Chapter V

Terrorism in Punjab and Cross-Border Connection

The genesis of the terrorist movement in Punjab is traced, occurred in April 1978. The 13th of April marks the birth of the Sikh khalsa, and had been chosen in that year by the Nirankaris Sect to hold its annual convention at Amritsar. The Nirankaris are accused of apostasy by the Akalis and by other fundamentalist Sikh groupings. A gang of a few hundred members of an Akhand Kirtani Jatha led by Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale and Fauja Singh attacked the Nirankaris convention. There was a long history of such clashes, but on this occasion 13 Sikhs were killed including Fauja Singh along with three Nirankaris. Over the next six years until his death in June in 1984, Bhindranwale was to propagate the creed of unadulterated the mobilising the political frustrations of the Sikhs from a fundamentalist religious platform. The Punjab has experiences one of the most lethal terrorist violence in the world which has left not only thousands of innocent people killed, injured and uprooted but has also left its scars on the five hundred years old harmonious relationship that existed between the two predominant sections of Punjab society the Hindus and the Sikhs. This however does not mean that a common Hindu or Sikh was prone to kill each other, or harboured a feeling or perpetual hatred against each other. The tragic course of the events nevertheless certainly marked a water-shed in the Hindu Sikh relations putting the common man in both the communities in the dilemma. During the early years of freedom movement of India, it is useful to recall that the mainstream of the Sikh community and its moderate leadership held by the Akali Dal supported the peaceful and non-violent method of struggle launched by leaders like Gandhi. Yet some extremist elements amongst them however chose the violent path to oust the foreign British government from India and win independence. But in no way was violence aimed at ruthless butchering of the innocent people. Their
cause was national liberation not narrow personal or political gains. These extremists organised themselves in the form of Chakarvati Dals and later the Babar Akalis Jaths and started a parallel militant movement of their own popularly called the Babbar Akali movement.¹ The militants of this movement comprised returned emigrants and Ghadrites and the retired soldiers who rejected the peaceful method as unworkable and instigated Indians to become violent against the British and their Indian supporters.²

The beginning of terrorist movement in Punjab rewash rooted long and continuous process of decline in which intricate and often unscrupulous political manoeuvres systematically undermined democratic processes in the state. After independence and the tragedy of partition, political parties in Punjab continued to pursue a divisive politics that laid inordinate emphasis on the separation of communal identities, and that ‘Reorganisation’ of the Punjab state on ‘Linguistic’ lines. This meant its trifurcation in 1966 in to a Sikh majority Punjab and Hindu majority Haryana and Himachal Pradesh. The ‘Reorganisation’ however failed to create the necessary based for the communal vote, and the share of the Sikh parties, specifically the Akali Dal, remained well below 30 percent through the late sixties and the seventies, with more than half the Sikh population un equivocally rejecting their ideology and methods of communal mobilisation. The Akalis were, consequently never able to do better than to cobble together unstable coalitions in Punjab. At the same time the ‘Secular’ formations, including prominently, the Congress (1) also adopted the

² The word Ghadr stands for revolution. A ‘Ghadr party’ originally known as the ‘Hindustani Association of the pacific Coast’ came into being in Astoria, Oregan, U.S.A. on 21 April 1993 under the Guidance of a philosopher Literature, and Lala Hardayal. The other revolutionary figures who worked for this Ghadr party were Sohan singh Bhakna, Bhai Harman Singh Tudilat, Bhai Udham Singh, Pt. Kanshi Ram and Lala Ram Rakha. Advocating a campaign of violence through an armed revolution, the party aimed at the freedom of India and to set up a republican government based on liberty and equity. A weekly journal ‘Ghadr’ was brought out which inflamed the passions of the Indian people in U.S.A and Canada to inspire their Indian counterparts to work for the freedom of the country through violence against the British. The revolutionary spirit of the militant elements in Punjab as the Babbars was alleged to have established regular liaison with the revolutionary movements outside the country.
politics of alternating communal incitement and appeasement, as they made a bid not only for the popular vote, but equally for the control of the religious affairs of the Sikhs through the Shiromani Gurdwaraa Prabandhak Committee (SGPC), the body that administered Sikh religious affairs and places of worship. This incendiary mix of unprincipled politics and the manipulation of religious identities and institutions’ gradually brought the lunatic fringe of the Sikh far right to the centre stage of the state’s politics, pushing it into the spiral of violence that was to consume 21,469 lives in a little over a decade of strife, before the movement for ‘Khalistan’ was comprehensively defeated in 1993.3

The word Sikhs derived from the Prakrit - Sikkha which in Sanskrit became Sishya meaning disciple. It gives as a new sect around “Hinduism” but outside it. The religion was evolved by a succession of ten Gurus. The credit in fact goes to Guru Nanak for the creation of this sect/religion. However, the contribution of sixth Guru is worth mentioning here as he was the one who combined temporal and spiritual authorities by putting two swords—one of on the right and other on the left—combining meeri and peeri (temporal and spiritual authorities). For this time onwards Sikhs continued to combine religion and politics. Likewise the seeds of separate identity were sown by Guru Gobind Singh. He inspired his folk men with faith and gave those five KS as a distinct mark—Kes (long hair), Kangha (comb), Kripan (sword), Kachcha (short drapers) and Kara (steel bracelets) and thus created khalsa on April 13, 1699 at Anandpur Sahib. He baptised the five devotees and got himself baptised from them by giving power to the sangat to overrule the Guru and thus created real democracy. This is how one can trace the course of politicisation of religion or the fusion of religion of politics in Sikhism as well as the development of militant attitude amongst Sikhs. MISL or territorial confederacies which were created during 1945 - 1967, a period which saw about 6 Afghan invasions,

determine to the large extent the Sikh Socio - Political expectations even today. MSL were created to defend the Sikh Socio - Political expectations even today. In times of strife local leaders organised the bands of able bodied Sikhs, initially to fight against Afghans or Mughals and ultimately to fight each other. However, the idea of MSL became firmly embodied in the minds of Sikhs as accepted, recognisable way of organising of conflicts. The present day functionalism in Punjab politics is the modern equivalent to these ancient confideracies. Knowledge of 18th century MSL sets pattern for and legitimises the modern factionalism in politics. ‘We are behaving people may say to themselves as our for-bears did when one. MSL struggled against another in former glorious times’.

While the above mentioned facts reflects the development of violent methods and struggles for safeguarding their life, liberty and property as well as fusion of religion and politics, there were other factors responsible for the development of ‘threat to the religious identities’, largely associated with the issue of the control and management of Gurudwaras. Gurudwaras acquired great significance after Guru Gobind Singh’s proclamation of Granth Sahib as the eternal Guru and became the pivot of Sikh social life as this was the place where sacred book was housed. Many Gurudwaras were run by Hindu Mahantas (supervisors) or those who had abandoned their outward symbols of five KS and became indistinguishable from Hindus. The properties of the Gurudwaras came to be recorded in their names. Perception of a grave threat to their religious identities because of the above mentioned reason paved way for the setting up of Shiromani Gurudwaras Prabandhak Committees (SGPC) to manage the Golden Temple in 1920. Few months later ‘Akali Dal’ or the army

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of the faithful or immortal was created to wrest control of Gurudwaras from the Mahants.5

Simultaneously the campaign run by some Hindu communal forces to deny the emergence of Sikhism as an independent religion let to a growing fear amongst the Sikh elites that the Sikhs might be absorbed in the Hindu social system. This is how; historically speaking Sikhs started perceiving themselves as separate people. The Sikh has been trying to obtain recognition of this distinct identity for decades. The underlying objective of the struggle thus was political power. There were various other factors which provide fuel to the otherwise dominant demand for independent recognition of Sikh identity in the post-independence era which by the decade of late 1970s took the form of ‘Khalistan’.

5.1. Imperial Conspiracy

British imperialist who ruled India till 1947 did all they could to keep Indian people divided and to weaken their unity in the fight for independence.

As a part of their game of “Divide and Rule” the British rulers and their spokesman not only made persistent efforts to plan in the minds of the people the patently false and dangerous concept of our nation being based on religion-of Indian consisting of separate Hindu, Muslim and Sikh nations, etc - but they also encouraged our people to imbibe this belief. This was sought to be done with special vigour ever since the first war of independence of 1857. “There is not and never was an Indian”, proclaimed Sir John Strachey in his “Indian, its administration and progress”, 1888.

The rivalry between Hindu rulers or Mahantas and Sikhs, whereby growth of Sikhism as an Independent religion was denied, was fully utilised by British to inculcate, encourage and strengthen the false and reactionary concept

of an Independent political identity of the Sikhs. The campaign run by some Hindu Communal forces to deny the emergence of Sikhism as an independent religion led to a growing fear amongst the Sikh elite that the Sikhs might be absorbed in the Hindu social system and might thus lost their distinct communal (religious) identity. This was taken advantage of by the British to inculcate, encourage and strength the false and reactionary concept of an Independent political identity of the Sikh.

Against the background with the demand of Pakistan by Muslim league, Akalis too demanded Azad Punjab in 1942 when Cripps Mission arrived in India. The Sikhs are encouraged by the British to regard themselves as a totally distinct and separate nation. They made persistent efforts to inculcate among the people that the dangerous idea of religion as the basis of nation - states.

The “Azad Punjab Scheme” provided for the redemarcation of Punjab boundaries. The then predominantly Muslim districts were to be separated and merged with the North-West Frontier Province. The remaining districts were to be in the proposed “Azad Punjab”. In which neither community would be in a dominant majority. In case of India being partitioned “Azad Punjab” was to be turned into a buffer state between India and Pakistan. The scheme did not get popular Sikh support. Some Akali Leaders did not in begning rebuff of Jinnah to get their support for Pakistan (with the whole of Punjab going to it). But latter on the patriotic Sikh masses forced them to do so.

5.2. Militancy and Religion

The perception of Sikhs with regard to their political world and motivation is deep rooted in their cultural and religious traditions in which militant politics ever since the days of Guru Govind Singh. Another related factor is the importance of the “Khalsas Identity”. According to Sudhir Kakkar
the two elements militancy and martyrdom are its inner counterparts of the well known five KS which constitute the outer marks of the khalsas identity.\(^6\)

Since the days of the great Guru Govind Singh, one dying for the cause of the panth if glorified and treated as a martyr. On this ground terrorist in Punjab justified their inhuman acts of violence and genocide. This is how they tried to acquire mass recognition to the elements of ‘Independent Punjab’. Militancy and Religion as a matter of fact have always been a part of Akali politics in Punjab during the post independent period. Sikhs always resorted to militant posture in order to achieve their goals whatever they may be, what is new is not militancy rather its increased dimension, intensity, changed objectives. It also carries the explanation of extremist and terrorist facing little difficulty in adopting militancy and the rationale behind their appeal to the psyche of the Sikh masses in highly subjective terms in the name of religious prestige and honour of the panth.\(^7\)

The relationship between religion and militancy or religion and politics thus paved for a significance role to be played by ‘Akal Takht’. The Takht is regarded as the seat of both spiritual and secular powers. Besides, Akal Takht is also the seat of theoretic education in Punjab where the children of small, rural peasants get the education completely based on Sikh scriptures and rituals, devoid of modern education and scientific outlook. Granthis, Ragis and priests appointed at various Gurudwaras, are also the product of this institution, who is important players in the politico - religious affairs of Punjab.\(^8\)

### 5.3. Role of Akali Dal

The first political party exclusively representing the Sikh community was formed (Akali Dal) in early twenties which provided a platform for the assertion

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7. Ibid p 135
of a Separate Sikh identity, but at the same time created a minority complex among the Sikh community. Sikh fear of losing this identity in a pre-dominantly Hindu India became sharpened when political power continued to erode the Akali party even in Punjab. This turned the Akali energies into organising political agitations at regular interval on various issues - political, economic, agrarian, linguistic and religious in order to broaden their areas of influence. All such agitations had only one single objective to promote the legitimacy of the Sikh desire to rule in Punjab and were rooted in a supposed denial of the perceived claims to political supremacy in the state.

Before independence the Akali party functioned as adjunct of the Indian National Congress. After independence and partition in 1947, there were rumblings of discontent of the Akali party due to wooing of Akali by the congress party, the major segment of which stayed away from the congress, the gulf between congress and the Akali party continued to grow till it became nearly unbridgeable in the 1970s. Mrs. Indira Gandhi used two well thought out strategies to finish off the Akalis as the viable Sikh political party which could challenge designs of the congress party to rule the Punjab.

- She encouraged the growth and expansion of the Sikh extremist movement by giving covert support to Bhindaranwale and,
- When he become controllable, took to large scale killings and plunder and established a reign of terror in the Punjab, she ordered army to flush out the terrorist from the holiest shrine of the Sikhs, the Golden Temple.

She largely succeeded in her designs. The Akali party which represented the moderate segment of Sikhs become irrelevant in Punjab. Inevitably the extremists gained ground as the Akali party become non-functional for quite some time. The army action in this background made Sikh community in India and abroad discontented, sullen, angry, and alienated.
Extremists, thus, had an open field to spread out its roots aggressively, Harvinder Ahuja observes that the ‘the Akali and the extremist were at the root cause of the entire crisis, the Akalis for daily rising, retreating and renewing their demands without realising their significance and repercussions. Everyone knows the never raised any demand when they were ruling in Punjab but once out of power, they suddenly become votaries of the Sikh cause. One of the biggest crimes to be has blurred the distinction between the Sikh religion and politics. The Akali Dal is an always was a political party and whatever the Akalis were asking for was all political in nature and based on a desire for power in Punjab. They shamelessly gave a religious facade to it and mouthed their demands for inside the holy places. They exploited the peasantry and the illiterate Sikh masses by raising the bogey of the panth in danger. Whenever they issued call for the agitation, it was always addressed to the Sikhs and not to their own party men.\(^9\)

The role of Akali Dal in Punjab politics to turn to violence was too great that it needs a separate analysis.\(^10\)

**5.4. Anandpur Sahib Resolution**

The Anandpur Sahib resolution first adopted in 1973 at Anandpur Sahib received mixed reaction in Punjab politics. The most controversial aspect of the resolution was use of the word “Sikh Quam”. This controversy was at the helm of Punjab crisis. Innumerable interpretations were offered during the course of agitation. But no agreement could be reached as to which version to be accepted. This disagreement was mainly because Indira Gandhi wanted to keep the issue alive for electoral gains.

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The resolution got caught in the midst of nation-wide controversy. It is important to highlight some of the issues raised in the resolution. There are altogether 12 resolutions adopted by the all India Akali Conference held at Ludhiana on 28-29 October 1978 under the presidencship of Jathedar Jagdev Singh Talwandi.

The first resolution is of general political nature which demands decentralisation of power so that state can have full autonomy of maintains its cultural and linguistic identity. The second resolution called for fulfilment of pending demands such as transfer of Chandigarh to Punjab, distribution of Ravi Beas waters, and to increase strength of Sikhs in the army. The third resolution was dedicated to economic guidelines for the state of Punjab as well as for India. Similarly, resolution 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 were also related to various grievances of Sikh community against the central government.

The most controversial of all the resolutions was the resolution number 9 that sought permission from the government of India to install a broadcasting station at the Golden Temple for relay of Gurbani to fulfil spiritual aspirations of the Sikh living abroad. It was the resolution which received severe and was rejected outright. Government took serious objection to these farfetched demands. The term “Sikh Qaum” or “Sikh Nationhood” as interpreted by the congress had already brought the state in political turmoil. Further demand for the broadcasting station was enough for the congress to brand the Akali demands as secessionist.

It is possible that if the government of India would have given serious consideration other demands, the controversial portions of the resolution could have been dropped. But Indira Gandhi did utmost haste in rejecting the entire charter of the Anandpur Sahib Resolution. Some of the demands, as proposed in the resolution were genuine which received enthusiastic support from the
common people, for instance greater autonomy in the governance of the state and decentralisation of power. These were not merely genuine demands of Sikhs in Punjab, but drew nationwide attention specifically in states ruled by opposition parties.

The outright denial of Akali demands opened a new chapter of confrontation in Punjab politics. It creates such a common in the body politics of Punjab that Akali Dal too was divided into two groups - the followers of hard line approach and the soft line approach. The democrat stalwarts like Sant Longowal, Badal and Barnala were sidelined by the hardlines who were encouraged by the congress to weaken the Akali Dal. In the process of creating an instrument against Akali Dal, the congress created a national problem.

The political bungling of the congress ultimately inspired Pakistan top intervene. Pakistan intelligence was all out to shelter, train and protect misguided anti - Indian Sikhs abroad. On the occasion of the birth anniversary of Guru Nanak, i.e, 8 November 1984 thousands of Sikhs settled abroad gathered at Nankana Sahib near Lahore. Important leaders amongst the participants were G.S.Dhillon and Jasbir Sing, brother of Bhindranwale who converted the religious concretion into a political meeting with the help of Pakistan government. The following of hardline approach were encouraged by the Pakistan intelligence agencies for a violent revolution in Punjab. The following section would highlight how they were encouraged from an insignificant entity to a hero and finally from hero to martyrdom.

The Anandpur Sahib Decision drafted by a sub – committee of the Akali Dal in 1973 and makes many demands which virtual support of a Sikh state by vast powers was shaped a flurry in a dovecote of Indian polity. The best reason of concern was the decision claiming that the Sikhs were a “Qaum” (State), a term denoting a separate state, but which has never been defined. The
subsequent support of the resolution of the Akali Dal generated uneasy political reaction and certain amount of distrust but the Sikh and the Hindu communities. Then there was one violent incident after another, and the Sikh militancy was obvious to the political observers but it all had it seems that started with a sharp argument between a group led by Sant Bhindrawala and the Nirankaris when the former had tried to disturb the letters ‘Samagam’ (a religious gathering a large convention) at a holy city of Amritsar. The sympathies of the Hindus in general were with Nirankaris as it was seen as an attempt by the extremist Sikhs to interfere with the Nirankaris right to profess their faith. This resulting in widening furthers the Hindu-Sikh Hiatus, and embroiled the Hindus in various violent acts.\textsuperscript{11}

What has been said in the preceding paras should help one to understand the real meaning of the much talked about Anandpur Sahib Resolution. There are many versions of the resolution. We can leave out the one which is claimed to be the real one by the Talwandi faction of the Akali party. The original one was adopted in 1973 at Gurdwaraa Anandpur Sahib in the town of Anandpur by the working committee of the Akali party.

It was stated in the introduction of the resolution that the English translation was by Amar Singh Ambalvi, who was also a member of the 12-member committee which had been constituted by the working committee to formulate comprehensive policies and programmes of the Akali party. The introduction also stated that notwithstanding sharp differences at any meetings, the final; report was adopted unanimously.

A slightly different version appeared in the press on December 13, 1982. This was said to be the flux text of the English version of the political goal resolution adopted by the working committee of the Dal on October 16-17,\textsuperscript{11}

1973 at Anandpur Sahib. There is another version - the one which was signed by the late Sant Longowal and given to Inder Kumar Gujral. There is yet another version which appeared in the white paper issued by the government of India in July 1984. This was supplied to the government by the Akali leadership.

Anyway, those who swear by the Anandpur Sahib Resolution make it clear that they mean the original 1973 one. All versions of the resolution contain certain religious as well as economic demands. Some of the latter are the real demands of the rural rich. Others are for catching votes. We need not go into all these because the essence of the Anandpur Sahib Resolution lies somewhere else.

Whereas all the Sikhs of India are historically and politically recognised and the political aim of every version is defined as “khalsas Ji ka Bol Bala”. This is nothing but a demand for a theocratic Punjab. They are based on the thesis that Sikhs are not only an independent religious community (which they undoubtedly are) but are also an independent and separate political identity - which they are not. In all the versions there is the false claim that the Akali party is the sole representative of the Sikhs.12

The genesis of present terrorism is usually related to the Anandpur Sahib Resolution which, along many other things, demanded greater autonomy for the state of Punjab, a step towards separation from India. But, Infact, the tendency of separation among Sikhs from the Hindu fold can be traced with the inception of Sikhism itself. There is no doubt that the demand for the acceptance of the Anandpur Sahib Resolution is the demand for “khalistan” within india but with a very weak centre, and its acceptance can only prove a big step towards a sovereign “khalistan”. The crisis of identity, which the Sikhs have been

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CHAPTER-V

Problems of Cross-Border Terrorism in India

experiencing from the very beginning, was reinforced by the British rulers in India. Also not only the religious and political leaders of the Sikh community but also their counterparts of the Hindu community in Punjab contributed, intentionally or unintentionally, to this psyche of the Sikh community.\(^\text{13}\)

The Anandpur Sahib Resolution does not limit itself to demanding a restricting of centre-state relations and to ask for more powers to the state. It calls for “maintaining the feeling of a separate independent entity of the Sikh panth and creation of an environment in which the ‘national aspiration’ of the Sikhs can be full and satisfactory”, as one of its political aims. It lists a number of areas from neighbouring states for the creation of a ‘New Punjab’, as a sample administrative unit wherein Sikhism and the interest of the Sikhs can be specially protected. The division of powers between centre and state is not simply based on a desire to rationalise centre–state relations but is actually an insidious attempt to emasculate the centre. In new Punjab the authority of the centre is to be confined only to the defence, foreign relations, communication, railway and currency. All the residuary subjects (departments) are to be under the jurisdiction of ‘New Punjab’, which should have the right to frame its own constitution of these subjects.\(^\text{14}\)

5.5. ‘Khalistan’ A Neoimperialist Game

Though it was on 13 October 1971 that Jagit Singh Chauhan inserted a half page advertisement in the New York Times detailing the reasons for establishing the ‘Sovereign’ Sikh state of ‘khalistan’. Its ideological basis in India was evolved later. At that stage neither the international community nor the Sikhs in India paid much attention to the advertisement. The slogan for


‘Khalistan’ was generally dismissed as a cry in wilderness. Chauhan had first raised the slogan of ‘khalistan’ publicity at a press conference in London in September, 1971. On April 12, 1980, he announced the formation of ‘National Council of khalistan’ with himself as a president and Shri Balbir Singh Sandhu as its Secretary General. Three months later he proclaimed from London the formation of the state of khalistan a similar announcement having been made in India by Balbir Singh Sandhu. The purpose of the Punjab terrorists is ‘khalistan”, i.e, an independent sovereign theocratic Sikh state. This is not only against the interest of India and Indian people as a whole. It is against the interest of the Sikhs themselves. Nowhere in the world has a theocratic state done any good, even to the people-the common people - professing the state religion. The Islamic state of Pakistan has not brought any happiness to the common Muslims of that country - the worker, agricultural labourers poor peasants, middle class people etc. Almost throughout the existence of this theocratic state, people have still deprived of even and most elementary human rights and of course, of democracy. Unemployment among Muslim youth has not disappeared. Women have been reduced to the status of second class citizens in every field of life. Instead of Hindu-Muslim riots, Pakistan has now Shia-Sunni riots, riots between the Mujahirs and the locals. All those involved in these riots and Muslims. If India were to say that Muslims who migrated from post - 1947 India to Pakistan can return to settle in India. A large number of then would avail of the opportunity with a great sigh of relief. Even though there is much misery, wrong and injustice in secular India, the reality of the situation in theocratic Pakistan surely has a lesson for those who feel attracted by the slogan of “khalistan”.  

Ever since the Akali extremist in Punjab is demanded separate homeland for khalistan, bombing, hijacking and destruction of both Hindus and Sikh

shrines have disrupted the atmosphere of Punjab. There are various reports about foreign hands encouraging these activities and fighting in Punjab. It is a tragedy that the Sikhs had made fabulous sacrifice during separation of the country and not allows their patriotic dream to be clouded, should be on the threshold of demanding the very basis of their Indians. However, hard thoughts have to make the votaries of khalistan conscious of the dangers inherent in any attempt at shape of khalistan. No countries can it to be dismembered. Any attempt at creation of a separate Sikh state however packaged or camouflaged on the basis of religion is bound to be taken as a challenge by all Indians who want to care for the country’s protective integrity. It is an important piece of the India. To talk about of the Sikh being a distinct and separate nation, as the extremists have expressed, is to fly in the face of the evident fact that the Punjabi Hindus and Sikhs are but the warp and woof of the social, cultural and economic fabric.

The terrorist in Punjab have openly declared that their main objective is the establishment of khalistan. At the moment let us discuss the roots and processes of terrorism initiated of some sections of the Sikh community.

The movement of the creation of khalistan was one of the most virulent terrorist campaigns in the world. Launched in the early 1980,s by a group of bigots who discovered their justification in a perversion of the Sikh religious identity, and supported by a gaggle of political opportunities both within the country and abroad this movement had consumed 21,469 lives before it was comprehensively defeated in 1993. Thousands of others were injured and maimed; hundreds of thousands were permanently scarred by their experience of dislocation, the gratuitous loss of loved ones, and an unremitting terror that they endured for more than a decade.16

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Neither group has shown, or could be expected to show, even a cursory respect for facts or evidence. Not only has this manifestly slanted debate excelled in the invention of political fictions, it has failed abjectly to explicate, analyze and evaluate the wealth of strategic experience that this campaign generated.

One of the dominant myths that these propagandist have tirelessly, and in some measure successfully, circulated is the idea that terrorism in Punjab was defeated, not because but in spite of the use of armed force against the militants. No evidence is described to shore up this claim, but a variety of nebulous theories - essentially populist and politically correct slogans – are propounded regarding a “people’s victory” or a “political solution” that brought peace to the strife-torn province. The defeat of terrorism in Punjab, and I have said this before, was unambiguously the result of the counter terrorist measures implemented in the state by the security forces? More ever the use of this coercive force was (and is) not just a necessary expedient, but a fundamental obligation and duty of constitutional government, and its neglect inflicts great and avoidable suffering of the innocent and law abiding. This is not simply an assertion of subjective belief, but a fact that is well borne out, as I shall attempt to demonstrate, by the overwhelming weight of evidence generated during the Punjab campaign. Specifically I shall seek to demonstrate the each time a ‘political solution’ was sought through a dilution of the operations carried out by the security forces, through negotiations with terrorist and their front organisations, and through measures referred to as “winning the hearts and minds of the people”- usually an euphemism for the policy of appeasement of terrorist element - terrorism escalated, as did the threat to the integrity of the nation, and the innocent victims of terrorism multiplied.

CHAPTER-V

Counter - terrorist and counter - insurgency operations in Punjab also challenged established traditions of response to situations of extreme and widespread militancy. By a large, once political violence escalates beyond a certain limit (which may vary from situation to situation, and according to political perceptions), conventional wisdom conceives of the army as a refuge of laze resort. This was, and remains the case in most campaigns with India, as it is in most areas of major civil strife in other in most parts of the world. Even those who strongly advocate the exclusive use of the civil police to confront all internal security challenges and see a “fundamental conflict” between internal security duties and “the professional instincts, traditions and ethos of the military” concede that a resort to the army is the legitimate “last line of defence” even within “the strict limits imposed in a constitutional liberal democratic system”. 18

Within India this advocacy of, and evitable resort to the army in circumstances of widespread disorder is also based on an implicit (even occasionally explicit, though not publicly proclaimed) assumption: the presumed subversion of the local police force in any solution of large scale insurgency or civil strife. Divided loyalties or the “unreliability” of the local police have been used to justify the withdrawl of the governments faith in this force in threats of low intensity conflict in various states of Indias North-East in Jammu and kashmir and for several years in Punjab as well. The Punjab movement, however eventually established not only that the civil police force was an effective counter-terrorist force even in the most extreme circumstances, but also that the presumption of bad faith was completely unfounded. The role of the army and the Para military forces, was, of course, critical in the final phase of this campaign, but it was the Punjab police that speeded the anti

terrorist offensive - and this is clearly borne out of the relative casualties these various forces suffered.

Both the devastating consequences of various “political solutions” and of a resort to conventional military strategies against terrorism are borne out startlingly by even a cursory review of the pattern of conflict response that prevailed in the initial phases of the terrorist movement in Punjab. Counter-terrorist strategies at this stage vacillated between the extremists of paralysis and over reaction, even as political responses and policies ranged from opportunism through cynicism to panic. It was only towards the end of the eighties that mounting violence and a mix of exhaustion and alarm made at least some political leaders and regimes – more amenable to a realistic appraisal of the threat and to the dictates of reason. It was not only invention to review this initial phase in detail. Certain elements, however, demand elaboration, to the extent that they define the context of the events and strategies that evolved later.

Terrorism in Punjab has, on occasion, been projected as natural consequences of the unfulfilled collective aspirations of the Sikhs as “an idealistic movement for the creation of a state among the Sikhs of the Punjab”.19

The fact, however, is that the movement of khalistan was created out of pattern of venal politics, of unscrupulous and bloody manipulation, and a brazen jockeying for power that is too documented to be repeated. It will suffice to state here that each of the major political players in the state and the national arena participated in the creation of this calamity and the congress. (1) And the Akali Dal were the most culpable formations.20

20. The Akali Role in Particular has been extensively documented in, K.P.S Gills Punjab, the Knights of False Hood, Haranand Publications, New Delhi, 1997
This indeed was the first stage where a pernicious pattern of political intervention contributed, not to the resolution, but to the creation and nurturing of terrorism.

Nor, indeed were any ‘Sikh Aspirations’ involved in the movement in the khalistan. Far from being a revolution against ‘oppression’, this was actually a rebellion of a privileged quasi-federal caste based orthodoxy that saw its privileges shrinking. It was, moreover, entirely unconnected with any element or principle of Sikhism, and was based, rather, on a corruption and perversion of everything that Sikhism has historically represented. In it, “the institutions of the Sikhs, both religious and political, (were) ... hijacked by a small clique, a self-interested oligarchy, representing a particular ethnic cluster, a small endogamous segment of Punjab’s social fabric: a narrow caste group that... (sought) ... to define Sikhism and Sikh identity in terms of its own constructed vision.”

This convoluted pattern of politics of competitive communalism and brinkmanship in the Punjab produced the larger than life image of Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale. An image that owed its proportions as much to the political leadership of that time as it did to the media, and, eventually and overwhelmingly, to his seizer and control of the Golden Temple – the most hallowed shrine of the Sikhs. Whatever the causes, it is a fact that, by 1984, Bhindranwale murderous creed had captured the imagination of a significant number of Sikhs, particularly in rural Punjab.

The years preceding 1984, are particularly inglorious for the Punjab police and its leadership. Their failure to act against extremist elements was comprehensive. It was, nevertheless, understandable. Before the 1980s, terrorism has only been experienced in India in regions that were regarded as

21. Ibid p 29
‘peripheral’ to the national mainstreme. The North-East has long been troubled by bloody insurgencies, but was generally viewed as an amorphous ‘disturbed area’ that invited a certain pattern of armed intervention, primarily through use of military force. Having served a quarter of a century in that region, it had seen these campaigns at close quarters and had long regarded them as an inappropriate model for intervention - one that reflected not only political short-sightedness, but also a strategic failure of monumental proportions. In Punjab, however, the shock of terrorist tactics – unfamiliar in the extreme – produced a paralysis that was compounded enormously by the conduct of politicians at the very highest level. To expect a sagacious, balanced and educate responses from district police officials against extremism that is clearly, directly, sometimes openly, encouraged by leaders at the highest levels of governance, is to ask for the impossible. In any event in the absence of a clear mandate and a firm leadership, the police, directionless and demoralised, quite simply, refused to engage.

It was not present in Punjab at this juncture, but there was ample evidence of this abdication of responsibility even when he was transferred to the state in September 1984 - a full three month after operation blue star. It held joint charged as Inspector General (IG) of the Punjab Armed Force (PAF) and IG operations. In both capacities, jurisdictions comprehended counter terrorist operations right across the state, and was astonished to discover that simply no records were being maintained in connection with terrorist crimes, no investigations were carried out an almost invariably, no documentation exited of any action taken. There was widespread reluctance on the part of Punjab police officers to involve themselves in anti-terrorist work. Many of the interrogations had to be carried out by officers at a senior level, as Station House Officers (SHOs) and subordinates at the police stations were clearly unwilling to be associated with the process for fear identification and reprisals. As IG
operations, records relating to terrorist crime and profiles of terrorist were essential to my work, and it was only after this stage that a slow and pains taking process of record-keeping and analysis was established.

Political mischief, a mounting campaign of demonstrations and bandhs orchestrated to coincide with terrorist actions, increasing and unpunished incidents of extremists violence, the evident impunity with which terrorist acted, and a total uncertainty and apathy that attended the actions of the law enforcement machinery, had by 1984, created by atmosphere of terror and collapse of the state that was far in excess of anything that the situation itself warranted. Between 1981 and 1983, the terrorists had killed 101 civilians. Of these, 75 were killed in 1983 itself (1981; 13: 1982; 13)-an event that in the prevailing state of hysteria, inspired one commentator to refer to thus as “the year of the Armageddon”.  

Disturbing though the numbers were, this evaluation was more than excessive. Indeed, even in the years preceding the advent of terrorism in Punjab, the number of murders in the state were seldom below 500 in any year, and tended to maintain a secular upward trend (1981; 555; 1982;575 1983;591).  

More recently, in the three years after terrorism was brought under control in Punjab there have been a total of 2,081 murders unrelated to terrorism (1994;687; 1995;686; 1996;708). These numbers are not regarded as being extraordinary, and have attached no exceptional comet in the media, nor was there any sense of a “breakdown” in the state.

Without doubt, the impact of terrorist killings - as a result of their sheer brutality, irrationality and randomness - is for greater on the public mind that than of an ordinary criminal act. It is only natural for a poorly informed and

sensation-hungry media to devise frenzied headlines. But for the police administration to act as if these represented an objective evaluation of the threat potential is inexcusable.

But the police, no doubt stupefied by the sheer unfamiliarity of the challenge, was also not permitted to act; nor dares it to act on its own against the manifest intent and stratagems of political powers. The result was that, in the months preceding operation bluestar, terrorist violence mounted to claim 158 civilian lives between January and May 1984. The sheer intensity of police paralyse at this time has been substantially documented. Rights since the daheru incident in 1981, when an ill prepared police party, when shot at by a group of terrorists whom they had gone to arrest, abandoned its weapon and fled, there had been acts of dereliction without number. Nevertheless, there is one incident that bears repetition, as it reflects the abysmal depths to which the spirits of law enforcement agencies had plummeted.

A single incident epitomises their importance. On February 14, 1984, a group of militants attacked a police post at some distance from the entrance of the Golden Temple. Six policemen, fully armed, were ‘captured’ and dragged inside. The ‘police response’ came twenty four hours later in the form of a senior police officer who went to Bhindranwale in the Akal Takhat and begged him to release his men and return their weapons. Bhindranwale agreed only to hand over the corpse of one of the policeman who had been killed. He later relented and released the remaining five man who were still alive. Their weapons including three sten guns, and a wireless set, were not returned. No one asked for them. No action was ever taken in the case of the murdered policeman.24

It cannot imagine any police force in the world reacting to such an outrage with such ultra cravenness, in such complete and impotent prostration. Nevertheless, even under the prevailing circumstances and with the victims of terrorism multiplying rapidly, it cannot believe that what was done under bluestar could be justified. It is firm conviction that with the right leadership and the clear and unambiguous political mandate, the police morale could have been revived (as it was, much later, and in a situation that was far worse) to secure effective action, and that concerted police action, was suitable Para-military and army backing, would have produced better results even at this stage. Instead, in an ill-planned, hasty, knee, - jerk response, the army was called in; artillery battered the revered edifice of the Golden Temple complex, and tanked rolled across the holy parikarma. The army however was not to blame for this botched operation; it was acting on specific directions from the Prime Minister’s office, and had been given little choice or time to prepare.  

The damage bluestar did was incalculable. This was compounded by operation Woodrose, the army’s mopping up’ exercise all over Punjab that sought to capture Bhindranwale surviving associates and to clear all Gurdwaraa in the state of extremist’s elements. Woodrose suffered from all the classical defects of army intervention in civil strife - an extraneous and heavily armed force suddenly transported into unfamiliar territory; mistrustful (in this case, exceptionally so) of the local police and intelligence, but with no independent sources of information; dealing with the population, large segments of which had become hostile; and operating under a political fiat that not only condoned, but emphasised the use of punitive force. Operating blindly, the army arrested large numbers of people, many innocent, others perhaps sympathetic to the militant cause, but by no means associated with any terrorist or criminal activity. Lacking in adequate information to distinguish effectively at the local

level, the discriminate sweep of Woodrose pushed many a young man across the border into the arms of welcoming Pakistani handlers. And then, even as Woodrose drew to an end, the evil was incalculably compounded by the pitiless massacre of Sikhs in what were perceived to be congress-I-government-sponsored riots of November 1984.

It agreed operating bluester and the November 1984 massacres as “the two most significant victories for the cause of “khalistan”... not won by the militants, but inflicted... upon the nation by its own government...these two events, in combination, gave a new lease of life to a movement which could easily have been contained in 1984 itself.26

After the army it was the turn of the ‘political solution’. The Rajiv Gandhi, government having, in its first days, remained a mute spectator the Anti-Sikh riots, decided to force the ravaged state through a hasty and ill-timed election. Negotiations were initiated by the central government in mid-1985. The Akalis led by Harchand Singh Longowal, assisted by S.S Barnala and Balwant Singh (of whom longowal and Balwant Singh later fell to assasins), showed great eagerness to reclaim their hold on events in the state. But the centres strategy went well beyond the ‘moderates’ in the Akali Dal, and the government also initiated a dialogue with representatives of the all India Sikh representatives of the All Sikh Students Federation (AISSF), at the time a frontline terrorist grouping. It was asked, initially to present at the meeting between the AISSF and the governments intermediaries, and subsequently to intervene. Eventually, the AISSF representatives expressed their willingness to join the electoral process, but demanded a short deferment of the projected dates in order to prepare. The Akalis who were negotiating separately with the government, however, objected strongly fearing that the AISSF, given this time, 

could sweep the elections. The talks with the AISSF broke down on the trivial difference, mainly because of the centres inclination in favour of the Akalis.

The entire move to install the Akalis in power was most unwise. It was based on the erroneous premise that, just as the Marxist (Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI-M) has tackled Naxalism (CPI (Marxist-Leninist) terrorism) in west Bengal, the Akalis would fight Sikh terrorism in Punjab. This was a complete misreading of the relationship between the Akalis and the extremist. It was strongly opposed to the elections of 1985, and repeatedly expressed my reservations, because it was convinced that there was no real difference between the fundamental thinking of the Akalis and the terrorist - and that the Akalis completely lacked the desire and the will to contain terrorism. It was equally convinced that terrorism would return with a vengeance within six months of the Akalis forming the government - and events soon demonstrated that even this projection was an overestimation.

The elections eventually took place-but only after Longowal assassination - on August 20, 1985. Sympathy and the lack of any serious opposition in the elections on September 25 returned the Akali are now led by Barnala, with a sweeping majority (73 out of 117 seats). One of the first acts of the Barnala government was the appointment of the Bains committee which released, masse, over 2000 extremists at that time under detention. The impact on terrorist violence was palpable – not only because those who were released simply resumed their activities, but also because others saw in this act a restoration of the immunity they held enjoyed in the pre-bluester phase. 1985 had seen a total of 13 civilian and eight policeman killed by militants. As the bains committee began its work, in just the first three months of 1986, 102 civilians and 10 security men fell to the terror.
Barnala also surrendered the Golden Temple to the terrorist once again. The Shrine was restored to the Akalis controlled Shiromani Gurdwaraa Prabandhak Committee (SGPC) on January 22, 1986. In less than a month, the terrorist led by the Damdami Taksal, were in complete control. The SGPC in fact had to shift the venue of its Sarbat Khalsas (the great assembly of all Sikhs) to Anandpur Sahib, because it was in no position to hold the event within the temple precincts. Once again, murderers swaggered across the parikarma; proclaimed offenders, wanted by the police for the most heinous crimes, planned and directed their activities from the security of the hallowed complex; assassins installed themselves in the highest religious offices. By the end of April, a panthic committee had been constituted to coordinate all terrorist activities and a ‘declaration of khalistan’ was issued by the committee from the Golden Temple (April 29, 1986). A day later, the Barnala government ordered a mock search in the temple with ample advance notice. It was an ill-conceived and ill-planned raid (occasionally, if inappropriately, referred to as black thunder-I) mounted by the National Security Guard (NSG) the sum total of the impact of this operation was the use of stun grenades the resulted in the burning of a bookshop near the gate of the temple, the beating up of the two grant his after they had been chased off the parikarma, and the interruption of an akhand path due to the disturbances. No unexpectedly, “no one of note was caught”.27

On the face of it, the demand for Khalistan seems almost absurd, apart from that sometimes even absurdities acquired a strange halo. At any rate the analogy with Pakistan is entirely gratuitous, if not mischievous. The Sikhs are not a partition but only a separate community with in a congress of community. The great Indian nation subsumes all way of common spiritual and cultures.

The information that the Sikhs and Hindus construct the Golden Temple (Harmandir) equally at Amritsar is a part of history. The Harmandir is provided with four doors and it is said that they represented the four castes of Hinduism. Amritsar is known all over the world for its Golden Temple which glitters in its resplendent beauty and grandeur day and night. It is the central shrine of the Sikhs, visited by thousands of Sikh and Hindus every day and hundreds of thousands of Diwali and Baisakhi days.

In the overall context of terrorism in Punjab, black thunder was only a minor operation. Nevertheless, its impact in certain aspects was critical. Though only a fraction of the terrorists operating in the state were apprehended in the temple, it generated crucial structure transformations in the terrorist movement. After black thunder, and the macabre exposures relating to the activities of the extremists in the temple, the movement of Khalistan could never recover the facade of religiosity that had attended it in its early years, and became increasingly and manifestly criminalized. Moreover, the Gurdwaraa as sanctuary and safe-house for terrorists and leaders ceased to exit. It had been shown to be uniquely vulnerable to a pattern of police action that would not agitate the devout, and would inevitably force the renegade into police custody. The damage done to the extremists cause was tremendous.

The most significant was the loss of the Golden Temple and the Gurdwaraa as shield and sanction. Extortion and murder has been the business of the terrorist from the very begning of the movement; but in its begning phases, and right up to the black thunder period, the top leadership was apparently distanced from these activities, concentrated as they were in the Golden temple. Their depravity and voice in the hallowed place remained unknown to the larger mass of Sikhs; and while lesser terrorists were often seem to ‘stray from the path’ the highest motives could still be described to the militant leadership.
Divested of the sanctuary of the Golden Temple and the Gurdwara, the leadership was forced to live life as fugitives in the Punjab country side; on the one hand, their own deeds exposed them, and on the other, the deeds of the followers compromised them even further, since they were now believed to be condoned, even encouraged, by these leaders.28

The Sikh Gurdwara act was passed in 1925. It is under this act that a legal framework was provided to the Sikh Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee (SGPC). This was enacted following a mass movement under a direction of the Akali Dal in 1921. At times, the movement become violent and the police had to resort to firing on a few occasions. In 1925, a compromise reached with the leaders of the movement for the reform of Gurdwaraa and this act was passed. This movement thus achieved its primary goal of obtaining control of the Gurdwaraa. In the five-year period from 1921-1925, according to official figures, around 30,000 Sikhs were arrested, 400 killed and 2,000 injured. The government also imposed fined totalling about RS 16 lakhs which a quite at impressive sum for those days. After its enactment control of their Gurdwaraa which to the Akalis encompassed both the religious and political institutions, became it’s primarily goal, it is not a coincidence that the Akalis have been controlling the Sikh Gurdwaraa Prabandhak Committee (SGPC) ever since its inception. The intertwining of religious and secular concerns became institutionalized through the SGPC system and provided the Akali Dal with a very potent base among Sikhs. The party uses its base in the Gurdwaraa quite openly to seek political power in Punjab. The Akali Dal attracted a number of ex-serviceman and some extremist elements from the erstwhile Gadar party, giving it a militant character.29

28. Gill, Knights of False Hood, Op cit, p 100
No, indeed, was any ‘Sikh Aspirations’ involved in the movement for khalistan. The people of Punjab are still struggling to come to terms with the terrifying memories of a tragic decade - a half of turbulence and terror; but already, strange and unsettling reverberations of that malevolent past can be heard again. If we cast our minds back to 1981 and 1982, were terrorism in Punjab was already being perceived as a serious threat to the authority of the state, we discover that 13 persons were killed by the terrorism in each of these years. 1983, which was described by contemporary commentators as “the year of the Armageddon” saw the number of deaths inflicted by terrorist violence rise to 75.

Almost four years after the terrorist scourge and decisively been eliminated, there was a sudden rash of terrorist incidents; between March 14 and July 10, 1997, fifty five persons lost their lives to the militant bomb and bullet in Punjab. When does terrorist violence cross the threshold at which it is recognised and confronted in its true guise-as terrorism? Recently the world health organisation issued a statement the effect that even one case of polio constitutes an ‘epidemic’. 30

Unfortunately, certain inveterate delusions that preclude the possibility of a fitting response to militant violence that established themselves in the minds of the political leadership of Punjab. A group of ‘interested’ politicians and activists, whose role during the period of the ascendancy of terror was more than ambiguous, are now vigorously projecting, and seeking to popularise, a myth that terrorism was defeated in Punjab, not by police action, not by a force of arms, but because it simply lost popular support. This fable has been repeated so often, at every available opportunity and forum, that its advocates, if no one else, now appear to place all their faith in its explanatory efficacy. But are we to

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understand, on this argument that terrorism, returned to Punjab because it had, in the first months of 1977, inexplicably regained ‘popular support’.

There are several dangers inherent in this manifestly specious argument. The first of these is the insidious suggestions that terrorism did, at one time, enjoy overwhelming ‘popular support’ in Punjab. Despite the comprehensive disruption of the entire machinery of the state, and of the normal lives of the people that the terrorist successfully engineered for over ten years, there is no reason to believe that a majority, or even a substantial proportion of the common people, were even behind them. Certainly, there was a measure of support in the area along the borders of Pakistan. This was largely restricted to what is referred to as the Majha region, comprising mainly the tract lying between the River Beas and Pakistan border and essentially covering only two districts Amritsar and Gurdaspur.  

The second perversity is the implicit proportion that terrorism does in some sense represent the ‘Democratic Will’ that is expresses - possibility by illegitimate means - the legitimate aspirations of the people, and that when the political agenda of the masses somehow {fortuitously? spontaneously/?} changes terrorism simply ‘wither away’ or the terrorists adopt the methods and objectives sanctioned by the masses nothing could be more patently absurd.

But the greatest hazard in the present circumstances, is not the intellectual deceit, the evident falsehood of this thesis it lies in the compliance that such a belief or such a pretence, encourages on the part of the state; the sense of misplaced confidence of mistaken security, that it induces in a gullible public - the belief that, without their support militancy cannot return despite the still recent memory of the terror inflicted upon them without a least regard to their own fervent desires.

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31. Ibid p 10
The fact is that terrorism and its executioners have their own agenda, entirely independent of the popular will, of democratic considerations or institutions, or of the aspirations and desires of the community they claim to represent. They are defeated not by the operation of some mystical force called ‘popular will’ but by the force of arms. Their activities are not some convenient substitute for the ballot box; they are an absolute rejection of every value integral to democracy. The people themselves have no defence against them, other than the power they confer on those who govern on their part. Their will is expressed at best, through the extent to which they extended or with hold cooperation, especially in the form of information; to those who fight the scourge on their behalf. It is the security forces of the state and of the nation who bear the burden of the actual responsibility for the war against terror and anarchy.32

Unfortunately, both these circumstances come out, once more, to prevail in the Punjab as they did when the movement for the despicable fiction of ‘khalistan’ took birth. The response of the Akali government to the new, if limited, eruption of violence has been a predictable as it has been inappropriate. For from projecting a certain toughness in dealing with the situation, or an adequate understanding of the problem, most of the public pronouncements of the state leadership in the wake of the spate of killing since march 1997 have been restricted to blaming kashmiri terrorists or the ISI or some vague forces inimical to peace in Punjab or to Hindu Sikh amity. Is the states responsibility to protect the citizens against the depredations of terrorist somehow diminished if they come from some other state? Or from another country? Or if they are motivated by the desire to disrupt peace or communal harmony? Unless they are confronted with firm, effective and immediate counter measures the terrorists,

32. Ibid p 11
whatever their aspiration or nationality, will only return to visit greater
destruction on a hapless people.\footnote{Ibid p 12}

There can be a greater travesty of truth that the terrorists claim to fight for
‘khalistan’ in the names of Sikh religion and tradition. The principle means
employed in this fight is that of killing, killing of innocent people and killing of
those whom they believe to be their opponents. Most attacks have been on
people who were utterly defenceless. Sleeping in their homes and working in
their fields, or doing peaceful business at labour at their place of work - most of
them has been preyed upon unawares. Even those who could have been aware
simply had no means to combat the trained attackers armed with sophisticated
weapons.

‘Khalistan’ terrorists held in the Gurdwaraa taking advantage of the
state’s reluctance in the matter of ordering police or other forces inside them too
often. The Gurdwaraa are now the places were meeting are held and
assassination planned. There are also being used for storing for arms and for
imparting training threatening letters for extortions are sent from there. The
Golden Temple, Amritsar, the holiest of the “Pang Takhts” of the Sikh tradition,
has been desecrated beyond measure. A place were devotees used to throng in
lakhs and where the daily prayer would attracts hundreds from Amritsar City
and its environs and were normally could be seen a fairly noticeable sprinking
of non Sikhs is generally deserted today. The rooms adjoining parikarma have
also been used as torture chambers where many of their victims have perished.
More than all this the Manji Saheb Dewan hall has been used for proclaiming
‘Khalistan’ and for organising sarbat khalsas wherein separatism has been
preached and open threats administered to all who would refuse to fall in line.
Since all this is being done under the control and banner of Sikh religion, the question naturally arises as to how far they speak and stand for Sikhism. There is a large section of Sikhs today including those who are relatively well-educated and well-placed who while rejecting ‘Khalistan’ has a vague sympathy with the “boys”. At the root of this sympathy lies a sense of grievance which they might have been nursing on some account or the other which has been aggravated by the trauma of operation bluestar. They might well be secure at heart, which infact quite often they are and may have been votaries of the Hindu-Sikh unity but because of the hurt psyche they seem to be believing that the “boys” somehow are doing something which is aimed at securing a better future for the Sikh community, or in any case so the argument goes, since they are “challenging” the might of the centre at grave risks to their lives, they have nothing else except the good of the community at heart.

Feeling of similar type are also shared by the ordinary middle class Sikhs and by elements of the Sikh peasantry who are the witness, and in quite a few cases the victims as well, of the senseless killings which have become almost a routine now. A combination of such confused thinking and the circumstance of widespread terror has resulted in a situation where the voices of reason and sanity among the Sikhs have been suppressed and muted. It has become all the more necessary therefore to examine the relationship, or the absence of this, between the Sikh extremist and terrorism, on the one hand and the teaching and practices of the Sikh religion on the other.34


The dastardly murder of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi on October 13, 1984 was clearly a part of the imperialist game. Proofs of this contention were presented in the U.S press itself. One “expectation” was that it would lead to

huge-scale Hindu Sikh riots. The most shocking Sikh riots that took place in the first few days of November 1984 in Delhi, Kanpur and other various places must have gladdened the hearts of Indian enemies. The reality that some Sikhs celebrated Indira Gandhi’s assassination deserved severe condemnation but that could never be a justification for anti-Sikh riots.\textsuperscript{35}

The Sikh alienation, some analysts suggest, started with the 1951 census, independent India’s first when the Hindus, discarding Punjabi, registered Hindi as their mother tongue. Others each a few years earlier and claim that the process of alienation of the community from the national mainstream was set in motion within a couple of years of the 1947 independence due to the communal outlook of the Akalis Dal, Jan Singh, R.S.S. and sections of the Arya Samajists.

Seen this way, post-1951 census, the Punjabi image of the Sikh community slowly yielded place to a “Sikh Image” with a chip on its shoulder. When the Akalis Dal conducted a vigorous movement mid 1960s for formation of a Punjabi suba (that is Punjabi speaking state out of the then existing Punjab which incidentally then extended from the Tibet border of Gurgaon, contiguous to U.P the Hindus (and of course the government of India) saw it as a demand for a Sikh majority state. But when finally the demand for a Punjabi majority state on the linguistic basis were conceded in 1966, it left the Punjabis-Sikhs - dissatisfied because not only certain Punjabi Sikhs areas were left in Haryana, Chandigarh too was not allotted to Punjab as its exclusive capital, letting Haryana sharing in Punjab. The difference between Hindu-Sikh had made to the headlines in the national dailies.

The theme of Sikh grievances has been a stock in trade of the Akali Dal leadership since India won independence. Of, course; one should not reject such protestations just out of hand. But what the Sikh separatist have done is that

\textsuperscript{35} Dang, Satya Pal, “Terrorism in Punjab”, Gyan Publishing House 5, Ansari Road New Delhi, p 51
they have made these grievances appear irredressable under a” Hindu Rule”. Comparing the central government with the Mughals and calling it the representative of “Hindu Imperialism”, the separatist have proclaimed that nothing short of ‘Khalistan’ can satisfy the Sikhs. Infact, though the demand for ‘Khalistan’ was expressly made in the post - operation bluestar period, the attempts to create conditions conducive for its formation has been going on since the rise of Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale in 1981. Though apparently evasive on the separatist demand saying repeatedly that “we do not demand, Khalistan’, but if the government gives it, we shall not reject. We will not repeat the mistake that we committed in 1947 Sant Bhindranwale did everything possible to create conditions which would lead to the carving out of a separate state for the Sikh.

This was this period when different incidents take place which alienated Sikh masses and were made to perceive in those incidents a real threat to their identity - humiliation of Sikh soldiers during Asiads in Haryana, opposition of Hindu organisation on the ban of smoking in and around Golden Temple complex, the breaking of Golden Temple replica at Chandigarh railway station, burning the picture of Guru Ramdas. In this background Bhindranwale said, Sikhs were second class citizens and slaves in India and that they must fight for their independence. Our aim is to break the shackles of this slavery.\(^\text{36}\)

The year of 1984 was a very eventful year not only for Punjab but for the state as a whole. ‘Operation Blue Star’ was conducted in June and it resulted in the army entering the Golden Temple and the obvious consequential implications. The Prime Minister was shot dead by her two Sikh bodyguards on 31 October 1984. This was followed by large scale riots in Delhi and elsewhere in which a large number of Sikh were killed. Events in Punjab have been

simmering for quite some time. There was the 1973 Anandpur Resolution issue of exchange of Chandigarh with certain parts of Punjab.

‘Operation Blue Star’ was perhaps a desperate of flushing out the terrorists and others including Bhindranwale from the inner sanctuary of the Golden Temple by utilizing the army in a big way. The fact that such people could be dealt with in a more effective and meaningful manner was amply proved by operation black thunder which was conducted by the police in 1988.

‘Operation Wood Rose’ which followed ‘operation blue star’ was meant to clear Punjab of terrorists, actually resulted in running away of many Sikh youths seeking shelter in Pakistan and coming back as impressionable youth willing to fall in the trap of the hardcore extremist elements.

The Bhindranwale’s fight against the central government was not too far removed from Sikh struggle which since the tenth Guru has been mostly viewed in the images of lifting of the Sword against the tyrannical rules. The sense of grievances and alienation increased manifold after the operation blue star in 1984 which completely shook the Sikh psyche. To quote Khushwant Singh, now it will be increasingly difficult to find a self respecting Sikh who will have a kind word to say for the government. Sikhs will feel isolated and a separate people.37

Bhindranwale acted on two planks both of which, for various reasons, proved affective. He spoke to religious congregations preaching hatred against the Hindus, calling them Sir Ghapia, Dhela Da Lala, Topiwala etc. Threatening the Hindus with mass slaughter he would say, “after all, each Sikh had only to cope with 35 Hindu”.38 It may be of some interest to note that while Bhindranwale preached hatred from within the precincts of the Golden Temple complex most of the discourses concerned current political affairs. He referred

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38. Ibid
to gurbani infrequently and strictly avoided mentioning most of the vital teaching of Sikhism. He selectively picked up instances of the Sikh sacrifices and of the mughals oppression to issue warnings and threats to the government. He twisted the meaning of some remarks made by the gurus to draw a parallel with the present situation and to justify his call for arming the Sikh youth with modern weapons.\textsuperscript{39}

5.7. Operation Blue Star

Completely exploiting the week reaction of the Punjab government, the militants starting functioning from the Golden Temple Fortifications starting coming up in full view of the Punjab police and the Central Reserve Police Force, but the government make up its mind on how to respond. There were a variety of reports of happening inside the complex on the eve of army section is June, 1984. Some averred that the likelihood of Pakistan granting immediate recognition to declaration khalistan by the Sant might deter New Delhi for sending its army into the Golden Temple. The firing of CRPF’s is believed to have started “as an attempt to frighten Bhindranwale into surrendering and also to make him reveal his dispositions and his fire power, but this exercise was not of much use. By but this time Bhindranwale was sure that the army is just round the corner.”\textsuperscript{40}

It was in this troubled context that the game changing operation bluestar occurred. By the manner of 1984, the situation in Punjab had become untenable for Prime Minister Gandhi. On the one hand, Bhindaranwale’s fiery and polarizing rhetoric had gone for beyond what the congress had wanted him to do. The extremist’s preacher and his supporters were inciting communal violence, fortifying them inside the Golden Temple and running a parallel government. Mrs. Gandhi eared that allowed him to continue on his path would

\textsuperscript{39} Ibid
\textsuperscript{40} Marwah, Ved, “Uncivil Wars Pathology of Terrorism”, Harper Collins Publishers India, 7/16 Ansari Road Daryagang, New Delhi, 1995, p 188
send the signal that she was losing control of important and prosperous border state. On the other hand, the moderate Akali Dal was also challenging Mrs. Gandhi’s authority. The congress leadership was concerned that any conciliatory offer to the Akalis would weaken the party’s own hand and could also trigger similar unrest in other parts of the country. As such the demands of autonomy and concessions could not be met. The Akalis planned strike, if executed successfully, could serious destabilise the movement of food in the country and once again weaken Mrs. Gandhi position. From October 1983, onwards the extremists started turning the Golden Temple complex into a fort and there was large scale storing of arms and ammunition. That stage of chaos and confusion, habitual criminals and smugglers joined the extremist. Punjab has over 2 lakh firearm licences but it is rightly believed that the number of unlicensed firearms is at least five times this figure. There are reasons to believe that extravagant hopes were given to them by Pakistan agents and CIA that once they made a bold declaration of Khalistan and captured in Punjab, outside forces would come to their help. Meanwhile silent, negotiations were going between the congress and the Akalis. Only may 1984, the government woke up to the reality that any more delay may be fatal and it was only them the operation blue star was launched by the army on June 5, 1984. It had both good and bad consequences. The army commenced moving into the Golden Temple precincts but had to face heavy firing from the terrorists. On the contrary, the troops were uselessly throwing teargas shells into terrorist positions as the windows and doors were heavily barricaded with bricks, mortars and sand bags. Facing attack from all sides, particularly from the Akal Takht which stood like the fortress, the troops slowly moved into the Golden Complex. In the early hours of 6th June, the SGPC President and the centre figure in this entire saga, G.S. Tohra and the Akali Dal president Longowal, surrendered near Guru Nanak Niwas with about 350 people.\textsuperscript{41}

\textsuperscript{41} White Paper on Punjab Agitation, Government of India, 10 July 1984, p 49
The army units had taken position in all the districts and around Golden Temple in 1 June 1984. They destroyed some of the terrorist’s gun posts on high buildings inside the temple complex. They then clear the high buildings around Golden Temple under occupation of the terrorists by commando action. They planned to amount infantry attack on the Golden Temple. They opted for a frontal infantry attack to a flanking or real action. They also preferred a night attack to a day light operation.

Some analysts have refused to see Operation Bluestar Star as an anti-terrorist action, but as an assault on a fortress to capture or destroy religious fanatics entrenched and entrapped inside. The initial action started on 2 June 1984, after a 32 hour curfew was imposed on Amritsar city and the army formally requisitioned to aid of civil authority.

On the night of 5 June 1984 the army going in to the Golden Temple precincts but have to face heavy firing from the terrorists. On the contrary, the troops were uselessly throwing target shells into terrorist positions as the windows and doors were heavily barricaded with bricks, and sand bags. In the midst of fierce exchange of fire and the use of tanks by the Indian army, the Golden Temple suffered extensive damage. Irreplaceable Sikh manuscripts housed in the library of the temple complex were lost in a fire that had broken out during the gun battle. The Akal Takht, the symbolic seat of spiritual and temporal authority for the Sikhs, was nearly destroyed.

Attacks from the Akali Takht was demolished, so also many other buildings around Akal Takht, by shells from many tanks. Many private buildings behind Akal Takht caught were reducing the entire area into rubbles.

Operation Blue Star embraced Gurdwaraa all over Punjab, and that required the deployment of more than three army divisions for a variety of tasks. As subsequent developments showed after the initial action by the army
the operation was not only flawed in its very concept but marred by poor planning and execution according to some analysts. In this regard Mr. Khushwant Singh’s description of the incompetence of army generals responsible for the operation are accurate and succinct. He says “as for as the competence of the army less said the better. In an age when a handful of Israeli and German commandos could, through a well planed action overcome well entrenched enemy thousands of miles away from them, the best our generals could do was to storm the Temple complex with tanks and armoured cars, blast Akal Takht to get at Bhindranwale and about 200 of his men. According to the white paper of the government of India civilian casualties were 524 killed and 124 injured, and army 92 killed and 287 injured. In cross fire, upwards of 500 people majority of them pilgrims including women and children lost their lives.\(^{42}\)

The aim is not to discuss the details of Operation Blue Star but the main factors of planning and conduct which aggravated the impact of this operation on the Sikh psyche. First and foremost to launch an assault on the temple on the martyrdom day of Guru Arjun Dev the builder of the golden temple was sheer perversity because a very large number of pilgrims were bound to be caught in the cross fire if the aim was to achieve is to surprise or because the presence of the pilgrims it was thought would prevent the militants from taking strong action it proved to be the clumsy attempt which showed a cynical disregard for the loss of innocent lives. The second was the damage of the temple and Akal Takht and the destruction of Sikh masses reference library all this was considered the result of revengeful vandalism by the Sikh masses. Thirdly the army action is about 37 other Gurdwaraa combined with the combing operations called operation Wood Rose but all Sikh on notice and created an atmosphere of terror. This widened the scope of the conflict with disastrous

effects as later events were to prove. After Operation Bluestar, Operation Woodrose was set in motion, in tandem with operation bluestar in 1984. The object was to seal the border with Pakistan and comb villages infested with extremists. Operation Woodrose proved to be a disaster. It serves merely to breed more militants and the negative effect it had on the local people continues to fester to this day in the villages of Punjab. With the 1984 experience to go by, the second phase of operation Rakshak (the first was from June to September 1990) was launched three months ago to stem the tide of violence in the border belt. Major elements of five infantry divisions was deploying along most of the 550 km of the Punjab border. But this time, Prime Minister Chandra Sekhar intervened to ensure that there was no disastrous repeat of operation Woodrose. He gave directions that adequate precautions must be taken to allay the fears of the local population and if possible to win them over. It is common belief that it was operation bluestar which had long lasting adverse effects on the Sikh masses and pushed perhaps most unemployed Sikh youths into terrorism than anything else. Post operation bluestar, a number of them crossed into Pakistan where received training and weapons as well. If previously the conflict was confined to a new radical groups, after operation bluestar it embraced the entire Punjab and apart of the army itself. One opinion is that though terrorism originated at Bhindranwale it assumed serious proportions with operation bluestar. \(^43\)

5.8. Creation of a Separate Sikh State

After the liberation of Bangladesh, Pakistan’s foreign policy took a vindictive turn towards India though it pretended to be friendly by signing the shimla agreement in July 1972. The turn of events gradually affected political scenario in Punjab. The point of concern is how and what does Pakistan

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intended to achieve in Punjab. There are three major objectives of Pakistan in Punjab.

- Creation of a separate Sikh state.
- To discredit India’s secular credentials and
- Fragmentation of India.

One of the significant objectives of Pakistan’s foreign policy in Punjab is to carve out a Pro-Pakistani separate Sikh from the Indian side of Punjab. Pakistani foreign makers intended to avenge the loss of East-Pakistan in 1971 war. The defeat in 1971 war caused fear psychosis of being contained by India and simultaneously Pakistani leaders were reluctant to accept India hegemony in this region. In spite of being aware that India is a potential power with significant military (fourth largest) economic and technical resources.\textsuperscript{44}

Pakistan harps on parity with India. This psyche was prevalent right from the beginning. It further intensified after the 1971 war. Vendetta got so deeply rooted that Pakistani leaders adopted an eye for an eye approach towards India. Avenging 1971 war becomes the most evident objective of Pakistan to India.\textsuperscript{45}

The first plan obviously is to alienate Sikh community from the mainstream of India’s socio-economic and political life. Without mass alienation of local population Pakistan would not be in a position to achieve its goal. The government of Pakistan employed various propaganda measures to flare up suppressed feeling of Sikh masses including those in the Indian army. The ISI agent’s unleashed series of hostile propaganda, highlighting 1982 humiliation and army in the golden temple. They propagated the Sikhism its holy places are in danger under repressive regime of Hindu India.

\textsuperscript{45} Singh, Jagjit Chauhan in an Interview to India Today, 15 December 1993, p 65.
Such propaganda had far reaching impact on the Sikh sentiments. It affected them to such an extent that some of the Sikh army personal deserted the Indian army and marched towards Delhi and Punjab to protect the golden temple.\textsuperscript{46}

Operation Blue Star had immensely damaged the sentiments of Sikh masses. People were in anguish and alienated as planned by Pakistan. The local Punjab politics was in turmoil. There was neither strong leadership nor any political direction. The Akali politics was in shameless. Coupled with political turmoil was the political design of Indira Gandhi which further precipitated the situation. The dismissal of Badal government in 1979 and support to Bhindrawala against the Akalis caused severe damage to the fabric of Punjab politics.\textsuperscript{47}

The political situation gradually deteriorated from bad to worse from 1980 onwards. It was the kind of situation Pakistan was aspiring for since the creation of Bangladesh. Pakistani leaders found the situation favourable to strike in Punjab. Pakistan provides the external support to create a Pakistani Sikh state. Pakistan government under the leadership of Ziau-ul-Huq launched state sponsored terrorism in Punjab to create khalistan.\textsuperscript{48}

General Zia and Jagjit Singh Chauhan, the self styled exiled leader of proposed khalistan, become very close friends. When Chauhan visited Pakistan as a pilgrim, the government of Pakistan accorded him special treatment and helped him tom organise a massive rally of Sikhs which was attended by several aspirations of khalistan from the U.S and Canada.\textsuperscript{49}

In infact, his pilgrimage to Pakistan turned into political design of Pakistani’s to malign India’s image. To strengthen movement of Khalistan as

\textsuperscript{47} Satyapal Dang, “Genesis of Terrorism”, Op.cit
\textsuperscript{49} V. B. Kulkarni, “Pakistan: its Origins and Relations with India”, Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd, 1988, p XXXVII.
proposed by Chauhan, Zia government launched special mercenary training programmes for the Sikh youths.\textsuperscript{50} Innumerable school-drop-outs and unemployed youths of Punjab were tempted into this profession for want of money and career prospect.\textsuperscript{51} Sikhism preaches active live for prosperity. The unemployed youths could not sit idle. The teachings of Guru Nanak emphasised value of life in the following lines Nam Japo, Kirat Karo and Band Chako.

Recite the name of God, perform duties and enjoy fruits of deeds. This is the basic teaching of Sikhism. But lack of job opportunity and constant political instability in the state rendered youth’s Sikhs to roam to wilderness. As a result the youth of Punjab became prone to exploitation of Pakistan. The turn of events in Punjab politics during 1980s proves that Pakistan used them to achieve its goal in Punjab. The rise of Bhindrawala and fortification of the Golden Temple by militants in 1984 makes it evident that Pakistan provides all kinds of assistance to aspiration of khalistan, KGB the soviet intelligence agency intercepted a conversation between the CIA agents and some Pakistani officials that some of the khalistani planned to proclaim khalistan from the premises of the Golden Temple on 4 June 1984.\textsuperscript{52}

It is obviously that Pakistan, in connivance with militants was all set to create a separate Sikh state Lt. Col. Sher Nawaz of Pakistan army disguised himself as Captain Amrik Singh of Khalistan Commando Force (KCF) and entered Golden Temple two days before operation blue star took place. He got the feel of the Indian forces around the temple and managed to escape the night before the operation began because he did not want to be a prisoner of India once again.\textsuperscript{53}

\textsuperscript{50} Dixit, J.N, “Anatomy of Flawed Inheritance Indo-Pak Relations”, Konark Publication, Delhi, 1995, p 51
\textsuperscript{53} Gour, H. S., “The Hindu Code”, Nagpur, p 201.
5.8.1 To Discredit India’s Secular Credentials

Pakistan was created on the basis of ethnic demographic and religion whereas India’s opted for secularism. This ideological divide made India more popular compared to Pakistan in the world politics. But it was hard to Pakistan for believe that India is a secular country.54

Pakistan leaders branded India as repressive Hindu regime rather than a secular state. They aspired to tarnish tolerant image of India. This objective of Pakistan could be achieved by creating communal rift in Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab. Both these states of India are minority dominated. Punjab however is better places to weaken India’s secularism because Sikhism as a religion is recognised as an off shoot of Hinduism, as a separate religion.55 This interpretation is denounced by the Sikh leaders. They do not accept that Sikhism is a sect of Hinduism. According to them, Sikhism is a separate religion and it must be treated as such. They abhor any idea of being contained in the broader Hindu fold of life.56

Any effort by the Hindu religious institutions to undermine Sikhism causes anguish in Sikh community. They have been aggressive about their religious belief and this psyche is exploited by Pakistan to gain political mileage. Secularism or religious tolerance is not a novel concept in India, is not a religion in the same sense as Christianity and Islam.57 In the six systems of Indian philosophy,58 one can often come across contradictions. These contradictions in Hinduism make it a tolerant religion. In other words it has tremendous scope for assimilation. Pakistani leasers are aware of this fact and find it difficult to change this identity unless they adopt a definite strategy to

56. Radhakrishnan, “Indian Philosophy”, George Allen and Union London, 1923
58. Ibid
torn the fabric of communal harmony. This could be achieved by adopting propaganda techniques by different phases.

The first phase was propaganda for mass agitation against the government of India to gain confidence of the people. The sentiments of people were outraged and encouraged to rebel through mass media. The political errors of committed in the state by the then congress government were highlighted out of proportion and people were made to believe that the government of India is dominated by Hindu Chauvinists. The Pakistani propaganda repeatedly emphasised that human rights of minority community in India are not well protected and the Sikhs are being discriminated. “Hate India” propaganda was widely disseminated through mass media like newspaper, radio, direct contacts and through intelligence agencies. Well concocted written articles and news columns and pamphlets were distributed to the Sikh masses. Documented films and video tapes were released to highlight atrocities committed by the Indian authority in the state. These incidents were given communal gloss to instill sense of insecurity among the sikhs.

The propaganda strategy of Pakistan proved quite effective. People got swayed by the communal propaganda unleashed after the “Operation Bluestar”. The demand for khalistan which was a vision of few disgruntled Sikh personalities like Jagjit Singh Chauhan, Sohan Singh, Baldev Singh and their associates now became a cause of common concern. People were brainwashed by heinous propaganda the outcome which was mass exodus of Sikhs from India during early 1980s. A good number of them migrated to Canada, Britain and other European countries. They carried back and shared their bitter share

60. V. B. Kulkarni, “Pakistan: Its origin and Relations with India”, Sterling publishers, New Delhi, 1988, p 5243.
experience meted out to them during the course of political turmoil in Punjab from 1980-1984.61

A point of concern however what is does Pakistan intend to gain by discrediting India’s secular credential. One aspect is quite obvious that by doing so, Pakistan does not gain secularism for herself. But it can definitely bring ego satisfaction that India is a communal or theoretical as Pakistan happens to be. But this is too small a factor to be incorporated into foreign policy agenda.

Secularism is the backbone of pluralistic society of India. True is the fact that the majority of India belong to Hindu fold of life. Since the advent of Islam in the Indian sub continent not merely ancient Hindu way of life has been influenced by Islam in the northern proveniences of India, but a sizable population is converted to Islam.

By fomenting communal disharmony, Pakistan is to divide Indian society on religious line and create conflict from within constant internal conflicts would affect politico-economic conditions that would weaken political and economic moral will of India. Thus an established Punjab would be in the interest of Pakistan. This would debilitate India’s strength in South Asia and then Pakistan can counter challenge India’s strong hold in the region. In other words by destabilising Punjab, Pakistan could be beneficiary in regional race for power.

5.8.2 Fragmentation of India

Pakistan leaders are conscious of the fact that creation of khalistan would be detrimental to their own existence; hatred for India is too acute that they tend to make wrong calculation.63

63. Ibid.
Their policy in Punjab is the example of the same miscalculation. Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab are the immediate targets of the Pakistan. This object of Pakistan directly affects external and internal security aspects of India. As a matter of fact, creation of a separate Sikh state and to discredit India’s secular credential is offshoots of Pakistan’s objective to weaken India’s defense strength.\(^{64}\)

Thus, the only means to weaken India is internal conflict and external threat from across the border. Pakistan policy makers have visualised this option well in advance, but it could shape only during the regime of Zia-Ul-Haq.\(^ {65}\)

By bringing about disharmony in Punjab Pakistanis sole objective is to destabilise India. In other words leaders in Pakistan aspire for fragmentation of India from within riots, violence and internal upheavals would keep the armed forces engaging in maintain law and order of the state.\(^ {66}\)

As a result strength of forces at the border would gradually reduce making the western border vulnerable to Pakistan forces. Punjab has been vulnerable to external threat from time immoral. Poltical turmoil in Punjab therefore causes instability in the nation. Political agitation in Punjab during 1980s brought entire nation under siege. The normal social economic and political life remained paralysed in India for more than a decade bringing nations progress at near halt. Its impact well felt as far as the northern-eastern states of India. It was during the period that Assam agitation reached its zenith, internal violence and conflict flared up and the country did appear breaking into pieces. Though Punjab is peaceful these days because of stern administrative action taken by KPS Gill and law enforcement agencies, people too have realised the woes of terrorism. Still government of India cannot take the present lull as permanent peace. The present divide in akali politics might spark

\(^{65}\) Sunday Observer, Bombay, 27 November 1994, p 1
\(^{66}\) South Asian Studies, Vol. 12, No. 182, Jan-June and July - Dec, 1977, p 51
agitation in Punjab any time and Pakistan would attempt to use terrorism. It would be premature to conceive that the police administered peace in Punjab has lessened hidden danger of Secessionist movement. Pakistan would again try to revive terrorism in Punjab with the help of Afghan Mujahideen and Akali dissidents. Government of India needs to keep tight vigilance in Punjab after the Kargil episode.⁶⁷

5.9. Cross-Border Linkage

Some analysts hold that Pakistan is determined to avenge its defeat in the 1971 war against India and consequent loss of its eastern wing, as it holds that Indian machinations responsible for both these national catastrophes. Therefore, Pakistan grabbed the opportunity that came its way when Punjab terrorism raised its head early 1980s, by extending all kinds of help to it with certain, definite strategic and political objectives in mind. It provided finances sanctuaries operational bases, weapons and training facilities on its soil to various terrorist groups operating in the Indian Punjab, aimed at creating chaos and disaffection which should eventually lead to creation of the theocratic state of its borders with India.⁶⁸

Pakistan had started playing the ‘Punjab card’ much before 1987 and even in 1991 Pakistan continues to encourage and assist terrorism in Punjab, for the purpose of destroying the political and ethnic cohesion of the Sikh population with the rest of the country. The terrorism started by murdering Nirankaris and Sikhs and Hindus, opposed to their demands. The shocking murder of Lala Jagat Narain took place on September 9, 1981. Period murders kept up a climate of violence and terror. Police failure to catch the murders led to the increasing violence. Even factional rivalries and inside Gurdwaraa politics led to murder. In this class fell the murder of the President of Delhi

Gurdwaraa Prabandhak Committee, Jathedar Santokh Singh? The hijacking of the I.A. Boeing to Lahore on 29th September 1981 showed the pak factor in the Punjab drama. In December 1982 the terrorists started the killing of their targets in the police force. The climax was reached when on April 25, 1983 Mr. Atwal, DIG, Amritsar was shot dead when he came out of the Golden Temple. As the government did not take any action even then it became plain to all ranks of the police that they and their families stand in the danger of being liquidated if they annoyed the terrorists. This led to total demoralisation of the Punjab police and it became a useless instrument for maintaining law and order. Large contingents of CRPF and BSF had to be brought in to maintain a semblance of ordered governments.69

In the Indian state of Punjab, radical Sikh separatists continue to wreak havoc with weapons obtained in Pakistan. But the level of assistance to the guerrillas from Pakistan’s government appears to be lower than in Kashmir. Indian intelligence officials charge from Pakistan is providing military training and advice to the Sikh guerrillas, but some guerrillas say that they conduct their own training within India and only cross into Pakistan to purchase weapons. Pakistani military officer’s charge that India is fighting back by renewing covert operations in Sind, Pakistan’s ethnically troubled southern province. Pakistan expelled four diplomats from the India consulate in Karachi, accused them of being agents of the Research and Analysis Wing, (RAW) India’s main intelligence agency. A senior military officer said in Karachi the alleged agents had been caught travelling without permissions in rural Sind, where they allegedly met with radical Sindhi nationalist and organised crime figures and offered to provide weapons and other assistance. He also said ISI had obtained a memorandum from the Indian intelligence agency’s New Delhi headquarters

asking the Indian consulate in Karachi to establish about a dozen “safe houses” in Sind from which covert operations could be mounted.

India and Pakistan far years have accused each other of stirring of trouble through covert operations, but the level of activity across the border appears to have increased since spring 1990, when tensions over the insurgency in Punjab prompted both sides to rush troops and weapons systems to the border amid shrill threats of war. Since then, the military tensions have eased, dampened by superpower lobbying, faltering economies and domestic political instability. The gulf crisis also to reduce war fever as a swift international condemnation of Iraq reminded each government that they armed incursion could bring costly international isolation. In November 1990, both India and Pakistan have changed their governments, with rightist Nawaz Sharif replacing Benazir Bhutto as Prime Minister in Islamabad and socialist Chander Shekhar taking over from V.P Singh in New Delhi.

Shakher and Nawaz Sharif met for the first time in November 1990 at regional conference in the Maldives. They agreed to continue ministerial talked aimed at enacting confidence-building measures to reduce military tensions along the border, but they achieved no significant break throughs. Military and intelligence officials and defence analysis in both countries say they accept the proxy war to continue at relatively high levels for an indefinite period. Patronage of insurgencies by Indians and Pakistanis is a way of keeping alive their hostility because they really do not know what to do it. Said Subir Bhowmik, an Indian intelligence specialist and author a forthcoming book on covert war in South Asia.70

Has the Bhindranwale Tiger Force (BTF) one of the riots outfits in the Punjab, been infiltrated by the dirty tricks department at the Research and

70. The Hindustan Times, 10 December, 1990.
Analysis Wing (RAW) deep throat hears that RAW has planted some moles within the BTF, which enjoys the patronage of the Pakistani military mafia. BTF leader Gurcharan Singh Manochchal is himself believed to be a victim of the dirty-tricks squad, completing his expulsion from the pro-pak panthic committee. Pakistani intelligence has apparently stepped up its surveillance of khalistan’s protagonists operating in Punjab and elsewhere, so that RAW operatives are unable to compromise them and use them as double agents.\textsuperscript{71}

Pakistani spies are playing games in Islamabad to test not only their country’s new leader but perhaps also to see how India’s new leader will react. Perhaps for the first time, Pakistani intelligence agents abducted in their country an Indian diplomats wife, interrogated her for 24 hours and forced her to sign some papers.

Obviously, the Intelligence Bureau, Indian counter intelligence organisation, reached sharply and retaliated by harassing the Pakistan high commission diplomats as well as its other staff. The Pakistan high commission complained that plainclothesman shouted abuses as its staff from the roadside and either cut the telephones lines and threatened them over phones again and again throughout the night. Well; Pakistan does not have the moral right to complain because they took the first step in this game and picking up an Indian diplomat’s wife. But countries keep a round-the clock surveillance on each other’s high commission staff, including diplomats. In fact, vehicles load of intelligence agents, here and there, follow “rivals” bumper-to-bumper, wherever they may go. Second secret agents told us that whenever there is a change in India’s leadership Pakistan intelligence agency men start playing such kind of games. This time, they are perhaps testing their new leader also. However, when the Indian agents moved into pay the Pakistani high commission people in their own coin, the authorities quietly placed a big group of crack commandos of the

\textsuperscript{71} Spy Vs Spy, \textit{Illustrated Weekly of India} (Bombay) 14 May 1990.
national security guards around the high commission people in their own coin, the authorities quietly placed a big group of crack commandos of the national security guards around the high commission in Chanakapuri, New Delhi. The idea was to “hit back” if by any change plain clothes members of the Pakistani armed forces, stationed inside for its security, decided to attack the Indian intelligence agencies, out around it.  

P Chidambaram, Minister of state for Home on April 6, 1989 assured the Lok Sabha that the government was keeping a close watch that over the activities of the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) agency of Pakistani whose direct involvement with activities of Afghan rebels, Punjab terrorists. The Home Minister whom was replaying to the debate on nexus between the Afghan rebels and Punjab terrorists said that the report of both was through ISI. The Minister said that reports about contact between Afghan rebels and terrorists became established in UK from 1985 onwards and came to notice in the United States from 1986. They were basically at the level of purchasing arms. He said terrorists have tried to purchase stringer missiles and there were reports that the few had been brought but they had no information about any of them having been brought here. The Minister said they had no information about any Indian unit of Afghan rebels being active along with terrorists in Punjab are being active on Indo-Pak border. He said they also had no reports about the involvement of any Afghan refugees here being involved in any terrorist activity.

He suggested these reports may have been circulated as counter to reports circulated by Mujahedeen Agencies about Indian involvement with Afghan government. He said there was no military cooperation between India and Afghan government and reported circulated about such activities were totally baseless.

The Home Minister said that there were also reports that Afghan rebels and followers of JKLF had attended the meetings called in the U.K and the United States were they had thanked amnesty international and a few congressmen in the United States for help given in raising human rights issues but no government help was officially mentioned by them.73

India’s Minister of state of Home Chidambaram told Lok Sabha the other day that there was “plenty of evidence” of the Inter Service Intelligence (ISI) the Pakistan secret service, supporting Afghan Mujahedeen and also the forces which smuggles arms into Punjab. It was also involves in conducting training camps for terrorists and sending them to Punjab and links between extremists in India and the Afghan Mujahedeen through the ISI. First, let us see what the ISI is. This agency was originally created to serve the armed forces of Pakistan. It giving into a dominating monster during the decade of General Zia-ul-Haq’s martial law. As Gen Zia being to rely more and more on this secret service its activities soon spread beyond its original mandate and it became an instrument of his domestic political needs as well as his personal arm in areas of direct concern to him. Consequently, the Pakistan Intelligence Bureau languished; ISI’s role in controlling the resistance in Afghanistan gave its both muscle and unlimited access to foreign funds and arms. It challenged these funds to which it liked, including local politicians. It thus came to acquire power so much so that it became a government with in a government. The Americans and Saudis who supplied the funds and arms asked no questions and if they did they never got the correct answer. It is the ISI which has been in charge of funding and training the Sikh terrorists. The death of Gen. Zia was the great blow to the ISI but soon it was back into its mettle. It organised a massive political offensive against Pakistan’s Political Party (PPP) and Ms. Benazir Bhutto. It created the alliance in nine parties called the Islami Jamhoori Ittehad (IJI). Mian Nawaz Sharif,

73. The Hindustan Times, 7 April 1989.
with fundamentalist Jamait-I-Islami as its guide and provided funds and strategy for the November 1988 elections. It conducted the IJI election campaign on the theme; hatred against India and PPP. When the People of Pakistan finally choose her as their leader with an overwhelming majority. The ISI and its best to prevent President Ghulam Ishaq khan from swearing her in as the Prime Minister. Having failed in this effort also, the ISI has now reverted its earlier role of formenting trouble in Punjab in India.\textsuperscript{74}

Pakistan came into existence not because the Baluch, Sindhi, Pathan or even Punjabi Muslims wanted it. It was imposed on them as the choice before the Indian leadership in August 1947 was between nationwide communal holocaust and the country’s partition on religious lines. It is Hindustani speaking Muslims – now being treated as second class citizens in Pakistan - who were the most vociferous protagonist of Pakistan Mohammad Ali Jinnah, who played the British game, realised on his death - bed the grievous harm he had done to India in general, and to the Muslims, in particular. All the coins in the pocket are counter felt, he told his physician. It is not accidental that since Jinnah death Pakistan has continued to be an imperialist pawn, a base for subversion. In semi-tribal, feudal Punjab part of Pakistan it discovered a willing ally and an obedient tool to destroy Indian unity and prevent it’s economic and political development. The Baluch, the Sindhi and the pathans were numerically too weak to influence the course of Punjabi - dominated Pakistani polity. The Bengalis were treated as sub-human subjects and not equal partners in a national that was yet to be forged out of the ethnic mosaic. Pakistan’s survival was to fan the hate Indian campaign and keep the people’s attention diverted to Indian threat. Again, it is not the Pakistani people but the feudal militarists who have held the decisive say in the formulation and execution of policies. But the hatred of India, instead of consolidating of Pakistan, precipitated wars with India and

\textsuperscript{74} Syed Ziaullah, \textit{Role of ISI and Pakistan}, Madhya Pradesh Chronicide, 24 April, 1989.
the break-up of the country. The only person of eminence who realised the futility of permanent hostility with India and also the internal weakness of Pakistan was Z.A Bhutto.\textsuperscript{75} Zia used religion not only to justify his hellish crime against the Bhutto family and the secular demands of the people, he used religious fanaticism to recruit agents among Khalistan fanatics and disgruntled elements in India. He spent millions to recruit friends in a section of Indian intelligentsia, media men and also bureaucracy. While plotting to stab in the India in the back, he offered Nishan-e-Pakistan to India’s former Prime Minister Morarji Desai and convinced some bureaucrats of his “sweet reasonableness”. He created the monster called Inter-Service Intelligence directorate with nearly one lakh paid agents operating both inside the country and outside. The ISI outfit runs a parallel government and is still not reconciled to the civilian government headed by Benazir. It is not fully accountable either to the Prime Minister of Pakistan or to the military chiefs. The ISI is very much controlled by the CIA and has its own independent source of income from the Saudis, on the one hand, and the in trade, on the other. The ISI set a number of camps to train Khalistani and pro-Pakistan Punjab terrorists. The blue star operation was forced on India as the ISI was oppressing terrorists, who had fortified themselves in the Amritsar Gurudwaras, to declare an independent Khalistan. Gen. Zia’s Sikh card was aborted during Zia’s life time though it created a deep schism between the Sikh and Hindu. The ongoing terrorism in Punjab is organised and financed by the Pakistani military intelligence which has its network among the non resident Sikh in the United States, Britain and Canada. As part of the Anti-Indian campaign, the CIA encouraged a couple of Americans senators and congressman to back the Khalistan demand and raise the issue of human rights in Punjab.

\textsuperscript{75} Ganeshshukla, “ISI out to Provoke Conflict”, Destabilise Benazir, New Wave, 16 April 1989.
The plot to kill Indira Gandhi was masterminded by Gen. Zia at the behest of his Saudi and American masters. It was the CIA which was produced the post - India scenario six months before she was assassinated by his own Sikh guards. There is circumstantial evidence that the CIA station chief in New Delhi knew in advance the date and timing of the assassination.\(^{76}\)

Even before Gen. Zia came on the scene western intelligence agencies were working overtime to destabilise India with the help of a number of so called voluntary agencies which were only fronts for anti-national activities. The kudal commission report is a monumental indictment of a number of organisations, individuals and political and social workers, some of whom were recently honoured with state awards and even inducted in government outfits. Together the Thakkar commission and kudul commission reports give a picture of how the alien agencies have been and are still working for destabilising and dismembering India. To start with Rajiv was advised by numerous moles in the system to start on a clean state, and if necessary, bend backward to the friend Gen. Zia and strengthen bridges of friendship with the United States, little realising that the nation’s history, experiences and urges are not school room lessons which can be written on black board and wiped out with a duster. The decision for Pakistan is not taken in Islamabad: they are taken in langlay, the state department, the pentagon and the white house. As Benazir, does not know much of what ISI doing ‘George Bush does not what the various agencies of his government are doing. The ISI seems hell bent on prolonged the Afghan civil war even if it leads to Afghan Pakistan military clashes. Its activities in Punjab have the potentials of the kind of plot that was hatched in Washington and Islamabad and had to be destroyed by a military operation. To allow Pakistan to destabilise India’s Border States by low-level violence may exact much harsher
price if prompt action is not taken to destroy the nests from which the ISI is operating.\textsuperscript{77}

Efforts by the Pakistan Intelligence Agencies to bring about terrorist organisations operating in Punjab under one command had failed to yield results. A senior police officer said in Amritsar, on November 23, 1990 that interrogation of a few terrorists who had been a Pakistan and were apprehended recently, revealed that the field Intelligence units and the interstate intelligence unit, responsible for training the terrorists, had called a meeting of top level leaders of various terrorist groups near Lahore where they asked them to sink their differences and unit under one command.\textsuperscript{78}

However, dreaded terrorist Gurbachan Singh Manochahal who heads one of the Panthic Committee and is the founder of the Bhindranwale, Tigers Force, and has associate Wassan Singh Zaffarwal had opposed the view points of Dr. Sohan Singh who heads the rival panthic committee.


According to the terrorists Manochahal wanted the removal of Paramjit Singh Panjwar as “KCF” Chief which was opposed by Dr. Sohan Singh. The meeting was attended by all of them expect Panjwar and Budhsinghwala.

The interrogating of the terrorists, the official said points to the fact that the militant groups accused each other for the killing of terrorist Sukhwinder Singh Sanga a self - styled general of the Bhindranwale Tigers Force a breakaway faction of the Manochahal group. While Manochahal accused

\textsuperscript{77} Ibid
\textsuperscript{78} Pioneer, 24 November, 1990.
Paramjit Singh Panjwar of being “responsible” for the killing of Sanga, the panthic committee headed by Sohan Singh held Manochahal responsible.

Sanga who was shot dead recently, had taken to terrorism under the influence of Manochahal but had later disassociated himself from his mentor and declared himself as the chief of the “BTF”. Sanga was also involved in bitter rivalry with “KCF” Chief Paramjit Singh and the two groups have killed a number of ‘sympathisers’ of either side.

Having failed in their efforts to make the terrorist groups operate under an unified command. The Intelligence Agencies across the border had been pressurising top level terrorists like Wassan Singh Zaffarwal and Sukhdev Singh Babar to cross the border into India in order to bring about a joint operational strategy amongst terrorist groups.

However, the official quoting intelligence reports said that this had not so far materialised. The official said that at the meeting Pakistan Intelligence officials had also asked the terrorist leaders that they should recruit persons having ex-serviceman background into their ranks. The official said in interrogation of terrorist had lee to the relief that a number of Pakistan nationals in the grab of Sikhs had been pushed across the border with an objective to create communal friction in Punjab.

With the deployment of the Pakistani army along the ditch – cum - bandh close to the Indo-Pak border in Punjab, the Intelligence agencies of that country is likely to “push in” well-trained spies into india to get information about army positions.79

From indie’s point of view it would be unrealistic to expect any early change in the Anti-Indian thrust of Pakistani policy. Any new government set up in India will have to give priority to tackling the law and order problems in

Punjab. It is common knowledge that Pakistan’s Inter-Service Intelligence directorate gives training and assistance to subversives crossing the Indo-Pakistan border to create trouble in the Indian side. The fact that Pakistan incurs revenue expenditure “associated in large part to the Punjab conflict” has been taken note of by the world bank Benazir Bhutto made a reference to the Kashmir issue in her first speech as leader of the opposition in parliament. The point she sought to make was that the advantage “so painstakingly” gained by her government had been frittered away by the caretaker government that replaced her.80

The ISI would continue to sow seeds of communal differences in Punjab and elsewhere in India. Internally of domestically, the Pakistan armed forces will play a significant role in the pacification of Sindh. It is not possible to escape the fact that the IJI is the creation of the ISI. Even Ghulam Jatoi, the caretaker Prime Minister had said that “no government can survive in Pakistan, unless it enjoys the confidence of the army”.81

The objective of pak-sponsored terrorism in Punjab is accession of the state from India because accession to Pakistan was ruled out way back in 1947 itself when the representatives of Sikh community gave their verdict in favour of India82.

Since India did not have major political problems during the early post-independence period, Pakistan did not adopt unlawfull methods of cessation of the state. The bitter experience of partition was still fresh in the minds of the people and there was hardly any opportunity for Pakistan government to intervene in domestic politics of Punjab. Unlike Jammu and Kashmir, where Pakistan government used almost all the instruments of foreign policy to capture the state, Punjab was placed by the different agenda. It was clear to

82. Indian Express (Bombay), 12 June 1992.
policy makers that east Punjab cannot be a union of Pakistan, but it could be utilised to achieve their foreign policy objective in India. I.e. to promote secessionism and creation of a Separate Sikh state. This objective of Pakistan could be achieved only by sponsoring terrorism in Punjab with the help of local population.

“Operation Topac” was the code name given by Indian defence analyst to Pakistan’s plan of subversion in India. It is relevant to mention in the context of operation Topac that there is no full evidence to prove or disprove that Zia government adopted or implemented any such plan of action. But this actions in Punjab during 1980s and his inspiration from Tupac Amuru,83

The chief of pampharamca in Peru in eighteenth century who fought against the Spanish colonisation of Uruguay suits the code “Operation Tupac” for Pakistan-sponsored terrorism in India. This programme was more directed towards Jammu and Kashmir than to Punjab. The infrastructure provided to Jammu and Kashmir militants were also made available to the Sikh militants. Infact rhetoric support to Sikh militants served double purpose for Pakistan. On the one hand, the government created dissension and law and order problem in India and on the other raised fund for its ordinance factory by selling arms to the militants. It is relevant to note that Sikh militants were encouraged to buy arms and ammunitions whereas the Jammu and Kashmir militants were added and funded.84

These differences in the nature of terrorism in Punjab were related to differences in objectives Pakistan. Pakistan government was also aims to tarnish India’s image in the eastern of world opinion. It needs to be noted that when there is change in objective, the modus operandi or the implementation of the

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84. Ibid
plan too changes. Thus, it corresponds to logical conclusion that the nature of pak-sponsored terrorism in Punjab could be described in phases.

The first phase is in the nature of terrorism in Punjab was the alienation of the Sikh population in Punjab.

The next phase emphasised the need for the subversion of the state machinery and the mass agitation against the government.

The final phase marked the reign of terror in Punjab, because people were become victims of violence by the militants and the administration. The infrastructure provided to Sikh militants by Pakistan analysed under following heads.

5.9.1 Through Intelligence

The contribution of Pakistan’s Intelligence Agencies in abetting terrorism in Punjab from that of Jammu and Kashmir is related to geographical locations. All the units of Intelligence such as ISI and FIU active in Punjab. While ISI functioning in connivance with the Pakistan basic panthic committee, the FIU members operate at the borders. The government of Pakistan has carved out a separate cell in ISI to provide infrastructure for the Punjab terrorist.

Its major work is to formulate policy in consultation with the panthic committee and other militant outfits such as Khalistan Commando Force, Bhindranwale Tiger Force, and Khalistan Liberation Force and Babar Khalsa. All these four terrorist groups receive policy direction from ISI.85

The most tasks allotted to ISI are to control over militant activities. The power is more relevant in Punjab where Pakistani Intelligence has to deal with Non-Muslim out fits. Pakistan did not expect blind obedience from Sikh

85 Office of the Director General of Police, Intelligence, Punjab, Monthly Terrorist Review on Punjab, Copy No. 22, Secret (Chandigarh; May 1993), p 37
militants. Thus certain amount of restraint is essential, especially in the light of fact that many Sikh aspire to see Punjab Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Hence ISI is empowered to monitor activities of Sikh militants.86

Panth and politics go together in the social and political life of Punjab. Because of religious interference in politics, which is the way of social life in Punjab, the panthic committee holds high esteem. The dictates of the committee are observed as divine order and are followed. The panthic committee consists of five members elected from amongst the religious heads of Akal Takht of Amritsar, Anandpur Sahib, Damdami Sahib, Patna Sahib and Nanded. These groups are involved more in politics than maintaining religious order. By virtue of being member of the panthic committee, they have access to resource and manpower of Gurudwaras which is normally exploited for extra religious activities in Pakistan.

In 1925, the Gurudwaras act is passed which made Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee (SGPC) custodian of all the Sikh religious Shrines along with their enormous resources. The SGPC also functions under the dictates of the panth. These enormous resources of money, manpower and infrastructure were used by the panthic committee for its own gain. The SGPC is there by empowered to take care of management of Gurudwaras, while the panthic committee takes care of decision making. The panthic committee and the SGPC in India which is dominated by Akalis can influence politics and policies of both centre and the state governments, because Punjab which is dominated by Sikhs (60 percent of the total) is of strategic significance for the national security and the territory of India.

But in Pakistan scenario is different. The panthic committee in Pakistan has no right to intervene in governance and politics of the state. The Sikhs are in

86. Ibid
extreme minority there. They have no choice but to follow their faith and be at the mercy of the government: and it one of the important factors that gives Pakistan government at opportunity to intervene or to utilise services of the panthic committee to achieve goals in Punjab. Through religious congregation in Gurudwaras for celebration of birth anniversary and martyrdoms of the Gurus, the Pakistan intelligence agencies exercise influence on ideology and social behaviour of religious heads the through them the common people. Thus, the role of Pakistan based panthic committee in abetting terrorism in Punjab could be analysed from two perspectives.

First from the point from co-ordinance with the ISI in policy formulation for sponsoring terrorism in Punjab. These policies are made in consultation with the panthic committee to win their confidence and ask for co-operation at the time of execution of the plan. But, in practice, this is more a formal gesture rather than a genuine desire to consult. Premises of the Gurudwaras are used as hideouts or shelter after or before act of subversion. It has been revealed by police findings that terrorists coming from Punjab to Mumbai or any other parts of India are usually harboured in different Gurudwaras of the cities.

There family members are well looked after by the committee so that militants can indulge in violent acts without any fear for security of their family members. Within the premises they are provided with medical facilities and food to take care of their essential requirements.

The Gurdwaras was also made for hoarding arms and ammunition which in due course of time are supplied to different Gurudwaras in India disguised as food and other essentials required to maintain Gurudwaras. Huge stock pile of arms recovered from the Golden Temple in 1984 “operation blue star” is

88. First Panthic Committee for the *Cause of Khalistan was set up in Amritsar* on 26 January 1986 under the Leadership of Sohan Singh who went to Pakistan latter, Sunday Observer, 10-16 February 1991, p 5
manifestation of this fact. All such murky transactions are done under the nose of pak-based panthic committee.

Finally, panthic committee plays an important role in propagating hatred and violence against government of India in Punjab. The members of the panthic committee have a direct interaction with the people who pay reverence and obedience to their religious leaders. The religious position is emotionally exploited by the panth. By delivering speeches of religious sentiments and by revealing certain incidents of torture meted out to Sikh community in early 1980s during the course of Punjab agitation, the pak-based panthic committee instigated people to take arms against the government of India. In the name of hypothetical autonomous Sikh nation the young people got swayed and marched on the path of no return i.e, terrorism the outcome of which was violence, counter-violence and bloodshed for over a decade.

5.10 Pakistani Collaboration

There was suspicious of Pakistani collaboration with the terrorists from 1983 to June 1984, when army action was taken. This collaboration was supposed be of two types; that a largely quantity of arms had taken supplied by Pakistan to the terrorists and a number of Pakistani military experts had been working with the terrorists in Punjab. It has been specialised publicised by various agencies by most of the weapons seized by barmy from Golden Temple were foreign made and that a number of Pakistanis had been apprehended from the Golden Temple. This was proved to be incorrect. Out of 1467 weapons seized as shown by government at (A) to (K) of annexure - XI of the white paper, none of the weapons was of Pakistani origin, whereas 95 percent of weapons were of Indian origin, the remaining percent, mainly 52 Chinease rifles, were of foreign origin which could have come through Pakistan. Thus,
most of the weapons that found their way to Golden Temple over a period of two years were either from the army or from police units or from defence factories in India. Such large scale smuggling of weapons into Golden Temple was a blatant failure on the part of the administration, the army and the police. Secondly, no foreign nationals were found in Golden Temple except one Pakistani civilian of no consequence. Only ten Muslims were arrested from Golden Temple out of which nine were Indian Muslims. It may mentioned that prior to army operation, more than 3000 fire arms were seized by police and Para - military force between July 1983 and May 1984 in their operations in various districts of Punjab. These consisted mostly of country made pistols besides a few rifles, revolvers, carbines and smoothbore guns, all indigenous available with army, police, civilians and smugglers. Thus there was no significant supply of arms or ammunition by any foreign country up to operation blue star. There were also no Pakistani military experts in Golden Temple of anywhere in Punjab as there was no need for it. The retired officers of Indian army with Bhindranwale were no less competent, rather better than any Pakistani military expert. However, there was no doubt that Pakistani intelligence was quite active during this period of Punjab border motivating and instigating the terrorists.90

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