TERRORISM: THE INDIAN SCENE

Terrorism has claimed more lives in India than anywhere else in the world. Hundreds of thousands of persons have fallen victim to terrorism in various parts of the country. Terrorism has become a way of life in states like Jammu and Kashmir, Tripura, Manipur, Nagaland and Assam.

Terrorism in India is essentially the creation of politics. There are four types of terrorism that India has had to face. Khalistan oriented terrorism in Punjab, terrorism in Kashmir, Naxalite terrorism in Bengal, Bihar Andhara Pradesh and the ULFA terrorism in the North-East. Terrorism has today become a political tool for achieving power.

In India especially, there are diverse religious, ethnic, linguistic and culturally different people, who are living together. Every few miles the language, the dialect, the clothes and the way of living of the people changes. This is a unique aspect of India, which is not found anywhere in the world. This diversity gives birth to insecurities among the minorities. The insecurities in turn increase when their demands are not met. In this massive democracy of over a billion people there are bound to be certain kinds of social tensions and disharmony between the people. These problems get aggravated when the political parties fan the fire.

The world today is facing a new kind of terrorism, that of the Islamic Jihad. The goal of the jihad is to spread Islam all over the world. Any person who does not practice Islam is termed to be a non-believer and whose fate is to die. It is these jihadis that are at the forefront of the militancy in Kashmir and the rest of the world, whether it be in America or Chechnya or Indonesia or the Middle East.

Pre Independence

In India terrorism goes back to the activities of a criminal group called thuggees who indulged in macabre terror. The thuggees in India (1300 A.D.) kidnapped travellers for sacrifice to their Goddess Kali. Sacrifice was the central element of the killings carried out by the Thuggees (who bequeathed us the word ‘thug’) – an Indian religious cult who ritually strangled their victims.
(usually travellers chosen at random) with a silk tie, as an offering to the Hindu goddess. The intent was to terrify the victim (a vital consideration in the Thuggee ritual) rather than influence any external audience.

Some of the earliest traces of terrorism can be found in the period 998 to 1030. This was when Mahmud Ghazni's powers were at its peak. This was when he had ascended the throne of Ghazni. It is said that he initiated 17 raids into India during his tenure. Ghazni had an army of Islamic crusaders. The motive of the crusaders was not only to plunder large parts of India; it was also to spread Islam. This provided the psychological edge to the crusaders. It is said that the crusaders were not paid anything by Mahmud. They sustained themselves off the loot they plundered from the innocent Indians. Their tactics were much like those of modern day terrorists. They believed in rapid strikes and rapid retreats. Their main purpose was to terrorise the Hindu inhabitants and to loot and plunder. Mahmud's raids on rich temples and cities in North India provided him with the resources to carry out his conquests in Central Asia. It is widely believed that despite his repeated successes in North India, Mahmud never attempted to annex any of these territories. It is this fact that emphasises the terrorist element in him and his crusaders. He just wanted to terrorise the Hindu inhabitants in order to facilitate plundering of the riches. Such was his terror that at one point, he marched from Multan across Rajputana so as to raid the temple of Somnath without any resistance. After Mahmud Ghazni, Muhammad Ghori continued his reign of terror. The main purpose of these invaders was to create terror and to loot and plunder the rich lands of North India. It is said that even though the Indian armies had better resources, the Islamic crusaders won due to their planned tactics. They were able to identify the weakest points in a formation and attack them. Thus the similarities with the modern day terrorists are endless. It can be safely said that these Muslim crusaders were the earliest examples of terrorism in India.

The history of terrorism in India that we remember can be traced to the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857. This was the first war of independence against the British rule, which had united most of India. During this mutiny, Indian troops in the army revolted, stormed British garrisons and massacred British soldiers and members of their family. This was basically a reaction to the policies of
the British which the Indians felt insulted their religious sentiments. The British in turn let loose a reign of terror, which ended in the arrest and conviction of the Indian leaders. Their crime was that they had waged war against the king and for this they were hanged to death.

Many revolutionaries like Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Wasudeo Balwant Phadke, Sarvakar brothers took a major lead in organising a revolutionary movement against the British. They resorted to terror tactics to fulfil their aims. Terrorism entered public life in a significant way after the first partition of the province of Bengal in 1905.

Pre independence India had seen a different kind of violence mainly inflicted by the British against the subjugated Indians. An incident, which stands out in the history of terrorism, was that of Jallianwalla Bagh. On April 13, 1919, when General Reginald Dyer opened fire on a crowd gathered to hear political speeches at Jallianwalla Bagh, it came to be known as worst atrocity perpetrated by the British.

On that fateful day General Dyer gave the order to fire without any warning. The crowd ran in terror in all directions but few found exits by which to escape. People crammed into the entrances to the narrow passageways, frantically seeking to force their way out. The troops were directed to fire on these, killing many, and causing more to be trodden underfoot or crushed under the mounds of bodies that eventually built up ten or twelve feet deep. Many tried to climb the walls and they were picked off as they did so. This massacre marked the turning point of India’s struggle for freedom from the British rule and became a watershed experience. It also became a rallying point for the common people who were already feeling thwarted by the oppression unleashed by the rulers. The main motive of the General was to spread terror among the Indians. Whether or not he succeeded in his objective became obvious by the reaction of the outraged public. This act also highlights the close relation shared by terrorism and the innocent public. Acts of terror are normally perpetrated on the innocent and the unsuspecting public. This is because they are incapable of responding to these acts of terror. This incapability in turn becomes the single most important factor in
establishing terror in the minds of the public thereby achieving the objective of
the terrorist. Compared to this, a terror act directed at a group of trained and
experienced military personnel will never have the desired effect for the
reason that firstly, there is a good chance that the act itself will fail and the
terrorists will be killed as the victims will be trained to counter such attacks
with consummate ease. Secondly, even if the act succeeds, it will fail to have
the desired effect as these are highly experienced individuals who regularly
face such situations and are thus desensitised to them. Another factor which
tilts the scales against the terrorists is the fact that in most countries, the army
personnel are very well equipped to deal with them. They have the most
sophisticated equipment for dealing with the terrorists. This makes the attacks
on these personnel unattractive for the terrorists.

It has to be understood that the normal progression for most Islamic
terror organisations is that they initiate their activities for the purpose of
‘protecting Islam and its followers’. This object is diluted somewhere down the
way and their main objective thereafter is to carry out the political objectives of
their financiers and to make their presence felt.

One of the most spectacular acts of terrorism in Bengal was the
Chittagong Armoury Raid on 18 April 1930. The terrorist group which raided
the armoury consisted of fifty youngsters who were dressed in khakhi. In 1925
Kakori (a town near Lucknow) conspiracy case was registered. There
occurred a train dacoity in which the guard was overpowered and a safe
containing cash was removed from the brake-van and looted. In this case four
accused persons were hanged and 16 others were sentenced to
transportation for life or imprisonment. There were many bomb outrages,
which occurred in Punjab. Amongst them one revolutionary was Bhagat Singh
who threw a bomb at the open Assembly and was consequently hanged to
death.

Terrorist activities both against the government and by the government
were widespread during the ‘Quit India’ movement in 1942. Soon after the
arrest of the national leaders on 9 August, there was mass upsurge and
widespread violence. Railway tracks were uprooted, tele-communication lines

1“Blood on that Baisakhi” (Excerpts from The Butcher of Amritsar by Nigel Collett), Spectrum The
were tempered with, police stations were attacked and policemen beaten up, government buildings and railway stations were set on fire, road bridges were blown up with bombs, post offices and banks were attacked and cash looted. The army had to be called at 60 places. Police opened fire and the army dropped bombs from aeroplanes killing thousands of people.2

The Indian partition was the bloodiest in human history. The religious zealots on either side wrecked havoc in Punjab and Lahore. The communal riots which occurred during that time were heart rending. Millions of innocent men, women and children were slaughtered during that time. The discontent born between the Hindus and the Muslims from that time continues till today. This is evident in the internal situations of both India and Pakistan.

Post Independence

Before independence acts of terror were directed against the British for the freedom of their land. At such time the people had rebelled in the name of freedom and justice. After independence it was thought that the terrorist activity would stop as no cause would be left. However India had to face an embarrassment when the rise in the terrorist activity took such magnitude as never known before.

The colonial rule had left a legacy of ethnic and border conflicts in the Indian subcontinent. In the recent years, escalation in the terrorist activities and drug trafficking have further adversely affected the relations between the neighbours, besides posing a grave threat to the unity and integrity of these countries. In the last decade or so, India's deteriorating relations with Pakistan, Sri Lanka and to some extent with Bangladesh are a manifestation of an increase in the terrorist activities.

In the fifty years of its independence India has been assailed by social and political violence; witnessed communal rioting, caste wars, the political assassinations of Mahatma Gandhi, Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi, the

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Tribune, June 5, 2005.

leftist insurgencies in Hyderabad, Naxalbari, Bihar and Andhara Pradesh and secessionist terrorism in Kashmir, Punjab and the Northeast.3

Kashmir has been a subject of dispute between India and Pakistan since the partition in 1947. As far as the Kashmir problem is concerned India cannot afford to give it up, as it would mean giving in to the communal forces. India is a peace loving country and it houses more Muslims than its neighbour Pakistan.

One aspect which would emerge from our discussion of post independence terrorism in India is the close and inseparable relationship shared by terrorism and religion. This relationship is pronounced in India due to the fact that Pakistan has been behind most terrorist movements in India. It has been supporting most of these movements in some way or the other. The whole idea of Pakistan was based on the premise of a separate nation for the Muslims. India in contrast was founded on substantially secular ideals which ensured equality for all religions. Pakistan took upon itself the task of proving that its premise of separate nation for different religions was the only sustainable idea. It thus started instigating disgruntled portions of minority religious leadership in India. They in turn started misleading the simple, uneducated youth in India against the government of India. The youth were fed with lies about the policies of the government which they were told was endangering the religious identity of the minorities. This situation was aggravated by the failure of the government to reach out to the public and clarify the policies. This entire situation alienated certain minorities from the mainstream. Also the minority leadership had their own vested interest as they felt that the only way to achieve power was to separate from India. The collective result of these factors was that religious insecurities grew in the minorities in India and some parts of the minorities took it upon themselves to achieve freedom from India and to form a separate nation for their religion. Thus, religion has shared a very close relationship with post independence terrorism in India.

Another reason for this has been that it is relatively easy for the political leadership to instigate people on the basis of religion. Nothing can incite

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passions in an individual like religious insecurities. In such a situation, the individuals follow the leadership blindly and act upon their commands. Coupled with this was the fact that the idea of a separate nation was inherently attractive to the monetarily influential parts of the minorities as it would give them better avenues of monetary investment and control. Religion was thus the perfect weapon for the leadership to achieve power and a mass base.

Another aspect or objective of post independence terrorism in India has been to destabilise the economy of India through terrorism. The secret of India’s strength lies in its economy. India today has one of the most robust and strong economies in the world. In terms of GDP, its economy is ranked fourth in the world behind the US, China and Japan. In terms of GDP growth rate, we are second only to China in the world. This economic strength in turn has given immense powers to the Indian government on the world stage to negotiate with other countries. It is no secret that India was able to get the post nuclear test sanctions removed only because it was able to offer other countries a share in its economic progress. This not only shows the interest of the other nations in India’s economy but also substantiates the strength and size of India’s economy. India thus has been able to successfully use its economic strength as a weapon against Pakistan in international relations. Today, most countries are desperate to jump into the Indian market as it is recording some of the highest growth rates in the world. For this, they are willing to accede substantial diplomatic largess to India which India can use to pressurise Pakistan. Thus, India’s strength today lies in its economy. Pakistan thus realised that the best way to weaken India was to destabilise its economy. Terrorists were the perfect weapon for this.

To understand the effect of terrorism on the economy, we must understand the sensitive nature of the economy. The economy today is largely dependent on the investments made in India. These investments in turn are very sensitive to India’s economic policies. The economic policies in turn are very sensitive to India’s relations with its neighbours (specially Pakistan). This is because the economic policies determine the venue of investments to be made by the government. If India’s relations with its neighbours are stable and there is no threat of a war, the government can
easily implement policies to invest in infrastructure and other avenues which are beneficial to investors. Conversely, if the relations are unstable and there is a threat of war, the government shall have to invest the same money to build the defence infrastructure thereby harming investor interest. Thus, the economy is very sensitive to terrorist acts. Pakistan has understood this aspect and has repeatedly tried to undermine the economic strength of India. The serial bomb blasts in Mumbai were one such example. The blasts were masterminded by the ISI and executed by their trusted man Dawood and his relations. Dawood today has been designated as an international terrorist by America. It is also no secret that he was continuing to live in Karachi in Pakistan under the protection of the ISI.

It must however be emphasised that the strength of India’s economy is such that it has emerged stronger from every attempt to destabilise it. Such acts have only a temporary effect on the economy if any. This is largely due to the potential of the economy and the policies of successive governments which continue to make India an attractive investment option. The Sensex which is a true barometer of the health of the economy and investor sentiment, would substantiate this argument. After every major terror attack, there has been a temporary panic in the stock exchanges which has brought the index down temporarily. After the initial period the index has risen strongly and is at an all time high today. Economic terrorism has largely been confined to the economic centres of India i.e. Mumbai. Mumbai has always been the economic capital of India with all major businesses having a base there. This economic strength in turn has given birth to and bred the underworld in Mumbai. This underworld is the source of all acts of economic terrorism in India. Influential and successful entrepreneurs are regularly harassed and threatened by the underworld for protection money. Any individual refusing to accept the demands is dealt with brutally as was seen with the music baron Gulshan Kumar. These acts are perpetrated with the same motive as that of all other terrorist acts i.e. to spread terror. Once they are successful in spreading terror, their work becomes easier. These acts result in harm to India’s economy in some way or the other. But the fact of the matter is that the strength and size of India’s economy is such that it is able to absorb these attacks with consummate ease. Another prominent factor responsible for the
ability of the economy to deal with these attacks has been the emergence of numerous economic centres in India. Today economic activity is no longer confined to Mumbai, cities like Bangalore, Hyderabad, Gurgaon, Ludhiana etc., have emerged as the new economic centres. Even though their individual economies still cannot be compared with that of Mumbai, their collective strength would easily surpass Mumbai. This emergence has spread India’s economic strength deep in the Indian heartland where the terrorists have no substantial presence.

Even though the effects of economic terrorism have been minimal in India, the need to eradicate it and deal with the economic terrorists cannot be emphasised enough. This is because the infrastructure created by these economic terrorists can easily be used by religious terrorists. This is due to a number of reasons. Terrorists of all kinds usually share a deep relationship due to their diverse needs. The people backing them are usually the same as will be seen in the case of ISI. The ISI was backing an economic terrorist like Dawood and also simultaneously backing the terrorist movements in Punjab and J&K. it was thus able to use its human assets in all these places to each others benefit. The infrastructure created by Dawood in Mumbai was used effectively by the ISI to perpetrate the Mumbai blasts. The blasts not only served to damage the Indian economy, they also brought the Kashmir movement in the international limelight. It is thus very important to deal with economic terrorists and their infrastructure effectively so as to counter terrorism.

There are different factors responsible for the increase of terrorism in different states. There is no uniform pattern followed. For a detailed analysis let us discuss the events of terrorism in the states.

Jammu and Kashmir

India has had to deal with serious levels of violence and terror, particularly in the region of Kashmir. Kashmiri militant groups have continued to attack civilian as well as government and military targets in India held Kashmir and throughout the country. Jammu and Kashmir is a very important state primarily because of its geographical location.
Terrorism has adversely affected the relations of Pakistan and India in recent times. Terrorism in Kashmir is a major threat to India’s integrity. In fact, it has become one of the most pressing problems of foreign policy. The manner in which the partition had taken place and a number of post-independence issues led to the fighting of three wars between the two countries. But the problem of terrorism that led to a low intensity conflict since the 1980s further deteriorated their relations. Since war has become a less attractive option in the nuclear age and the escalating costs, Pakistan is trying to achieve its foreign policy objectives by encouraging and supporting terrorist movements in India.

What has caused this proxy war by Pakistan against India? Let us analyse the history, which has lead to this violence against the people of Kashmir. Discussion on the issue has largely been flawed by misunderstanding of the State’s history and its present situation. Pakistan, in promoting its own territorial ambitions, has deliberately sought to project a distorted version of developments in the State since 1947 when the State of Jammu and Kashmir joined the Union of India. In an attempt to disguise its own sustained effort at undermining the peace in this region, Pakistan has resorted to various kinds of tactics.

Pakistan has repeatedly shown its intentions in its campaign of aggression against India, initially in the form of conventional wars and then by sponsorship of terrorism. This strategy is born of Pakistan’s non-acceptance of the accession of Jammu and Kashmir to India, made with the full support of its people then led by Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah.

Jammu and Kashmir became an integral part of the Indian Union in 1947 through final accession in accordance with the legal framework determined by the British Parliament for the independence of the Indian subcontinent. This was sought to be undermined by the use of military force in 1947, which though successfully resisted by the Kashmiris with the support of India’s army, resulted in a portion of the State remaining under Pakistan’s occupation. Again, in 1965 Pakistan sought to capitalise on local disturbances to foster insurgency, but on failing to suborn the local Kashmiri population, infiltrated armed personnel into the State leading to war with India, ending with the Tashkent Declaration of 1965. In 1971, under threat of an insurgency
in its own eastern wing Pakistan again sought to divert world attention and extend the conflict into Jammu & Kashmir. This brought about defeat and the loss of its eastern wing with the emergence of independent Bangladesh.

In complete contravention of the Tashkent Declaration of 1965 and the Simla Agreement of 1972, signed after two wars, Pakistan, still addicted to its quest to wrest Jammu and Kashmir by force, changed strategy and embarked on a programme of sponsoring terrorism in the State. Since 1989, with over 20,000 people killed, Pakistan continues its proxy war against India. Even after the Kashmiris voted for democracy and again elected their own government in 1996, signalling their disenchantment with terrorist violence, Pakistan has not given up its policy of trying to disrupt the free democratic polity of Jammu and Kashmir. Disappointed with the response of the Kashmiris to its calls for what it sought to promote as a "holy war" in Jammu and Kashmir, Pakistan has taken recourse to sending in battle hardened Pakistani, Afghan and other mercenaries who have distinguished themselves only by drenching the soil with the blood of the very people whose interests they claim to champion in the name of religion.

Since the partition of the Indian sub-continent in 1947, Pakistan has sought to project the accession of Jammu and Kashmir to India as invalid and that, as a state with a Muslim majority, it should have somehow become part of Pakistan. The Pakistani argument is that since the state had a Hindu ruler he was surreptitiously persuaded to accede to India, whereas if the wishes of the people had been considered, they would have opted for Jammu and Kashmir acceding to Pakistan. This patently false hypothesis has been used by successive leaders in Pakistan to refer to Jammu and Kashmir as the "unfinished business of Partition" and to justify Pakistan's pretended "concern" for the Kashmiris' rights, and its continued meddling in Jammu and Kashmir. Given the ethos of Jammu and Kashmir and the liberal and secular philosophy that provided the foundation for the Indian Union it was natural that the leaders of the people of Jammu and Kashmir would seek to identify with a polity that enshrined the same values that they cherished. India, since its independence, has been a vibrant, secular democracy providing to the people of all its states, including Jammu and Kashmir, free and equal participation in political life and governance that has enabled them to determine their own
destinies. It was this awareness of what India represented that prompted Sheikh Abdullah, the undisputed leader of the Kashmiri people at the time of Partition, to actively endorse the accession of the State to India and to appeal to India for help, on behalf of the people of Jammu and Kashmir, to repulse the aggression by Pakistan.4

Having failed in its effort to persuade Maharajah Hari Singh, the princely ruler of Jammu and Kashmir, to accede to Pakistan, Pakistan’s fifteen day old government tried to forcibly annex the state by sending in raiders backed by the regular troops in civilian clothes on October 22, 1947. Ever since then the Pakistani rulers have been trying to annex J&K by any means available to them. The raid was possibly the earliest example of post independence terrorism in India. The raiders looted and plundered the inhabitants of Kashmir. The women were raped, houses looted and all resistance was crushed. It was in this situation that the ruler of Kashmir decided to ask India for help. India immediately sent in its troops who valiantly fought and defeated the raiders. The main motive behind the raid was to terrorise the inhabitants of Kashmir and to pressurise the ruler to join Pakistan.

India however remains committed to dealing with all matters pertaining to its relations with Pakistan, within the bilateral framework of the Simla Agreement. Solutions that entail a rewriting of history or a redrawing of geographical boundaries and possible population transfers can, however, never be countenanced.

The first terrorist attack in Kashmir occurred when an attempt was made on the lives of Jawaharlal Nehru and Sheikh Abdullah in Srinagar. A bomb was thrown on the car in which they were travelling. The explosion caused serious injuries to Sheikh Abdullah’s eyes and Nehru escaped with minor injuries.

The worst fallout of this ongoing tussle is that lakhs of Hindus have migrated from Kashmir valley to Jammu, Delhi and other places. Even the Kashmiri Muslims left their homes and went away. Besides the fear of attacks, the constant harassment by the police personnel and the prolonged curfews

4 A Comprehensive Note on Jammu and Kashmir online at:
had broken down their resistance to stay peacefully in such a place. The beautiful valley of Kashmir has virtually become a fortress guarded by the army.

It is sad but Pakistan has been assisting every terrorist group in India. Pakistan’s involvement in sponsoring and supporting terrorism in India is undisputed. Pakistan is actually the hub of international terrorism. The most notorious terrorist organisations, such as the Harkat ul-Mujahideen, Al Badr, and Lashkar-e-toiba, are openly operating from Pakistan with direct support from the Pakistani government.

The proxy war in Kashmir started in 1987 when the first batches of Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) volunteers were trained at four abandoned Afghan camps and sent to India. Phase two began in 1989 with systematic Islamisation of the militancy with the induction of graduates from the 500-odd madrasas run by the Jamaat. The third phase was the internationalisation of the Kashmir issue and the fourth, extending religiously motivated militancy among the Muslims in the rest of India.  

The involvement of Pakistan’s ISI is very clear from the incidents that occur in Kashmir. The ISI trained Kashmiri militants were behind a series of bomb blasts in New Delhi, Bombay and several other cities in 1992-93. The arrest of Mohammad Jalis Ansari, ‘a big-time ISI operative’ and Abdul Karim Alias, another key ISI operative reaffirmed the fact. It was established that Ansari’s close linkage with the Menon brothers, the architect of the Bombay blasts, was through the ISI connection. The CBI investigations revealed that after the Bombay riots, Ansari formed a terrorist group called ‘Crush India Force’ and that a large quantity of explosives and weapons were found from his residence in Bombay and Delhi.  

Harkat ul-Mujahideen (HUM) was designated a foreign terrorist organisation by the United States government in October 1997. It was HUM, which was responsible for the hijacking of India Airlines Flight 814. Maulana Masood Azhar, a HUM ideologue was freed in return for the hostages on the hijacked flight. HUM is an Islamic militant group based in Pakistan that


operates primarily in Kashmir. It leader Fazur Rehman Khalil has been linked to bin Laden and signed his fatwa in February 1998 calling for attacks on US and Western interests. HUM operates terrorist training camps in eastern Afghanistan. It has conducted a number of operations against Indian troops and civilian targets in Kashmir and is linked to the Kashmiri militant group al-Faran that kidnapped five Western tourists in Kashmir in July 1995.7

The problem is that even after two wars and the constant infiltration of terrorists into the valley, the government has not been able to take a hard stand and evolve a definite coherent policy. Our policy makers are forever chasing soft options and are unable to take a lead in this respect. Even the BJP government, which was initially thought to be fit to tackle this issue failed because of the coalition.

Terrorism in Kashmir has assumed a new shape after 1998. The militants have launched a bloody and a terrible battle to concretise their wants. These militants are being provided training and weapons to help them in their jihad. There is no dearth of weapons in the valley and there are enough young men recruited every moment who are ready to lay down their lives. Unfortunately India has not tackled the terrorism problem in valley correctly from the beginning. The initial response of the government was inadequate and indifferent. They did not deal with the terrorists effectively and let the situation worsen.

In December 1989, the militants took hostage Rubaiya Sayeed, the daughter of the then union home minister. The government lacked the will to stand up to the situation and did what the terrorists expected them to do. The state government under pressure from the central government conceded to all the demands of the terrorists and in the process released six hard-core terrorists in exchange of the hostage. These terrorists are usually caught with great difficulty and in capturing them a lot of lives are laid down. Their release however was secured in a flash. The terrorists know how to exploit the weakness of the Indians.

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The kidnapping and killing of the Vice-Chancellor of Kashmir University, the kidnapping of two Swedish engineers in April 1991 (who ultimately managed to escape on July 6, 1991), eight Israeli tourists in June 1991 and five foreign tourists in July 1995 illustrate the working of the terrorists.

Again in 1991 the state government of Kashmir repeated its earlier mistake and gave in to the demands of the terrorists. It released twelve terrorists to secure the release of a hostage, an Indian Oil Company executive, K. Doraismwamy, who had been kidnapped.

The situation in Kashmir has deteriorated to such an extent that no judicial officer is willing to pass a verdict against the terrorists. This has lead to the collapse of the working of the judicial system and that of the government.

The infiltration of terrorists into Kashmir is rising with the passing of every year especially after 1992. Most of these are from Afghanistan and Pakistan. There seems to be no stop to this menace. The policy of government has also been ineffective to quite a large extent.

In 1994 the Mirwaiz of South Kashmir, Qazi Nisar Ahemd, was killed in Anantnag. His widow and the local people blamed the Hezb ul Mujahideen, and processions and demonstrations condemning the militant group and Pakistan took place in the town. In the same year the Harkat ul Ansar kidnapped Kim Housego and David Mackie, two British tourists. The action was widely condemned by the people of Jammu & Kashmir leading to the militants capitulating and their release.

The year 1995 was one of the worst years. There were multiple blasts at the Maulana Azad Stadium in Jammu during the Republic Day Parade, which almost killed the governor, Gen. K. V. Krishna Rao. There was also an increase in the use of remote controlled devices to detonate explosives. Also in December 1995 mercenaries of the Harkat ul Ansar and the Hezb ul Mujahideen led by a Pakistani national Mast Gul, seized another revered shrine in Charar-e-Sharief resulting in the mindless destruction of both the shrine and the surrounding township. Mast Gul was given a hero's welcome in Pakistan and paraded through the streets by the Jama'at e Islami the mentor of the Hezb ul Mujahideen. The Harkat ul Ansar issued press releases stating that its cadres had been in the shrine which further aggravated the divide.
between the centuries old Kashmiri ethos of harmonious co-existence and the extremist orthodoxy being sought to be imposed by the pro-Pakistani groups. Another sensational incident was the kidnapping of five foreign tourists by the terrorists group Al Faran. Out of these one was killed in August 1995 and the other four were reportedly killed in December of the same year.

The period around this time witnessed a changing mood in the Kashmir Valley against militancy and towards seeking some solution to the crisis. The media became more vocal in its criticism of the activities of the militant groups. Responding to the changed public mood the Government of India organised Parliamentary and Assembly elections in 1996 in Jammu and Kashmir. There was large-scale participation of the people in the elections. The Kashmiris voted back to power with a two-third majority, their own old party, the National Conference, with Dr Farooq Abdullah at its head.

Pakistan was unable to deal with this return to a certain kind of normalcy. It started its militant activities afresh. Shortly afterwards on January 25, 1998, the eve of India's Republic Day, terrorists massacred over 29 Kashmiri Pandits, men, women and children, at village Wandhama, only a few miles from Srinagar.

India has continued to deal with serious levels of violence. Kashmiri militant groups have continued to attack civilian as well as government and military targets in India-held Kashmir. Militant groups were held responsible for the bombing of a passenger train travelling from Kashmir to New Delhi in 1999, killing 13 people and wounding 50. Despite the best efforts of the police and the security forces, the extremists keep crossing over through vulnerable points along the POK border. Also due to the difficult terrain on the Indo-POK border barbed-wire fencing has not been possible. This again does not help the terrorist activity in the region.

In December 1999, the Taliban hijacked the Indian Airlines flight 814 from Kathmandu to Kandahar in Afghanistan. This was a joint exercise in terrorism by the ISI and Taliban. One passenger was killed in cold blood by these hijackers to send a chilling message to the other passengers of the fate...
that would be theirs if their demands for the release of Pakistani terrorists, who were in India’s jails, were not met. The hijacking, which began on December 25, ended on December 31 when the Indian government released from the prison three individuals linked to Kashmiri militant groups in return for the release of the passengers aboard the aircraft. The hijackers were then allowed to go free. Within and outside the country, the Indian government was subjected to a lot of derision for releasing the jailed terrorists to save the lives of more than a hundred passengers of more than one nationality who were on board that flight.

Ved Marwah says, “The people in the state are sick and tired of violence. They are disillusioned with Pakistan, and accession to Pakistan is no longer a popular demand. Successful holding of the parliamentary and then state assembly elections has completely transformed the political scene. The militants are under pressure from the security forces, but the level of violence is still quite high.”

Kashmir is not an Islamic or a religious issue and the two-nation theory has been seen to be irrelevant. A sizeable Muslim community chose to live in India at the time of partition rather than move to Pakistan. The most prominent Kashmiri political party, the National Conference, headed by a popular Muslim leader, Sheikh Abdullah sought and endorsed the accession of Jammu and Kashmir to India. The emergence of Bangladesh as an independent nation proved conclusively, if further proof were needed, that the notion that all Muslims of the sub-continent would wish to be a part of Pakistan, which is the basis of Pakistan’s claim to Jammu and Kashmir, was a fallacy.

Another point, which requires attention, is that the internal situation of Jammu and Kashmir is, by the will of its people, strictly India’s affair and there is no call for any international intervention. India wants to resolve all outstanding issues with Pakistan and has started a dialogue for this purpose. However the integrity and sovereignty of India cannot be a matter for discussion. India is committed to protecting the human rights of all its citizens and for this purpose militancy must be eradicated.

George Fernandes in his article on *The Global Fight Against Terrorism*, says, "Terrorists live and operate in conditions where massed armed forces cannot play any role. If they could, the Indian Armed Forces would, long ago, have decimated the various terrorist outfits operating in J&K. India has scrupulously avoided even targeting the terrorist training camps, which are not far from the country's border with Pakistan. For the simple reason that, located as these camps are around or beside civilian population centres, any strikes on them will claim the lives of innocent people, including women and children. If dealing with clusters of terrorists is fraught with undesirable consequences, the plan to hunt down a single terrorist located in Afghanistan must be accepted as a gargantuan task, even with a prize of US $ 25 million on his head."  

The terrorists have the latest and the most sophisticated of weapons with them. There has been a visible improvement in the fire-power available to the terrorists. The Kalashnikov is now virtually a standard property of the terrorists and there are increasing numbers of rocket launchers available. Various seizures of arms have produced missile launchers, anti aircraft gun, anti-tank and anti-personnel mines and a significant number of flame-throwers in addition to thousands of kilograms of explosives and a variety of sophisticated triggering mechanisms. They are posing a real danger and challenge not only to the lives and property of people but also to the national unity and integrity. India maybe concerned for the lives of innocent people but it should not be mistaken for softness. A country, which supports terrorism in this form, should be ready for the retort. Pakistan will never be free from the spillover of terrorism within its own borders. Any country, which encourages such a policy, has to face the consequences.

On 12 March 1993 a series of high-powered bomb blasts tore through Bombay from south to north and rocked the city to its foundations, leaving a

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gory trail of death and devastation. Bombay was bombed for three hours in which 13 bombs exploded killing over 200 persons and maiming over hundreds. The magnitude of the tragedy and the sophistication of its planning recalled a similar explosion exactly two weeks before at New York City's World Trade Centre. Nearly an hour after, the Basement Stock Exchange was bombed, a lorry filled with explosive chemicals was blown up in the congested central Bombay locality of Dongri. Five persons died on the spot and eleven persons were seriously injured. The blast was powerful enough to destroy several buses, cars, taxis etc. parked near by and caused serious damage to shops and houses in the adjoining buildings, killing several persons and maiming several of them. The Bombay police were quite certain of the involvement of Pakistan's ISI, who were supposed to be working in collaboration with Tiger Menon and Dawood Ibrahim.12

The suicide attack on the Kaluchak army camp in Jammu on May 14, 2002 could have instigated an India-Pakistan war under the shadow of nuclear weapons.

However lately it seems as if there is some respite from the terrorist activities in Jammu and Kashmir. It remains to be seen if it can be sustained for sufficient period of time.

Punjab

The rise of Bhindranwale and “Khalistan” movement ushered in the politics of terrorism in Punjab in the 1980s. The problem in Punjab was a creation of the Government’s mishandling of the situation. The Government tried to counter the increasing demand for a federal and autonomous region with a crackdown but failed. There is no doubt that forces beyond India’s borders played a significant role but there were internal factors, which gave rise to it.

There were innumerable acts of terrorism committed in Punjab during the 80s and the 90s. Important among them were the massacre of selected non-Sikh passengers travelling by bus, blowing up the Air India Boeing ‘Kanishka’ and killing nearly 300 innocent Indians, the murder of 11,543

12 See Gosh, supra 5, pp. 383-384.
political leaders, journalists and even innocent people, and of 1667 cops between 1984 and 1992, the killing of 114 Hindu train passengers at the Buddowal railway station near Ludhiana in June 1991, the looting of banks both in and outside Punjab, the killing of 24 candidates contesting elections in June 1991 (later postponed to February 1992) at the rate of one candidate a day.13

The growth of terrorism in Punjab was a culmination of various factors, such as dithering on political aspirations, regional demands, political bungling, exploitation of discontentment of people for sponsored terrorism by Pakistan and inept handling of the developing problem of terrorism. Also the Sikhs have a history of being involved in heroic struggles and in doing so they don't bother for their lives. They are an easily excitable race. A lot of youngsters were brain washed and were convinced regarding the wrong done to their religion.

In Punjab both the external and internal factors were responsible for the terrorism. Firstly the Sikhs carried a sense of grievance ever since the partition wherein the Muslims got a separate State. They felt they were not given their due in the partition especially when they had to leave their lands in Pakistan and migrate to India. They lost everything and had to start anew. They wanted a separate State for themselves. Secondly Punjab has a common border with Pakistan. Terrorism in Punjab got a lot of help from across the border. There was large-scale training of youths who were smuggled into India. Some very sophisticated weapons were supplied to them to help the cause of terrorism. Pakistan always wanted to destabilise the Indian polity. This was because after fighting multiple wars with India, they had realised that the cost in terms of monetary resources and international opinion was too large in a conventional war. Thus they started exploiting the Sikh leadership to achieve their goals. The leadership was initially instigated on religious grounds. Thereafter, the very survival of the movement became dependent on the Pakistan resources. This was because after a while, the movement lost its popular support among the Sikhs. Thus, the only thing sustaining it was Pakistan's resources and the greed of the Sikh leadership.


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A factor that played a very big role was the vote bank policies pursued by the political parties in Punjab. The Congress and the Akalis were the two main parties in Punjab. Both tried to achieve power through terrorism. Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, the chief of the Khalistani terrorists, originally a Sikh priest, was brought into politics by the Congress which encouraged him to raise extremist slogans.\(^{14}\)

The terrorists have been waging a violent struggle with an ultimate aim of establishing 'Khalistan'. The origin of terrorism can be traced to the killing of the Nirankaris on 13 April 1978 and the assassination of Baba Gurcharan Singh, the spiritual head of the Nirankaris on 24 April 1980. Later on Lala Jagat Narain was also killed.

The Congress Party, which lost power in parliamentary and assembly elections of 1977, being an opposition party indulged itself in the activities wherein they created trouble for the Akalis who were at that time in power. This is when the Congress introduced Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale against the Akalis. This intensified the issue of differences between the Sikhs and the Nirankaris which resulted in a violent clash between the two in which sixteen persons lost their lives. This creation of the Congress became a threat for the entire country. The Akalis lost political power in 1980 and then raised some political, religious and economic demands in order to create trouble for the Congress Government. In this imbroglio the Golden Temple became the headquarters of the extremists, terrorists and separatist forces.\(^{15}\)

With the support of the Government, Bhindranwale became so powerful that police officers started taking orders from the Golden Temple, the headquarters of Bhindranwale, instead of from the Government of Punjab. There was a clear notice to the police personnel to forget the law and act on political guidelines. The criminal laws namely the Code of Criminal Procedure, the Indian Penal Code, the Indian Evidence Act and the Indian Police Act became irrelevant. In this atmosphere quite a few policemen including those in higher ranks became friends of terrorists but the majority of them did not act under the law, out of fear. While the Punjab terrorists were stockpiling


sophisticated weapons and harbouring terrorists and criminals inside the Golden Temple Complex in Amritsar, the Government chose to look the other way.\footnote{15}

Pakistan also got actively involved in supporting terrorism in Punjab in 1983. They introduced the assault rifles, which gave the terrorists a definite edge over the terrorists. In October 1983, the terrorists hijacked a bus in Amritsar and selectively shot dead Hindu passengers. This led to a furore in the entire country. Such like terrorist incidents led to the imposition of the President's rule in Punjab. The emergency provision was invoked and the state government was brought under the direct rule of the Central Government.

A sharp increase in the number of terrorist acts and the number of persons killed was noticeable after the imposition of the President's rule. The central paramilitary forces, which were brought in at that time to tackle the problem, could not do so effectively. This was because they lacked the local knowledge and had little information about the terrorists, their hideouts and their plans. They were not trained to fight terrorism. By trying to tackle it through force was a blunder that they committed.\footnote{17}

Pakistan's support of terrorism made it easier for the terrorist groups to smuggle sophisticated weapons across the border. The first evidence of Sikh terrorists receiving training in Afghan Mujahideen camp came in the late eighties when activists of the "Dal Khalsa" were killed during a Soviet raid in Patka. Several documents of the Sikh terrorist outfit were also seized during this raid.

In 1983-84 large scale fortifying of the Golden Temple started taking place with all kinds of arms and ammunition flooding the place. There was a steep rise in the terrorist incidents in the state. On 2 June 1984 the Army was called in aid of civil authority and was given the task of checking and controlling extremists and terrorists.

At 1900 hours on 5 June the Army commenced Operation Blue Star to flush out the terrorists from the premises of the Golden Temple Complex and


to stop Bhindranwale. The terrorists armed with sophisticated weapons and explosives started firing from the Akal Takht and from Harmandir Sahib. There were a large number of casualties from both sides. During this operation Bhindranwale was killed in the firing. Several hundred terrorists surrendered. Although the Golden Temple and other gurdwaras were cleared of terrorists several terrorist organisations sprang up and spread to different parts of Punjab. Kidnapping of civilians and police personnel for exchange of the arrested terrorists became common at that point. Later they also started kidnapping for ransom. The short-sighted, ill-planned and poorly executed Operation Blue Star had laid a foundation for terrorism in Punjab. This turned the Sikhs against the government and they swore to avenge this turmoil at the seat of their religion.

As a result Prime Minister Indira Gandhi fell victim to the bullets of her own Sikh security guard on October 31, 1984. This was followed by anti-Sikh riots in Delhi, Kanpur and other parts of the country. In the capital itself, more than three thousand Sikhs were burnt alive and killed in a gruesome manner, without the government doing anything to stop it. These riots were invariably motivated by the Congress leadership which was stunned at the assassination of its biggest leader. It is widely believed that some Congress leaders took to the streets of Delhi and other cities and were involved in violence against Sikhs.

The failure of the government in providing protection to the victims and the support provided to the political criminals who took part in these riots infuriated the Sikh community throughout the country and those living abroad who in turn encouraged terrorism in retaliation. As a consequence several new terrorist groups sprang up.

The Sikhs felt alienated and homeless in their own country. This deep-rooted feeling of hurt sentiments was mainly responsible for the killing of Sant Longowal in October 1985, who had signed the Punjab Accord with Rajiv Gandhi in July 1985. This is a deep inflicted wound, which still remains unhealed, and most of the Sikhs find it difficult to reconcile to this bloody

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reaction. The state assembly elections followed in September 1985 and the Longowal faction of the Akali Dal was swept into power. The Central Government repeated its earlier mistake. President’s rule was once again imposed in Punjab in May 1987.

Non-implementation of the Rajiv Longowal Accord and the dismissal of the Barnala government alienated the Sikhs against the Central Government and helped the growth of the Sikh militancy.

People were terrorised to such an extent that they became reluctant to register cases against the militants. Forcible seizures of arms were not reported; witnesses did not come forward to depose; police officers were not willing to register cases and interrogate; judges and magistrates were not happy to try them and jailors were reluctant to keep them in jail even during the interim period before trial.

The terrorists succeeded in spreading their network in Punjab. They once again made the Golden Temple their operational headquarters. Notwithstanding their ouster from the place during Operation Blue Star, they again started fortifying it with all kinds of weapons and ammunition.

To counter the terrorism in Punjab this time the government came out with Operation Black Thunder. K.P.S. Gill prepared the blue print for operation Black Thunder in May 1988. This was perhaps one of the most well executed and successful antiterrorism operations in the world. The most important difference between Operation Blue Star and Operation Black Thunder was that, while the former was conceived in haste, the latter was meticulously planned.

After the success of the operation there was an improvement in the situation for some time. But due to the failure of the government to take effective action the situation again deteriorated. There was again an increase in the terrorist activity. The next couple of years saw the worst phase of terrorism in Punjab. During this time the terrorists targeted the family members of the police personnel, which included the women and children.

The person who brought terrorism under control was none other than K.P.S. Gill. He was a man with indomitable courage and nerves of steel.

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18 Ved Bhatnagar, Challenges to India’s Integrity Terrorism, Casteism, Communalism, (Rawat
Through his grit and perseverance Punjab was able to flush out all the terrorists from its region. Also the decision to revive the political process and hold state assembly elections went a long way in sorting out the terrorists in Punjab. The newly elected chief minister Beant Singh gave his unstinted support to the Punjab police in the fight against terrorism. Many factors led to the decline of terrorism.

North East

In India, the North East states have lived in the shadow of insurgent activities since independence. Murder, extortion, arson, dacoity and robbery, kidnapping and hostage taking are wide spread.

Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura the seven states in the North Eastern part of India has always been an unpredictable flashpoint. It is a very sensitive region of India as it is hemmed in by four countries namely Bangladesh (formerly East Pakistan), Myanmar (formerly Burma), China and Bhutan. It is connected to the rest of India by a narrow twenty kilometre wide strip.

This region is conducive to terrorism because of its geographical location, economic and social backwardness, and presence of innumerable different tribes with different cultures, which possess a strong sense of identity. Further a large portion of the population is politically alienated. Due to the presence of a large number of tribes, there is no unity among them. There is a lot of infighting because of the difference in their race, language, culture and customs. Taking advantage of this situation, hostile external forces have been encouraging and helping the forces of subversion in the region since independence. The neighbouring countries provide sanctuary to these militants who can easily run there for cover after indulging in terrorist activity. The hilly terrain and the thick forest cover also provide a breeding ground for terrorist forces in the region. Of the seven states terrorism is most rampant in Assam, Manipur, Nagaland and Tripura.

Moreover like Arun Shourie\textsuperscript{19} says, "Terrorism has become a lucrative business: in the Northeast, for instance, joining one of the terrorist organisations is a sure way to rake in a minor fortune – the proceeds from the 'taxes' the organisations collect, the ransom they extract from kidnapping.

The Government of India granted statehood to Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Mizoram, Meghalya, Nagaland and Tripura in the hope that by giving a separate political identity to these people it would solve the problem of insurgency. However all these measures failed and in fact there has been a growth in the insurgency.

Assam

The most important reason for terrorism in Assam has been the influx of outsiders in the region. The original inhabitants of Assam have been agitating for the deportation of these illegal immigrants. Assam has been in the grip of terrorism since about 1979 when the main terrorist group, the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) was founded. The preamble to the constitution of this organisation declared that independence of Assam was to be achieved through armed revolutionary struggle. It adopted a flag of rising sun against a white background. The ULFA, which aims at secession from India, is essentially a by-product of the prolonged Assam agitation started in 1979. Many of the members belonged to the All-India Assam Students Union (AASU).\textsuperscript{20}

ULFA has been causing disruption of communications and has been committing kidnappings and killings to create terror. Further the ISI has been supplying arms and explosives to these terrorist groups and has been serving their cause. The ISI's hand is visible in recent cases of sabotage of oil pipelines, communication lines, railway lines, roads, bridges and other vital installations. These are vulnerable targets. It is difficult to effectively patrol and protect these installations, which are spread over large areas.\textsuperscript{21}

\textsuperscript{19} Arun Shourie, "Responding to Terrorism", in K.P.S. Gill and Ajai Sahni eds., The Global Threat of Terror: Ideological, Material and Political Linkages, (Roli Books and Institute of Conflict Management, 2002), pp.16-17.
\textsuperscript{20} See Ghosh, supra 5, p. 245.
\textsuperscript{21} See Marwah, supra 9, p. 320.
The Assamese people had raised the issue of removing 'foreigners' and deleting their names from the electoral polls. When the government failed to take action, there were agitations in February 1983 elections in which 5,000 persons lost their lives. The All Bodo Students' Union (ABSU) emerged as a militant organisation along with ULFA and demanded a separate state resulting in considerable violence.

The ULFA stepped up its campaign of murder, loot and kidnapping. The terrorist activities spread panic amongst the people. Alarmed at the scale of violence unleashed by ULFA, the government imposed President's rule in Assam on 27 November 1990. The same day ULFA was declared unlawful under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act of 1967. The army action in the form of Operation Bajrang, against the militants subdued it to the extent that they did not interfere with the elections in June 1991. It was hoped that the new Congress government would be able to contain the militancy. But the abduction of persons from different parts of the state and the killing and the looting of the people belied these expectations. The eight year Bodoland movement was expected to end in 1994 when the Bodo People's Action Committee (BPAC) and the All Bodo Student Union (ABSU) agreed to accept a Bodoland Autonomous Council within the state of Assam. However the continuing agitations indicate that the agreement between the government and the Bodos has not borne the expected fruit.\(^{22}\)

Recently in December 2003, Bhutan launched armed operations against three militant groups that target India while operating in its territory.\(^ {23}\) During this Operation Flush Out the political climate of the Northeast was changed beyond recognition. After the Royal Bhutanese Army launched a major offensive against the Indian militants hiding in the jungles of southern Bhutan, nearly 30 camps of ULFA, the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB) and Kamtapur Liberation Organisation (KLO) were destroyed. The monarch himself led the operation in which over 150 militants were killed. Almost all the top leaders of the KLO and the NDFB, and some leaders of ULFA were rounded up and handed over to the Indian authorities. However, a

\(^{22}\) See Ahuja,, supra 13, pp. 435-436.
\(^{23}\) The Indian Express, Chandigarh, December 16, 2003.
lot of these militants could not be traced.\textsuperscript{24} This was a major victory for the Indian State in its fight against the north-eastern terrorism.

**Manipur**

Manipur was a Union Territory till January 1972 when it became a full-fledged state. Being a border state, Manipur is vulnerable to terrorism and has a history of leftist terrorism. Meiteis are the predominant inhabitants of the state and the economic unrest amongst these youth has been an important factor in the rise of terrorism. The other inhabitants include the Nagas and the Kukis. The aim of the insurgents has been to establish an independent Manipur free from the control of Government of India.

There are more than one terrorist groups active in the state. The United National Liberation Front, the People's Liberation Army (PLA), the People's Revolutionary Party of Kaungleipak (PRE PAK), the Kangleipak Communist Party and the Kanglei Yawol Kanna Lup mostly operate in the valley. The NSCN(IM), the NSCN(K), the Kuki National Army and the Kuki National Front operate mostly in the hill districts. Some of these militant organisations have been declared unlawful by the government due to their secessionist and terrorist activities.

The ethnic Naga-Kuki clashes have given rise to terrorism in this region. Further corruption and maladministration have worsened the situation. The infrastructure being poor, the people do not get the basic necessities like water and power. The people in this area are left with a feeling of deprivation and disillusionment. The thinly guarded border with Myanmar is conducive to infiltration of militants and the smuggling of arms and ammunition. The level of violence in the state continues to be high because of the conflict between the main ethnic groups.

**Nagaland**

The Nagaland independence movement started in February 1946. After independence the Nagas resorted to insurgency with moral and diplomatic support from the British, because they were sympathetic to the

Naga militants for their role during World War II. Material support came from Pakistan in the form of arms and ammunition. They also collected arms from China and Burma. The most active secessionist groups are the Naga National Council (NNC) and the Nationalist Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN).

To pacify them the Indian Government granted them statehood in December 1963. NNC fizzled out in 1963 when Nagaland became an autonomous state. NSCN led by T. Muivah is quite active till today. The NSCN has been declared unlawful by the government.

Terrorism has experienced many ups and down in the state. After the defeat of Pakistan in 1971 there was a lull. The negotiations between the NSCN and the central government made a headway and were successfully concluded with the signing of the Shillong Accord on November 11, 1975. According to the Accord the underground Nagas were to surrender their arms and had to begin participating in the electoral process. However this was not to be so as a number of Nagas repudiated the accord and refused to surrender.

The NSCN split into two factions in 1988: the Khaplang faction or the NSCN(K), and the Isac-Muivah faction, the NSCN(IM). Both the organisations are actively involved in the terrorist activity for their cause. Preoccupied with tackling terrorism, the state government paid little attention to the economic development of the state. Lack of co-ordination between the governmental agencies and the Pakistani support has given rise to increased terrorism. The situation continues to be difficult.25

Tripura

Tripura was a Union territory at the time of India's independence. The spread of terrorism in this state has its origin in the entry of a large immigrant population from the neighbouring states. It started with the migration of Hindu Bengali refugees from East Pakistan due to frequent communal riots after the partition in 1947. The transformation of the ethnic composition of the population has been the root cause of political agitations leading to terrorism.

25 See Marwah, supra 9, pp. 316-318.
The demographic balance has tilted against the local tribes in Tripura because of the influx of immigrants.

In 1967 the Tripura Upajati Juba Samiti (TUJS) a militant organisation was formed for the restoration of the land taken away by the Bengalee immigrants. The TUJS formed an armed wing known as Tripura National Volunteers (TNV) to terrorise the immigrant population into leaving Tripura.

The National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT) has been responsible for the terrorist acts lately. It has been targeting non-tribal groups and government officials. The other important group operating in the state is the All Tripura Tribal Force (ATTF). Internecine clashes between the NLFT and the ATTF for supremacy among the tribal population are also responsible for a number of terrorist acts.

The ethnic divide between the Bengalis from Bangladesh and the indigenous tribal groups has led to the formation of a counter terrorist organisation called the United Bengali Liberation Front, which targets tribal groups. The state has become increasingly dependent on the paramilitary forces even for the routine maintenance of law and order.26

Concluding Remarks

With 2,000 years of examples behind us we have no excuse when fighting, for not fighting well.27 India knows the price to be paid for the fight against terrorism. The attack against the Indian Parliament in December 2001 targeted the heart of the Indian democracy and served as a reminder to the whole world.

Pakistan has been the driving force behind every terrorist action on Indian soil. The naked dance of terrorism that took innumerable lives in Punjab in the 1980s was sponsored and sustained by Pakistan. In his book Strangers of the Mist, Sanjay Hazarika observes, “Over the years, the ISI has stirred the Punjab insurrection, arming and training Sikh extremists, until a

ruthless police official named Kanwar Pal Singh Gill crushed them with an iron hand. "28 Thousands of misled Sikh youth lost their lives during this time.

A perception has developed among the terrorist groups that the Indian State is inherently incapable of meeting their challenge – that it has become soft and indolent. As a matter of fact, quite a few parties and groups appear to have developed a vested interest in a soft state, a weak government and an ineffective implementation of the laws. 29

Take for instance the terrorism sponsored by Pakistan in Jammu and Kashmir. There are truckloads of evidence to prove that these terrorists are recruited, trained, equipped and paid with money raised through the narcotics trade by Pakistan through its undercover agencies. The number of civilian and military lives claimed by these terrorists in J&K would be, perhaps, nearly ten times than those lost on September 11 in Manhattan and at the Pentagon. Punjab and J&K have been in the public eye the world over for reasons we need not dwell upon here. The world has either no time or no inclination – for obvious reasons – to take a look at Pakistan sponsored terrorism in India’s North Eastern states. 30 Therefore this just goes to show that we need to learn from our past mistakes and not depend on other countries in our fight against terrorism. Another need staring India in its face is the need to raise the cost of sponsoring terrorism in India. Right now, the cost of sponsoring terrorism in India is rather low. It is costing Pakistan less than it would cost it to wage a full scale war. The returns more than justify this cost. It is upto India to raise this cost whether it is in terms of human resources, monetary resources or in terms of Pakistan’s image in the international community.

India must also change from its image of a soft state to one of no tolerance for terrorism. We must never repeat the humiliation of IC 814. the terrorists must be told firmly that the Indian Government does not negotiate with terrorists. This is the only way to prevent abductions and hijackings like IC 814. Israel has set an example in this sphere. As a state policy, it does not negotiate with terrorists. Consequently, the terrorists stopped abducting

30 See Fernandes, supra 10, pp. 8,9.
people when they found that the government refused to negotiate with them for the release of their hostages and in fact sent in their commandos to deal with them. As Indians it is our bounden duty to support the government in such efforts. Traditionally, India has been a slave to world opinion on its internal conflicts. The actions of successive governments have been directed by the perception of the international community. This has weakened India's ability to counter terrorism. Pakistan's misadventure in Kargil was the perfect opportunity for India to change this perception. Pakistan's army cadres had infiltrated into Indian territory. Any strong nation (Specially America) would have launched a full scale war against the infiltrating country. India had the justification for going into Pakistan. India however bowed down before pressure exerted by a few countries led by America and restricted the theatre of war actions to its own territory. This not only led to increased cost of operations for India, it further emphasised India's image of a weak state. America has shown the way after 9/11. it refused to be bogged down by world opinion and went in for a war against Iraq. This was in the face of the stiffest opposition by the international community against any war. Never before had the world united in opposition of a military action like this. The Americans were however, unaffected. They went into Iraq fearless of world opinion. India must learn from this. No country is going to bother about India and its problems unless they have some vested interest.

India should get over its petty obsessions and stop looking at other countries for moral support. It has to handle it own problems. Balraj Puri says, "India's main enemy today is not Pakistan, not even Afghanistan, but terrorism."31 We don't need to depend on others in our fight.

As Dominique De Villepin on his visit to India said, "in the endeavour for a new order, India has a major role to play. First because it is an example of dynamism and energy. Your country is one of youth: 33 percent of the population is under the age of 15. You are aware of the tremendous asset and the immense responsibility that this represents. A young population is a guarantee of imagination, renewal, awakening and hope. But it is also a

challenge in terms of education, health and training. Therefore we have the resources and the strength to do it. We just have to wake up to the fact and take the plunge.

India must also learn to tackle its unique diversities and find a common thread to bind all Indians together. India’s problem of terrorism stems from the diversities. These include religions, language, customs etc. These change every few miles in India. India in a lot of ways is comparable to Europe. Each state in India is comparable to the different countries in Europe. This comparison would help establish the enormity of the task at hand. The task is made more difficult by corrupt, selfish and unscrupulous politicians. They think nothing of exploiting these diversities for their selfish gains. In the process, they succeed in alienating the Indians from each other. This has harmed the country no end. India needs a leadership which can highlight the similarities in all Indians and bring them closer. Unfortunately such leadership looks unlikely to emerge from the cess pool of Indian politics.

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32 Dominique De Villepin, “India has major role in new multipolar world order”, The Indian Express, Chandigarh, February 16, 2004.