

Counter Terrorism Strategy

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Abstract

The scourge of terrorism has haunted Indian policy-makers since independence. Some of the states, particularly the bordering states, having different cultural and ethnic composition from the heartland, suffered from a real or perceived sense of neglect and misgovernance. Inimical powers exploited this aspect and sowed seeds of sedition and secession amongst some sections of society of these states-particularly the states of the North-East, Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir-by providing them with arms training and financial support and instigated them to take up arms against the state machinery. India's experience in combating insurgency/terrorism in these states has mostly been of finding a military solution to a political problem. Central and state governments have responded with various actions, mostly military, within own borders but lacked a coherent counter terrorism policy. This paper is an attempt to look at the changing dynamics of terrorism, experience of some other countries and India, threat of terrorism to national security, the ISI's role and suggests some measures that might form part of a possible counter terrorism strategy for India.

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Changing Dynamics of Terrorism

Violence and terrorism have resulted from irrationality, miscalculation, xenophobia, fanaticism, and religious extremism. Historically mankind has remained in a state of conflict and resorted to violence to bring in changes in the society and in political systems.

The origins of terrorism are lost in antiquity. Terror and terrorism are as old as the human discovery that people can be influenced by intimidation. In the early periods we find the mention of the Sicarii, a Jewish religious sect that employed terrorist tactics between 66 and 70 AD against Jewish moderates in Palestine who they considered had succumbed to Hellenistic influences. Sicarii-a term derived from sica, the short sword-was used to attack their targets, in broad daylight.¹ Thus, we find the origin and use of violence by small groups for achieving political/religious-ethnic objectives.

The history of assassination is traced to middle of eleventh century to an Arab religious teacher Hassan Ibn Sabah, who founded a 'society of the Assassins', the original Arabic word being Hashshasin, which indicated the

addiction of the terrorists to hashish.² The members of this religious-political group of 'Fedawi' (Arabic for 'devoted ones') believed that killing bad people on the command of their leader was a sacred duty. Thus, the words 'assassin' and 'assassination' came in the western languages. Their first victim was the chief minister of the Sultan of Baghdad, Nazim al Mulq, a Sunnite by religious persuasion and therefore an enemy.³ During the years that followed, assassins were active in Persia, Syria, and Palestine, killing a great number of enemies, mainly Sunnis but also Christians, including Count Raymond II of Tripoli in Syria and Marquis Conrad of Montferrat, who ruled the kingdom of Jerusalem.⁴ Political terrorism was thus used as a tool of statecraft to install governments and change leadership.

Political terrorism was further used against the governments that did not meet the aspirations of society. It gave rise to revolutions and modern terrorism, which grew in Europe and migrated to the rest of the world. The term terrorism (the word terror is of Latin origin-from *terrere*, to frighten⁵) appeared during the period of French Revolution (1789-1795)⁶ when Robespierre unleashed a 'reign of terror' after overthrowing the monarchy and slaughtered French nobles, their families and sympathisers.⁷ The terror claimed about 40,000 victims, which ended with guillotining of Robespierre.⁸ In Russia, Narodnaya Volya (People's Will)⁹ a terrorist organization, to overthrow the Tsarist tyranny, considered terrorism a cost-effective form of struggle. After the failed Russian Revolution of 1905-1907, Tsarist police started a ruthless manhunt against all those even remotely suspected of sympathy with the revolutionaries and about 5,000 people were awarded the death sentence and 30,000 people sentenced to penal servitude or terms of imprisonment for such offences.¹⁰ The Tsar was later overthrown by peasants and workers.

In China, repression of the Qing (Manchu) dynasty against the peasants and workers gave rise to the Chinese Revolution and Kuomintang (KMT) or the Nationalist Party in 1911. On ideological grounds, Mao Tse Tung's Red Army fought KMT through guerrilla warfare leading to fleeing of Kuomintang to Taiwan and China attaining independence in 1949.¹¹

After the Second World War (1939-1945), the meaning of terrorism changed again as people revolted against European domination of the world; nationalistic groups were deemed to be terrorists groups. In India, groups that adopted violent methods against the British were branded as militant/terrorist groups.¹²

Events of the Middle Eastern politics after the assassination of King Abdullah of Jordan in 1951 gave rise to radical Muslim elements and terrorism became even more rampant. Anti-Israeli terrorism became a major and well-publicised feature of world politics in the 1960s.

From about 1964 to the early 1980s, the term terrorism was also applied to the violent left-wing groups, as well as nationalists. Use of violence to achieve political objectives came to be recognised as the weapon of the weak against the powerful. A minority syndrome spread so far that these groups were willing to espouse the cause of other groups in the world. This has led to international linkages and terrorism began to be viewed as sub-national warfare.

Use of terrorism as a tool of statecraft by the small and weak nations against powerful countries with the objective of bringing about a change in their perception/ policies, etc. to suit the convenience of the perpetrator countries started gaining momentum. Terrorists were sponsored by rogue regimes like, Libya-supported Irish Republican Army (IRA), Arab terrorist groups, Philipinos, Germans, etc, Iran- supported Hezbollah against Israel, Iraq-supported Hamas against Israel, and Pakistan supported terrorists groups against India.¹³

Most of the changes in the modus operandi and profile of the terrorists took place during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. However, striking differences between them were in the belief that the former expected as a matter of course, that they would be executed or at the very least get long prison sentences. They claim that killed or imprisoned terrorists are therefore martyrs. Twentieth century terrorists argue that they, and only they, know the truth and therefore ordinary law does not apply to them.

Contemporary terrorist organisations have assumed a transnational character. They operate beyond the national boundaries of their target

states. In the post-Cold War era, the transnational character of these terrorist groups has necessarily brought forth to them certain advantages, viz., global networking with potential allies, arms suppliers, and other terrorist groups, as also the generation of transnational support. The transnational support structures disseminate propaganda and lobby with governments, inter-governmental and non-governmental organisations. They network with dispersed segments of the diaspora and migrant communities, raise funds to hire expertise and train members, procure weapons and dual technologies, and manage or charter ships both to support personnel and supplies to the theatres of conflict.¹⁴

With the developments in scientific, technological and communication knowledge, terrorists and states sponsoring terrorism, are believed to be gaining access to non-conventional weapons of mass destruction like nuclear, biological and chemical weapons. Termed as weapons of mass destruction, these are the dream of any terrorist group.¹⁵

One of the most violent and horrendous dimensions of transnational terrorism using modern systems, non-conventional weapons and having transnational linkages was seen on September 11, 2001. This single act has brought a conceptual change in the terrorism warfare theory where 'Idea terrorism' has been used. Radical changes have taken place in the ways in which terrorist acts have been committed against the most powerful country of the world without using conventional terrorism weapons. They used equipment/machines/tools of terror of modern developed societies as weapons by converting passenger planes laden with aviation fuel into a bomb and converting it into a guided missile against WTC/Pentagon (symbols of American economic and military strengths). With a single coordinated action lasting less than an hour, they caused multi-level damages, and achieved several objectives - loss of life and property, loss of image of the target nation, economic recession and layoffs causing unemployment. One of the most perceptible things that happened was the change in the American way of thinking. It caused social unrest characterised by racial hatred and riots against people of particular origin/community, and the media gave it worldwide publicity for several

months. Such an event would have unprecedented ramifications and response patterns. Today, terrorists/insurgents and terrorism have assumed the stature of a full-blown 'Frankenstein Monster'.

Experience of Other Countries Facing Terrorism

The Dilemma in Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland has long been seen as the hotbed of terrorism. In order to exercise pressure on the British authorities, the Irish Republican Army has carried on its terror campaign in the heart of Britain, especially London.

British Response to Terrorism

The British view is that terrorism as a part of insurgency is a political problem that demands a political solution. After the British experience of the campaign in Malaya between 1948 and 1960, Sir Robert Thompson, drew five 'principles' for the government to counter terrorism: that the government must have a clear political aim; that the government and its security forces must function in accordance with the law; that the government, its agencies, and forces, must have an overall plan; that the government must give priority to defeating political subversion, not guerrilla action; and that the government must make sure it secures its own base areas first, before moving into the insurgency-affected locations.¹⁶ However, the British did not hesitate to use the military option in specific cases e.g., to end siege at the Iranian embassy in 1980.¹⁷

LTTE

The Tamil Tigers (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, or LTTE) are fighting for an independent homeland for the nearly three million Tamils in northern and eastern Sri Lanka.¹⁸ They have waged a guerrilla campaign based on the Chinese and Cuban pattern, using terrorism as a way to support uniformed guerrillas in the field. The movement is going on for over 20 years.

They carried out assassinations of important leaders like Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and President Ranasinghe Premadasa. The LTTE receives funds from expatriate Tamil communities in Canada, US, Australia, South Africa, and several European countries. Negotiations are now underway for

a peaceful solution to the two-decade long problem. The Tigers have already agreed to replace the demand of separate homeland with greater autonomy to Tamil dominated areas.

*The Israel Experience*¹⁹

Islamic fundamentalists have declared jihad against Israel, which is held culpable for the reprehensible policies against the Palestinians and the occupation of Jerusalem, a city holy to Muslims.

Arabs claim an ancient attachment to Palestine. Mohammed is said to have ascended to heaven from the present site of the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem for an audience with the earlier prophets and with Allah. His journey is said to have commenced from the site of the Al Aqsa mosque, which is considered to be the third holiest site in Islam.

Jews claim their links to Palestine as far back as 1800 BC when the Patriarch Abraham led a group of nomads (the Israelite) from Urs in Mesopotamia (now Iraq), to the land of Canaan (in present-day West Israel). They consider themselves to be 'the chosen people of God', to inhabit Palestine as their 'Promised Land' for all time.

Without going too much into history, it is worthwhile to mention that David's son, Solomon, built the first temple for Jews in Jerusalem in 950 BC and hence they also consider this place as sacred. The British, after gaining control of this area in 1918, promised the Jews the return of Palestine to them and signed the Partition Plan under the UN, which was not acceptable to Arabs.

With the situation spiralling out of control and the Arabs unwilling to accept the UN Partition Plan for Palestine, the British withdrew from Palestine in 1948. The events that followed are common knowledge and suffice it to say that creation of the state of Israel led to Palestinian acts of violence and of terror to regain their land. Israel responded to Palestinian terror with reprisals, raids, demolition of Palestinian homes, arrests, military incursions, air attacks, and assassinations and built up a strong network of intelligence agents to pre-empt and track down terrorists whoever they may be, wherever they might take refuge. Israel invaded Lebanon in full force in

1982 as a punitive action to destroy the PLO bases from where terrorist attacks were being launched against targets in Israel.

The Hezbollah, as the 'Champions of Islam, the oppressed, dispossessed, and downtrodden', confronted Israel and mounted a successful suicide bombing and terrorist campaign against American, British, French and Israeli troops that were based in Lebanon since 1983. Since then Hezbollah is in the forefront along with the Hamas to carry out strikes against Israeli targets. The primary target for Hamas terrorists is the Israeli population.

*The Israeli Response to Terrorism*²⁰

Israel's Arab policy is based on self-survival and defence. Its response to terrorism has been founded on the principles of deterrence, pre-emption, prevention, and reprisals. Israel employs three major agencies in its fight against terrorists. First, the Israel Defence Forces (IDF), the military arm of the state; second, the Israeli National Police, particularly the Border Police; and third, the Israeli Intelligence Community. The Israeli intelligence community includes three organisations that respond tactically to terrorism. They are the Military Intelligence arm of the IDF; the General Security Services, usually known as Shin Bet after its Hebrew initials, and the Central Institute for Intelligence and Security, known as Mossad.

While Israeli counter terrorism efforts have certainly hampered terrorism, they have not put an end to it. Meanwhile, Palestinian determination has not weakened, and many of the problems of territory and nationality have worsened. The years of violence, counter violence, and repression have only served to harden attitudes on both sides.

*The Spanish Experience*²¹

ETA (Euzkadi ta Askatasuna)-Basque Homeland and Freedom was founded in 1959 by a coalition of radical youth groups with the primary aim of Basque independence and recuperation of Basque culture and language. ETA adopted the strategy of armed struggle, but in the 1960s and early 1970s ETA was engaged only in sporadic acts of violence against the authoritarian and ultra Spanish Nationalist, Franco. The most dramatic consequence of these was the assassination in 1973 of Prime Minister

Carrero Blanco, heir apparent of Franco, an event that helped to bring about the demise of the authoritarian regime.

During more than forty years of its existence, ETA has been responsible for more than 500 assassinations, 1,000 injuries, 60 kidnappings, and innumerable bombings, armed assaults, and robberies. It is responsible for more than 70 per cent of all the people killed in terrorist attacks in Spain during the last forty years.

ETA lost public support after it started violent activities in an indiscriminate manner, more frequently directed against collective targets (innocent civilians).

*The Algerian Experience*²²

The liberation movement in Algeria failed to frame a convincing popular campaign and to communicate it to a wide, eager constituency. Successive administrations, largely French but with Algerian membership, failed to address political, social and economic issues and establish any legitimate authority acceptable to those who felt disenfranchised. They fell short of building any tolerance between secular governance and the Islamic observance of the majority of the population. Failure to deal with manifestations of protest and to use the possibilities of discussion and compromise led to irrepressible frustration and growing violence.

From 1992, Islamic terrorists, GIA (Armed Islamic Group) changed its terrorist methods; the violent acts were not only directed against the security forces or government officials and civil society figures, but against people. Islamic terrorists targeted state employees and supporters, and even foreigners.

Algeria in the mid-1990s was in a desperate condition. Between 1992 and 1997 some 120,000 people were killed in terrorist insurgency characterized by staggering cruelty on both sides. The insurgency was carried on like a guerrilla war in the mountains and the countryside, characterised by ambushes on security apparatus, assassinations of thousands of 'liberals' who were considered supporters of the state: school teachers, doctors, lawyers, journalists, academics, civil servants, etc. Across northern Algeria,

guerrillas raped and murdered women, some of whom merely refused to wear the veil.

Algerian response to terrorism

'Special courts' were created to try cases related to terrorism. A terrorist act was defined as 'any violation of State security, the territorial integrity of the country or the stability and normal functioning of institutions by any act having the object of sowing terror among the population and creating a climate of insecurity by attacking persons or property. Terrorist and subversive crimes are now legally defined and are to be dealt with by the ordinary courts. Self-defence groups were established in villages and communes which operated under army/police. The Government gave serious consideration to programmes of social reform.

The Indian Scenario

Since independence, India has faced a number of terrorist/insurgency-related situations, which have revolved around perceived concepts of secession with the aim of creating separate independent sovereign states. Although we have been able to control such fissiparous tendencies, a dangerous dimension has been added for the last two decades by the involvement of Pakistan in aiding/abetting secessionism in the North-East, Punjab and J & K. Having failed in its attempts of annexing Kashmir by force and realising the futility of carrying out an armed adventure in the existing security scenario, Pakistan resorted to what can be termed as proxy war and cross-border terrorism.

Punjab

The militancy in Punjab remained active for over a decade broadly, from 1980-1990. The conflict was caused due to a number of reasons ranging from the future of Chandigarh, territorial adjustments with neighbouring states, river water allocations, protection as well as promotion of Sikhism,²³ reducing landholdings over the past few decades which resulted in the progeny of marginal farmers being converted into owners of economically unviable land holdings, and unemployment reaching a new peak in the early 1980s, which gave rise to disgruntled youth who took to militancy.

During the period when militancy was at its peak, about 15,000 people died in the militant attacks. Pakistan exploited the dissatisfaction borne out in the state and gave covert and overt assistance for their struggle. External support also came from influential/ prosperous members of the community who resided abroad. The Nirankari clash of 1978 provided the spark, which resulted in overnight escalation in the level and mode of conflict.

Terrorism in Punjab was controlled through a politico-military and social process that inter alia included various factors like the following:-

- Clear political resolve and strong police leadership
- Fencing and floodlighting along the Indo-Pakistan border in Punjab
- Effective utilization of police and central para-military forces
- Rejection of public support by the Sikh community to the militants
- Effective intelligence network, which could penetrate the militant organisations
- Lack of international support to the militants
- Signing of the Rajiv-Longowal peace accord

Jammu and Kashmir

There are historical reasons for which since 1947 some Kashmiri Muslims have been oscillating in their demands for an independent state or merger with Pakistan. Unemployment amongst educated youth, rampant corruption, and alleged large-scale rigging of the 1987 election to the State Assembly resulted in deterioration of the law and order situation. A large number of unemployed youth crossed over to Pakistan, which was already on a lookout to exploit any opportunity to its advantage, and Pakistan has since then been actively providing diplomatic, political, moral, financial and arms assistance and training to the militants. Besides many heinous crimes that terrorists commit almost daily, the attacks on the Parliament and the State Assembly in Jammu and Kashmir in 2001, many massacres of innocent people including infants and women of minority communities and attacks on temples in J&K and outside are some of the horrific acts perpetrated by terrorists aided and abetted by Pakistan, that defy any logic.

The gravity of the situation spiralled out of control to the extent of mobilization of forces of India and Pakistan on the international border and the two (nuclear) nations were at the brink of war. The present situation is seen by Pakistan as her last opportunity to wrest the valley from India. India has been involved for many years in a costly, protracted battle against terrorism in the valley. Islamic terrorism in Kashmir has the active support of Pakistan and was further aided by Taliban. The Government of India has been seeking a political solution to the problem and took a number of steps towards such a solution, like Prime Minister's visit to Lahore, inviting General Musharraf to Agra, unilateral ceasefire against militants, release and rehabilitation of surrendered militants, internationally acknowledged free and fair elections, and appointing N.N. Vohra to hold discussions with the elected representatives of the state government.

North-East

North-East India is in a strategically vulnerable geographical situation and is surrounded by countries like China, Myanmar, Bhutan and Bangladesh from three sides. It is linked with the rest of the country by a narrow corridor (20 km wide Siliguri neck). North-East India is anthropologically a paradise, which is inhabited by races of Mongoloid stock, besides Indo-Aryan groups. Barring the Khasis and Jaintias who belong to the Austric linguistic group (now branded as Monkhmer cultural groups of Myanmar), almost all hill tribes belong to the Tibetan-Chinese linguistic family and Tibeto-Burman sub-family. The non-Aryan population, being prominent in this region, shelter more than 125 major groups each having distinct cultural traits.

In the case of the North-East, terrorism arises from a strong feeling of alienation from the mainstream of northern India plus a conviction, that the central government should be more active in north-eastern affairs. Nagas argue that Clause 9 of the Hydari Agreement promised them the option of freedom.²⁴

Essentially, their economic backwardness stems from the unexploited natural resources, inadequate infrastructure development, rampant corruption and the strong nexus among politicians, contractors and insurgents in the region. Economic hardship due to poor and

underdeveloped agriculture, alarming mass unemployment problem, rampant corruption, lack of educational and medical facilities, exorbitant prices and shortage of essential commodities in the far flung areas of the North-East forced the promising youth to turn to extremist activities. The unemployment situation lent an edge to the separatist tendency by creating numerous insurgent outfits in all the states of the North-East.

In the case of Assam and Tripura, unabated infiltration of Bangladesh nationals into these two states with the ulterior motive of upsetting the demographic balance first, and then swallowing up big chunks of territory has the blessings of Dhaka. The problem of migration from East Bengal (later, East Pakistan and then Bangladesh), to Assam dates back to about 100 years to Nawab Salim Ullah Khan of Bengal. According to the Group of Ministers Report of February 2001, "Illegal migration from across the borders has continued for over five decades. Today, we have 15 million Bangladeshis, which has implications to national security."

The problem of secessionism over the last fifty years in India has occurred in three regions - Punjab, Kashmir and the North-East, where people are on the social and physical fringes of India. Language, religion and the feeling of alienation set these people apart from the people of the heartland of the country. All the three are concentrated at the outer limits of India adjoining a neighbouring country that has the desire and the ability to create problems in India's internal security.

Role of Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence (ISI)

Ever since independence, ISI of Pakistan has been active in creating trouble in various parts of India like the North-East, Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab. It has caused some of the major terrorist strikes in India like Mumbai blasts, attack on Indian Parliament, massacres in Jammu and Kashmir, attack on temples in J&K, Gujarat, and so on. ISI has posed an internal security threat to India since the 1950s.²⁵ Before the creation of Bangladesh, the ISI used East Pakistan for creating trouble in India's North-East. It is now using Bangladesh to carry on with its activities by providing support to all militant groups acting against India including those operating in Assam, Manipur, and Tripura. The ISI, initially, infiltrated its agents

through its porous border with India but with growing vigil and fencing, it shifted its infiltration strategy and established bases in Nepal and Bangladesh to enter India. It tried its experiment on India's territorial integrity in Punjab with an aim to create Khalistan as a buffer between India and Pakistan, tried to make Indian Army's operations in Jammu and Kashmir difficult and drive a wedge in Hindu-Sikh unity. Towards that objective it provided safe sanctuaries, training and material support to Sikh militants and still continues to do so.

The ISI is using Muslim fundamentalist elements in Nepal to achieve its India-centric objective. It has exploited the historical, cultural and ethnic linkages of Muslims living on both sides of the Indo-Nepal border. Nepal is also a launching pad for infiltrating militants into India. The Pakistan embassy in Kathmandu is used for providing financial assistance and preparation of documents for the agents directed against India. The ISI's anti-India activities in Nepal comprise: (a) smuggling, (b) proliferation of small arms, (c) support to Muslim fundamentalist organisations, (d) infiltration of agents into India, (e) using commercial enterprises as non-official cover for intelligence operations, and (f) circulation of fake Indian currency in Nepal.²⁶

The ISI has also developed close linkages with LTTE to establish bases in South India particularly in states like Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnataka. It is also believed that ISI has developed links with some of the naxalite groups like People's War Group (PWG), Maoist Communists (MCC), etc. The ISI had also developed links with the religious Muslim groups in India like SIMI, (which now stands banned), and is promoting anti-India teachings through some of the madrassas.

Terrorists obtain legitimate travel and identification documents from Pakistan, making it difficult to identify and track them. They have a ready source of weapons and legitimate means to transport them. By international convention, diplomatic bags are exempt from search, and the baggage handlers at state-owned airlines don't interfere when told not to examine a particular parcel. The involvement of the Pakistan Embassies in India, Bangladesh and Nepal in funding terrorists is well-known. Pakistan also

provides facilities of training and camps to the terrorists on its territory. It also provides them safe houses, which allows them to plan future action without fear of arrest and punishment.

Finally, Pakistan's financial support to terrorists allows them to concentrate more on operations because they don't need to indulge in other nefarious activities to raise money. The ISI has been trying to establish a network of the various militant/ terrorist/ naxalite groups in India to carry out its activities directed against Indian interests within India as well as abroad in the foreseeable future. Thus, the ISI's game plan is to encircle India by establishing its bases within the country and outside through Nepal, Bangladesh, Myanmar, and Sri Lanka to transform various secessionist movements into a pan-Islamic movement against India.²⁷

Objectives of Terrorists in India

Terrorism threatens the national security of the nation. Territorial integrity, political independence, fundamental political institutions and cultural values are the targets of terrorists in India. Pakistan-sponsored terrorism targets India's democracy and secular character, the major aspects of which are summarised below:

Nation's Integrity

Gen. Pervez Musharraf had on one occasion in April 1999 said that, "India is a hegemonic power and low intensity conflict (read terrorism) against it would continue even if the Kashmir problem is solved to our satisfaction."

The goal of Pakistan-promoted terrorism is to affect India's national integrity. Pakistan's efforts to disintegrate India were also echoed by the All-Party Hurriyat Conference's (APHC) former chairman, Gilani who had also said in an interview to the Sunday Observer that if Indian soldiers could play a role in the birth of Bangladesh, what is wrong in Pakistani soldiers playing a role in the independence of Kashmir?

The secessionist movements in Kashmir and the North-East aimed at independence from the Indian union. Punjab militancy also aimed at disintegration from India and establishment of independent Khalistan. So, it is not only J&K that Pakistan is aiming at, but the larger design of Pakistan is to ultimately work for the disintegration of India through promotion of

terrorism. Towards this objective the ISI is fully supporting various secessionist groups within India and outside.

Political Independence

Terrorists operating against India are under the belief that by means of violence they can achieve their goals, and that no instrument of conduct of international relations like international organisations, international law, diplomacy or even war works as effectively as terrorism. India is targeted for alleged violation of human rights in Kashmir and the North-East by the national and international human rights watch groups. Continuous fight against terrorism in Kashmir and North-East is expected to weaken the nerves of the Indian government.

In the present context of terrorist attacks on the US, the latter has sought Pakistan's cooperation in its war against global terrorism. Pakistan had really no choice given its present economic situation and close relationship with the ruling Taliban in Afghanistan. But US Pakistan cooperation since September 11 has already reduced Pakistan to the status of a client state in a patron-client relationship.

The Government of India had given unsolicited support in the war against global terrorism. Now, the war against international terrorism, says the US, first will be fought against Osama bin Laden and Afghanistan and later it will be extended elsewhere. Where is the guarantee that the US will not play politics with Indian concerns in Kashmir once again?

Government Institutions

Government institutions in the terrorism-affected areas like the judiciary, civil administration, press/media, etc. have either ceased functioning, or are forced to tow the pro-militant line. They were the instant casualties of terrorism.

Democracy as a value system is under threat in India as a result of continued cross-border terrorism. The constant use of armed forces to maintain peace in Jammu and Kashmir and elsewhere not only raises the question of human rights violations both nationally and internationally but also creates a credibility gap between democracy as a value and its practice.

Human rights are violated in the process of fighting terrorism. There is always a dilemma-should a government violate human rights to preserve the nation's integrity or sacrifice integrity to protect human rights?

Finally, Pakistan-promoted terrorism questions the multi-ethnic and multi-religious Indian state's right to exist. Pluralism itself is under attack, since terrorism, in its latest phase, after Musharraf took power, has been presented as jihad to liberate Kashmir.

Internal Security

National security embraces not only external security contours, but also internal security, which is equally important. Deployment of forces in Jammu and Kashmir, and North-East to combat militancy and insurgency is at the cost of army's preparation for war. It is also a drain on the economy forcing the state to divert scarce resources to a non-productive fight to eliminate it.

Terrorism is a low-cost, high-yield, option for the militants and Pakistan. It is a conflict of low intensity only from the viewpoint of the perpetrators of conflict. But it brings about maximum destruction and death in India. This is brought out clearly by its prolonged continuation in India and the government diverting and spending crores of rupees from the development projects to fight it.

This aspect is also brought out by the fact that if only 19 committed terrorists could bring about destruction and death of the magnitude of the 9/11 attacks in US, nations need not maintain a standing army at all. Also, it is difficult to identify and separate terrorists from civilians and fight them. One attack on the US interests provoked Louisiana Representative John Cooksey to say: "Anyone wearing a diaper on his head should expect to be interrogated during the probe. It is understandable but not condonable." If the Americans could be led to this position with one single attack, one could easily imagine the effect on ordinary citizens in India of their living with decades of Islamic terrorism.

Suggested Counter Strategies

The threat from terrorism to India's national security is real and alive. Contemporary terrorism carries out acts of violence mostly as state-

sponsored large-scale operations surpassing all national boundaries. From isolated individual acts, the groups are resorting to mass murders. Other contributions to the changing nature of terrorism are attributable to radical changes occurring in the attitudes of different groups in society towards each other, particularly with regard to attitudes and authority. When participation is denied, authority may be challenged with terrorism as a viable option.

Ethnic disharmony, rebel movements and insurgencies threaten approximately one-third of all the present member-countries of the United Nations. It is necessary to correctly perceive the intricacies of the changes taking place in the international order and their repercussions on the political, socio-economic, cultural and ideological components of society so that meaningful strategies can be formulated for the future progress, development, well-being and survival of mankind. As long as terrorism was considered a type of criminal behaviour, counter-terrorism was considered a task of the police. This viewpoint was entirely appropriate for incidents of domestic terrorism. Unfortunately, terrorism that India is facing is international terrorism and it has assumed more and more the characteristics of unconventional conflict. Obviously, dealing with international terrorism, especially the state-sponsored type calls for radically different responses from those that the police uses in handling criminal offenders

In the US war against terrorism, President George W. Bush signed an Executive Order on Terrorist Financing on September 24, 2001 and the US Congress passed the USA-Patriot Act 2001 which deals with terrorist funding among other issues.²⁹ Further, on September 28, 2001, the Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 1373 under Chapter VII of the UN Charter.³⁰ Its provisions require, among other things, that all member states prevent the financing of terrorism and deny safe havens to terrorists. States also need to review and strengthen their border security operations, banking practices, customs and immigration procedures, law enforcement and intelligence cooperation as well as arms transfer control regulations.

Shri Muchkund Dubey, former Foreign Secretary, identifies some of the causes of terrorism in South Asia as: persistence of extreme poverty and accompanying deprivations such as unemployment, low levels of literacy and limited access to health services; non-functioning or malfunctioning of democracy; years of misgovernance which has made violence the only means of bringing about a change; brutal suppression of human rights over an extended period of time; and the alienation of whole cultural or ethnic groups.³¹ Having identified the causes he lists out some recommendations for South Asian countries to tackle terrorism: home-grown terrorist elements be brought to the mainstream, maintain pluralistic societies, maintain good bilateral relations to enable the countries to better absorb each other's shocks, refrain from exaggerating terrorist threats from other nations in the region to pursue obscurantist and chauvinistic domestic political agenda, countries to absorb each others economic shocks and invest in each other's prosperity, and so on.³²

Walter Laqueur argues that the only effective weapon against terrorism in the modern era has been the infiltration of their ranks and the use of informers. Counter terrorism's success in democratic societies is mainly due to advanced computer technology and the cooperation of a population that provides important leads.³³

Transnational terrorism has to be countered by effective international means and mainly by international cooperation which may include declaring terrorism as an international crime, extradition of the offenders to another state, denying to the offences of terrorism the status of political offences, better measures of assistance including sharing of evidence at their disposal, following international convention to abstain from any negotiations with terrorists, refusal to succumb to extortionist demands, and effective sanctions against those actively supporting terrorists giving them asylum and other types of assistance³⁴ and stressing for their strict implementation.

Jennifer Jane argues that domestic counter terrorism measures focus on five main aspects: the use of exceptional legislation, maintenance of a vast intelligence network, development of pre-emptive controls on political activity, military involvement in civil disturbances, and the development of a

media management strategy in times of crisis.³⁵ While national awareness of fight against terrorism is underway, a comprehensive counter terrorist strategy would integrate political, diplomatic, military, social, economic and technological might against threats from land, air and the sea. Some of the aspects that might form part of the counter terrorism strategy in the Indian environment are discussed below:-

Evolving a National Policy

India is facing the scourge of terrorism/insurgency since independence. It started with the North-East, followed by Punjab and now J&K. An analysis of these movements brings out some of the common aspects among them. The secessionist movements occurred in bordering states/regions, have external sponsors/supporters and occurred in the population mix which are culturally and ethnically different from the heartland. The demographic profile in these regions is minority-dominated compared to the rest of the country. As the problem remained confined more or less within the state boundaries, it was allowed to be dealt with by the states which treated insurgency and terrorism-related issues as law and order problems. Each state initially responded with the resources available at its disposal and allowed the situation to grow worse quite fast. The problem has been met with a mix of hard and soft responses from the government and a pro-active national policy to give a clear direction to the counter-terrorism mechanism is yet to be implemented.

National Consensus to Deal with Terrorism

An analysis of insurgencies in India brings out violence, mass support, external assistance and wide publicity, as the common factors for their growth and lack of education, development, employment and religious tolerance produce insurgents. External assistance to terrorism/insurgents has been possible due to the national internal conflicts and weak response. 'Secularism' the very foundation of the nation is being questioned. The threat to the nation has very deep-rooted implications, which can be successfully fought if all the issues are addressed jointly and there is consensus to convey a strong message to secessionists. In a democratic set up, consensus on vital issues is a must. India, being a secular,

democratic country, cannot fight insurgency effectively without popular support. Within the constitutional and sovereignty framework, all the political parties should rise above the vote bank politics and treat terrorism/insurgency as a threat to national security. It is ironical that some states have opted against POTA for political reasons rather than security considerations, thus belittling the spirit of the Act and the resolve of the nation to fight terrorism.

Dealing With State-Sponsored Terrorism

States sponsor terrorism with the aim of weakening the adversary militarily, economically, socially and politically. Such states do it with full knowledge of the consequences and should not be allowed to escape under the advantage of denial. The US action against Afghanistan and Al Qaida is an indication of the extent to which a victim state can go against perpetrators of terrorism. Some countries including Russia believe in taking active measures-run the gamut of covert and overt techniques, diplomacy, public information, propaganda, economic and military assistance and the use of special forces and taking pre-emptive measures.³⁶ Ajai Sahni recommends that India's target of a counter-terrorism strategy should be our adversary's enduring strengths and weaknesses.³⁷

The Indian response has been two-fold-political and military. It is clear that India has preferred non-military solutions and tried to reach a political solution to accommodate the affected groups, wherever possible like giving greater autonomy, etc.³⁸ The military option has been used to inculcate a sense of security amongst the affected people, isolate the problem, wear the rebels down and bring them to the negotiating table so that a political settlement could be reached. While this approach has been reasonably successful in the past, it is not likely to succeed in a situation where it is not Indian citizens but foreign nationals who are coming and waging war against the state. These foreign mercenaries have the full support of Pakistan whose intelligence agencies provide them with state-of-the-art weaponry, communication technology, explosives, training and other resources. These groups also receive financial assistance from their sympathizers in other countries.

The landscape of terrorism has changed now. It is a low-cost, low-risk and high return proxy war by Pakistan which has been cloaked with an element of denial. India, therefore, needs to adopt a policy that includes eliminating the cause of militancy, resort to international diplomacy, and make it too expensive for Pakistan to exercise this option against India.³⁹ India should also vigorously apprise the Pakistani population about the miseries brought on Indian civil population by military and political establishments through their support to the 'jihadis' operating in J&K, to build public pressure on them.

Strengthening the Internal Mechanism

Reorganising the Police Forces: The first instrument of the state, which comes into contact with the terrorists, is the local police. Initially, it is ill equipped and poorly trained to face well-armed terrorists.⁴⁰ Traditionally, police have been trained to control riots, investigate and deal with other law and order situations, which do not need massive use of force against its own people. But the equations have changed over a period of time since the arrival of hardcore, foreign trained militants having access to sophisticated weaponry and equipment, which the police do not have. Even para-military forces initially found it difficult as they were neither trained nor equipped for this job. There is general reluctance to arm the police to the teeth as the latter once accustomed to the use of firepower may find it difficult to revert to its original doctrine (use of minimum force), once the problem of terrorism is over or it might result in increase of human rights violations.

Today, the terrorists believe in the use of extensive violence to achieve their political objective. We need to re-conceptualize violence and terrorism, to train the soldiers/ policemen to use their minds and fight in a new way. Some of the aspects that might form part of counter-terrorist campaigns are:-⁴¹

Modernisation of the Police Forces and Effective Border Management: Terrorists have kept pace with technology, whereas security forces (particularly police) have not. Police still works, at places, with old lathi or vintage model .303 rifles. Fighting an automatic-weapon-equipped terrorist

with a vintage model weapon-equipped police results in police suffering higher casualties and hence demoralisation. Resistance to arm police with modern weaponry is under the pretext that it would lead to more human rights violations, whereas, the reverse may be true. Such objections and perception are due to lack of ground realities. Modernisation of the security forces needs no justification. On the question of effective border management, recommendations of the Group of Ministers' report of February 2001 are in the process of implementation. That may be expedited.

While, sheer use of force in dealing with a terrorist situation is inescapable, police needs to improve its public image and be friendlier with the public to fight terrorism and dry the public support available to terrorists.

Restructuring the entire syllabus of training to include disaster management, rescue and relief operations, first aid, and civic action/psychological operations. Review and possibly change the entire force structure of police force-size, composition and number of units in it-to suit counter terrorist operations. The para-military forces raised for specific purposes and definite role should revert back to their original role (as recommended by the Group of Ministers' Report).

Preferably, the government may consider converting some part of the existing police force into a 'Counter Terrorist Organisation' at the state level with a separate training module. Such special units should be lean and mean, highly motivated, confident, resourceful, emotionally committed with multiple skills, fluent in more than one language, and stationed in sensitive areas for taking necessary action immediately. Some of the states are already in the process of raising the counter terrorist units. Most of such states don't have the experience and expertise of fighting terrorist violence of the magnitude as seen in J&K, the North-East, and Punjab.

There is a requirement of a common doctrine, syllabus, and training infrastructure for all the state police forces as a part of the process to strengthen the inner response mechanism but different from normal law and order handling.

Intelligence: Intelligence plays the most crucial role in counter terrorist operations. Terrorists operating against India are transnational terrorists. They plan operations abroad and transmit instructions to the executors through international communication channels in India.

As the police are more adept in dealing with the public, its ground level intelligence regarding the terrorists-place of stay, supporters, harbourers, etc.-is extremely good and invaluable in counter terrorism operations. However, actionable intelligence remains a dream for most of the commanders operating on the ground. Existing modes of intelligence apparatus are so tedious and time-consuming that by the time information reaches the forces on the ground to take necessary action, it is too little, too late, and is normally distorted and suffers due to the tendency of oneupmanship. There is need to restructure the intelligence apparatus.

Development with Good Governance

This should be the key area for any counter strategy to be effective and productive. India achieved independence when the North-East and J&K were relatively underdeveloped, with a different ethnic mix, bordering inimical states and linguistically separated. Though these regions were constitutionally integrated into the Indian Union, the neglect by the mainstream is perceived even today, after more than 50 years of independence. The perception of neglect and underdevelopment brought frustration and a feeling of alienation among the local population, which was exploited by hostile states and this gave rise to insurgencies. During interactions with the civil population in the terrorism-affected areas, it is invariably reported by them that the civil administration seldom pays them any visit to listen to their grievances and sort out their problems. Such complaints are more in remote areas where the youth join militancy as a source of livelihood or to avenge the atrocities allegedly committed against their kin by the security forces.⁴² To bring normalcy, it may be made mandatory on the part of the civil administration, particularly at the district level, to pay a fixed number of visits every month in the field to feel the pulse of the population and redress the grievances.

*Terrorist Funding*⁴³

Terrorists need funds for multiple purposes. It acts as a lifeline for any militancy movement. Militancy has become an industry where money is paid to each and everyone who helps militants in any way. Funds reach militants through banking and non-banking channels. Though a bulk of the funding is carried out from abroad where funds are generated, collected and sent to India through non-banking channels like hawala, money laundering, etc., banking channels are also known to have been used to transfer funds to militants. Money received officially as 'aid' may also be channelled for funding some of the militant organisations, if proper checks are not carried out. In India, the Prevention of Money Laundering Bill, which addresses terrorist funding and arms trade among other crimes, is stuck in the Parliament for want of a consensus on some of its controversial provisions. Section 22 of POTA deals with fund raising for a terrorist organisation as a criminal offence and a person guilty of an offence under this Section shall be liable, on conviction, to imprisonment for a term not exceeding fourteen years, or fine or both. There is a need for enhancing the powers of enforcement agencies to take cognisance of suspected transactions, and the banking industry has to work in coordination with the enforcement agencies.

Central Agency to Monitor Investigation of Militancy Cases

It has been observed that normally militancy-related cases continue to remain uninvestigated. There being no time limit for investigation, such cases die a slow death and justice is denied to the aggrieved party even in genuine cases. It is proposed that there should be a central monitoring agency to monitor the progress of militancy-related cases so that speedy trials are carried out.

Constitution of Special Courts

Often there is a general reluctance on the part of the judiciary to deal with militancy-related cases for fear of reprisal by the militants. As a result the cases are prolonged to such a length of time that it defeats the basic principles of justice. Even otherwise, courts are so overloaded with routine law and order and other cases that they are left with very little time to deal with militancy cases. Algeria constituted 'special courts' to try cases related

to terrorism.⁴⁴ It is proposed that in India too special courts be set up on a priority basis to expedite militancy-related cases.

Utilisation of Development Funds

Development of the affected areas is the cornerstone of any counter terrorist strategy. Lack of development activity in the North-East and Jammu and Kashmir has been identified as one of the main reasons for militancy in these areas. It has been observed and experienced that the funds released for development purposes are not utilised properly and there is wide spread corruption, with some funds getting channelised towards terrorist groups with the connivance of civil officials. The government should find an alternative way of utilising these developmental funds for tangible effects. One of the ways could be their utilisation through NGOs or through the security forces operating in remote areas.

Media Management

In India, one of the most controversial aspects of analysing terrorism is the way print and electronic media cover terrorist acts. Police and other government agencies operate with a set of objectives diametrically opposed to the goals of print and visual media. The issue of terrorism heightens the animosity between the police and the media and is a reflection of a deeper conflict between those in government and those in the media.

Members of the media have two competing and often contradictory roles. They control the flow of information while simultaneously making the news entertaining enough to 'sell'. The police or security forces are charged with bringing the situation to a successful conclusion. Their job is primarily to preserve order and protect lives. The Press has the job of transmitting information while making the story interesting to the consumer. One of the counter-terrorist strategies to be adopted by the government is to be transparent⁴⁵ in dealing with militants as it increases the credibility of the government actions as well as reduces the chances of allegations of human rights violations by vested interests. Operations can be videotaped which may be shown to the media for transparency and instant communication. Facilities may be extended to national and international media, to visit the affected area immediately. Moreover, there should be extensive

propaganda in national and international newspapers and journals against terrorists and states sponsoring terrorism, by eminent people from the police and the Army who have dealt with terrorism, and by academics.

Dealing with Surrendered Militants

Surrender of militants is encouraged to give them an opportunity to join the mainstream. Normally, such militants are offered jobs or incentives to lure them to surrender. It has also been seen in some cases that militancy becomes a means to get a job on surrender. In some cases militants have either rejoined militancy or become informers. Even after surrender by a few individuals there is not much decline in the militancy, more so when the source of supply is an outside country. It is recommended that before such persons are given jobs, the law must take its own course and only such cases, which have the court's count, should be given jobs.⁴⁶

Negotiations with Terrorists

Channels of communications should always remain open to find a political solution to a problem within the framework of the Indian Constitution and without compromising the national integrity. However, the government must exercise the military option as a last resort.

Counter Terrorism Institute

Finally, even though India is facing the threat of terrorism/insurgency since independence, all the agencies involved in fighting terrorism are operating in their own watertight compartments or on a need basis. As a very important step towards formulation of strategies and also to act as a source of expertise, it is imperative that India establish a Counter Terrorism (CT) Institute where research work is carried out on projects ranging from improving the ability to respond to conventional terrorist incidents, upgrading the ability to detect and respond to the threat of chemical/ biological/ nuclear terrorism, enhancing our capability to effect safer explosives ordinance disposal, developing new equipment to upgrade intrusion detection and counter-measure capabilities, etc. This would require separate budget allocation and involvement of various agencies to enhance counter terrorism capabilities.

Conclusion

Over the years, it is well established that though inimical powers have tried to fish in India's troubled waters, the country's own track record has been one of finding a military solution to a political problem. India's experience in fighting insurgency/terrorism in the North-East, Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir has seen commonalities in the causes of the problem, which range from misgovernance to economic deprivation. The solution in fact lies in the problem itself; remove the cause and the problem ceases to exist. For that to happen, a political and not a military solution is required. But the problem has now grown beyond internal conflict. Involvement of foreign terrorists, who plan, collect funds, train more and more terrorists and organise terrorism/insurgency from outside the country, gives it a transnational character. There is a requirement to address the problem through international cooperation. Also, it is necessary to reach a consensual definition of terrorism.

Events of September 11 have focussed world attention towards countering terrorism in all its manifestations with renewed urgency and determination. India should make use of the changed circumstances and environment to address its own problem of terrorism and evolve a coherent and comprehensive counter terrorism policy. Finally, as KPS Gill has opined, the primary and most effective strategy to avoid war is to prepare for it.⁴⁷

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