomenal proliferation in the last few decades gets its motivation from the Islamic worldview of Darul-

Harb and Darul-Islam and wrong interpretation of *Jihad* by radical sections of Islam.

In recent years, the US-European political hegemony in Middle East seeking to exploit the lucrative oilfields, Israel-Palestine conflicts and entry of erstwhile USSR in Afghanistan are cited as main reasons behind the spread of terrorism. In the Indian context, the issue of Kashmir wherein India is portrayed as an 'aggressor' by Pakistan, is cited as one of the main causes of terrorist attacks. Their objective relating to India is to "liberate" the Muslims of not only Kashmir, but also destroy the secular fabric of India. Of late, the radical Islamic organizations in India are getting external support from the ISI and from the Islamic fundamentalist organizations of Pakistan, Afghanistan and Saudi Arabia and now Bangladesh too.

Terrorism in India has emerged as a hydraheaded monster; operating trans-nationally, dealing with organized drug cartels operating worldwide, controlling Hawala operations, having nexus with international mafias like Dawood Ibrahim and that of Albania and having a huge resource of gathering arms through large scale smuggling. One can say at this point of history that terrorists *per se* have consolidated their position by striking roots at local level, networking with international mafias.

Till 9/11, India's case of terrorism was not taken seriously by the international community. India had been raising voice against Pakistan's role in abetting terrorists and separatist activities in India since 1990s in many international forums. In fact ever since 1989, Governments in Pakistan had been making distinction between terrorism in Jammu & Kashmir and the rest of India. Pakistan was never ready to accept that there was terrorism in J&K and rather it projected it as 'freedom struggle'. Till 1995, the views carried out by Pakistan were upheld to a certain extent by the international community. In fact they were not ready to accept that acts of violence in J&K were basically terrorism. It was only after the kidnapping of some Western tourists in Kashmir by the Harkat-ul-Ansar(HUA) (subsequently renamed as Harkat-ul-Mujahideen) under the name of Al Faran in 1995, which

led to a change in the attitude of the international community. They began to accept the arguments of Indian government that violence in J&K was basically terrorism in the name of *Jihad* backed by Pakistani terrorist outfits. This changed perception led to the declaration of HUA as a terrorist organisation by the United States in 1997.

Interestingly, no Indian terrorist group is co-operating with the international *jihadi* terrorist movement headed by Al Qaeda. However, certain Pakistani *jihadi* terrorist organisations, which are members of bin Laden's International Islamic Front (IIF), are being used by Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) for organising terrorist attacks in Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) and other parts of India. These are the Harkat-ul-Mujahideen (HUM), the Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami (HUJI), the Lashkar-e-Toiba (LET) and the Jaish-e-Mohammad (JEM). All these organisations except the HUJI have been designated by the US State Department as Foreign Terrorist Organisations (FTOs) and are subject to action under the UN Security Council Resolution No.1373 against terrorism. Most of the terrorist organisation in India are based in Kashmir and are backed by Pakistan and other rogue states which are enemical to India. Although at present Lashkar-e-Toiba, Jais-e- Mohammad and local Students Islamic Group of India which has spread its base all over India tops the list of terrorist organisation fighting in the name of *jihad* there are number other organisation also which has strong base in J&K region and operates from there.

Although J&K is the worst affected states by terrorism, the terrorism in India is no longer Kashmir specific and the strategy seems to destabilize India. The terrorists have spread their network to other parts of the country. Major terrorist attacks in India like the 1993 Mumbai bombings, the 1998 Coimbatore bombings, the Akshardham temple attack, the Hijack of Air India Flight IC-182, the attack on Indian Parliament in 2001, the terrorist attack on the American cultural centre in Kolkata in 2002, the Indian Institute of Science shooting in 2005, the bomb blast in Delhi on the eve of Deepavali festival in 2005, the Varanasi bombings of 2006 and the recent attack on financial

capital of the country on 11 July 2006 in which bombs were planted in seven trains in Mumbai killing more than 200 people and injuring more than 700 people and Malegaon blasts show that terrorists have acquired an all India reach and they are no longer confined to the valley. These terrorist attacks encompass a wider strategic objective of weakening India by targeting its stupendous economic growth and advancement in science and technology and creating communal disturbances by attacking temples.

Since the beginning of 2001, a new dimension has been added due to the infiltration of terrorists from Bangladesh. In fact, Indian security planners are so obsessed with the Western border that they continued to ignore the eastern border. The fact is that in post 9/11, Bangladesh has become a “sanctuary” for terrorists and also a “launching pad” for them to operate against India. The reports indicate that apart from Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) operatives, leaders of several militant outfits operating in the North-East, such as Paresh Barua, were living in Bangladesh and aiding terrorism. According to some observers, Islamist fundamentalist groups in Bangladesh have come to the extent of influencing policy making in Bangladesh.

Of late, Uttar Pradesh has emerged as one of the major centres of activities of the Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) in India and ISI-trained Indian sleeping modules had infiltrated into even small towns of the State. At least 200 youth in Uttar Pradesh had come back after getting training in ISI (instead of getting directly involved) camps in the Balochistan province of Pakistan. The ISI has now largely been banking on local trained youth to carry out operation and both the Jaish-e-Mohammed (JEM) and Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) had spread their tentacles in the state making Meerut, Almorah, Baghpat, Phoolpur and several other cities the hub of ISI network.

Response of the Government

Till now since 1980 when for the first time terrorism entered in Punjab in the form of Khalistan movement, two Prime Ministers have been assassinated, while hundreds of public figures and thousands of men in uniform, and at least 1,00,000 innocent people have

fallen victims to the depredations of terrorists.

At macro level, India’s approach to terrorism appears to be still evolving. Incidents like the Home Minister of India granting freedom to imprisoned terrorists for the safe return of his abducted daughter in 1990; the Foreign Minister of India personally escorted terrorists to Kandahar in 1999 and swapped them with passengers of the hijacked IC-814 Indian Airlines plane gave the impression that India is a soft state. The terrorist attacks on the J&K Assembly and the Indian Parliament forced the government to take a hard look at events. An exceptional mobilization of Indian Armed Forces; Operation Parakaram, was the immediate Indian reaction of the attack on Parliament. Since then onwards, the Indian response started getting hardened.

Evidently, these and countless other policy waffles benchmark India’s whole approach to combating terrorism. In fact, there is need of a strong political will and stringent law to counter these *Jihadi* terrorists. The ubiquitous terrorist violence in the country makes it imperative to look into the lacuna that needs to be addressed and measures required urgently.

The way Government of India’s policy is evolving, a change in the existing anti-terrorism policy is imminent. This may include issues like:

- Make no concession to terrorists.
- Bring terrorists to justice for their crimes in an expeditious way.
- Isolate and apply international pressure on states that sponsor terrorism.
- Bolster the counter-terrorist capabilities of countries that work with India.

In fact, countries like the United States and Britain have effective anti-terrorism laws. The United States Anti-terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996 made terrorism a federal offence, expanded the responsibility of the FBI in solving such crimes and imposed death penalty for terrorism. The Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism (USA PATRIOT ACT) Act of 2001 aims to deter and punish terrorist acts in the United States and around the world.

It provides far-reaching authority to both domestic law enforcement and international intelligence agencies. The UK too has a strict Terrorism Act, 2000, which has widened the definition of terrorism and established that it may have religious or ideological as well as political motivation and would cover actions which might not be violent in themselves but which can, in a modern society, have a devastating impact.

In India, several political parties and the Human Rights' groups opposed the enactment of an anti-terrorist law. The TADA was allowed to lapse and there was no anti-terrorism law for about five years. The government, after great difficulty, was able to pass the Prevention of Terrorist Activities Act (POTA) but that too has been abolished.

The US and other Western governments realised that the counterterrorist establishment had to be equipped and reoriented to handle the new task. Western governments, therefore, strengthened their intelligence networks, spent huge sums of money to equip them, hired experts and strengthened coordination between the various agencies. For India, there is still a long road ahead. India's multi-Agency Centre, designed to coordinate the fight against terrorism, is moving ahead in evolving a viable mechanism.

In fact, prior to 1999, there were hardly any steps taken to ascertain why an intelligence failure occurred during the Mizo revolt of 1966. The Kargil Review Committee (KRC) studied the 1999 intelligence failure that made the Pakistani intrusions possible. The Special Task Force on the revamping of the intelligence apparatus, which followed the KRC, went into the need for follow-up action recommended by the KRC. However, it did not specifically address the equally important question of perceived intelligence failures in terrorism-related matters. Unless and until an inquiry committee is set up into each instance of a major intelligence or security failure, it is very difficult to identify our deficiencies and as such to correct them.

Also, unified command of the civil and defence forces is absolutely essential to deal with any terrorist situation. The concept has already been accepted and applied in J&K and in Assam in India. The

implementation, however, calls for improvement. There is a need of proper coordination between civil services and the defence forces.

After 9/11, the Indian government offered its unqualified help to the US even before a formal request came and it was a sort of invitation to the US to come and join India's fight against terrorism. But the US preferred the Pakistan; help because of obvious reasons that terrorism emanated from Pakistan and not India.

Although India and the US have been cooperating on the counter terrorism operation, but it has not been fruitful for the US for protecting its citizens and interests, whether in the US homeland or elsewhere. But Pakistan seems to be vital for the US war on terror due to the fact that while there has been no act of *jihadi* terrorism mounted against the US from Indian territory after the kidnapping of an American tourist by the Al Faran in Jammu & Kashmir in 1995, practically all the post-1992 *jihadi* terrorist strikes against US nationals and interests had been planned and mounted from Pakistani-Afghan territory.

In the light of this, it is inevitable that where there is a conflict of interests between the USA's counter-terrorism policy requirements vis-a-vis Islamabad and those vis-à-vis New Delhi, the requirements relating to Pakistan would have primacy and would receive priority over those relating to India. It is, therefore, likely that the Indo-US co-operation in Counter-terrorism would not have much scope for any spectacular advance against the terrorism of today.

India should, therefore, focus on counter-terrorism co-operation with the US in meeting the likely threats from the 'terrorism of tomorrow' and not the 'terrorism of today'. The terrorism of tomorrow would have four components—maritime terrorism, weapons of mass destruction (WMD) terrorism, cyber terrorism and terrorism affecting energy security.

Recently, to counter terrorism Indian government has decided to tackle terrorism with the help of Pakistan and both the nations have agreed to set up a three-member anti-terror mechanism to be headed by a person of the rank of Additional Secretary (International Organisations) from the Ministry of External Affairs of

India and the Additional Secretary (UN&EC) from Pakistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Its mandate would be to consider counter terrorism measures, including through the regular and timely sharing of information. But this Indo-Pak joint Counter-terrorism is a matter of concern and is questionable. As already there have been mechanisms under the INTERPOL where India's CBI and Pakistan's FIA are to cooperate. But it has not worked. The government's initiative to tackle terrorism by cooperating with Pakistan raises serious questions. In fact before evolving any strategy to deal with Pakistan, which has been sponsoring and abetting terrorism in India, the government must formulate its own strategy to deal with internal security. Instead of relying support from the United States or from the military rulers of Pakistan, India must rely on its own mechanism to deal with terrorism and other extremist outfits like the Naxal movements.

Finally, government is coming up with Counter Terrorism Doctrine (CTD) which might help the agencies fighting terrorism but it would be premature to analyse its effectiveness at this juncture.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the perceived knee-jerk reaction to terrorist activities, the government needs to look for a long term solution to the problem of terrorism. This involves measures to revitalise and energise the state police forces and restructure the paramilitary forces and ensure their optimum utilization and speedy trial of the cases related to terrorism. Government needs to modernize its police forces since the weaponry of the terrorists was fast changing everyday. Arsenals of police forces need to be updated and adequate funding for the purpose needs to be given by the government. This

can be possible only when policy makers decide a doctrinal change in anti-terrorism policy and take a hard approach to terrorism, which is posing serious security threats to the nation.

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Internal Insecurity: Need for a paradigm shift, post 9/11

Pinaki Bhattacharya

“Cities harassed with seditions...Even words now lost their former significance, since to palliate actions they were quite distorted; for, truly, what before was a brutal courage became to be esteemed that fortitude which becomes a human and sociable creature, prudent consideration to be specious cowardice; modesty, the disguise of effeminacy; and being wise in everything, to be good for nothing: the hot temper was adjudged the exertion of true manly valour; cautious and calm deliberation to be a plausible pretext for intended knavery: he who boiled with indignation was undoubtedly trusty; who presumed to contradict, was ever suspected: he who succeeded in a roguish scheme was wise...associations were not formed for such mutual advantage as is consistent with, but for the executions of such rapines as are contrary to human

laws. In mutual trust they persisted, not out of any regard to religious obligation, but from the bond of communicated guilt....Revenge on another was a more

valued possession than never to have suffered injury...revenge was not limited by justice or the public welfare; it aimed at more ample satisfaction....all this while the moderate members of such communities, either hated because they would not, or envied for such obnoxious conduct, fell victims to both sides.” Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*¹

Most of these people who bear the brunt of militancy and insurgency belong to geographical peripheries of the country, largely situated on the international borders. Their crises in terms of their own identities are as real as their people who dwell across the artificial boundaries. In this scenario, scenarios of area dominance have little meaning if one looks for people as force multipliers in sensitive strategic zones. In that light peoples’ security gets enhanced if there is a sense of cooperation between them and machines of the state. This cannot be achieved by seeking to forcibly assimilate them in a vision of a nationhood they do not ideologically share yet as they see the values of that not accruing to them sufficiently. So, people’s security can get enhanced only when their individual and collective identities are acknowledged and not denied.

Denial, most notably fails as a solution when a state tries to refute its own nature and instead, seeks to be all things to all people. For the people understand what they are faced with when the time for appropriation and distribution of resources arrives. They understand how the state caters first and foremost to its main constituents – the elite. That causes a kind of ‘cognitive dissonance’¹⁵ that not only creates apathy towards existing democratic institutions but also a grows faithlessness towards contemporary politics as a vehicle for reaching solutions.

This is where the crux of all the problems lie. While peoples’ security demands the state change its character, which the people seek to achieve through periodic elections, the state cannot fail its base for its own survival. The ensuing tussle is usually the single biggest threat to people’s and national security.

doom overwhelming the optimism that normally visits of an epoch – an epoch which had begun with the promise of many old shibboleths of the human kind

If that rather long quote did not have a name appended to it, thus situating it many millennia ago, it could have been written by any sensitive contemporary historian sensing

falling into disuse. The tyranny of money as capital seemed to yield ground to knowledge; conflict to cooperation; exclusivism to inclusive embrace of human welfare; and balance of terror to peace. This vision ignored one reality: the cyclical progress of history does not end, merely changes its garb creating illusions of those triumphalists who miss the trees for the woods.

Yet, many saplings have been regularly planted on 9 September over decades, which grew into trees. Many of them yielded poison fruits. Renowned activist-commentator, P Sainath reminded us of two others, besides the one easily remembered, on that day this year in the editorial page of the *Hindu*.² He missed out on one, very pertinent for this article. On 9 September, 1958, then President of India signed into law the Armed Forces Special Powers (Assam and Manipur) Act (AFSPA). Still, we remember one the most. Modern technology of seamless communication showed us that day in 2001 how a promise of the American leaders over the years of not countenancing another day when the USA was found wanting in securing itself, crashed into a heap of broken convictions. "Never again," they had said after Pearl Harbour and had thrown themselves into ordering the world in a way that locked them into 'no war, no peace' for four decades. In other words, they had defined the first principle of modern statehood: maintenance of security. And what does that security mean? It is defined as "a condition that results from the establishment and maintenance of protective measures that ensures a state of inviolability from hostile acts or influences."²

Clearly, this principle had disproportionate impact on the minds of political leaders across the globe. India is not an exception. The late Govind Ballabh Pant, who had been India's Home Minister when the AFSPA was legislated had said that in an emergency, fundamental rights could be abrogated.... the AFSPA powers stemmed rather from Article 355 of the Constitution, which gave the central government authority to protect the states against external aggression and internal disturbances.³ In other words, the principles of security, even if they are challenged by your own countrymen, are so inviolate that they could be met with the same heavy hand that an external aggression demands. And even the basic rights of the citizens could be suspended indefinitely. So the question that needs to be asked: for whom security?

For the definition of security above leaves a revealing and crucial hiatus. It talks of an object without a subject. What is that subject? The people? Or is it the state itself? Because only its own continuation can maintain the system it fosters? A cursory glance across the world will tell an observer that the only budget item of national economies that has kept rising ever since the reconstruction processes were over after the Second World War by the early 1960s, and the spending for public goods and services of the Keynesian economies took the downward slope. That has been true for India too. From the beginning of the 1970s, as the process of centralisation of political and governmental power began under the late Indira Gandhi in right earnest, the expenditures under the security head kept rising, not only for defence but also for internal security. It has now reached much higher levels with the paramilitary forces and central police organisations witnessing unprecedented expansion in the wake of a rise in militancy and terrorism. Laws have come to force that curtail civil liberties, while extolling the virtues of security. While not yet at the level of the USA, the security mindset of the government in India is led by the thought that insurgency – peaceful or violent - has to be met with uncompromising force.

Major element in this thinking is the position of the Indian state about inviolability of national boundary, in terms of the political and the Constitutional context. A possible reason for this is that the members of the Indian state have for the first time in the country's history have the tools in their hands for a viable nation-state. This enables them and their primary constituents, the power and the business elites, to enjoy a territorial advantage with attendant natural, human and financial resources, which can accrue them gains in proportion to their ambitions. So when they seek to create a homogenous nationalism that can tend to their interests effectively, without interrogating the reasons for their precepts.

But having said that, one has to note this construct has faced challenges almost right from the beginning of India's independence. Be it in the north eastern parts of the country or presently in Kashmir, people have shown that they do not wish to embrace this vision of India. All this while, independent India have sought to find militarist solutions to the problems or failing which, sought to strike quick political bargains about limited

power-sharing and creating illusions of empowerment of the people in the periphery. This may not work for very long if the India has to survive. The idea that was imbued with an ideology of social and economic transformation of the people's condition, oppressed under an exacting colonial rule, and the belief that they needed full liberties and franchise to be able to choose their own destiny. Can that dream be allowed to be stolen in the name of greater security for aggrandizement of a few?

9/11, the phenomena

Carl von Clausewitz's timeless classic "On War" had only a limited treatment of insurgency or guerrilla warfare. In an English translation of his original German treatise, the chapter aptly titled "People in Arms" was covered in barely five pages. He traced the origin of insurgency to French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars. He ascribed nationalism the driving force for insurgency. And the centre of gravity for his insurgency and counter-insurgency operations was the population. He marked out the local peasantry as the best possible guerrilla fighters who could accomplish an operation and then melt back into their habitat, thus making the job of the forces targeting them immensely difficult.⁴

But what kind of nationalism could have driven the people who hijacked four American airliners and drove them into intended targets cause devastation of unimaginable proportions? They were themselves a multinational force. Products of different cultures, the only thread that bound them was their religious denomination and their belief that the "Great Satan" had to be brought to its knees. Clearly they were not nationalist warriors. Many in the West have begun to diagnose the primary motivation for this kind of action as 'humiliation.' But that is too broad a rubric which obfuscates the real reasons driving people to take their own lives, while wreaking havoc on their targets. Humiliation is caused by an affront on human dignity. That dignity is undermined by continuing exploitation, subjugation and threats to people's social and cultural identities.

Why would Clausewitzian pre-industrial peasantry or post-industrial underclasses take up arms as insurgents if they had profitable livelihoods that ensured their dignity? On the contrary as Clausewitz had himself noted a couple of centuries ago, these same people could become effective force multipliers in counterinsurgency

operations, thus alienating insurgents from their base, if they were satisfied with their lot.

Any counterinsurgency specialist would be able to vouch for the above precepts. But at the level of implementation, what do we see? We see in India cordon and searches that begin at night by herding the people to a common village or locality ground and exemplary techniques of random interrogation. As if that is not alienating enough, we also witness the people being uprooted from their traditional habitats and resettled in areas far away. The assault on human consciousness does not stop there. In multicultural, polyethnic societies like India, the ranks of the uniformed forces are filled with people from more populous communities. Considering that most of these forces are deployed in peripheral areas, they are invariably alien to the cultures and languages of the places they seek to dominate. And since they have a sense of power not just emanating from the guns they hold but also from the knowledge that they belong to the mainstream, this gets reflected in their approach to the people they have under their control.

During the first Gulf War, when the USA was about to deploy its forces in Saudi Arabia, Riyadh had reportedly made a strange demand: that no lady American soldier be deployed in their country. When Washington had said they would not be able to adhere to that stipulation, a compromise was reached on the ground that woman soldiers of the US armed forces would not venture out of the garrison. Now, one can only recall the last testament of Mohammad Atta where he had wished that no woman be present in his funeral. Was this wish his cultural revenge against women who he had believed 'desecrated' the 'holy land' by their mere presence in a manner not sanctioned by Islam? This instance illustrates how even for an educated man like Atta who studied architecture in modern France, a religio-cultural assault on his revitalised consciousness made him negate the existence of his mother and sisters at the final moment of his worldly presence. While the level of dehumanisation in the case of Atta was more in the realm of religious ideology, in the case of common Indian people, pitted against the state, it is usually far more real.

It begins with an attempt at denationalisation of the people in a country where the traditional nations and the state are not necessarily coterminous. This attempt

is usually made without a concomitant effort at providing a fair share in the resources of the country, while a reverse situation could have made the people to subscribe to the more modern notion of Indian nationhood. On the contrary, as the Assamese had so effectively highlighted, the state seeks to appropriate the local resources for the dominant sections of the society. In the recent years while the state has withdrawn more from delivering public goods and services to the people and failed to redistribute income more evenly, it has become more repressive for maintaining the supposed stability and integrity of the nation. While mere snapshots are available of the state's growing intolerance towards peoples' demands in places like Gurgaon, Telengana, Orissa, Chhattisgarh or Jharkhand, the real battlegrounds of repression are in the peripheral locations in the north east or far north.

Max Weber's state, enjoying monopoly on 'legitimate violence,' is increasingly taking illegitimate means. The political class is increasingly seeking to create legislative immunities for itself and its armed forces so that they can work outside the boundaries of judicial review. Not that the Indian judiciary is greatly militated by the thought of taking corrective measures in the wake of such attempts by other sections of the Indian state. Many believe that since the senior members of the bar and higher judiciary belong to the same social crucible that has given rise to the other sections of the state, they are not psychologically equipped to take an independent view of the security related issues. Take the case of the AFSPA. A piece of legislation that has been called draconian by a large section of thinking Indians went on the dock in courts of law more than a couple of times. On each occasion, the judiciary took a view that the famous international Constitutional expert, Richard Dworkin calls the "majoritarian view of democracy," and upheld its validity.

But no discussion on India's current internal security can be complete without touching upon the issue of terrorism. The Indian state, taking the lead from the post-9/11 (2001) global situation, in many ways has made terrorism a catch-all term for all forms of insurgency. This is evident in the way it has defined it in the proposed amendment to the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967. This definition of terrorism/terrorist is, "Whoever, with intent to threaten the unity, integrity, security or sovereignty of India or to strike

terror in the people or any section of the people in India or in any foreign country, does any act by using bombs, dynamite or other explosive substances or inflammable substances or firearms or other lethal weapons or poisons or noxious gases or other chemicals or by any other substances (whether biological or otherwise) of a hazardous nature, in such a manner as to cause, or likely to cause, death of, or injuries to any person or persons or loss of, or damage to, or destruction of, property or disruption of any supplies or services essential to the life of the community in India or in any foreign country or causes damage or destruction of any property or equipment used or intended to be used for the defence of India or in connection with any other purposes of the Government of India, any State Government or any of their agencies, or detains any person and threatens to kill or injure such person in order to compel the Government in India or the Government of a foreign country or any other person to do or abstain from doing any act, commits a terrorist act."

That crucial "whoever" does not recognize the distinction between a person trained by another country sent to create terror amongst Indians; and another Indian with indigenously developed capabilities who undertakes an insurgent act to merely make the state to heed his demands. The reason this distinction is blurred in law is probably because of the sense of the Indian state that a receptive atmosphere exists within the country for foreign-honed terrorism to find a home here and spread among the locals. Be that as it may, illustrative of this sense are the Bharatiya Janata Party leader and a former central Home Minister, Mr Lal Krishna Advani once making this distinction rather succinctly when desperate to gain political capital from a solution to the Kashmir problem during the time his party-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government was in power. Still, it did not signal an institutional mindset change.

Conclusion

Still, the inexorable progress of human history necessitates change. If the state is found wanting to adapt to this, they are usually found overtaken by the new realities left by change. And that is normally not a pleasant experience. Increasingly, the clamour for security to be moved out of the rarefied environs of secretive chambers to a more open practice is increasing. And the state's priorities about attaining that security,

guided by its own notions of upholding the 'national' integrity and institutional resilience is being challenged as the people find their concerns not being addressed within that rubric. So a desire is arising that security be defined not just by national interests but people's interests and concerns. A call for peoples' security is rising. But what does this new concept entail? Is it radically different from the more traditional notions of security?

This notion of security arises from the age old relationship of humankind with the land it lives on and off. A threat to that sense of limited territoriality creates acute sense of dispossession and disenfranchisement, which leads to violent reaction cycles, thus creating fresh menace to life itself. Peoples' security's first tenet should be the protection against any such threat to life and habitat of the people. Related to this aspect is the issue of nationhood. Modern nationhood of India on many occasions comes in conflict with the traditional nationalism of the peripheral people. Issues of identity and identification play a crucial role in this kind of conflict. Till now, on each of these occasions in the past, the Indian state had taken recourse to an impatient militarism that has only exacerbated the threats to peoples' security. Alternative pathways need to be found in a globalising world by which the commonality of interests of the nationalist people and the larger Indian national interest are fostered and accommodated. No armed force in the world likes to be at odds with its own people as it withdraws the *raison d'etre* of its own existence and creates weaknesses in the rear bases.

Significantly, most of the people who bear the brunt of militancy and insurgency belong to geographical peripheries of the country, largely situated on the international borders. Their crises in terms of their own identities are as real as their people who dwell across the artificial boundaries. In this scenario, scenarios of area dominance have little meaning if one looks for people as force multipliers in sensitive strategic zones. In that light peoples' security gets enhanced if there is a sense of cooperation between them and machines of the state. This cannot be achieved by seeking to forcibly assimilate them in a vision of a nationhood they do not

ideologically share yet as they see the values of that not accruing to them sufficiently. So, people's security can get enhanced only when their individual and collective identities are acknowledged and not denied.

Denial, most notably fails as a solution when a state tries to refute its own nature and instead, seeks to be all things to all people. For the people understand what they are faced with when the time for appropriation and distribution of resources arrives. They understand how the state caters first and foremost to its main constituents – the elite. That causes a kind of 'cognitive dissonance'⁵ that not only creates apathy towards existing democratic institutions but also a grows faithlessness towards contemporary politics as a vehicle for reaching solutions.

This is where the crux of all the problems lie. While peoples' security demands the state change its character, which the people seek to achieve through periodic elections, the state cannot fail its base for its own survival. The ensuing tussle is usually the single biggest threat to people's and national security.

NOTES

1. Translation by Dr Smith as quoted by Anthony Burton, *Urban Terrorism: Theory, Practice and Response*, published by Leo Cooper Ltd, 1975, London, p. 2

2. P Sainath wrote about Augusto Pinochet's CIA-backed coup in Chile on 11 September, 1973; Mahatma Gandhi's first *satyagraha* in South Africa that began on the same date in 1906; and the US blasts five years ago. *The Hindu*, 11 September, 2006, p. 11

3. See http://www.hrhc.net/sahrhc/resources/armed_forces.htm

4. See, <http://www.cda-cdai.ca/symposia/2005/Lammy.pdf>

5. Sociologist James A Geschwander in his studies on conflict resolution had talked of "cognitive dissonance" as a cause for conflicts. This is a state when the hiatus between the pronouncements and the realities differ in a massive way, leading people to interrogate validities of state.

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