CHAPTER - FOUR

ISSUE OF TERRORISM AND MILITANCY

A salient feature of recent political developments in South Asia is the frequent occurrence of incidents of conflicts between religious groups, ethnic communities, or caste agglomerations. Though most of the sources of conflict are embedded in the historical development of each society, these conflicts have sharpened in the recent past after the state began to intervene more actively to initiate social and economic changes. Though there is not even an unanimous agreement on who is a terrorist.

and what is terrorism, it can be said that terrorism is the systematic use of terror or unpredictable violence against governments, public or individuals to attain a political objective. It is viewed as a form of violent strategy, a form of coercion utilized to alter the freedom of choice of others. Jay Mallin writes that it is a disease of modern society. It is a virus growing in an ill body, which has no certain cure. B.V. Walter writes, 'conventionally, the word 'terrorism' means a type of violent action, such as murder, designed to make people afraid. Modern terrorism born in the post-war world has undergone a remarkable evolution. At least three distinct types of terrorism are distinguishable:

First, CLASSICAL TERRORISM, was an extension of war by other means. It differed from classical warfare, in that it deliberately targeted civilians. The strategy was to demoralise the population. Attacking the defenceless was deemed a military necessity.

Second, MEDIA TERRORISM, which appeared at the end of 1960s, was an extension of politics by other means. Unlike classical terrorism it occurred in complete absence of actual military

confrontation, aimed at publicity, and there was a radical
dissociation between the target of the violence and the target
of the message.

Recently, a new, even more dangerous form of terrorism has
emerged, STATE SPONSORED TERRORISM. Here the elements of terror
have changed again. The objective is neither panic nor publicity,
but, purely and simply elimination of enemies, preferably enemy
leaders. The perpetrators of this species of terrorism completely
disregarded the basic human factors. This 'new wave' terrorism
has sent the whole world aflame.

Generally, it can be said that a person indulges in terro­
rism due to an acute feeling of want or alienation. Sometimes,
his feelings may be justified. The society he lives in may be
so repressive and exploitative that he may feel that he can
achieve social and economic justice only by terrorising his oppres­
sors. Terrorist acts have two levels of objectives. Tactically,
the goal is publicity and recognition of a purported claim. It
is as well to remember that the necessary concomitant of terrorism
is fear and the ultimate objective is coercion. The foregoing acts
of violent behaviour-characterized by a technique of perpetrating
random and brutal intimidation, coercion or destruction of human

lives and property, and used intentionally by sub-national groups, operating under varying degrees of stress, to obtain realistic or illusory goals are symptomatic of what we consider 'terrorism' to be. Indeed, we seem to have entered an 'age of terrorism', the pattern of which is unlike any other period in history when ideological and political violence occurred. The major reason for this contemporary phenomenon lies in the very nature of modern civilisation itself. The present complex technological society is extremely vulnerable to unsuspected and ruthless attacks of terrorism. It is because, first, highly sophisticated weapons are now relatively easy for various terror movements to obtain. Second, the availability of the most modern warfare capabilities to terror groups challenges the stability of an orderly human society. Third, the advance of science and technology are slowly turning all of modern society into a potential victim of terrorism. Fourth, communication and transportation opportunities have enabled an international network of terrorism to develop with a certain degree of centralised organisational structure. In addition to these factors, several broad causative circumstances have substantially contributed to our 'age of terrorism' including the rise in ethnic,

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8. Ibid., pp. xi-xii.
linguistic, social, religious and national consciousness of
groups throughout the world. M.J. Akbar writes, 'it has become
increasingly clearer that we are too many with not enough land or
jobs available for all of us. The root cause of spreading endemic
violence is economic, religious, linguistic and ethnic differences
provide the excuse and motivation to indulge in it. Stephen P.
Cohen, former adviser to the US State department on Indian affairs,
says in an interview to Sunday, 'The process which is going on in
the countries of South Asia, like, Sri Lanka, India and Pakistan is
the attempt by the state organisations in these countries to retain
control over territories and people.... The Pakistani vision of
Pakistan as the homeland for South Asian Muslims inherently runs
into conflict with the Indian vision of India as a secular state.
The Sinhalese definition of Sri Lanka as a homeland for South Asian
Buddhists inherently runs into conflict with the fact that it
has a large minority Tamil community that has other interests and
other visions of what the state should look like. This is the
long term process going on in all these countries.

One of the tragic realities of the contemporary world in
the rising levels and quality of violence threatening not only the

10. Cohen, Stephen P., in an interview with Nirmal Mitra in
state but also society itself, when the innocents become the central focus of killings. During the past decade or so, tremendous proliferation of the weapons has taken place in the world and South Asia is no exception. The qualitative aspects of this proliferation has resulted in weapons of ever increasing lethality. The qualitative difference between the large-scale transistor-bombing in Delhi in 1985 and the RDX bombing of Bombay in which 235 persons were killed and 1225 were injured, is illustrative of the trend. What we need to note is that alongwith the qualitative improvement, there has been a global proliferation of such weapons - from USA to Bosnia, Somalia, the Middle East and all the way to Afghanistan and now India. The quantum of weapons supplied to Afghan mujahideen for a decade and a half has been phenomenal with Pakistan Skimming off nearly 60 per cent of the weaponry. It is in this context that we need to see Pakistan's ideological underpinnings to support and supply to militants and terrorists in Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir.

The profit motive has led to a vast black, grey and legitimate market in minor weapons operating in the world. At the same time, in many countries, gun/arms control laws are either too permissive, freely permitting proliferation, or are circumvented. Pakistan's gun control laws are believed to be very lax. The

11. The Hindustan Times, 25 May 1993
disintegration of the Soviet Union and its socio-economic crisis along with force reductions has generated the potential of large scale movement of minor weapons to unknown destinations.

A. INDIA:

One of the dangers that face India is the fast spreading epidemic of violence, intimidation and terror that is at once affecting the functioning of institutions and generating a deep sense of fear and panic among individuals and communities. People are facing violence and acts of terrorism in different parts of the country, specially in Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab and the North-East. The gravity of the situation is underlined by the fact that there may be a sponsoring neighbouring or, a distant state.

PUNJAB: The genesis of the Sikh's quest for a separate identity, which turned on a violent secessionist character, can be traced back to the day of British rule. It began with the periodic censuses initiated by the British, which classified people on the basis of religion. As it was difficult to differentiate between

Hindus and Sikhs. Alongside, a movement to dehinduise the Sikhs soon took shape. In 1920, the Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee (SGPC) was accordingly formed to take over the shrines. Its activists, the Akali Dal, forcibly took over shrine after shrine in no time. This gave Akali militancy an aura of respectability and confidence. Gradually, an element of fundamentalism began to seep into Sikh politics. Subsequently, in 1973, the Working Committee of the Akali Dal at a meeting in Anandpur Sahib passed a resolution, known as Anandpur Sahib Resolution. This formed the basis of the Akali's demands. The Akali Nirankari clash on Baisakhi day in 1978 was the beginning of the cult of violence in Punjab. Baba Gurubachan Singh, the Nirankari Guru, was murdered in Delhi on 24 April 1980. Lala Jagat Narain who sympathised with the Nirankaris was assassinated on 9th September 1981 on way to Ludhiana. The militant wing came increasingly under the influence of Jarnail Singh Bhindrawala. An Indian Airline Boeing 737 with 107 passengers aboard was hijacked and taken to Pakistan. As a consequence of all this, the Government of India was compelled to start negotiations with Akali leaders in December, 1981. Several rounds of talks were held between the Government of India and the Akali leaders nominees between 1981-83, but they proved unsuccessful and tension increased. Indira Gandhi


at this stage announced unilateral acceptance of the religious demands of the Akalis with a view to diffuse the tension. This also however, did not help. The main cause for failure was factionalism among the Akali leaders. So far the opposition parties had been kept out of the discussions. Now, the government associated the opposition with the talks and a tripartite conference was held on 25 January, 1983. Nine such conferences were held between 1983-84, but nothing came out of it. Akali returned to the course of agitation and Bhindrawale started a separate morcha at Amritsar. M.J. Akbar calls Bhindrawale as 'the Ayatollah Khomeini cum Jinnah of the secessionist movement in Punjab.' By the end of 1984, the extremists had made even ordinary citizens their target with the objective of terrorising the people. The result was the growth of extremism making use of the Golden Temple premises, the Akal Takht being made a fortress to challenge the state authority. The result was operation Bluestar which was carried out in June 1984. This undoubtedly injured the religious feelings of the Sikh community, and afterwards Punjab could only be ruled with the active support of the Army. 

Seeing the importance of Punjab as a state on the border with Pakistan which has the ulterior motive of destabilising the

17. Ibid., pp. 331-332.
country, Rajiv Gandhi did realise that some settlement had to be arrived at. The result was the Rajiv - Longowal Accord of 1985. This Accord was welcomed by the people of Punjab. But Sant Longowal had to sacrifice his life at the hands of the extremists on 20 August 1985. Elections were held immediately after his martyrdom. The Akali Dal got a massive majority and Surjit Singh Barnala formed the Government. Even the Barnala Government's attempt to root out terrorists by inducting Julio Ribeiro, as the director general of Punjab police, has failed in the absence of a political solution and President's rule was imposed on Punjab, on 11 May 1987. Terror prevailed in the State and people were afraid of defying the extremists. Because by this time the training in Pakistan and massive supply of weapons had given the extremists superiority even against the police force. In the beginning of 1992, when elections were held, not more than 10% of the population participated in the elections. But one change in the situation was noticeable. The people were getting fed up with the activities of the extremists. It was in this situation that the police which began fighting the extremists determinedly were getting the cooperation and support of the people. This factor resulted in restoring near normalcy in Punjab. But from this it will be wrong to conclude that peace has been restored in Punjab.

20. 'The Search for Khalistan', op.cit., p. 11.
21. Ibid.
Because the issues which formed the basis of the present situation will remain to be solved.

JAMMU & KASHMIR: At the time of partition of the country, the people of Kashmir perceived a threat to their Kashmiri identity from Pakistan which refused to concede them the right to decide their fate. At first, it recognised the right of the ruler to do so and later assumed it for itself and tried to enforce it through a tribal raid. A self-respecting community like the Kashmiris could not accept that position and, therefore, sought Indian armed help to defend their right of self-determination. However, Srinagar and New Delhi had divergent perceptions about the fateful decision of the Kashmiris to accede to the Indian Union. For the rest of India, it became just a part of India, but the Kashmiri Muslims continued to talk of the separateness of the Kashmiri identity. The prevailing sentiments had their origins way back in 1940s, provided by the Jamait-e-Islami (JEI). The JEI came into existence in Kashmir in 1945. It aims: propagation of Islamic teachings and the creation of an Islamic state following the Islamic way of life based on the shariat. It does not recognise the accession of Kashmir to India. The secular forces

in Kashmir began a slow decline with the two secular national parties confronting each other in elections. While the congress-I seemed to take up the Hindu cause, the National Conference (NC) naturally banked on its Muslim supporters.

If the fundamentalists have been trying to whip up communal frenzy inside Kashmir, the more extremist among them had gone abroad and tried to engineer a viable scheme to take Kashmir away from India. The more prominent among them was Mohammad Maqbool Butt, who migrated to Pakistan occupied Kashmir (POK) in 1958. He soon gave up passive struggle to 'liberate' Kashmir and set up an underground militant wing called the Jammu and Kashmir National Liberation Front (JKNLF) in 1964. The JEE, which had always maintained contacts across the border in Pakistan, suffered a major setback when Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto was hanged in 1979. It indulged in a major exercise to project itself as the champion of Muslims in Kashmir at the International Seerat Conference in May 1980. The polarisation in the politics of Kashmir inevitably set the stage for the communal riots that rocked the valley in early 1986. Another factor that caused alienation of the Kashmiri Muslims is the lack of outlets for their discontent. Before the Rajiv - Farooq accord of 1986 (which brought an understanding

between Congress and National Conference), the Congress was the channel of discontent against the state government while the NC channelised discontent against the Centre. As the two parties formed a coalition government, both types of discontent was diverted to communal and secessionist outlets. The lack of a democratic tradition, civil liberties and free elections further forced the popular discontent to seek outlets outside the political system. It was the vacuum created by the collapse of politics through normal means - party system, elections, civil liberties - that terrorism - which is politics through other means, sought to fill. Of course, the training facilities and supply of arms by Pakistan made its task easier.

Like the JKNLF, another front Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) was formed in 1976 in Britain. Its founder President was Abdul Jabar Butt. But in 1982, it split into two. The new faction was headed by Amanullah Khan. His arrival in Pakistan in 1986 following his deportation from UK gave an impetus to Kashmiri terrorism. Pakistan has taken advantage of internal unrest and is funding, arming, training militants in a big way. It is

also providing intelligence, laying down the strategy and specifying objectives. The challenges of terrorism in the state magnified with the militants acquiring arms like AK-47, rocket launchers and the like. Large scale use of improvised explosive devices causes heavy casualties among innocent bus and rail passengers. Kidnappings have added another cruel dimension. The tension gripped both India and Pakistan in February 1992 as the JKLF announced its plan to march across the Line of control from Pak-occupied Kashmir to the Indian side on February 11, 1992, but it was prevented by Pakistan authorities effectively. But the cycle of violence and terrorism is still on. The surest way to counter terrorism is by countering terrorist logic in the crevices of the individual soul. The demands of militants have to be addressed politically. The solution lies in initiating the political process in Kashmir. But the difficulty in front of central government is that there are a number of militant groups with different objectives.

To be sure, terrorism is no answer to the genuine problems of Kashmir. It would eliminate dissent and free thinking - without which a civilised society cannot exist. It would brutalise a


30. Ibid.

humane and cultured community. It would destroy even the remaining institutions and thus make orderly life impossible. Its economic, social, cultural and political costs would become increasingly prohibitive. But mere condemnation of people of Kashmir will not do. They deserve sympathy and understanding and sincere help to get out of what is one of the gravest crisis in their long history.

It is not only Punjab and Kashmir, where the people of India are facing terrorist activities. Different groups with an ideology of violence are working in different facts of the country. In the north-east violent agitations are a daily phenomenon. Naxalism, a left extremist movement, which was born in the countryside of Naxalabari, West Bengal, nearly 25 years ago, today covers not only West Bengal but Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Orissa also. To fight out all types of terrorism and militancy, a democratic way of life and the administration will have to take all possible steps to root out militancy from our midst.

B. **PAKISTAN:**

Pakistan shares three of its ethnological population groups with its two South Asian neighbours, Afghanistan and India. The Pushtuns, Baluchis and Punjabis are all crossnational ethnopolitical groups. The Sindhi population of Sindh, a province of Pakistan also suffers from a sense of relative deprivation. This
sense of deprivation and dissatisfaction has led different communities to take up terrorist activities. Bomb explosions have become a common affair in the cities like Karachi and Hyderabad.

**SINDHI - MOHAJIR CONFLICT:**

The refugees who came to Pakistan from India following partition settled mainly in the cities of Sindh - Karachi, Hyderabad, Mirpurkhas and Sukkur. They are called mohajirs. Linguistically, there was no comparison of these refugees with their Sindhi hosts. The refugee identity was quickly concretised within the new state and the refugees emerged as the ruling ethnic group within Pakistan. The death of Liaquat Ali Khan was the beginning of the shift in power between ethnic/national groups in Pakistan which continued with greater intensity once the non-mohajir military took over in 1958. The rise of Sindhi nationalism in 1970s confronted mohajir aspirations. The 1983 and 1986 Movement for the Restoration of Democracy (MRD) were other examples where the two communities had very different political aspirations. The mohajir identity per se has only become crystallised after the official launching of the Mohajir Qaumi Movement (MQM) in 1986.

and by the violent events following that, there has always been the seeds of an exclusivity of identity in this community. The MQM's armed wing, the Black Tigers, which constitutes a few hundred young men who have taken an oath to die for their mohajir cause, has played a notorious role in spreading terror among the people.

The rise of Sindhi nationalism is less dramatic and has taken a longer period to emerge than has mohajir consciousness. Bhutto certainly played a major role in crystallising Sindhi consciousness. The death of Bhutto and the treatment by the Punjab and its army - to counter the nationalists who were always labelled as traitors resulted in a further concretisation of Sindhi consciousness. The 1983 movement was the main outcome of the results of these developments when Sindhi nationalism was at its peak. Today Sindhi nationalism is the dominant political philosophy in the province and is slowly cementing itself further still. The leader of the Jiye Sindh Movement Mr. G.M. Sayed was placed under house arrest by the Pakistani authorities in January 1992, when he called for an independent Sindh nation, "free from exploitation and state slavery." The Sindh people's Students' Federation gave

34. Ibid., p. 1297.
a strike call against his detention which brought in its wake firing bomb, explosions and clashes in Hyderabad and some other towns. One important feature of the events over the last few years is the degree and nature of violence committed upon political opponents in Sindh. The extremely brutal atrocities are being carried out by members of the MQM and by the Peoples Party on each other. Violence is endemic in all forms of protest and dispute within the Pakistan society. It was not just political suppression which has now resulted in this extreme release of energy in the form of violence, but equally important, cultural, academic and social oppression under the military have given rise to violence.

BALUCHISTAN:

The Baluch tribes who inhabit Baluchistan (a province of Pakistan) and adjacent territories in Afghanistan and Iran, are said to entertain aspirations of a single sovereign Baluch state. Baluchistan occupies nearly 40 per cent of Pakistan's land area. Inspite of its vast area and resources, it has remained underdeveloped. The people of the Province suffer a sense of economic deprivation and political isolation. They are against Central authority's calculated disregard of their ethnic and cultural

identities. Since 1947, Baluchistan has gone through repeated political upheavals, culminating in the most severe insurgency which lasted four years (1973-1977) during the Bhutto regime. The endless presence of the Army, the imposition of ad hoc administrative arrangements giving rise to endemic bureaucratic corruption, and development expenditure that was counter-productive led Baluchis to develop a hostile view of the Central Government. The regional and linguistic differences escalated to the point that critics began to refer to the troubles in Baluchistan as 'Pakistan's Vietnam.'

PAKHTUNISTAN:

Pakistan has witnessed the continuing ethnocentric and centrifugal pull that Pakhtun regionalism represented long before partition. Spanning many ecological zones, Pakhtuns are the largest and most cohesive tribal group in Pakistan's ethnic mosaic. The demand for the creation of a separate state called 'Pakhtunistan' to include all Pashtu-speaking areas in the North-West Frontier Province, parts of Baluchistan and Afghanistan dates from the creation of Pakistan. Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan was the most

38. Ibid., p. 21.
outstanding leader of Pakhtuns. At the time of partition, Pakistan's leader, M.A. Jinnah, gave him an assurance that his Government would not interfere in any way in the traditional independence of tribal areas. On the contrary the Pakhtuns were interfered and have ever since been suffering from an identity crisis. To add to the Pakhtun sense of belonging to a separate 'nationality', Afghanistan began playing a direct manipulative role in the 'Pakhtunistan' issue. In 1955, the Soviet leaders declared that they sympathised with Afghanistan's policy on the issue. A number of Soviet scholars considered Pakistan as a collection of separate 'nationalities' and argued that 'the dismemberment of India along religious lines has not solved the national problem in the areas constituting Pakistan.' Since the beginning of 1973, Z.A. Bhutto's adoption of various measures for the effective control of Pashtun areas created suspicions among several independent tribes over whom neither Kabul nor Islamabad could ever exercise effective control. Later on due to the efforts of Gen. Zia-ul-Haq tension was reduced in the Frontier. As a response to this gesture, Wali Khan, the principal leader of Pakistan's Pakhtuns, negotiated with Gen. Zia-ul-Haq but negotiations broke down. Since 1979, with the continuing arrival of Afghan refugees, mostly Pashtuns inspired with the spirit of

Jahad (religious war) against Communist forces, the problem took a grave turn. Today, even after withdrawal of Soviet forces, problem remains the same. Problem can be solved only after political stability comes to Afghanistan and Pakistan.

India and Pakistan blame each other for helping terrorist and violent groups in their territories. As far as the question of solving this problem is concerned, the cooperation of both the countries is needed.

C. SRI LANKA:

This is undeniable that the Sinhalese majority have since 1956 persistently discriminated against the Tamils, especially in the fields of education and job recruitment and Tamil objections to these injustices have sporadically been rewarded with violence. And most viciously it was in 1980s that violence on the Tamil side and repressive totalitarian measures on the Sinhalese side have fed each other.

SINHALA MILITANCY (J V P):

Sri Lanka Freedom Party founded by SWRD Bhandarnaike in 1951, gained wide acceptance with its Pro-Buddhist commitments

41. Rahman Ataur, op. cit., pp. 204-205.
and promise of sweeping socio-economic reforms. But despite the reforms, island remained a trading and plantation economy. The United National Party which came into power in 1960s could not do much to assuage the resentment of native Sinhalese who were demanding better employment, and more representation. It was amidst these chaotic developments that the well organised youth front Janata Vimukti Peramuna (JVP) was secretly established in 1965 as a faction of Maoist Communist Party. JVP has been described as an 'ultra-left organisation dominated by educated youths, unemployed or disadvantageously employed.' After Mrs. Bhandarnaike's victory in 1970, the JVP gathered momentum under the leadership of Rohana Wijeweera, with increasing doctrinaire extremism. JVP infiltrated into the armed forces and sections of UNP and fielded independent candidates during the elections. The attempt of 44 insurrection in 1971 was characterised as the first large scale revolt by the deprived youth. The uprising claimed more than 5,000 lives and hit the economy inflicting a loss of over Rs. 400 million. Emergency was clamped which extended till 1977. Though the insurgency was brutally put down, it showed considerable amount of wide-spread underground activities that took place with a sense of planned strategy energised by revolutionary ideology.


JVP faded for a while after the failure of 1971 insurgency but by late seventies sprang up, now only better organised. The UNP government laid the blame for 1983 riots on JVP and banned it. In the 1987 elections JVP won four seats. The activities of JVP in late 1980s deeply upset the Sri Lankan Government. The Sri Lankan Army was deployed in the Sinhala areas to thwart the JVP threat. In November 1987, Jayewardene invited JVP for talks but there was no response. Instead JVP activists exploded a bomb in Parliament House that was aimed at eliminating President Jayewardene and his colleagues. By this time JVP started its own brand of violence including a systematic assassination campaign. The demand of both LTTE and JVP was that the IPKF must be withdrawn immediately. In 1989, President R. Premdasa took strong army operations against JVP and finally crushed it. JVP leader Rohana Wijeweera was killed.

Tamil Militancy:


47. Ibid., pp. 101-102.
All three taken together effectively removed vast majority of Indian Tamils from the electoral registers. But at this time it did not create any major rift between the Sinhalese and Tamils. Till 1949, Mr. Ponnambalam Ramnathan had been the leader of all Tamils but when he joined Senanayake Cabinet, a big chunk of his partymen led by Mr. Chelavanayakam broke away and formed the Federal Party, making the very beginning of the politics of dissent among the Tamils in Sri Lanka. Federal Party redrafted the aims and goals of the Tamils as a whole. At the convention of the Federal Party in Trincomalee in 1956, Mr. Chelavanayakam listed 3 demands: "(a) an autonomous region for the indigenous Tamil-speaking people comprising the northern and the eastern provinces; (b) parity of status for the Tamil language with the Sinhalese language; and (c) citizenship rights for the Indian Tamils."

Since independence, until 1956, the Sri Lankan Tamil politics was one of the responsive co-operation. The Tamil Congress had participated in the government since 1947. In 1956 (after the SLFP won the elections riding a wave of Sinhala - Buddhist nationalism) began the Tamil non-violent non-cooperation move in the hope of securing their demands. At this time, the Federal Party, through


a pact between its leader S.J.V. Chelavanayakam and the Prime Minister SWRD Bhandarnaike in 1957, tried to win some of its demands. But Bhandarnaike abrogated it in 1958 under Sinhala pressure. In 1958, there were anti-Tamil riots over the language issue. After sometime in 1964, the Federal Party moved one step further and organised a 'Tamil only' campaign. These campaigns caused problems for the central administration. Before the 1972 constitution of Sri Lanka was passed the Tamil Parties demanded a ban on caste discrimination. But the constitution did not represent a consensus. The Plantation Tamils were not represented in the constituent Assembly. In protest, the Federal Party, the Tamil Congress, the Elathamidar Ottumani Munoi and the All Ceylon Tamil Conference joined together in 1972 to form the Tamil United Front (TUF) to protest 'the freedom, dignity and rights of the Tamil people. The TUF had adopted a six point action plan for the Tamils:

1. A defined place for the Tamil language;
2. Sri Lanka should be a secular state;
3. Fundamental rights of ethnic minorities should be embodied in the Constitution;
4. Citizenship for all who applied for it;
5. Decentralization of the administration; and
6. The caste system to be abolished.

52. Ibid.
In October, 1972, the TUP launched a non-violent struggle to achieve its objectives. But various discriminatory policies of Sri Lankan government, led them in May 1976 to adopt a historical resolution calling for complete independence of the Tamil nation. The name was changed to that of Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF). It denounced the 1972 constitution saying it had reduced the Tamils to a 'slave nation' by the Sinhalas. The Tamil youths were not satisfied with the conservative Tamil political leadership. Vellupillai Prabhakaran formed the Tamil New Tigers in 1972, which became Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) four years later in 1976. They had staged their first assassination on 27 July 1975, murdering Mr. Alfred Duraiappa, the SLFP Mayor of Jaffna. In April 1978, the Tiger Movement for the first time came out in the open when they killed some policemen. The Jayewardene government reacted by enacting the 'Proscribing of the LTTE Law (No. 16 of 1978)'. In July 1979 this law was repealed and replaced with the Prevention of Terrorism Act (No. 48 of 1979), which gave wide powers of search and arrest to the police. The same year state of emergency was imposed in Tamil areas.

The main five Tamil militant groups that had grown over the period of 1975 to 1983 were: (1) The Liberation Tigers of

55. Ibid., p. 160.
Tamil Eelam (LTTE) under Prabhakaran; (2) People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE) under Uma Maheshwaran; (3) Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF) under Padmarabha; (4) Eelam Revolutionary Organisation (BORS) under Balakumar; and (5) Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation (TELO) under Sri Sabaratnam.

There was wide spread violence against Tamils in July 1983. Since then violence and counter violence continued. After a decade of violence and destructive communal strife, Sri Lanka and India signed an accord on 29 July 1987. It provided the basis for ending hostilities between the Lankan majority Sinhalese Community and the minority Tamil community. Under this agreement, Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) was sent to Sri Lanka to create peace in north-east provinces. But soon, it was realised that "a foreign force is seldom welcomed in any country for a long time and the Indian army is no exception. They are seen as liberators neither by the Sinhalese nor by the Tamils." In September, 1989, an Indo-Lankan Agreement was signed on the complete withdrawal of the IPKF from Sri Lanka by the year end. It was pulled out completely in March 1990. So, despite strong efforts made by Sri Lanka and India


militancy in Sri Lanka is still raising its head. The terrorist activities of LTTE reached its climax when Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated on 21 May 1991 and President R. Premadasa was killed on 1 May 1993 by the LTTE human bombs. It reminds that the ongoing cycle of violence in the island nation is still far from over.

D. POLITICS OF ASSASSINATIONS IN THE REGION:

In the modern age assassinations have become the most common assignments of the terrorists because, inspite of the best pre-cautions adopted by the individuals and authorities, the assassin, with some planning, patience and daring can hope to successfully attack a single person, howsoever important, popular and well guarded he or she may be. Almost the entire South Asian region is afflicted with the pathology of political killings. Year after year political leaders and high government officials in South Asia are being brutally murdered by terrorist elements. The irony is that countries with a strong and enduring democratic ethos and institutions, such as India, are as much a victim to this aberration as countries like Pakistan having very fragile and nebulous democratic institutions in practice. The


reasons may be different, but the trend is the same. Ironically, the trend originated in India. And the victim was none else than Mahatma Gandhi, the apostle of the creed of non-violence. In countries like India and Sri Lanka, the politics of fanaticism and political assassinations. It is because the particular community felt that its 'genuine' demands have not been met. More important, the particular community entertained the feeling that it has been the victim of 'brutal repression' by the state apparatus. Another important characteristic of these groups is that they have been seeking the redressal of their grievances through extra-constitutional secessionist solutions. Invariably their demand has been for a separate state-based purely on ethnic and religious considerations. The demand for a separate Khalistan by the Sikh militants in India and a Tamil Eelam by the Tigers in Sri Lanka are examples. Hence as a matter of vengeance, the fanatic and terrorist elements of these groups have carried out the assassination of leaders and officials they hold responsible for their 'suppression'. The assassination of Indira Gandhi on 31 October 1984 by her own Sikh bodyguards, having links with the Sikh terrorists, came after ‘Operation Blue Star’. The General A.S. Vaidya also became a victim for similar reasons. The assassination of Rajiv Gandhi on 21 May 1991 was also carried

60. Ibid., p. 7
out on the same pretext. The LTTE held Rajiv responsible for
the deployment of IPKF in Sri Lanka, which carried out
operations against the LTTE. The assassination of Wijeratne, the
Sri Lankan Navy Chief and also that of President R. Premdasa
fall in the same category. The murder of A. Amirthalingam is
slightly different. The LTTE probably found him a stumbling
block on its way.

There are even cases where the leaders of the majority
community have become victims. The assassination of Mahatma
Gandhi by Nathuram Vinayak Godse in 1948 and the shooting
down of the Sri Lankan Prime Minister SWRD Bhandarnaike on
25 September 1959 by a Buddhist monk, fall in this category.
While Godse accused Gandhi of 'betraying the Hindus', the
Buddhist monk took the life of Bhandarnaike on the ground that
he was 'not Buddhist enough'.

In Pakistan and Bangladesh, political assassination
have been carried out under different circumstances and for
different reasons. In these two countries power struggle within
the military and or between the civilian political leadership

63. Pradhan, Bansidhar, op.cit., p. 6
and the military establishment have been the main reasons behind such acts. While Pakistan was struggling to emerge as viable nation in the sub-continent, Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan was shot dead on 16th October 1951 while addressing a rally in Rawalpindi. Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto's case was a peculiar and unique instance of political assassination under the garb of judicial legitimacy. Bhutto was hanged under the martial law dictatorship of Gen. Zia-ul-Haq in 1979, despite a worldwide appeal against such a dangerous act. The basic intention behind the hanging was that Zia wanted to get rid of a man with substantial political support and mass base in Pakistan politics, so that there could be no resistance to his dictatorial ambitions. Bhutto's daughter, Benazir in her famous book, 'Daughter of the East,' describes how the General systematically manipulated the entire judicial machinery to serve his own political ambitions.

At best, Bhutto's hanging was a judicial murder. This was a clear-cut example of the ruthless extent one can go to finish one's political adversary. General Zia himself probably became a victim when he lost his life in a mid-air explosion near Bahawalpur in August 1988. Further, the mysterious death of General Asif Janjua in early 1993 may be yet another instance of this type.

66. Ibid.
In Bangladesh, story is no less horrifying. On 15 August, 1975, Sheikh Mujib-ur-Rahman, the father of the nation was ruthlessly killed during an army coup. His entire family, excluding two daughters who were out of the country, fell victim to army bullets. Mujib's killing was followed by a period of violence and bloodshed until General Zia-ur-Rahman took over the country. However, General Zia-ur-Rahman, himself was assassinated in Chittagong on May 30, 1981. Ironically, his killers were also army rebels, which obviously reflected the power struggle within the military. During the decade following liberation of Bangladesh an average of three attempts per year were made to kill the country's top leadership. Since the assassination of SWRD Bhandarnaike in 1958, Sri Lanka's history of representative democracy and competitive party politics has been marred by several dramatic assassinations. The leaders of almost every political party including TULF leader, Amrithalingam, SLMP leader Vijaya Kumartunga, EPRLF leader K. Padmnabha and leaders like Lalit Atuludmundali have become victim of violence.

Now, the need is to come out of this dangerous and dysfunctional political behaviour which is fast becoming a short-cut

68. Ibid.
69. Tiruchelvam, Neelam, 'A tragedy' in Frontline, 21 May 1993
method to eliminate one's rivals in the race to capture political power or to seek political vendetta. This method not only erodes the democratic culture of a particular nation but also pushes it into medieval butchery and darkness where swords and bullets decided who should own the seat of power. A reassertion of faith in democratic ethos and strengthening of the existing institutions of representative democracy is the only way this trend can be reversed. Ballots and not bullets should be the means to resolve the political differences and disputes. In this reference Maldivian President said in December 1991, "Rajiv's brutal assassination revealed the alarming proportions, terrorism has reached. We need to curb the rapid growth of cross-border terrorism before it totally engulfs the peace and stability of mankind. It requires immediate and concerted efforts by all nations and people alike."

---x---x---x---x---x---

Terrorism is only means of exploitation, a concept that seems to have influenced every field of human endeavour, leaving no era or area ever free from its crutch. It, now, is simply

70. President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom in an Interview in the *The Hindustan Times*, 7 December 1991.

a resort to senseless, utterly uncivilised forms of violence. The fight against terrorism can be effective only if governments cooperate more closely especially through the exchange of relevant information concerning the prevention and combating of terrorism, identification, arrest and persecution or extradition of terrorists. Nations will leave to sink mutual differences and suspicions and launch a collective war against terrorism. The issue of terrorism is subject to a heated debate because the countries in South Asian region have no shared definition of terror. In this direction, one of the most imaginative decisions was taken by the heads of the state and government of the seven South Asian countries immediately on launching of SAARC at Dhaka on December 8, 1985. They directed the standing committee of SAARC, comprising foreign secretaries "to examine the problem of terrorism as it affects the security and stability of member states of SAARC. Terrorism affects not only the stability and security of South Asian states but also their relations with one another. It is this dimension which needs attention. In the Bangalore Summit of SAARC in November 1986, all the member

72. Singh, Randhir, 'Terrorism, state Terrorism and Democra
74. Ibid.
nations agreed that cooperation among SAARC states was vital if terrorism was to be prevented and eliminated from the region. And in 1987, during the third Summit, they attended a SAARC Regional Convention on Suppression of Terrorism. In March 1993 Indian Parliament gave its seal of approval to the SAARC Convention (Suppression of terrorism) Bill. All other SAARC members except Pakistan and Bangladesh have already adopted the legislation. One of the objectives of the Bill is that contracting states will cooperate with each other in exchanging information, intelligence and expertise to prevent terrorist activities through precautionary measures by their concerned agencies.

Thus, undeterred by the fact that the countries of the region are signatories to the SAARC convention against terrorism, terrorist groups remain well equipped through across the border supplies, giving rise to a clandestine arms bazaar. It is a formidable reality and is threatening the economic well-being as well as socio-political stability of these societies. Particularly so, at a time, when these countries are engaged in implementing an economic reforms programmes that is bound to generate its own pressures and socio-economic tensions. So the menace of terrorism must be dealt with a firm hand.

75. The Hindustan Times, 31 March 1993.