TERRORISM AND INSURGENCIES
Future Trends and
Strategies to Counter

Lt Gen (Dr.) VK Ahluwalia

Centre for Land Warfare Studies
New Delhi

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Even in the midst of world grappling with Coronavirus pandemic (Covid-19) outbreak, the insurgents and terrorists continue to attack with a destructive mindset: 17 security personnel were killed by the Maoists in Sukma district on 22 March 2020, and the Islamic State group killed 25 persons from Afghanistan's Sikh minority in the gurudwara (place of worship) on 25 March 2020, and leaving many injured. These were outrageous acts, to say the least.

Introduction

The 14 February 2019 horrendous suicide attack (Fidayeen) on a convoy of vehicles carrying security force (SF) personnel by a vehicle-borne bomber in South Kashmir, marked a distinct change in the pattern of attacks by the terrorists in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K). It claimed lives of 40 SF personnel. Pakistan-based banned Islamist group Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) had, immediately claimed responsibility for the attack.[1] Two months later, on April 21, a series of coordinated explosions, targeted both at the Easter mass in three churches at different locations, and three luxury hotels in and around Colombo in Sri Lanka, killed 259 people.[2] Although, ISIS claimed responsibility for the attacks, the suicide bombers and their local facilitators in the Easter attacks appeared to have been associated with the National *Towheed Jamaat*, a local Islamic extremist group.[3] The year 2019 was the first year since 2012 that, due to an exceptional increase in deaths in Afghanistan, South Asia became the most impacted region by terrorism in the world.[4] South Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Middle East & North Africa (MENA) regions recorded the highest number of deaths due to terrorism, in that order. During the period 2000 to 20 February 2020, India had a total of 43,703 armed conflict/terrorism related fatal casualties, which include 13,853 civilians, 7,188 SF personnel and 22,662 terrorists/insurgents/extremists.[5]

In recent times, the world has also witnessed precise pre-dawn attacks on the strategic assets of a country. Attack on Saudi Aramco's oil-processing facilities at Abqaiq and Khurais in eastern Saudi Arabia by unmanned armed drones[6] is a case in point. Following the bold attack on the two major oil fields of Saudi Arabia by a swarm of 18 armed drones and seven missiles on 14 September 2019, a new form of unmanned attacks—though not the first of its kind—shot into prominence. United States Secretary of State Mike Pompeo had declared the Aramco attack as an "act of war." A week later, few drones had reportedly dropped weapons, ammunition and communication hardwares in the Indian border state of Punjab, to promote a terrorist module of the revived Khalistan Zindabad Force (KZF).[7] On 4 August 2019, Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro was reportedly attacked by two drones armed with explosives while making a speech at a public outdoor event in Caracas. These drones (type DJI M600) were flown by a non-state group (reportedly the 'T-Shirt Soldiers'), much outside the war zone.[8] Gatwick airport near London too has remained in news since December 2018 when hundreds of flights were cancelled, following reports of drone sightings close to the runway. Therefore, following the global trend, in the future, India could also experience similar armed drones or more lethal attacks by state-sponsored non-state actors (NSAs) or terrorists, on economic, strategic, military, transportation, energy producing core industries, vital installations and manufacturing hubs, sensitive religious places of worship or soft targets, both along the borders and in the hinterland.

Looking at an overview of terrorism and insurgencies, and their causes, this paper proposes to briefly analyse the fundamental linkage(s) between the ongoing conflicts and terrorism, and its drivers, at the global level, with a special reference to India. It aims to highlight the complementary relationship between terrorism and insurgency, the future trends of terrorism at different levels, broad forms of manifestations of terrorism in India, our preparedness and strategies to counter it. It would also be interesting to analyse linkages, if any, between the armed conflicts at different levels and the frequency and intensity of terror attacks and the resultant casualties.

Armed Conflicts and Terrorism: Studying the Global Picture

Post-World War II, there has been a progressive increase in intra-state conflicts the world over, which have shot up manifold since late 1950s, when decolonisation gained momentum. The increase in the intra-state conflicts is attributed to a number of factors like effectiveness of the governance systems, ethnic, sectarian and religious polarisation, economic growth, competition for fast diminishing resources and socio-economic exclusion,

which resulted in civil wars, armed conflicts, terrorism, and related political violence. Since the turn of the millennium, there has been a significant deterioration in the global security environment due to prolonged intra-state conflicts, as also terrorism, predominantly in MENA, Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.

Globally, there has been a proliferation of several extremist ideologies and terrorist organisations, predominantly based on religious, sectarian, ethnic and identity driven alienation or motivations. A case in point is that, ISIS began as an ideology due to which it had large followers across the world. Later, it has been acknowledged not only as a terrorist organisation, but that, it also has a larger global vision of establishing an Islamic Caliphate, by occupying territory and establishing bases worldwide.

While there can be no terrorism without a cause, the strategies of terrorist organisations focus on either of the four broad areas: political, economic, military and religious demands/issues. In addition to technology-based terrorism like cyber, biochemical and nuclear terrorism, it can be broadly classified as standalone terrorism (as an individual or as a group), political terrorism, religious terrorism, narcotic terrorism, transnational terrorism and state terrorism. Despite the threat of terrorism and declaration of a global war on terrorism (GWOT), an acknowledged fact, the global community at large has failed to adopt a universally acceptable definition of terrorism and violent extremism. Due to vested interests of different countries, it continues to remain a contested concept.[9] This notwithstanding, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) formulated guidelines for Global Counter Terrorism Strategy on 8 September 2006, with the aim of enhancing cooperation among nations to combat terrorism at the national, regional and international levels.

Based on a few high-profile terror attacks [9/11 in the US (2001), 26/11 Mumbai attack (2008), 13 December 2001 attack on the Indian Parliament] that drew the attention of the world community, there is a general perception that terrorism is exclusive of any other conflict, suggestive of its 'standalone' nature. It is not so! Standalone terrorism has been discussed separately. An analysis of statistical data over five decades (1970–2018) suggests that the terrorist attacks experienced by countries are largely in conformity with the number of ongoing internal armed conflicts and their intensity (refer Figure 1). Since 1998, 85 per cent of terrorist attacks were committed in civil war countries, with a further 3 percent in countries with low-intensity armed conflicts.[10]

Analysing the graphical depiction of casualties due to terrorism and internal armed conflicts, few prominent deductions can be drawn:

- There was a spike in terror attacks in late 1970s and 1980s in South Asia, prior to and during Soviet Russia's invasion of Afghanistan. India alone was experiencing multiple insurgencies in the North East, like the Naxalite Movement (Maoists) in Central India, and the Punjab militancy (1981–94).

- During the period 1990–94, there was a sharp rise in the armed conflicts and terrorism, with events like the end of Cold War, Gulf War I: Operation Desert Storm (1991), Breakup of Yugoslavia (1991–93), Conflicts in Cambodia, Angola, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Mali, Namibia, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, and the genocide in Rwanda (1994). In addition to earlier insurgencies in India, Pakistan-sponsored proxy war commenced in J&K in 1989, which continues till date. During 1993 alone, of the 79 countries that had major conflicts, 65 were in the developing world.[11]

- Post 9/11, there was a dip in the ongoing conflicts and terrorism, for a relatively short period, due to intense international pressure and the declaration of global war on terror.

- In 2011, terrorism also increased with the ongoing civil wars in Syria and Iraq. The intensity of violence and terrorism increased with the ISIS becoming effective from 2014 onwards, and its occupation of Mosul, Aleppo and other towns in the MENA. An analysis suggests that these conflicts were dominant in parts of MENA, Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.

- South Asia had far more intra-state conflict-related casualties than due to war between states. According to Uppsala Armed Conflict Database, the region experienced 298 conflicts between 1946 and 2002, of which 277 have been intra-state. Except Maldives, every state in South Asia has faced one or more sustained insurgencies since decolonisation.[12]

- These trends depict a stark relation between incidents of internal armed conflicts and those of terrorism globally. Notably, it has been documented that more than 93 per cent casualties from acts of terror have occurred in countries with ongoing conflicts, with maximum deaths attributed to countries with ongoing civil wars during that period.[13]

Figure 1: Global Spread of Terrorism and Internal Armed Conflicts (1970-2018): Relationship
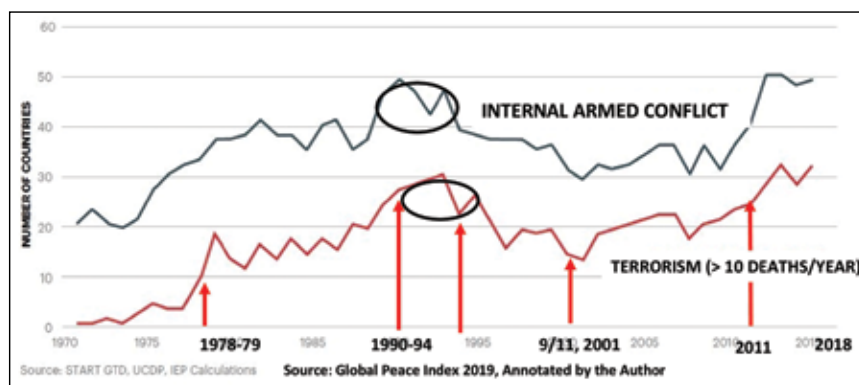
Source: Global Peace Index 2019, Annotated by the Author.
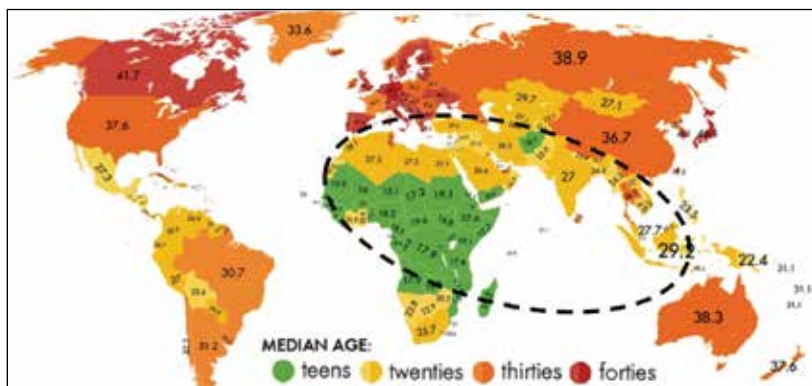
Standalone Terrorist Attacks

Standalone attacks have been on the rise since the 1990s. The perpetrators of horrendous attacks on soft targets such as the one in San Bernardino on December 02, 2015 and Orlando night club shooting on June 12, 2016 are perhaps attributed to 'homegrown violent extremists', with transnational linkages. There has been an increase in frequency and intensity of such type of attacks in the United States, France, Spain, Belgium, Canada and the United Kingdom. According to Katie Worth, 'white supremacy' has been the chief political motivation of modern lone wolf terror in the US.[14] These forms of terror attacks and extremist violence, though difficult to predict, also merit consideration to evolve counter terrorist strategy and tactics. Besides, politico-socio-economic discriminations, broad distinctions among the terrorist groups and their ideologies are driven by their political, nationalists, religious, ethnic and identity aspirations / motivations. In recent times, owing to superiority complex, Right Wing Terrorism would be considered as part of political terrorism. Over the past decade, there has been an increase in the political and religious motivated terrorist attacks, as also an increase in the self-radicalised lone wolf terrorists.[15] In a number of cases, domestic terrorists or homegrown terrorists get influenced by transnational[16] terrorist organisations that provides necessary support to abet violence, attack SF & civilians, places of worship, create communal disharmony, fear, panic and instability. A case in point is, Pakistan's proxy war-cum-state sponsored terrorism to destabilise India with multiple aims and methods.[17]

It is true that there have been several high-profile standalone terror attacks that are not part of any insurgency or armed conflict. Then what drives an individual to engage in an extreme form of violence? According to a study by RAND, in addition to the broad contextual factors like socio-economic and political discrimination, there are four prominent drivers of individuals willing to engage in extreme violence or terrorism: first, the socialisation processes which enables radicalisation (prisons, radical families, social media, internet sites, religious institutions, etc.); second, expected real or perceived rewards (financial, excitement, social, religious or ideological); third, a felt need to respond to grievances (collective grievances, personal grievances, desire for revenge, identity driven alienation); fourth, a passion for change (political change, religious change, environmental, unemployment, etc).[18] Such homegrown violent extremists and lone wolf terrorists, relatively better educated and from privileged backgrounds, are generally not on the radar of monitoring agencies. However, it has been observed that they have affiliations to a particular ideology or a group, and that they get self-radicalised by various means.

The standalone terrorist attacks, at both domestic and global levels, are far more devastating, as they are difficult to predict, quantify and trace such individuals or their group and their motivations. Enough safeguards should also be put in place against non-state actors indulging in nuclear, biological, chemical and radiological (NBCR) form of standalone attacks.

Demography and Median Age

Besides state-structural factors, socio-cultural factors, foreign occupation,[19] the demography in terms of median age, rate of unemployment, socio-economic exclusion, ethnic and religious alienation, and neglect of a region or population also play a significant role in initiation of conflicts or terrorism. The country-wise median age of the population, as depicted on a global map below, shows that South Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa and MENA are predominantly in their teens and twenties. Interestingly, these three regions are also among the least peaceful regions of the world,[20] for multiple reasons. This can be equated with the Malthusian theory of demographic transition as these regions listed above are certainly in the second or third stage of the transition and are not developed.

Map 1: Median Age—Countries across the Globe

Source: https://www.pri.org/stories/2014-09-08/these-maps-show-where-world-s-youngest-and-oldest-people-live

Relationship: Insurgency and Terrorism

Often, there is confusion between the two violent forms: terrorism and insurgency and therefore, there is a need to understand the relationship or the difference between the two. A classical insurgency challenges the existing political, economic, religious and/or social order, to force a change of government or its policies by the protracted people's movement, and to bring in its considered ideology and methods to fulfil the aspirations of the population or the region. As an insurgency is based on the grievances of the affected populace, it takes the form of a people's armed movement with politico-economic-religious-ethnic and/or ideological aims. Thus, based on the goals and motivations, insurgencies could be termed as Separatist, Secessionist, Reformist, Revolutionary, Commercialist, etc. Insurgencies are generally confined within the country's political boundaries, as they are directed against the existing system of governance. With the increase in strength, insurgents start attacking larger targets. Propaganda is used to maximise the effect of violence by getting disproportionate publicity from media. All insurgencies aspire to mobilise the people with the aim of gaining control of the population or a part of the territory and its resources. This objective draws a major distinction between an insurgent and a terrorist organisation. Generally, the terrorists do not attempt to control terrain or the target population, save ISIS, an army of terrorists, which indulged in establishing a Caliphate by occupying Mosul in Iraq between 2014 and 2017. They were militarily defeated by the US-backed Iraqi Armed Forces after an intense protracted conflict for nine months. Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in Sri Lanka, is yet another recent example which grew stronger

militarily to develop limited conventional capabilities, controlled a part of territory, and fought against the Sri Lankan forces by taking up defences on the ground.

In comparison with the insurgent's groups, which are relatively large, with an organisation to provide the necessary support, the terrorist groups operate in small numbers and with limited logistics. The terrorists feel that occupying ground restricts their mobility, security and gives away their locations, which facilitates the security forces (SF) to neutralise them. In few cases, it may finally warrant a conventional battle with the state forces. Moreover, while the insurgents target the SF, police, governance officials and infrastructure, the terrorists are selective in targeting a leader, a community or the civilians at large.[21] On the other hand, terrorism is based on the tactics of terror and creating fear psychosis. It is a method, a tool or a tactic to use force and violence, to achieve its goals, which could be political, religious, ethnic, identity driven or ideological. In some of the insurgencies like the Left Wing Extremism (LWE) in Central India and those in the North Eastern Region (NER) in India, Shining Path of Peru as well as the Irish Republican Army (IRA) in the Northern Ireland, the insurgents have employed terrorism, terror tactics and guerrilla warfare to improve their visibility, to show the writ of state in a poor light, and simultaneously, to realise their objectives. Mao Tse Tung and General Giap laid great emphasis on exemplary personal conduct of rebels/insurgents to garner popular support. A few insurgencies are closely tangled with drug production and trade, radicalisation, recruitment of young children and organised crime. An insurgency is predominantly a rural phenomenon, but it is gradually penetrating the urban areas at an accelerated pace.

Considering the asymmetry in combat strength of the SF and the insurgents, John McCuen's explanation of the four phases of an insurgency is most apt. In brief, the four phases, which overlap seamlessly into each other, are: one, internal organisational structure, subversion, and mobilisation of the people; two, guerrilla warfare tactics (hit & run tactics, ambushes, raids, targeting the SF by IEDs, and a suitable combination of these); three, terrorism; and finally a graduation to 'conventional or mobile warfare'.[22] Therefore, subversion, terrorism, guerrilla warfare tactics, generation of funds, propagation of ideology, recruitment, organised crime, and developing mobile warfare capability remain an inherent part of an insurgency. More often, these phases and drivers of an armed movement overlap and flow seamlessly into each other. A case in point is, while an insurgency requires an ideology with popular support and an effective leadership to gain momentum, flow of funds is equally essential to sustain its large organisation, procure weapons,

equipment and explosives. Other drivers of an insurgency are external support, drug production & trafficking, safe havens to take refuge & train, and linkages with other insurgencies & terrorist groups. Most insurgents and terrorist organisations are quick to procure latest communication equipment and technologies available in the markets, to exploit and adapt to it. In recent times, terrorism, therefore, plays a vital role in each insurgency to realise its goals and objectives. There is, thus, a complimentary relationship between an insurgency and terrorism, with some similarity in their aims, objectives and methods as well.

Terrorism: Future Trends

Given the deep fissures among the comity of nations, due to their vested interests, it is most unlikely that a common definition of terrorism and violent extremism will be accepted universally in the near future. However, while discussing the current and future trends, it is axiomatic to compare with the past practices and techniques. Broadly, the trends are a function of goals, methods, need for new skills, organisations & structural changes, external support and number of stakeholders. The broad aim of the terrorists is to create a climate of fear and panic by targeting SF, government organisations & innocent civilians, and thus press for their demands and/or grievances. The terrorists continue to evolve and adopt innovative methods, tactics, and techniques to attack their targets. The organisational structures are varied, fluid and deeply linked to latest technologies and communication structures. Hence, the requirement of acquiring new analytical skills to train, adapt and exploit the latest technologies, crypto-currencies & funds transfers, weapons, equipment & explosives, and do-it-yourself (DIY) kits.

Geo-political and Economic Changes: The trend of terrorism is closely linked with the geo-political and economic changes taking place at global and regional levels, which would have an equal impact on India as well. The earlier form of terrorism focused primarily on political ideologies, while the terrorism of today and the future has multiple goals and agendas, multiple stakeholders and motivations, which are also transnational in character. The terrorists and their violent acts can weaken a country's political, economic, investment, and social environment. The terrorists may be part of transnational forces, non-state actors, irregulars, drug mafias & traffickers, and gangs involved in organised crimes.

Revolution in Communications: During the Mumbai attack in November 2008, the terrorists were using Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) with their handlers in Karachi (Pakistan) and that they navigated, using GPS, by sea to precise landing spots on the Mumbai coastline. Also,

interestingly, they had marked their GPS coordinates to return to Karachi after the terrorist attack in Mumbai. The 4th Industrial Revolution (4th IR), which refers to 'fusion of technologies', has blurred the distinction between physical, digital and biological domains. Digital communications are a vital part of the 4th IR. The terrorists and their groups have for long adapted to these technologies and tools of communications, to exploit the potential of social media, internet, dark webs, secured chat rooms, message boards, encryption and anonymising technologies. They network and share information on a real-time basis, both within and outside the countries. They also carry out psychological warfare, influence operations, propaganda, fund raising, and data mining with multiple aims. One of the primary aim is to target the cognitive domains of the people, disrupt communal harmony, radicalise youth and recruit them for carrying out extremist violence and terrorist attacks. Effective communications facilitate easy recruitment, planning and ensure the ultimate—carry out lethal terror attacks to inflict 'maximum casualties'.

Emerging Technologies: The advent of unmanned aerial systems like armed and unarmed drones will be used in multiple roles like Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR), facilitating communications, delivering guided missiles, explosives on the targets, surprise & deception, and deploying chemical, biological, radiological & nuclear (CBRN) materials. We must continuously monitor the new techniques that would emerge from the application of artificial intelligence, big data analytics, biotechnology, 3D printing, robotics and crypto-currencies. The irony lies in the fact that, while terrorists are known to remain abreast with latest technologies and exploit and adapt their applications, the SF remains behind the technology curve due to long processes involved in induction of new systems, and their applications, to counter the insurgents and terrorists. The SF must have emergency powers to procure limited 'state of the art' equipment and material to effectively conduct counter-insurgency/counter-terrorism (CI/CT) operations. Satellite systems, on the other hand, could be used by SF to identify and track movement of suspected insurgents and terrorists based on facial recognition technologies.

The emerging technologies have also facilitated easy access to the most sophisticated weapon & communication systems, flow of funds, masking of the terrorists' identity, access to protective devices & methods to tackle low or hi-tech systems of the security forces, and DIY kits that facilitate assembly of IEDs, lethal bombs and trigger mechanisms. The DIY kits and devices so assembled are small, inexpensive, hard to detect and engage, thus presenting a multi-directional threat, only likely to increase with newer technological innovations and inventions. In the future, nanotechnology is likely to empower

the terrorists, with wall-climbing robots for combat and quad copters to gain information during day and night. Psychotronic weapon systems that affect people's bodies by way of electronic harassment, electromagnetic torture, radar & surveillance techniques to transmit sounds & thoughts into people's heads[23] may be used by the state and the terrorists in the future.

Transnational Forces and International Terror Groups: With communications as an enabler on one hand, and globalisation, on the other hand, has facilitated movement of people, capital, investments and innovative ideas across political boundaries. This facilitates terrorists to have global linkages, share information, and become part of a larger terrorist organisation, or join as an affiliate. In the recent past, non-state actors and terrorists have been operating in other countries to abet insurgencies, incite violence or indulge in organised crime. Such actions result in violence and instability. Pakistan has been inciting proxy war-cum-state-sponsored terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir since 1989. So also, proxies of Iran are reportedly operating in Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Yemen and Iraq. Prominent international terror groups have established bases or affiliates in many countries across the world, like Al Qaeda and ISIS. This trend is likely to further intensify in the future.

Domestic Terrorism: Religious, sectarian, ethnic and identity driven alienation among the population, socio-economic inequality and a non-responsive governance system are a sure recipe for domestic terrorism. This gets further accentuated by external support, particularly from the anti-national forces. Militancy related violence, with external support, is likely to increase, as has been the case in North East India (Manipur). Hate speeches by leaders polarises the population, and results in communal, caste or tribe-based conflicts. Given the statistics available, targeted assassinations, and VBIEDs and kidnappings continued to remain high by ISIS and Boko Haram, to make financial demands and force governments to change certain policies.[24] Kidnapping appears to be one of the main sources of funding for sustaining the insurgencies and terrorist groups. For instance, in India, Alex Paul Menon, District Collector of Sukma in Chhattisgarh, was kidnapped by the Maoists on April 21, 2012. The Maoists have also indulged in other cases of abductions with political and financial demands.[25]

Complex Coordinated Terror Attacks: Over the last 2-3 decades, there have been a mix of standalone mass attacks and complex coordinated attacks, like the 13 serial bomb blasts in Mumbai on 12 March 1993, 9/11 attacks in the US in September 2001, and Easter bomb blasts in April 2019 in Sri Lanka. Majority of such attacks have been carried out by people, sleeper cells and youth in particular, who are not on 'suspected terrorist radar.' Smaller and lesser known terror groups have carried out horrendous

terror attacks and, on a number of occasions, well known established terror groups have accepted responsibility. A case in point is: ISIS owned responsibility for the Easter bomb blasts in Sri Lanka on 21 April 2019. This trend is likely to continue in the future as well. Also, individuals carrying out smaller terror attacks have lesser chances to be detected and have greater psychological impact. Generally, the perpetrators of mass attacks, as experienced in the US and Europe, do not show any specific leanings towards an ideology or motive. A few of them are based on perceived grievances, revenge, intense dislike of a particular policy, community or ethnic origin. It may be difficult to establish a definite trend at this stage.

Radicalisation: "Radicalism isn't a fever or a rash. You don't wake up with it one morning."[26] The author tracks how the experiences of poverty, isolation and alienation become the pathways to Islamist extremism. Radicalisation, more importantly, reflects political, religious, social and ideological dimensions of the threat. In most cases, radicalism is the first step towards terrorism. Given the high density and concentration of Muslims in South Asia (Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and Afghanistan) and the proliferation of Political Islam, this region is vulnerable to Islamist form of terrorism. There has been a great effort towards promoting Salafism/Wahhabism in the Indian sub-continent, as also to radicalise youth. Radicalisation is being fuelled primarily by religious ideology by influencing the society and individuals, using religious places, educational institutions and by making available online and offline contents.[27] Pakistan along with support from a few Islamic countries wants to use Jammu and Kashmir in India as the pivot to promote 'Wahhabism' so as to link it with the ideology of West Asia. It is known to run sustained perception campaign by multiple means like: religious and educational institutions; mass communication tools such as social media, internet, secure chat rooms, and distributing literature to radicalise the society and more importantly, the malleable youth in its fold. The campaign aims to attack the cognitive domain of the people at large and the youth in particular.

Flash to Bang Time: It is a terminology used by the Gunners to record the time lapse between 'flash being seen by the observer to bang being heard' to ascertain the distance/coordinates of the fall of shot of an artillery gun system, so as to direct the fire on the designated target. A few terrorism investigators describe 'flash to bang' as the time span from when a person may adopt extremist views and when they commit violence.[28] In other words, it is the time period between the radicalisation of a person (flash) to the execution of a terrorist attack (bang) by the individual. Undoubtedly, this 'flash to bang' time lapse has got compressed and may get compressed further due to the communication revolution and emerging technologies.

The most recent cases in point are the profile of Adil Ahmad Dar, a 22 year old radicalised individual and the perpetrator of the Pulwama attack in February 2019, and the five young terrorists involved in Holey Artisan Bakery terrorist attack in Dhaka in July 2016. Assailant Adil Ahmad Dar had joined Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) just about a year ago. In both these cases, the period between 'flash to bang' was rather compressed. In future, it may get further compressed.

Global Terror Groups and Linkages: Although, the ISIS has lost its control over the territory in Iraq and Syria, its idea remains virulent. It has already made inroads into Afghanistan, Egypt, Nigeria, Maldives, a few other parts of South Asia and Philippines. The UN report of 20 January 2020 on ISIL claims that the terrorist organisation is "remerging" in Levant, where it was destroyed militarily under a new leadership. In Philippines, Marawi was under the siege of militants affiliated with the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), including the Maute and Abu Sayyaf Salafi jihadist groups, for five-months in 2017 till cleared by the security forces. It has been described as the longest urban battle in the modern history of Philippines.[29] Al Qaeda too has made efforts to penetrate various parts like Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) in Yemen, Somalia and Al Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS). Both these terror groups, as part of leadership tussle, would endeavour to increase their footprint in the Indian subcontinent in the future.

Raising Funds: To sustain their insurgencies and terrorists' organisations, they raise funds through external and internal sources like donations, percentage of income from large industrial houses, demands for release of kidnapped hostages, collections for social, religious and charitable purposes, fake currencies, extortion, Designated Non-Financial Businesses and Professions (DNFBP) and through organised crimes.[30] With dark webs, deep webs and crypto-currencies in place, these groups have several ways of transferring funds, like bitcoin systems, hawala operations, limited amount through formal banking channels, transactions through trade and cash through infiltrating terrorists. High volumes and low value transactions raised through crowd funding are a real challenge to the counter-terrorism finance regimes. Narco-terrorism, in simple terms, refers to funding drug money for terrorism. It aims to create illegal narco-traffic regions, which facilitates drug mafias to fund terror groups across different regions. Besides e-Jehad, Pakistan has been pushing narcotics and drug money into J&K and Punjab,[31] to destabilise India.

New Terror Organisations and Affiliations: Going by historical experience of various terrorist organisations and their effectiveness, the life span of such groups is limited to a few years. Cases in point are LTTE and

the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF). Conflict-prone areas of the world, particularly South Asia, MENA and Sub-Saharan Africa may see emergence of new terrorist/insurgent groups in the future. The new groups may be offshoots or affiliates of the major terrorist groups like Al Qaeda or ISIS. Besides religious motives, the future organisations may mushroom with ideologies pertaining to sectarianism, ethnicism & identity alienation, and social instability.

Fidayeens (Suicide Attacks): The terrorists groups such as LTTE, Al Qaeda, Taliban, ISIS, Boko Haram, Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM), and Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) have carried out suicide attacks and/or vehicle borne IED (VBIED) attacks over the last few years. The attack in Pulwama in February 2019 by VBIED, was by a radicalised youth Adil Ahmad Dar. In recent years, the number of female suicide bombers has spiked globally. This can be attributed to the Boko Haram group in the Sub-Saharan Africa region, which has utilised more women as suicide bombers than any other group in history.[32] The trend of suicide attacks, by females, and VBIED is likely to pick up in India as well. Notably, LWE has more than 30 per cent women in their cadres.

Nuclear, Biological, Chemical and Radiological (NBCR) Terrorism: In future, world could see intentional delivery of lethal pathogen like bacteria, viruses or germs with the intent to kill or maim or have serious ill-effects on health of people, livestock and all living organs. According to reports, the government of Syria and ISIS have already used chemical weapons in several instances.[33] Despite tight security of fissile material and facilities, terrorist groups like Al Qaeda have been making efforts to acquire weapons of mass destruction (WMD), and have had the intent and motivation to use them.[34] Nuclear terrorism could manifest in different ways like explosion of a nuclear device, sabotage of a nuclear power reactor, attack on a nuclear storage facility, and dispersal of a radioactive material by detonating it with a high explosive device.[35] The world has to closely monitor and prevent individuals and small groups to clandestinely acquire precision-strike capabilities, cyber and bioterrorism tools with the delivery means. As NBCR terrorism is among the likely future trends, besides physical security at all levels, protection from cyber attacks also requires periodical reviews.

Cyber Terrorism: India has been the second most cyber attack affected country during 2016 to 2018.[36] Given the number of operational networks in civil and military arena, an adversary could increasingly use computers and information technology to cause severe disruption in financial, banking, transportation, aviation, health, educational, and military systems to paralyse the nation and create widespread fear & panic in society. A combination of

cyber terrorism, with cyber espionage, cyber attacks and hacking pose a serious threat to the security of the country.

Potential of Ongoing Protests: The year 2019 was witness to a spate of protests and movements across the world for multiple reasons.[37] In fact, Robin Wright talks about the 'Tsunami of protests that swept across six continents and engulfed both liberal democracies and ruthless autocracies… the protests reflect unprecedented political mobilisation.'[38] A few significant ones, with their primary causes, that merit a mention are: in Venezuela, anti-government protests seeking democracy; in Hong Kong protests against the proposed Extradition Bill, regional autonomy and people's civil liberties; students movements against new criminal code in Indonesia; Dutch Farmers Protests against the civil disobedience demonstrations against agricultural policies; anti-government protests in Lebanon and Iraq; protests on account of socio-economic inequality in Chile; anti-government protests in Iran; anti-government protests in Colombia; Yellow Vests Movement in France for economic justice; anti-corruption protests in Egypt; protests for regime change and inflation in Sudan; protests against abrogation of Article 370, Citizenship Amendment Act, National Register of Citizens in India; Azadi March and anti-government protests in Pakistan; anti-government protests due to Amazon fires in Brazil.[39] A study of the causes and profile of the protests suggests that it has been an exhibition of people's power, who have so far not resorted to violence and armed conflicts. However, the governing systems must engage with the protesters to listen and attend to their legitimate aspirations, lest such movements turn into armed conflicts or terrorism. With downturn in economy, the frequency and intensity of these protests are likely to increase further.

India's Internal Security

The country has been subjected to insurgencies, terrorism and extremist violent attacks since the 1950s. The genesis of these lies in three core reasons. First, the historical baggage of pre-independence times, and the 'bloody' Partition of the subcontinent into India and Pakistan in August 1947, based on the 'two-nation theory'. Second, the mushrooming of insurgencies at regular intervals since the 1950s, due to the state not being able to fulfil the political, economic, social, environmental, ethnic and cultural aspirations of the people. Third, religious, sectarian, caste and linguistic intolerances, sub-nationalism, identity crises, relative deprivations, exploitation and social justice, or a cumulative effect of two or more factors. Resultantly, India has met almost all the 'drivers' to initiate and to sustain classical insurgencies— an ideology based on grievances and unfulfilled aspirations of the masses–

effective leadership to lead the insurgency, easy flow of funds by various means, external support, availability of weapon and communication systems, drug production and trafficking, anger and frustration of the mobilised masses, training facilities and safe havens, young population with high levels of unemployment and socio-economic exclusion. Unfortunately, these have imposed heavy costs, both directly and indirectly, on the Indian economy[40] and the human security-cum-psyche of the Indian people.

The US State Department's annual 'Country Report on Terrorism 2017' states that "India continued to experience attacks, including by Pakistan-based terrorist organisations as well as tribal and Maoist insurgents."[41] Pakistan's state-sponsored terrorism will continue to remain the primary source of Islamist terrorism in India. To confirm the enhanced levels of violence in India, the Global Peace Index (GPI) 2019 report has further relegated India's peacefulness ranking from 136th in 2017 to 141st in 2018, out of 163 countries that were evaluated.[42] Also, it states that India has been ranked the seventh most affected country.[43] India's heterogeneity and diversity in its geographical terrain, regions and surface connectivity; demographically-diverse ethnic groups, religions, languages, dialects, customs & cultures; and socio-economic disparity with unequal levels of education, health care, job opportunities and wealth distribution—besides testifying its rich heritage, continues to make it vulnerable to security threats. Insurgencies and terrorism in India have been discussed separately in the succeeding paragraphs.

Insurgencies in India

Since India's Independence, it has been indeed unique to witness new insurgencies mushrooming in it, in every new decade, with a wide variety of demands, to seek fulfilment of their aspirations. Concurrently, there was a rise in terror attacks and resultant casualties.

The early 1950s saw the rise of the Naga insurgency, also called the 'Mother of all insurgencies'. As AZ Phizo, the Naga nationalist leader, formed the Naga Central Government, on 22 March 1956, the Indian Army was deployed in the region. It was the first time in Independent India's history that the Indian Army was deployed for counter-insurgency/counter-terrorism (CI/CT) roles. Similarly, 1960s gave rise to insurgencies in Manipur & Mizoram in the North Eastern region (NER), and the Naxalite movement (now called LWE) in Central India. The Communist Party of India (Maoist) or (CPI Maoist) ranked third among the five perpetrator groups with the most attacks worldwide in 2017.[44] LWE is an indigenous insurgency that has affected large parts of heartland of the country. Going by the improvement in the security environment, its spread has reduced from 232 districts in

2009-11 to about 60 districts spread across 8 States in 2019; and 30 districts accounts for 89 percent of LWE violence.[45] The prominent root causes of the insurgency lies in abject poverty, socio-economic exclusion, neglect of the region, deprivation, discrimination, unemployment, social injustice, and, non-implementation of Forest Rights Act 2016, Panchayat Extension of Schedules Areas Act (PESA) 1996 and land reforms on the ground. The Maoists would continue to show their presence and strength by attacking SF personnel periodically, as they did on 22 March 2020 in Sukma district that resulted in the killing of 17 security personnel. Unless the root causes are addressed, it may re-emerge even stronger, as it did in 1980 and 2004.

The following decades, 1970s and 1980s, witnessed the 'bloody' insurgency in Assam with a demand for a sovereign Asom, and engulfed the state of Punjab in a politico-religious secessionist movement based on the Sikh community's identity respectively. The movement in Punjab was abetted and supported by the immediate western neighbour, Pakistan. These decades also witnessed the beginning of insurgencies in Tripura and Meghalaya in NER.

The 1990s were marked by proxy war cum cross-border terrorism sponsored by Pakistan to destabilise India in general and the then state of Jammu and Kashmir in particular by Pakistan's policy and announcement of 'bleeding India with a thousand cuts'.[46] While Pakistan continues to provide political, diplomatic and military support to sustain the insurgency in J&K, it has made persistent efforts to indigenise it by getting the youth of J&K to the forefront over the past five years. Post the killing of Hizbul Mujahideen terrorist Burhan Wani, Pakistan has renewed its efforts towards indigenisation of insurgency, and radicalisation of the people, especially the youth. This has resulted in an increase in local youth joining terror ranks.

On balance, while the main causes of insurgencies in India are sub-nationalism, religious, ethnic, identity driven alienation, socio-economic exclusion and discrimination, their aim has predominantly been secessionist in nature, a few seeking separatism, greater autonomy and statehood.[47] A few of these insurgencies have their genesis in the troubled history of India during pre-Independence era and the Partition in 1947. These have got further aggravated due to the interplay of external and internal threats and challenges. In addition, India faces, internal security challenges, predominantly the threat of terror attacks, due to infiltration, UAVs and drones and illegal activities across India's land borders (15,318 km), total coastline (7,516 km), and island territories coastline (1,197 km). The concept of border management, needs to be reviewed with the growing vulnerability of our porous land, coastline, and the airspace, where threat due to swarms of small drones and UAVs is also widespread.

Over the past seven decades, we have resolved the classical insurgency in Mizoram (1966–86), militancy in Punjab (1981–94) and the insurgency in Tripura and Assam is in the final stages of resolution. In a recent development, the Bodo Peace Accord was signed between the government and the four factions of National Democratic Front of Bodoland on January 27, 2020. The rise of religious fundamentalism, the heightened global Right movement, majority–minority politics, mob lynching and protests turning violent endangers the secular fabric and has an adverse effect on national security. Another worrisome area is the periodical protests by different castes, ethnic compositions and regions demanding reservations for Jats, Gujjars, Marathas and Patidars.

A study of the statistics[48] of incidents and killings of the past decade (2010–2019) suggests that the violence levels have progressively declined in the NER and the LWE affected regions in India. Figure 2 below suggests an excellent window of opportunity (WOO) to put our act together—exhibit political will and improve governance at the grassroots—to resolve our conflicts.

Figure 2: Statistics of Incidents and killings at India Level (2000-19)
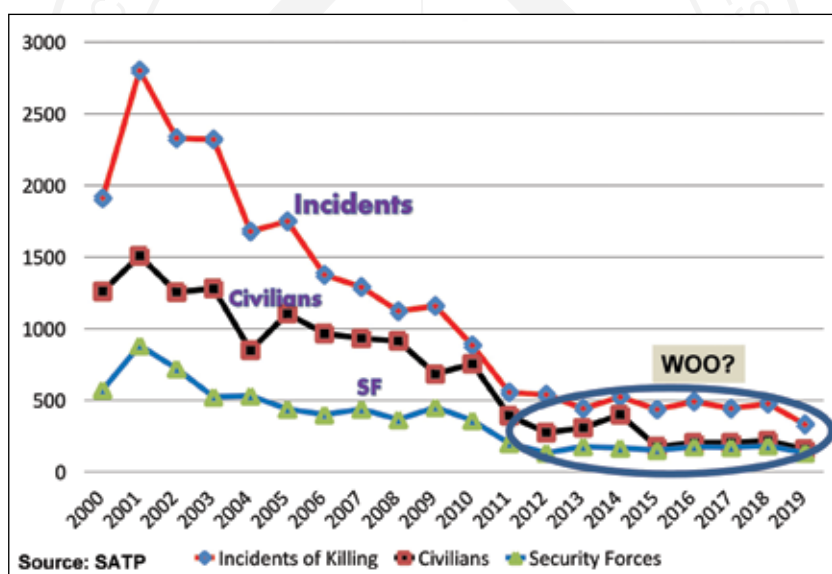
Source: SATP

Terrorism: Attacks against the 'Very Idea of India'

Besides insurgencies, India has been a victim of almost all forms of terrorist attacks: suicide attacks (*fidayeen*), hijacking and blowing up of aircraft,

sabotaging railway tracks, kidnapping hostages for meeting political demands, the assassination of two of its Prime Ministers, multiple attacks on religious places of worship, transportation systems, security forces, financial hubs, communal riots followed by extreme violence and attacks both by religious and non-religious terrorist groups, public information-cum-propaganda campaign and cyber attacks. This is facilitated by the large porous land, maritime and airspace borders with its neighbours as well as its peculiar location close to the 'epicentre of global terrorism'.

India has experienced many terrorist attacks in urban areas, which led to 'bloody' fights between the security forces and the terrorists. Prominent Islamist terrorist groups focused on Kashmir, that have been active in India include Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), Al-Qaeda affiliate Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM), Harkat-ul-Mujahideen (HuM) and Hizbul Mujahideen (HM). While Islamist terror groups like JeM attacked the highest seat of Indian democracy, the Indian Parliament on 13 December 2001, LeT exploited India's maritime approach to carry out multiple terror attacks in the mega city of Mumbai on 26 November 2008. Needless to say, that Mumbai was highly ill prepared to respond to such attacks.[49]

In India, terrorism can be broadly categorised in three distinct parts.

One, it has been brought out that the terrorist attacks experienced by countries are largely in conformity with the number of ongoing internal armed conflicts and their intensity (refer Figure 1). Thus, terrorism has been an integral part of insurgencies in India.

Two, proxy war cum cross-border terrorism unleashed by Pakistan, which dates back to Partition. Speaking at the UN Security Council on Kashmir on September 22, 1965, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the then Prime Minister of Pakistan declared 'a thousand-year war' against India.[50] Later, Pakistan's Army Chief, General Zia-ul-Haq (1977–88) had realised that Pakistan was not making any progress on political, diplomatic or military domains to resolve the Kashmir issue in its favour. He went a step further to formulate a doctrine called, 'bleeding India through a thousand cuts', to be achieved using covert and low-intensity warfare with militancy and infiltration.[51] Although he was killed in an air crash in 1988, Pakistan initiated proxy war cum cross-border terrorism in J&K in 1989, which continues till date. Besides J&K, a number of porous entry points along the coastal areas, the International Border with Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal have been used by the trained militants to reach J&K, as also to carry out terrorist attacks in other parts of India.

Three, the manifestation of terrorism in the hinterland. A critical examination of the terrorist attacks suggests that the terrorists, based on directions from the external handlers and the internal anti-national elements

(ANEs), have been targeting the 'very idea of India'. Some of these terrorist attacks were not part of any insurgency. Religious, ethnic sub-nationalism and identity based terrorism are perhaps the most potent threats to our national security. The terrorists had attacked select targets in Mumbai, the financial hub of the country, to disrupt India's economic growth story; attacked religious places like Hindu temples in Ahmedabad, Varanasi and Jammu, to disturb the existing communal harmony among the religious communities; attacked Bengaluru and Hyderabad to disrupt and destroy the IT hubs of the country; and finally also attacked the Parliament at Delhi, the very symbol and the seat of Indian democracy.

It would therefore be correct to surmise that terrorism, coupled with insurgencies, are the biggest threats to India and its 'very idea'—the idea to empower a democratic, secular and secure India with a technology enabled environment to ensure sustained economic growth. As India is located at the crossroads of the Golden Crescent and Golden Triangle, there is a close nexus between drug trafficking, narco-terrorism and transnational organised crime. The modus operandi of organised crime and terrorism has remained dynamic to achieve its goals and objectives. Moreover, terrorists have also been carrying out cyber espionage, cyber attacks and hacking. These along with cyber terrorism pose a serious threat to the security of the country.

Theoretical Constructs

Several theorists and specialists of 'conflict resolution' like Adam Curle's 'Conflict Progression Model' (1971), Brahm's 'Conflict Wave theory' (2003), Mitchell's 'Dynamics of Perpetuation, Exacerbation and Mitigation' (2005), and Michael Lund's 'Curve of Conflict' have analysed and recommended various methods to prevent and resolve conflicts. According to Lund, a classical conflict has five prominent stages: durable peace, stable peace, unstable peace, crisis and war. In these, the violence in conflicts is measured from two prominent dimensions: the intensity of conflict (the vertical axis) and the duration of conflict (the horizontal axis). The curved bell-shaped arc is rather smooth and appears too simplified to depict the life cycle of an 'ideal type' of a conflict. In practice, it is not so—there are both sharp declines and resurgence in a conflict, with varying intensities, based on several variables. These variations have been depicted by arrows moving in different directions. The highest probability of success, with nonviolent approaches to prevent an insurgency gaining ground, is during the early stages of an unstable peace phase. Lund's suggestion of devoting concerted effort and 'energies during the pre-crisis stage of unstable peace of potential insurgencies' is most relevant, but generally never addressed, till it becomes a full-blown insurgency. It is imperative to understand that all conflicts are dynamic and not static; hence CI/CT strategies and methods

should also be dynamic and be reviewed periodically. If the intervention is timely, then preventive diplomacy/constructive dialogue with tangible actions on the ground can prevent conflict escalation. Timing of application of effort is the key to achieving optimum results.[52] For obvious reasons, this stage provides adequate opportunities to address the legitimate aspirations of the people at large. Pathalgarhi tribal autonomy movement—a tribal rebellion simmering in Jharkhand since 2017—is a case in point which should be addressed during the initial stage itself.[53]

Figure 3: Michael Lund's Curve of Conflict (Annotated by the Author)

Source: https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/academy/OnlineCourses/Conflict_Analysis_1-30-08.pdf

Globally, of all the armed conflicts between 1968 and 2006, only 7 per cent were resolved by military force, and 43 per cent as part of political solutions or settlements.[54] Therefore, a pure militarist approach is not the solution to defeat an insurgency or terrorism—a whole of regional and societal approach, along with a calibrated military approach, is likely to be more successful.

As shown (in Figure 3), peacetime and preventive diplomacy play significant roles during the early stages of insurgency. Families, schools and religious teachers, trained media experts, NGOs, social scientists and counsellors play a significant role to educate and monitor the trends in the society. Collaboration with social workers, media personnel, NGOs, human rights activists, teachers, and promotion of cultural activities will help to engage with the people to convey effective narratives, ideas and messages. They should also promote the correct role of religion and that of its leaders and the society to prevent polarisation and to maintain harmony.

Critical Element to Assess Preparedness

"The terrorist uses surprise and stealth, and the only way to defeat that is by having accurate and timely intelligence."

— Bill Nelson, US Senator

Each insurgency is unique in its ideology, root causes, aims and objectives. It requires a detailed understanding of the human-terrain map, grievances of the people, the ideology, organisational structures and vulnerabilities of the insurgents to resolve a conflict. Global trends depicting terror/insurgency incidents and resultant casualties establish a complementary relationship between terrorism and insurgencies across the world. To ensure our preparedness and response mechanism, particularly for 'standalone' type of high profile attacks, it is vital to look at critical elements like effectiveness of intelligence network, physical & digital security, robust communication network & situational awareness, responsive force structure, coordination & integration of all elements, investigation & lessons and community involvement.

Of all the stated elements, **Intelligence** is the most critical to combat an insurgency and terrorism. Lack of information sharing, insufficient human intelligence, lack of 'state of the art' information technology, inadequate resource allocation, lack of coordination among various agencies and training/ skilling of personnel, are some of the major weaknesses. It requires an effective early warning and a robust intelligence system in terms of gathering information, processing, analysing, and timely sharing with appropriate agencies. It also involves coordination and monitoring the performance of the intelligence agencies. Major General Qassem Soleimani of the Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps was killed in Baghdad primarily because of a high degree of 'human intelligence'.[55] Human intelligence, complimented with technology-based intelligence, is the requirement of the day.

Since strategic & vital assets, prominent leaders, military garrisons and convoys remain on high priority for a terrorists' attack, their physical security, from ground, sea & air attacks, should be reviewed and technology enabled systems be installed. Cyber security of networks of strategic assets, vital installations, essential services and nuclear assets should be reviewed periodically.

Secured communications and coordination are the lifeline to combat terrorism. While the terrorists are networked and are adept at exploiting new tools of technology, the SF generally lag behind in exploiting the latest technologies. Connected with this are situational awareness and coordination amongst various agencies, which continue to remain one of the major

areas of concern. Other aspects pertaining to a responsive force structure, investigation post a terror strike, and community's involvements have been discussed in the CI/CT strategies.

India's CI/CT Strategies and Preparedness

Over the years, in order to prevent and deter violence by the terrorists, insurgents and extremists, governments the world over, have used varied models such as overt & covert actions, exploited full potential of technology to target terrorists & insurgents, eliminated leadership, speedy lethal retaliation to send a message, cut-off financial & logistic support, diplomacy to shape world opinion, and constructive dialogue & engagement. India too has put together several strategies in the legislative, governance, legal, diplomatic, socio-economic, military, border management, intelligence, technological, cultural and civil society domains.

India's CI/CT strategies have been discussed in two parts: one, actions already taken at various levels and their impact; and two, the areas that merit attention to further improve our response mechanism.

Actions Taken So Far

Legal Framework and Laws: Based on the nature, intensity and frequency of attacks or potential threats from insurgents and terrorists, few laws have been enacted, amended, repealed and re-enacted over the years. Broadly, these are the laws to deal with terrorism like Terrorists and Disruptive (Prevention) Act, 1985, then an enactment of modified version of TADA called Prevention of Terrorism Act, 2002 (POTA). This too was eventually repealed in 2004. Generally, there have been differences of opinion on counter-terrorism laws between the Centre and the States. Post-Mumbai terror attack in November 2008, the proposal to establish a National Counterterrorism Centre (NCTC) to pro-actively confront terrorism was strongly opposed by the states. One of the main objections of the states was, the proposal stated that the Intelligence Bureau (IB) be bestowed with police powers. Nonetheless, laws to provide additional special powers to the SF have been enacted and sustained, including the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA), an enabling law providing legal protection. Laws to facilitate speedy investigation and prosecution in terror-related offences against terrorist groups and individuals like Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Amendment Act (UAPA), and others to control terror finances, hawala transactions, money laundering, economic terrorism, narco-terrorism, cyber terrorism, etc., have empowered counter-terrorism mechanisms. To ensure zero tolerance against terrorism, the most recent UAPA Amendment Act was passed by the Parliament on 24 July 2019.

Other Response Mechanisms: Apart from enacting laws, various other developments have strengthened our response mechanism over time. These include structural changes to develop an effective intelligence network at strategic and operational levels and an emphasis to build capacity and coordination among various organs; maintaining a nationwide counter-terrorism database; identifying and banning of 42 terrorist organisations which have been operating in India (1 March 2020 MHA Report), based both on internal and external groups support; monitoring and cutting off supply of oxygen in the form of flow of funds (sources, means of transfer, distribution channel, and linkages), material, weapon systems, and logistics support to terrorist networks; demonetisation of currency to rein in stockpiled cash reserves to curb terrorism; declaring Masood Azhar—the head of the terrorist group JeM—as a terrorist by the UN's 1267 Committee; raising an exclusive counter-insurgency force at the national level, called Rashtriya Rifles (National Rifles); fencing of the Line of Control (LoC) between India and Pakistan in J&K, coupled with technology enabled anti-infiltration measures; post-terrorist attacks in India, conducting surgical strikes on the known terrorists bases in the identified neighbouring countries; *ab initio* positioning of counter-terrorist forces at four additional regional hubs to deter the terrorists and to ensure a timely response; setting up of 21 Counter Insurgency and Anti Terrorism (CIAT) schools to train police forces in CI/CT operations; laying down restrictions prohibiting possession of certain categories of lethal firearms and explosives; promoting awareness about the role of society and religion, as also encouraging educational institutions to follow modern education system and transparent syllabi; foster greater tolerance among youth for each other's religion, community, beliefs, customs and traditions.

All these efforts have collectively helped to secure the country against terrorism to a fair extent over the years. However, the role of leaders (especially political and religious) and the society to maintain harmony among communities needs much greater improvement. Socio-economic exclusion and dilution in the integrity of India's institutions would always be detrimental to India's internal security, which gives rise to insurgencies and terrorism. Governance system should address these with a sense of urgency.

Grey Areas: Actions that Merit Attention

SGM Herbert Friedman highlights the significance of identifying the centre of gravity (CoG) of an insurgency to resolve it. He states, "There were just three successful cases where a legitimate government in power had beaten back a communist insurgency. These were in Greece, Philippines and

Malaya."[56] In each of these cases, the CoG was identified and addressed. As each insurgency is unique, hence, it is imperative to deal with different insurgencies with a separate set of strategy and methods. India's approach to CI and CT operations has been multi-layered, multi-dimensional, with kinetic actions being a part of the whole of government approach. However, the results achieved are mixed so far, because India continues to remain subjected to insurgencies, terrorism and violent extremism, albeit with a progressive decline in the incidents and killings. There is, therefore, a need to take actions to address the grey areas and further improve our CI/CT action plan.

Pre-insurgency Stage: Invariably, the pre-insurgency stage is the most neglected period when peoples' grievances are propagated, organisational structures are being organised and subversion is central to the beginning of an insurgency. The rebels exploit the resentment among the population to incite a popular movement. While the actual triggers are wide-ranging and erratic, the root causes of an insurgency are a cumulative result of several grievances. Therefore, early intervention at different levels is vital to prevent an insurgency. Unfortunately, most states are complacent to accept the simmering discontent among the populace, which finally requires a heavy hand to deal with violent situations; thus, creating more number of rebels.

Root Causes: To formulate a CI/CT strategy, there is a need to first understand the nature of conflict, analyse the root causes in general and those specific to a region or an ethnic community, identify the centre of gravity, and then formulate a strategy and methodology to be adopted to achieve their objectives. For instance, broadly, in North East India, there is a need to expedite development, connectivity, integration, job opportunities and to look after the ethnic and identity sensitivities of the people. In LWE affected areas, there is an urgent need to improve the governance system, provide job opportunities, recognise and integrate tribes, enforce performance audit and establish accountability, and implement community forest rights (forests and trees are sacred to adivasis) and land reforms on the ground, to win confidence of the tribal community.

Generally, promoting awareness and education are some of the primary ways to engage with the society, with balanced narratives to prevent the young generation from getting radicalised. A few of them, the youth in particular being most malleable to accept new ideas and narratives, resort to extremist violence. Undoubtedly, in this context, madrassas should impart modern education, in consonance with the syllabi recommended for other recognised institutions of the country. The syllabi should be transparent and be available on the websites.

While addressing the root causes, it is important to specify responsibility of each element of national power, adopt a 'zero tolerance' approach for corruption, and insist on establishing accountability by carrying out 'performance audit instead of a financial audit'.

Although, efforts have been made to secure the environment and focus on addressing the root causes, accountability and implementation of schemes on the ground requires significant improvement. Notwithstanding which, the insurgencies resurface after few years of recouping and rejuvenation. A case in point is LWE which has seen its revival in the 1980s and again in 2004. The insurgents and non-state actors continue to exploit the identity-based alienation and socio-economic faultlines in the society to initiate and sustain an insurgency. America's former President Barack Obama called the "widening income inequality the defining challenge of our time."[57]

Whole of Nation/Society Approach: In Henry Kissinger's words, "It is the task of strategic doctrine to translate power into policy."[58] Given the significance of national security, we still do not have a formal national security doctrine or an internal security doctrine. To combat the scourge of insurgency (which also has terrorism as subset of it) effectively, it requires a "whole of government and society's approach" with a comprehensive national security strategy in place. It must mandate the role of each element of national power in addressing various aspirations of the people. Besides seamless coordination, integration and unity of effort, it requires the government to implement people-oriented projects on the ground with a sense of urgency. This was something that the British, a colonial power, achieved during the Malayan Emergency (1948–60). In addition, civic action programmes, gathering of intelligence, improving surface & telephone connectivity, creation of new villages and psychological operations were given high priority.[59] Given India's density of population, civil defence and the mobilisation of civil society is equally important to monitor and report anti-national activities. George K. Tanham, in his interpretive essay, 'India's Strategic Thoughts', published by RAND in 1992, categorically states that "India's relative lack of strategic thinking has produced little formal strategic planning." Although this part is not entirely correct after three decades, but the fact is that we still do not have a formal document as national security/internal security doctrine or strategy. It must be formulated in two parts: classified and unclassified. It would certainly provide the guidelines to all elements of national power to play their role in short-term and long-term perspective to resolve conflicts. Ever since the first insurgency—the Naga Insurgency—became effective in 1956, we have only resolved the classical insurgency in Mizoram and the militancy in Punjab. Although, the overall violence levels in LWE and North

East have declined over the past 5-6 years, our track record in resolution of insurgencies has been rather poor. There is a window of opportunity to resolve some of our ongoing conflicts. The understanding of the conflicts should lead to the formulation of a comprehensive strategy and an action plan that defines the role of each element of national power with timelines to accomplish their short-term and long-term objectives. Media has an extremely important role to uncover extremism, terrorism & radicalisation, by being objective, and countering malicious narratives by the anti-national elements (ANEs).

Intelligence: In CI/CT operations, timely and actionable information is the actual game changer. To have a robust and responsive intelligence system, it is expedient to further improve the organisational structures, capacity & capability of forces, and monitor their performance periodically. 'Human intelligence' has continued to remain one of our main weaknesses. AI and technology-enabled devices, including facial recognition devices, should be effectively utilised as part of a robust intelligence system and data bank to monitor activities of the terrorists and their network. In India, in this regard, a lot more needs to be done to make the intelligence architecture—both external and internal at different levels—more effective and responsive. The effectiveness of multi-agency centre (MAC) and subsidiary multi-agency centres (SMACs), and the response from state intelligence agencies, should also be evaluated for their performance. Simultaneously, as part of regional/sub-regional cooperation, these should be shared on a real-time basis with the neighbouring countries to combat insurgency and terrorism.

Responsive Force Structure: To improve the response mechanism, capacity building, modernisation of the police, National Security Guards (NSG), Army & other CT forces, and effective training, is not only an option but an imperative. Our CI/CT forces should be equipped with most appropriate weapons and equipment to combat a terrorist at close quarters, and with minimum collateral damage in built-up areas and crowded cities. India is a densely populated country. Since state police has a better local network and, more often, is the first responder in Mumbai-like terrorist attacks, it is expedient to transform the civilian police to achieve: one, adequate police presence by progressively improving police to population ratio (1.80 to 1000),[60] and an increased number of police stations with good communication network to enhance situational awareness and to contain violence at the earliest opportunity; two, capacity building by intensive training on basic skills and on latest weapons & equipment, use of digital platforms for distance learning, skill development, and experts to analyse the

likely future targets in their areas of responsibility; three, to train them to operate in an environment with the most appropriate force (minimum), and methods to minimise collateral damage; four, to engage with local populace and leaders, identify the vulnerable segments of society, discreetly monitor activities of suspected ANEs and seek community's support; and five, ability to carry out effective investigations with forensic, explosives & lingual experts, and other facilities available. To remain abreast with the latest technology, certain powers should be delegated to appropriate functionaries to carry out emergency procurements of the latest equipment or technology to train and apply them in CI/CT operations.

Emergency Protocol System: During a terror attack, time would always be at a premium to analyse the situation, decide a course of action, nominate the forces, brief them and the supporting elements, movement of forces, and coordination with other agencies. An 'emergency protocol system' should be put in place with all stakeholders to discuss and take a timely call to respond with the most appropriate force structures, who are properly equipped and are battle ready. Forensic experts, bomb squad, intelligence personnel, negotiators, trained media personnel, fire fighters, medical teams, dogs and their handlers, should be readily available to respond to an arising situation. In crowded cities, applicable to all class A and B cities in India, there is a need to examine alternative means of moving to reach the point of decision at the earliest time frame. Besides movement by helicopters, even motorcycle-crash groups could be considered to face local conditions. Employment of unmanned aircraft system (UAS) or quad copters or drones could also be considered to gain real-time information. It also gives a psychological advantage against the insurgents and terrorists. Forensic experts, bomb squad and dogs should be an integral part of CI/CT organisations. Post terror strike, an in-depth analysis of data should be carried out along with the support of these experts. It should include the ideology, sources of funding, weapons & equipment, motivation, tactics used, linkages with other organisations, training areas & methodology, selection of targets, etc.

Surgical Strikes: Connected with the responsive force and emergency protocol system, we should have 'well-considered actions' against transnational forces indulging in organising terrorist attacks in India. In the future, India must always have multiple options to retaliate at the earliest opportunity / immediately, which requires the nominated forces to be trained, equipped and be operationally ready. In fact, it would be expedient to graduate to developing intelligence to give precise locations of the terrorist organisations, leaders, training facilities cum bases and their activities. Based on pinpoint

accuracies, the aim should be to neutralise them even across the borders by unmanned systems and by other technologies in place. Simultaneously, we must be fully prepared for counter retaliatory measures. India should not be seen as a soft state; it must continue to take hard decisions against terrorist organisations and their leaders; including seriously examining the 'Doctrine of Preemption', without causing collateral damage.

Technology and Training: The terrorists and insurgents are known to exploit new technologies, to look at unsuspecting targets and new methods of attack. CI/CT organisations must also understand that high technology systems are force enablers and force multipliers. Besides carrying out SWOT analysis, these technologies must be used to gather intelligence, and analyse the intercepts, inputs, their activities, and prioritise the likely targets of terrorists in advance. For monitoring and surveillance of terrorists, digital mapping of population and AI enabled facial recognition must be put in place. It is expedient to have a well-publicised strategic level settings and full-scale CI/CT operations and hostage rescue exercises on the ground, with participation from all supporting elements. These would help to achieve multiple aims, besides demonstrating the capability of the forces. The ultimate aim should be to achieve exceptionally high levels of preparedness, and also be prepared to undertake preemptive strikes and thus achieve deterrence capabilities.

Radicalisation: In the long term, radicalisation is far more dangerous to national security than insurgency and terrorism. Although, Aristotle (384 BC-322 BC) had said, "Poverty is the parent of revolution," it gets aggravated by deprivation, discrimination, social injustice, socio-economic exclusion, perceived wrongs done to a community, and unemployment among the youth. Under such circumstances, young people with good education and from middle class-cum-affluent backgrounds have taken to cult of violence. Several leaders of terrorist groups belong to relatively affluent backgrounds. To counter an adversary's 'well-orchestrated' propaganda, narratives, misinformation and fake news, it is vital to form an effective apex level organisation, to formulate a detailed strategic communication plan and issue counter narratives on historical, religious, political, social, cultural and psychological issues. Such campaigns can best be countered urgently by a better idea and a credible and balanced narrative. Thus, information warfare with a robust cyber capacity and capability must be accorded high priority. In J&K, serious efforts are required to analyse the factors responsible for radicalisation: external, internal, J&K specific. Thereafter, carry out counter radicalisation and de-radicalisation with the support of various elements of the society such as family members, teachers, religious teachers, local leaders and the state machinery.

Prosecution and speed of justice: 'Zero tolerance to terrorism' should not remain a mere slogan, but it must be backed by adequate legislative, legal provisions and force capability. One of the major lacunae is that, our judicial trial on charges of terrorism is not only disturbingly slow; but also the conviction rate is exceptionally poor. The criminal justice system in India is being flooded with about 4 to 5 million cognisable crimes annually (48,31,515 cases in 2016: MHA report). This notwithstanding, the prosecution and speed of justice in cases involving terror attacks, terror financing and cyber terrorism, should be expedited to send the correct message to all anti-national elements. The legal provisions to investigate and freeze financial assets of terrorist organisations should be relatively simple, to incapacitate their sustenance.

Urban Terrorism: In the densely populated urban areas of India, it is virtually impossible to identify a sleeper cell, a terrorist or an anti-national activist, who masks his identity and blends effortlessly into the living environment. Such sleeper cells are not on the radar of the security agencies. Accurate actionable intelligence about impending attacks by terrorists is central to fighting successful urban terrorism. It may involve electronic surveillance and monitoring 'suspected communications' to know the designs of terrorist groups. In crowded cities like Mumbai, Delhi, Bengaluru, it is virtually impossible to reach the 'ground zero' by road in vehicles. Locally based solutions are required to combat terrorism. It would then be possible to neutralise the terrorists before they can launch their planned attacks. We would also require the support of local populace who should remain vigilant to any anti-national activities. The Central and State intelligence agencies should gather, process, and share information methodically with all concerned stakeholders.

Regional and Transnational Cooperation: Given the increasing trend of international or transnational terror groups, the magnitude of threats and manifestations of international and cross-border terrorism are enormous. Cases in point are ISIS and Al Qaeda which have bases in different parts of the world, as well as several smaller affiliate groups. As India is located in an unstable neighbourhood in South Asia, cross-border linkages of terrorist groups have made the problem even more intricate. To neutralise such extensive networks and their nefarious designs, there is a need for close cooperation among the international community. Further, it is imperative to have a political consensus and cooperative strategy at the international and regional level. It should address issues pertaining to sharing intelligence and terrorists-related data, findings of certain terror attacks conducted with other transnational terror groups, linkages with

transnational organised crimes, illegal drug trafficking, illegal human & arms trafficking, actions to prevent money laundering, proliferation of nuclear, biological & chemical weapons, extradition of confirmed terrorists, indoctrination & radicalisation. Wherever feasible, bilateral or regional treaties, with neighbours, should be signed to allow the affected country's SF to neutralise terrorist's network across the political boundaries. Globally, tight security and monitoring measures should be enforced on nuclear fissile material, nuclear power reactors and storage facilities to prevent nuclear terror attacks.

Application of Soft Power: Application of soft power in conflict-ridden areas refers to effective strategic communications, establishing a 'separate data mining organisation',[61] economic development, diplomacy, surface and digital connectivity, civic action programmes, improving healthcare facilities, generating employment opportunities, promoting culture, language & dialects, and meeting the local aspirations of the populace. As Joseph Nye highlights that soft power tends to "work indirectly by shaping the environment for policy, and sometimes takes years to produce the desired outcomes."[62] Strong economy is one of the most important parts that facilitate application of soft power. Promotion of tourism and its facilitation, local artefacts, sale of local agricultural and forest produce to bigger markets, etc., would help to generate economic activity at the grassroot level. Media has a significant role in sharing credible and balanced reporting, with a view to prevent fear, rumour mongering setting among the public at large. Once the security situation starts stabilising, the government must lay greater attention to soft power vis-à-vis hard power, with genuine concern for human security. The front organisations of the insurgents and terror groups influence their sympathisers, followers and local populace by issuing well-formulated narratives, at political & societal levels, by exploiting the social media and internet to their advantage. An ideology or a narrative can be countered only by a strong, effective and better idea/narrative, at the most appropriate time. Therefore, we require an organisation at the apex level to remain pro-active in creating credible narratives to prevent misinformation, propaganda and fake news by the inimical forces.

A combination of cyber terrorism, with cyber espionage, cyber attacks and hacking pose a serious threat to the security of the country. Therefore, adequate measures are required to be put in place to ward off or deter cyber attacks, by creating an apex body, like national cyber command, that can conduct full spectrum cyberspace operations.

Structural Change: Ministry of Internal Security (MIS)

Post 9/11 and Congressional Commission Report that investigated 9/11, the US realised the pitfalls in the intelligence apparatus and coordination among various department and agencies which was detrimental to internal security. The US addressed the problem by creating the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), in the largest reorganisation of the US government after 1947. India too is beset with a large number of threats and challenges to its internal security, as discussed, a few of which have direct intervention and support of foreign powers.[63] Besides adverse effect on 'human security', it has a huge impact on the economy of the country. The security challenges have been analysed in detail, with rationale and recommended that India should consider creating a separate ministry called MIS, which should be responsible for intelligence, police, law & order, and public order.[64] It is logical and merits consideration. MIS should also continuously coordinate with other departments as internal security is intertwined with external threats and challenges as well.

Conclusion

Strong economic growth and economic stability in developing countries is one of the most powerful means to fulfil the survival needs and legitimate aspirations of the people. This itself reduces socio-economic inequality, unemployment, discrimination and friction in the society; thus, paving the way for a relatively secure environment. With rapidly evolving global trends, countering terrorism and insurgencies across the world will require a more innovative, preemptive and people-centric response mechanism to be put in place. In the Indian context, a progressive decline in violence, incidents, and killings in the recent times has provided an excellent opportunity to employ 'smart power'—a combination of soft power and hard power in order of priority or employment of a whole range of tools and means available to the state to resolve the conflict. Further, the process of rehabilitation and reintegration of surrendered insurgents—a major weakness of our system— needs to be implemented on the ground.

To address terrorism and insurgencies effectively, intelligence, physical, digital & cyber security, information warfare, modernisation of forces, coordination, investigation of terror attacks and community's active involvement must be given due priority. We will require an analysis of the country's organisational capabilities, and put into effect a comprehensive inter-ministerial, multi-disciplinary counter-terrorism/counter-insurgency policy, with the state governments also playing an equally important role. Military muscle power and technology put together cannot provide solution to combating

terrorism and insurgencies. Ultimately, strong political leadership, stable economy, speedy disposal of terrorism related cases by judiciary, creating job opportunities, implementing people centric projects on the ground and community forest rights, and ensuring constructive engagement and dialogue with all stakeholders, are perhaps the key to resolution of conflicts and terrorism.

"This was an attack not just on Parliament house, but a warning to the entire country. We accept the challenge. We will foil every attempt of the terrorists."

— Prime Minister of India, Atal Bihari Vajpayee

(13 December 2001)

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