Recent Indo-Pak Engagement on Terror and the Pathankot Attack: Implications for India

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The issue of terrorism has been on the arena of international security with serious implications for India. In the last fifteen years, several major cities like New Work (2001), London (2005), Mumbai(2008), Boston(2013), Peshawar(2014), Paris(2015) and Jakarta (2016) have fallen prey to terrorist attack. In the first week of 2016 alone, terrorists have struck Kabul, Pathankot, Tel Aviv, and various locations of Iraq. Cross-border terrorism originating from across the border emerged as a serious threat to the society of India. This cross-border terrorism has emerged as a sort of surrogate unconventional warfare, a low-intensity conflict, a low-cost-high result option and a viable instrument for coercive bargaining. Brian Jenkins, a scholar on the issue of terrorism even subscribes to the view that many governments are using terrorist groups as an arm of foreign policy. Many countries including India have been confronting enormous challenges from state-sponsored cross-border terrorism driven by religious extremism. India has had protracted experiences since mid-eighties in Punjab and later in J&K due to its sharing of border with Pakistan and Afghanistan. Cross-border terrorism combined with transnational crimes poses a grave threat. Pathankot incident is a rude wake up call for India. India has to demonstrate that it is more than a functional anarchy.

Can talks and terror go together?

PM Modi's "impromptu" visit to Lahore on 25 December 2015 was hailed as a bold and laudable initiative. Modi's endeavour to ensure peaceful co-existence between India and Pakistan also drew flak from hardliners. But New Delhi's bold outreach to Islamabad signals a clear preference for summit diplomacy over incrementalism, in tune with PM Modi's personalized approach. Talk and terror have almost gone hand in hand ever since India and Pakistan embarked on a structured Composite Dialogue in 1997. Within months of the foreign secretary talks that announced the onset of the process of composite dialogue, that year witnessed a series of terror attacks including seven blasts in Delhi which more than 60 people. In February 1999, PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee took a bus to Lahore and signed Lahore Declaration. Kargil War of May 1999 contributed to the disruption of the peace process. Agra summit was held in 2001 between Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and then President Parvez Musharraf. It was followed by terrorist attack on Indian Parliament in December 2001. The perpetrators were Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) and ISI backed Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) terrorists. The attack prompted India to mobilize troops along the international border with Pakistan and force the latter to clamp down on its terror infrastructure. During Dr.Manmohan Singh's dispensation, talks were also accompanied by cross-border terror strikes mostly from Pakistan's side. Periods of 2007-08 witnessed the maximum engagement with close to a dozen secretary-level meetings. No significant policy measure has been able to prevent their recurrence. During 2007-2008, major cities like Varanasi, Hyderabad and others across the country witnessed low-intensity terror attacks, supposedly orchestrated by local feeder groups backed by Pakistani mentors. Again, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's invitation to Pakistan's Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to participate in his swearing-in-ceremony in May 2014 was accompanied by terror attack on Dinanagar police station in Gurdaspur district of Punjab on 27 July 2015. Frequent Pakistani provocations and saboteurs of peace have stalled the talk process. Prime Minister Modi commented, "Pakistan has lost the strength to fight a conventional war, but continues to engage in the proxy war of terrorism". India's contention that frequent ceasefire violations along LoC and

International boundary are designed to provide cover to terrorists crossing the border seems to be plausible. Recently, the issue of terrorism has occupied the centre stage to a greater extent due to India's insistence. The process of Composite Dialogue is kept under suspension for the time being. While speaking at the General Debate of the 70th session of the United Nations General Assembly on October 2015, External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj emphatically made it clear that talks and terror do not go hand in hand. This was precisely discussed and decided by the two Prime Ministers at Ufa in July 2015. To quote her, "let us hold talks at the level of NSAs on all issues connected to terrorism and an early meeting of our Directors General of Military Operations to address the situation on the border. If the response is serious and credible, India is prepared to address all outstanding issues through a bilateral dialogue". She cautioned that use of terrorism as a legitimate instrument of statecraft having deleterious impact cannot be accepted. Organised global action and adoption of comprehensive UN convention on terrorism which would provide a legal framework to combat terrorism were advocated by her. She also insisted that the countries providing finance to terrorists and safe havens for their training, arming and operations must be made to pay heavy price. Now Hurriyat leadership can meet the visiting Pakistani dignitaries as they did prior to 2014, but only after the bilateral talks were held. The trajectory of talks remained unproductive due to the prevalent pattern of terror attack before every bilateral talk and oscillation of policy between 'talk' and ''no-talk'. The trajectory of talks, terror strikes and collapse of talks is presented below:

● Lahore bus diplomacy and signing of Lahore declaration on 21 February 1999 between Vajpayee and Sharif getting death blow due to Kargil war of May-July 1999;

● Washing out of peace dividends of July 2001 Agra summit held between General Parvez Musharraf and Atal Bihari Vajpayee by December 2001 terrorist attack on Indian Parliament;

● Cancellation of first dialogue meeting after 2008 Mumbai terror attack due to terror attack on German Bakery in Pune on 13 February 2010;

● Cancellation of Foreign Ministers talk on 13 January 2013 after two Indian soldiers were beheaded by Pakistani troops;

● Firing at India-Pakistan border in October 2014 that killed more than 30 people and resulted in a huge loss of property after Sharif attended swearing-in ceremony of PM Modi on May 2014;

● Cancellation of Foreign Secretaries (FS) level talk scheduled to be held in Islamabad on August 2014 over the Pakistan High Commissioner's meeting with Hurriyat leaders in New Delhi, pointing to new 'red lines' in engagement;

● A day ahead of Modi-Sharif talk in Ufa in Russia on July 2015, a BSF jawan getting killed in North Kashmir due to Pak firing;

● Ahead of BSF and Pakistan Rangers talk, Gurdaspur terror attack on Dinanagar police station taking place in 27 July 2015 and a BSF bus being subject to terror strike in Udhampur in August 2015 killing two personnel;

● Post-Ufa ceasefire violations in LoC and International border;

● Around 685 ceasefire violations by Pakistan between July 2014 to February 2015 according to media reports;

● Cancellation of NSA-level talk on 23-24 August 2015 on 'Hurriyat' question;

● Meeting of Modi and Sharif at Ufa on July 2015 and at Paris climate Summit on 30 November 2015;

● The meeting of the National Security Advisors (NSA) in Bangkok on 6 December 2015;

● Modi's friendship overtures exhibited in his " unannounced" visit to Lahore to wish PM Sharif on his birthday on 25 December 2015 being followed by deadliest Pathankot airbase attack on 2 January 2016 in which seven Indians were martyred;

● Postponement of FS level talks, though by mutual consent, scheduled to be held in Islamabad on 15 January 2016.

The Prime Ministers of both the countries had met at Ufa on July 2015 on the sidelines of SCO Summit. Both leaders condemned terrorism in all its forms and agreed to cooperate with each other to eliminate this menace from South Asia and maintain

peace along the border. They also agreed on the following steps to be taken by the two sides:

● A meeting in New Delhi between the two NSAs to discuss all issues related to terrorism;

● Early meetings of DG BSF and DG Pakistan Rangers followed by that of DGMOs;

● Discussion on ways and means to expedite the Mumbai case trial including additional information like providing voice samples.

The meeting of the National Security Advisors in Bangkok on 6 December 2015, the visit of External Affairs Minister to Islamabad to attend 'Heart of Asia' meeting on 8 December and' impromptu' visit of PM Modi to Lahore after cancellation of FS level talk in 2014 insinuate India's inclination to break the current impasse and give momentum to peace initiatives. Delhi's insistence that Pakistan's NSA should not talk to the Hurriyat leaders in Delhi led to the collapse of 23-24 August 2015 talks. India's new redline on meetings with Kashmir separatists was not acceptable to Pakistan government. Meeting between the NSA Ajit Doval and his counterpart, Retd General Naseer Khan Januja took place in Bangkok. India had wanted the NSA level talk to be focused on the issue of terrorism, while Pakistan wanted Kashmir to be placed on the agenda. The joint statement implied that the concerns of both including the issues of terrorism, Kashmir, tranquility along the LoC were incorporated. India's position that the NSAs should meet before other engagements has also been met. In August India had insisted that no "third party" referring to Hurriyat leaders should be involved. But ahead of talks, Pakistani high commissioner Abdul Basit invited the Kashmiri separatists to a tea reception-a usual ritual to underscore Islamabad's point that Kashmiris have a stake in the dispute. This development gave a jolt to the peace initiatives and talk was cancelled. Grand diplomatic gestures can certainly play a big role in breaking logjams between countries. But the extremely unconventional and bold gambit of PM Modi to make a stopover in Lahore on 25 December 2015 was always fraught with risks. Again India was stabbed at the back in Pathankot terror attack which took place on 2 January 2016. A big terror attack was always on the cards after the flurry of meetings between Indian and Pakistani leaders in Paris, Ufa, Bangkok, Islamabad and Lahore. It is generally believed that Pakistan army and ISI are the spoilers of peace initiatives. The escalating violence between the two nuclear-weapon states, which have fought four wars, threatens to go worse. The Pakistani army supported by ISI has the capability to launch more attacks with the help of their proxies with little notice. According to the prevalent narrative, Pakistan will continue to carry out high-impact attacks to keep testing and enquiring India's resolve and preparedness. Starke reality is that Pakistan is known for its double game and doublespeak. As it cannot win a conventional war against India over J&K, Islamabad's main strategy has been to destabilize and" bleed India by a thousand cuts". In the wake of the Mumbai terror attacks in November 2008, India's outrage resulted in scuttling dialogue with Pakistan. Pakistan leaders succumbing to pressure exerted by international community, promised full cooperation in investigating the role of terrorists involved in the attack. Arrests were made and a trial was initiated. Dawood Ibrahim, mastermind of 1993 Mumbai serial blasts, Maulana Masood Azhar, mastermind of 2001 Indian Parliament attack and 2016 Pathankot attack, Zakiur Rehman Lakhvi and Hafiz Saeed, masterminds of 26/11 terror attack, Sayeed Salahudeen`, chief of Hizbul Mujahideen are roaming scot-free and yet to be brought to justice. Hardliners in Pakistan account this to presence of insufficient evidence to convict anyone. Counter-terrorism analyst Anil Kamboj opined, "Pakistan military and its intelligence agency ISI that openly backs the terrorist groups to unleash attacks on Indian soil want to tell Nawaz Sharif that they are the final authority and not the PM. The Pak army does not want any civilian peace talks or initiatives to take place. They want an aggressive posture towards India and disrupted talks. On the next day of PM Modi's visit to Pakistan, Jama'at-ud-Dawa chief Hafiz Saeed spew venom against India." The combined inputs of India's intelligence agencies suggest that the Pakistan army is not fully on board with Nawaz Sharif's efforts to usher an era of peace with India.

At the same time, Pakistan displays its inclination to engage India in comprehensive dialogue to show the world that Pakistan is not a pariah state. Pakistan continues to send mixed responses. Prompt denial of involvement, condemnation of terror attacks on Indian targets, making promise to take actions against perpetrators of terror, politely asking for evidence and then doing nothing constitute the components of policy tactics adopted by Pakistan. The Pakistan government pretends it knew nothing about the attack while the army puts the blame squarely on rogue terror groups and non-state actors over which, it says it has no control. Pakistan's allegations of India's support to insurgency in Balochistan and FATA and the equally bizarre allegation of funding the Pakistani Taliban are made to tarnish the image of India in the international fora. Skepticisms and misgivings persist among hardliners in both sides.

Pathankot Terror Attack: A reality check

On 29 December 2015, there was specific intelligence input of two teams of Pakistani terrorists having infiltrated into India. The input was specific about military installations being high on the terror radar along with nuclear installations. On 31 December, the intelligence was zeroed in on Punjab. On 2 January 2016, six heavily armed terrorists in Indian army uniform attacked the Pathankot air base, one of India's largest air force near the border. Attack was designed to inflict maximum damage to strategic assets-aircraft, helicopters, radars, air defense system and the command and control apparatus. The aim was a high value target- but not on the scale of 26/11 Mumbai terror attack. They could manage to enter the air force base and caused casualties to the seven security personnel. No civilian casualties took place. According to Defense Ministry release, the infiltrators were immediately engaged and neutralized within a limited area due to the joint efforts of Army, Air Force and National Security Guards (NSG), thereby preventing them from entering the technical zone which houses strategic assets. The heavy ammunition the terrorists used including mortars underscores the military-style training they had undergone. Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar said that he was worried

as to how the terrorists had managed to come inside the base which has a perimeter of 24 kms and located in an area of about 2000 acres. India having prior intelligence of the attack responded in a defensive way. The usual narrative of Pakistan attacking through its proxies like JeM again got credence . The first ramification of the attack has been the reinforcement of the fact that non-state actors continue to enjoy the impunity of the Pakistani security establishment and ISI. Given the enabling environment in Pakistan, they became able to plan and execute these attacks which gave a massive blow to diplomatic engagement and détente. Since Pakistan government was prompt in denouncing the attack and promising cooperation in jointly combating terrorism, Prime Minister Modi condemned the attack branding the terrorists as 'enemies of humanity' and avoiding a direct reference to Pakistan. It was something novel, something totally different from the temptation to plunge into instantaneous denunciation of Pakistan for its presumed involvement in yet another episode of terrorism on Indian soil. Measured and carefully calibrated stance of Indian government is laudable. India did not pin the blame on Pakistan. Instead, it made it clear that it was too early to know the perpetrators of dastardly crime. India's response is, in fact, astute and morally grounded, unlike the knee-jerk reaction of previous times. Astute diplomacy and sagacity were discernible. Reactions of opposition parties except Shiv Sena were moderate. Delhi's message between the lines was, of course, evidently clear. The alacrity with which India collected the evidence and shared dossier with Pakistan containing "leads" on the Pathankot attack is exemplary. Intercepts of telephonic conversations between the terrorists and their mentors in Pakistan were also shared. The ball, as Indian Foreign Ministry spokesman articulated, is proverbially in Pakistan's court. Will the peace initiatives and political capital invested by both Prime Ministers pay dividends?

Pathankot attack represented a worst breach of national security. The Pathankot terror strike coincided with an attack on the Indian consulate in Mazar-i-Sharif, which also came within a week of PM Modi's visit to Afghanistan. India was attacked at home and abroad. Distressingly low level of

preparedness to thwart terror strikes is on display. The attack was designed to derail the talk process started with much enthusiasm between India and Pakistan and new comprehensive dialogue formalized by External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj in Islamabad in December. The ball, as Indian Foreign Ministry spokesman articulated, is proverbially in Pakistan's court. Will the peace initiatives and political capital invested by both the Prime Ministers pay dividends?

Incident of Pathankot attack witnessed three major lapses. Firstly, terrorists succeeded in breaching the international border and entering India. The second was the manner in which Salvinder Singh, superintendent of Punjab police was abducted and allowed to go and the reaction of the Punjab police to the alarm he raised. It needs proper investigation. The third was the success terrorists had in entering the IAF station breaching the perimeter somewhere along the 24km area. In this context, few pertinent questions related to the area of operation of the terrorists, way of infiltration, targets and objective of attack, modus operandi and the future cropped up. It is noteworthy that terror activities have shifted from J&k to Punjab. Of late, Punjab has become a soft target due to drug-terror nexus. Smugglers and drug mafia reportedly facilitate infiltration and terror strikes. According to security experts, the militants could have sneaked into the Indian Territory through the nullahs at Indo-Pak border which do not have wired fencing. The Pathankot strike has a resemblance with Gurdaspur terror attack where terrorists resorted to indiscriminate firing using AK-47. It caught security forces unaware.

At this crucial juncture, the greater responsibility rests on the political leaders. Instead of bickering, indulging in blame game and politicizing terror, they are expected to exhibit the political determination to deal with terror threats at source. This implies a proactive policy of targeting and eliminating terror sources, be it within the country and outside. The challenge for Modi government will be to utilize talks as a test of Pakistan's sincerity and hold its feet to fire on the issue of terrorism.

Hollow commitments and rhetoric, condemnatory statements and complacency would not do. Skepticism prevails. There should be visible actions. It needs to be stressed that the Pathankot assault was a rude reminder that civilian administration in Pakistan do not wield much authority and influence. The resumption of dialogue has again been aborted by developments which are beyond the control of both the governments. India by submitting strong evidences of involvement of Pak-based terrorist groups like JeM has demanded for prompt and decisive actions within time bound framework from Pakistan. Pakistan's Foreign Secretary Aizaz Ahmed Chaudhry commented that Pakistan would not allow terrorists to use its territory to launch attacks on the other countries. Mr.Sharif also while reiterating the anti-terror commitment maintained, "Pakistan is swiftly carrying out investigations in a transparent manner and will bring out the truth. The world will see our effectiveness and sincerity in this regard. Pakistan is eliminating terrorism on its soil and will not allow any one to use Pakistani soil to conduct terror operations abroad," After US Secretary of State John Kerry called up PM Sharif, Pakistan promised quick action. Now onus lies with Pakistan. Nawaz Sharif has ordered probe into Pathankot attackers' link with Pakistan. Given the fact of persisting differences in Pakistani civil and military leaderships, very less is expected. India wants UN to ban Pakistan based terrorists. India is preparing dossiers on terrorists based in Pakistan including alleged mastermind of Pathankot attack Maulana Masood Azhar, chief of JeM and his brother Abdul Rauf Asghar, seeking a ban on the militants under the United Nations Security resolution 1267 which was adopted on 15 October 1999. According to some sources, the decision to seek a ban on Pak-based terrorists was taken to mount pressure on Pakistan to act. Intelligence reports indicate that military installations in border areas are still a vulnerable target and more Pathankot-type attacks could be carried out by Pakistan-based terror outfits. Former Pakistan General (retired) Parvez Musharraf, in an interview given to Pakistani TV channel, said that India should not 'overreact' to the Pathankot terror strike as such incidents would keep happening in the future due to

prevalence of terrorism in both the countries. Both are the victims of terrorism. Army Chief General Dalbir Singh Suhag contended that at least seventeen of the forty two terror-training camps identified earlier in Pakistan and PoK are still very active in exporting terror and engaging in 'proxy war' against India. The new equation is that the Americans nudge India and the Chinese pressurize Pakistan to ensure stability in South Asia where they have stakes. International pressure on Pakistan has been building up. The US wants Pakistan to walk the talk and act fast against Pathankot attack perpetrators. Negative aspect of this is that it re-introduces hyphenation of India with Pakistan. India does not want its strategic space to be circumscribed by their overwhelming presence in the given context. But their pressure on Pakistan is welcome particularly on the issue of terrorism and use of non-state actors.

New developments

A new scenario has emerged this time. Cooperative overtures in lieu of hostilities stemmed from both sides. Tacit acceptance by Pakistan of the fact that perpetrators most probably belonged to their country is discernible. Similarly, Indian response has been one of measured restraint. India provided Pakistan with actionable intelligence against the perpetrators including the JeM handlers, call details, the DNA samples of six fidayeen attackers, the weapons possessed by them etc. Moving beyond tokenism is expected from Pakistan. Developments after attack suggest that the policy of "talk, wait, watch, talk" might work this time in dealing with Pakistan. Going ahead with talks in the near future will certainly ensure mobilization of world public opinion in India's favour. Following unprecedented developments insinuate positive signs in Indo-Pak engagement on tackling terrorism:

● No denial of involvement in the attack by Pakistan government ;

● Carrying out raid and crackdown on offices of JeM, accused of carrying out the Pathankot attack and arresting its operatives and members by Pakistan government;

● PM Sharif convening many high level meetings to take stock of the situation and taking army chief General Raheel Sharif on board;

● Formation of Joint Investigation Team (JIT) by Pakistan government to probe the attack;

● Pakistan's unprecedented move to send a Special Investigation Team (SIT) comprising a six man investigation committee including ISI and military officials to visit Pathankot to probe and India welcoming this joint investigation which is going to be done for the first time;

● India's readiness to extend all cooperation to bring the perpetrators to justice;

● Two NSAs staying in continuous touch thereby keeping the communication channels open even after the occurrence of the attack.

Unlike in earlier years, because of these positive steps, trust deficit is overcome to some extent. Despite media reports quoting police and intelligence officials on the "protective detention" and questioning of JeM founder Masood Azhar, there was no confirmation from the Pakistani government regarding this, as pointed by MEA officials. The present scenario has led to the cropping of many pertinent questions which need to be answered. Will Pakistan hand over Azhar to India for questioning? Is the crackdown on JeM, one of the deadliest terror groups in South Asia, is mere eyewash or cosmetic exercise to salvage the talk process? If Pakistan does not deliver, as is more likely, then India must resort to more robust, hard-hitting, unrelenting policy to inflict punishment on Pakistan and its proxies. Pakistan will deliver precious little. 26/11 trial is still floundering. Given the fact of persisting differences in Pakistani civil and military leaderships, very lely.ss is expected. Pakistan army still distinguishes 'good terrorists' like LeT and JeM and 'bad terrorists' like Pakistan Taliban.

Lessons and Implications

The Pathankot attack is an eye opener for India in many respects. Causes of inept handling and passiveness of India's counter-terror movement can be attributed to the following factors:

● Inconsistent Pakistan policy;

- India lagging behind in taking preventive or pre-emptive actions;
- Lack of political consensus on dealing with Pakistan on the issue of terrorism;
- Absence of adequate preparedness of defense security system;
- Security shortcomings of defense establishments and several chinks in our border security mechanisms, both in terms of human surveillance and physical infrastructure;
- Critical operational deficiencies;
- Lack of coordination and insufficient dissemination among myriad security and intelligence agencies with overlapping roles but limited convergence;
- Burgeoning links between drug syndicates, terrorists and corrupt officials and terrorists using drug routes;
- Lack of a cohesive command and control structure of the agencies which are there to provide security cover and neutralize terrorist threats;
- Inept handling of looming threat despite specific intelligence input provided in advance;
- Absence of a written National Security Doctrine;
- Mismatch between the capacities of intelligence agencies and tactics employed by terrorists;
- Intelligence inadequacies;
- Laxity and failure of BSF and State police to stop infiltration;
- Punjab State police forces being ill-equipped, under-trained and not sufficiently trained to deal with a terror situation.

Suffice it to say, India's Pakistan policy is very inconsistent. India's response is always reactive and in the defensive. War with Pakistan, a nuclear power, is a non-option. Meanwhile, Pakistan has made serious charges regarding India's alleged covert support of terrorism directed against that country. It handed over to the Obama administration in October 2015 dossiers indicating India's involvement in terrorist violence in Baluchistan. US administration emphasized in joint statement issued after Sharif's visit, that both India and Pakistan should discuss their 'mutual concerns' over terrorism. Regular doses of advice administered to both Modi and Sharif from their friends abroad, particularly those in the western world, no doubt seems to be having some effect. In the past few months, India has had a dialogue with old friends of Pakistan like UAE and Saudi Arabia on the dangers emanating from Pak-based terror outfits. It deserves mention that terror strike from across Pakistan will go uninterrupted, despite the fact that talk is there or not. Hence, the obvious thing to do is for the government to proceed on the dialogue track with the full backing of national consensus. Suspending the India-Pakistan dialogue in the context of a terrorist attack gives jihadis a veto over talks. Three possible options need to be perused; first, should India continue to trust Pakistan vis-a-vis whom there is trust deficit; second, should Indian policy makers make endeavour to engage the Pakistan army directly and third, should India exercise the last resort of Hot Pursuit or target terrorist camps operating from PoK. Pakistan is yet to take stringent action against the perpetrators of 26/11 attack. Other options as suggested by analysts included snapping of diplomatic ties by recalling high commissioner in Islamabad and vice versa, downgrading Pakistani high commission to consular status, imposing calibrated economic sanctions to give a jolt to Pakistani economy, hitting Pakistan by covert and overt operations by hiring mercenaries (Baloch, Pashtuns and others). There should be proportionate response and impeccable deniability. It is amply clear for Pakistan that Indian outrage is often short-lived.

Need for Comprehensive Response

Another important question that needs to be addressed is how to prevent the recurrence of terrorist attacks in big cities and strategic bases. The 26/11 experience suggests it was not technically a failure of intelligence gathering. There was the alert of a possible fidayeen attack. It was more a failure of policy implementation and the inability of our intelligence agencies to pin down what specific targets were at risk and the exact date and time they would be at risk. The Pathankot attack was known one day before. A better security arrangement could have been made to foil the attack. Security lapses, role of insiders etc should be investigated by NIA. .Following measures need to be adopted by India.

- Constructive engagement with Pakistan and mounting pressure on Pakistan to act against perpetrators of terror for the benefit of both;

- Bilateral and multilateral counter-terrorism cooperation with US, EU, China and other countries to put pressure on Pakistan at various levels in different fora;
- Formulation of a National Security Doctrine;
- Formulation of a consistent and coherent Pak policy based on political consensus;
- Need for anti-terror capacity-building to meet actual contingency situations and strengthen the security infrastructure for national preparedness;
- Adequate preparedness to confront complex challenges emanating from drug-terror nexus;
- ;Fixing of accountability for acts of commission and omission;
- Formulation of clear cut national security strategy spelling out the command and control structures for meeting eventualities like terror strikes;
- Intelligence sharing, filling perceived gaps in intelligence gathering and processing, gathering credible intelligence inputs and real-time actionable intelligence on targets;
- Better and more effective inter-agency coordination;
- Bolstering counter- terrorist, offensive, quick response and retaliatory capabilities;
- Strengthening border security;
- Strengthening counter-infiltration grid along the border;
- Better border management through fencing, effective patrolling, installing observation posts etc.
- Increasing institutionalized cooperation with other countries in sharing lessons learnt, training personnel and emulating tactics and sharing intelligence and technology advancements;
- Creation and evolution of Multiple Assault Counter Terrorism Action Capabilities and membership in Global Counterterrorism Forum;
- Modernization of State police forces;
- Making no concessions to terrorists and striking no deals with terrorists as it may prove to be costly and this happened in case of release of dreaded terrorist Maulana Masood Azhar;
- Enhancing people-to-people contact and creating peoples' movement for peace in the form of exchanges like sports meet, arts exhibition etc.;
- Emphasis on track II diplomacy as well.

Concluding Observations

In the wake of Pathankot attack, numerous challenges resurfaced. Terrorism resulted in many deaths, including those of school children in the December 2014 attack on a Peshawar school in Pakistan. Pakistan has also witnessed dastardly terrorist attacks on its own soil. Will they be tempted to swallow the terrorists' bait and surrender the peace dividends of bilateral engagement to rogue actors whose mission is to foil and sabotage peace process? Though summit diplomacy and bilateral talks come with risks, sustained political will can deliver win-win solutions and outcomes. We no longer inhabit a world where the argument 'your terrorist is not my terrorist' hold much weight. Both are the victims of terrorism. United global action is required. There should be cautious optimism as well. India has to wait and watch. The present gesture of Pakistan is at variance with broader public perception and narrative prevalent in India. Pakistan should be given more time to take action-oriented steps. Both the countries should not be hostages to the nefarious and insidious terrorist agenda. Undoubtedly, this adversely impacts their society, polity and economy. The mere fact that India has been subject to constant terror attacks amply necessitates effective response and actions. Indo-Pak engagement on terror should constitute one of the significant components of a comprehensive counter-terror policy and strategy for India.

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Changing Geo-politics of Central Asia: Its Susceptibility to Terrorism

Dr. Alok Kumar Gupta

Introduction

Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) leader's summit took place in October 2015 in the Kazakh resort town of Burabay, where international terrorism and regional defense were core issues. Russian President Vladimir Putin warned of a spillover of violence from Afghanistan into the Central Asian region and floated creating a joint border task force with the other CIS members.[1]Putin planned to form a grouping of border guard services and other agencies from Commonwealth countries to resolve crisis situations at the border. Such a move may be interpreted variedly by analysts and those who are keen observers of the development that is taking place within Central Asia. The most prominent view that did the round was that Central Asia's authoritarian leaders hype the threat of ISIS incursions and Afghanistan spillover, using terrorism as pretext for crackdown on opposition. Putin has often been blamed for fanning such fears for obvious reason that a pro-Russian government must be at the helm of affairs within the countries of Central Asian republics. Russia intends to take comparative advantage of its proximity with Central Asian countries vis-à-vis US and West, as guarantor of their security and prosperity.

Putin, in his interactions with other heads of state in the same summit, made the remark that the situation there is really close to critical as terrorists of all kinds are gaining influence and do not hide their plans for further expansion. One of their goals is to break through into the Central Asian region. It is important that the leadership of Central Asian countries be ready for coordinated action to respond any such attempts.[2]Putin's claims were substantiated by the fact that according to various estimates 5000 to 7000 people from Russia and other CIS countries are fighting on the side of the Islamic State and that such forces are required to be checked so that they do not put their experience that they have acquired in Syria to use in Central Asia at a later stage.[3]

However, according to other sources there are well over 5000 Central Asians fighting in Syria and Iraq, but not all of them have joined ISIS. There are Central Asians on both sides of the Syrian Civil War.[4] However, the fact remains that given such a situation a threat to security and safety looms large over the Central Asian republics, especially in view of presence of huge resources of oil and gas, as these countries are along the Caspian Sea basin. Moreover, their demographic profile is such that a threat is always imminent with growing terroristic activities in West Asia or middle-east countries especially Syria and Iraq. Therefore, it makes it imperative to explore the possibilities of growth of terrorism in Central Asian region in the wake of fast changing geo-politics of the region.

Central Asia's Profile: Advantages versus Disadvantages

Comprising the republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, Central Asia is almost certain to become the new global battleground. Its history has been marked by more than two thousand years of conflict, as the great empires of the past fought to control the commercial lifeline linking Europe and Asia, the Silk Route (Almost the only empire that did not at one time or another rule part or all of Central Asia was the Roman Empire).[5]However, today's conflicts differ from the struggles of the past, and they stem largely from the changes wrought in the region by the erstwhile Soviet Union—and from the chaos that accompanied its dissolution in 1991. Coming into existence of these countries did not translate into an urge for democracy, the market economy, or Western culture and consumerism, as was the case elsewhere in the former Soviet Union, for example Russia and the Baltic republics. Instead, Islamic revival swept through the region. One of the key tenets of the Soviet system had been that religion was incompatible with communism, and the Communist methodically set about repressing all forms of religious expression

within the country. As the Soviet empire fell apart, the people of Central Asia, who had been forced to renounce or hide their religion for seventy-four years, at last saw an opportunity to connect spiritually and culturally with their Islamic past.

The Central Asians embraced Islam not only to re-establish their own ethnic and cultural identity but to reconnect with their Muslim neighbours to the south, who had been cut-off from them ever since Stalin closed the borders between the Soviet Union and the rest of the world. Almost the first new visitors to the independent Central Asian republics were Islamic missionaries from Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and elsewhere, who helped build hundreds of new mosques and distributed free copies of the Koran translated into Russian and other native languages. Millions of Central Asians emotionally seized this opportunity to rediscover their identity and heritage, all of which they linked intimately with Islam.[6] Therefore, prolonged suppression of their religious expressions and faith under the communist regime on account of their subjugation is bound to pop-up given the pan-Islamic movement and feeling within the Islamic world. Moreover, the demographic profile of the Central Asian countries is suggestive of its growing inclination towards middle-east or other Islamic countries in the long-term owing to traditional and religious affinity. Religion, as Marx said is opium to the society, is a strong pull-factor for enhancing affinity and strengthening ties with the countries with similar religious denomination. Christianity was a factor at one point of time for affinity within nation-states of the world and Islam has been one of the most important factors in the recent past. Such a claim could be further substantiated even through a cursory glance over the demographic profile of Central Asian republics and their religious affiliations.

Religious Profile of Central Asian Countries

The people of Central Asia are predominantly Sunni Muslims of the Hannafi sect. Shia Muslims make up a small minority in some of the great trading cities, like Bukhara and Samarkand, as well as in Tajikistan, where the Ismaeli sect, whose spiritual leader is Aga Khan, can be found in the Gorno-Badakhshan region of the Pamir Mountains. Since 1991 Central Asia has also seen a meteoric rise of militant Islamic sects, each with its own brand of orthodoxy and sharia

(Islamic law), and this phenomenon has obscured one of the most important aspects of traditional Central Asian Islam—its tolerance.[7] Characterized by major advances in philosophy, ethics, legal codes, and scientific researches under largely liberal political rulers, and spread through a vast region by Arabs, Mongols, and Turks, the Islam of Central Asia took many forms. Early Central Asian Muslims coexisted in relative peace not only with one another but also with the Jews, Buddhists, Hindus, Zoroastrians, and Nestorian Christians who had established pockets of civilization in the region.[8] Central Asia is thus, a home to Islam in a substantive way with traditions of suppressions and oppressions, which may act like a catalyst for attracting youths of the region to terrorism. Here are country-wise profiles of Islamic denominations in Central Asia.

Uzbekistan's demographic profile consists of 81 per cent of Uzbeks, 5.4 per cent Russians, 4 per cent Tajiks, 3 per cent Kazakhs and nearly 6.5 per cent people belonging to other religion. A majority of Uzbeks are non-denominational Muslims.[9] Non-denominational Muslims are Muslims who do not belong to a specific Islamic denomination, but accept Islam as a religion.

Kazakhstan which is populated by nearly 131 ethnic groups includes Kazakhs as 63 per cent of its population, whereas Russians, Uzbeks, Germans, Tatars and Uyghurs are other ethnic groups. Islam is the religion of about 70 per cent of population, and 26 per cent of population practices Christianity.[10] According to Pew Research Project on Religious and Public Life, Kazakhstan is the country with largest population of non-denominational Muslims which consists of 74 per cent of its population.

Tajikistan consists of 84.3 per cent Tajik, 13.8 per cent Uzbek, 0.8 per cent Kyrgyz, and 1.1 per cent of other religions. Majority of its population follow Sunni Islam. Sunni Islam of the Hanafi School has been officially recognized by the Government since 2009 even though it claims to be a Secular State. According to a US State Department release and Pew Research Group, the population of Tajikistan is 98 per cent Muslims, with approximately 87 to 95 per cent of them as Sunni and roughly 3 per cent are Shia and 7 per cent are non-denominational Muslims.[11]

According to CIA World Fact book the ethnic composition of Turkmenistan is 85 per cent as Turkmen, 5 per cent as Uzbek, 4 per cent as Russian and 6 per cent as others (2003 estimates). According to data announced in Ashgabat in February 2001, 91 per cent of the population are Turkmen, 3 per cent are Uzbeks and 2 per cent are Russians. Turkmen's population in Turkmenistan nearly doubled during 1989 to 2001, whereas the population of Russians went down by two-third.

Kyrgyzstan is another Central Asian country with Kyrgyz, a Turkic people as largest ethnic group comprising 72 per cent of the total population (2013 estimates). A country with over 80 ethnics groups the other ethnic groups are Russian (9 per cent), Uzbeks (14.5 per cent), Dungans (1.9 per cent), Uyghurs (1.1 per cent), Kazakhs (0.7 per cent) and Ukrainians (0.5 per cent) and other smaller ethnic minorities consisting of 1.7 per cent of the total population.[12]According to Pew Research Centre's Religion and Public Life Project nearly 64 per cent of the Kyrgyzstan's population consists of non-denominational Muslims.

Therefore, the religious and ethnic profile of Central Asia makes it obvious that on an average 75 to 80 per cent of its population is of Islamic origin, even though most of them are non-denominational Muslims, i.e. they follow Islam but are not categorised in terms of a particular sect or school of thought. One country is such which is dominantly Sunni sect of Islamic tradition. Given the religious profile of Central Asia one can easily figure out the vulnerability of the region to terrorism, especially in the light of it ever-increasing resource base of oil and gas, for which the whole world is scrambling and a source of conflict among the major powers of the world. The fact cannot be denied that the region is seating on a powder keg where a spark has already been lit and is slowly inching towards a big-bang. Moreover, the revelations of the recent past as to how even states are involved in sale and purchase of oil with the non-state actors (largely terrorists) in the oil and gas international black market is suggestive enough of the growing probabilities of incidence of terrorism in the region at the behest of some major powers itself. Russia's allegations that Turkey has been involved in oil and gas trade with ISIS as such illegal oil are available at cheaper rate, is a case in point, that with changing geopolitics and world order, terrorism may soon engulf the Central Asian region, the way it has spread its tentacles in West Asia. The profile of political dispensation also becomes a factor to this effect, as most of these countries are democracies on paper but authoritarian in functioning. World is a witness to the fact that quite often authoritarian regimes act as puppet or stooge of one or the other major powers to stabilize and strengthen their hold on power and for which they go to any extent in acting as leverage for their exploiters. The opposing powers, in their urge to use and exploit the resources of these countries, use opponents of the existing political dispensation by arming and funding them to dislodge the existing regime, and install a regime of their choice which shall facilitate them with oil and gas. The Great Oil Asian Game in Afghanistan is a case in point. Whole world is aware of the fact that the way Afghanistan stands destroyed and is now struggling to put the broken pieces together and restore peace and confidence of citizens of Afghanistan. Middle-East countries are another example to this effect. Two Gulf-wars on the pretext of disciplining Iraq has almost weakened Iraq to an extent that the present government seems unable to stand firmly on the ground in the wake of growing incidence of ISIS and other such organizations in the country.

Therefore, Central Asia is an equally vulnerable region, and its huge resources of oil and gas, is all set to become a disadvantage rather than advantage. These resources has attracted the major powers of the world to the region and all these powers have already started their political and diplomatic game in the region to turn the course and direction of the pipeline to suit their interests. The major power struggle is being discussed as a 'New Great Game' in Central Asia. Such endeavours of big powers in the region are bound to contribute towards political instability, and a fertile ground for terrorist organizations to make their way in the region with their vested interests. Therefore, it is important to understand the changing dynamics and geopolitics of the region.

The Geopolitical Configurations of the Region
Central Asia, sometimes also referred to as Middle Asia, is considered to be the core region of Asia,

expanse of which spreads from Caspian Sea in the West to China in the East, Russia in the North to Afghanistan in the South. It mainly consists of Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. However, Afghanistan also is sometimes referred to as a Central Asian republic. Fact remains that now Afghanistan is a formal member of South Asian group known as SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation); yet it has natural affinity and geographical congruity with Central Asian region. This region is a huge source of oil and gas. The region has long been a strategic location on account of its proximity to several great powers on the Eurasian landmass. The region never had a dominant stationary population nor was able to make use of its own natural resources for its own development. Thus, it has rarely throughout history become the seat of power for an empire or influential state. Central Asia has been divided, re-divided, conquered out of existence, and fragmented time and time again. The region, therefore, thus far has served more as the battleground for outside powers than as a power in its own right. Mostly, it has been on the receiving end of international and regional politics. Central Asia has been fast turning into an ethnic cauldron during the post-cold war era and is prone to instability and conflicts, without a sense of national identity but with tremendous religious fervour. Russia alone cannot be considered a dominant player in the region, but also Turkey, Iran, China, and Pakistan alongside the United States. Fact remains that in geopolitics, strategic realities can change with surprising speed, and even before countries realize it decisive shifts occur that shape the future for the years to come.

Geo-political developments affecting international relations on a global scale have ramifications in Central Asia too. A rising China and a rising India are two such possibilities that are going to have its impact on the region. The War on Terror, however long that may last, is going to affect the geo-politics of Central Asian region. Something like this also took place during the Cold War. While the Soviet-American competition was the main event during this era, several other geopolitically important events were also occurring: the dismantling of the West European colonial empires; the independence of so many of their former colonies in Asia, the Middle-

East, Africa and elsewhere; the emergence of Sino-Soviet hostility, followed a few years later by the emergence of Sino-American cooperation; the growth—as well as the growth in importance of what would become the European Union; the initiation of what Samuel Huntington referred to as the 'third wave' of democratization, which began with Spain and Portugal in 1975, crested with the downfall of communism in Eastern Europe in 1989, and continued in several other countries afterward.[13]Therefore, such course of events at the global and regional level cannot serve mere examples, but also as historical events that had its long-term deep rooted impact on the global and regional order. In geopolitical even smaller events of conflict, interaction as well as bonhomie are of determining nature and either change or prepare the ground for change of political order within a region. There is hardly any doubt that the course of events have changed tremendously in the post-Soviet era in the region and the erstwhile decision-maker and policy-maker for the region, i.e. Russia is now struggling to contest its turf in the region vis-à-vis US and West Europe, so that the direction of the oil and gas pipelines are towards the east and also transform the region as its area of influence so that it may continue to exploit its oil and gas. Therefore, it makes it imperative to understand the growing incidence and impact of big powers and major players in the region.

Russian Preponderance in Central Asia: **Myth or Reality**

Russia has been the preeminent regional security architect since the collapse of Soviet Union and remains the major weapons supplier to regional countries. Russia already has a significant military presence in Central Asia which it plans to expand. Russia's leases on bases in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan were extended to 2042 and 2032 respectively, in 2013. The Russian force in Tajikistan, already the largest outside of Russia, is scheduled to grow to 9,000 troops (up from around 6,000) by 2020. Earlier there were reports in media that Moscow was sending a helicopter unit to the Ayni airbase.[14]Therefore, strong presence of Russian military and its hardware in the region suggests that it has substantial presence in the region and is somewhat holding on its battle-turf. Russia's preponderance in the region, thus cannot be

truly termed as a myth, rather it's a reality in many senses.

However, there remains weak spot in Putin's coverage of Russia's periphery—particularly along the Afghan border. Turkmenistan, with 744 km border with Afghanistan, is avowedly neutral. Turkmenistan isn't a member of any of Russia's various regional clubs—the CIS, the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU), the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), or the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). Uzbekistan, which is a member of the CIS, withdrew from the CSTO in 2012. In September 2015 Karimov said Uzbekistan wouldn't host any foreign militaries and wouldn't get involved in foreign interventions.[15] Therefore, such developments contributes to worries for Russia which, ever since the collapse of Soviet Union has been trying to keep these and other break-away republics into its fold and formed a loosely held groups of Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) in the immediate aftermath.

However, Russia continues to dominate the political decision-making throughout the former Soviet Socialist Republics; although, as other countries move into the area, Russia's influence has begun to wane though Russia still maintain military bases in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Russia in the wake of Ukrainian endeavour and sanction by the West has started asserting itself and is contesting its turf strongly in the region and has also been successful towards putting the US and NATO at the receiving end. Russian adventure against ISIS into Syria and Iraq must be read and understood in context with Russia's interests in Central Asia. US which has been interested and active towards ousting Basar al-Asad regime of Syria by supporting the anti-Asad forces with arms, training and fund had almost free-play in the Middle-East. Russia on the pretext of ousting ISIS and in support of Asad entered the fray and has started bombarding ISIS holds, and is also allegedly involved in dislodging anti-Asad forces. Thus, Russia has sent a strong signal to US and the West that it will not be a mere observer of the events and allow its opponents and rivals to design a regional and world-order of their own choice. Russia has clearly and categorically made it obvious to its rivals that if it can contest US and West preponderance in Middle-East, it can do so in Central Asia as well. Under such circumstances West may turn soft on illegal anti-state forces and non-state actors in Central Asia to create havoc and destabilize the existing political order, to their own vested interests. Such probabilities raise the vulnerabilities of the Central Asian region with changing geo-politics in of the region.

United States Oil Diplomacy
United States with its military involvement in the region and oil diplomacy is also significantly involved in the region's politics. The United States and other NATO members are the main contributors to the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan and also exert considerable influence in other Central Asian nations. In the context of the United States' War on Terror, Central Asia has once again become the Centre of geostrategic calculations. Pakistan's status has been upgraded by the US government to Major non-NATO ally because of its central role in serving as a staging point for the invasion of Afghanistan, providing intelligence on Al-Qaeda operations in the region, and leading the hunt on Osama bin Laden. Therefore, in view of US presence in and ties with Pakistan and Afghanistan, US is not going to forgo its ground in Central Asian region; as it may also have a backlash in other regions of the world. Other opponents of US may also perceive it as US might and diplomacy is on the wane. Therefore, US will leave no stone unturned to contest its ground in the region.

China and India
China has security ties with Central Asian states through the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and conducts energy trade bilaterally. India has geographical proximity to the Central Asian region and, in addition, enjoys considerable influence on Afghanistan. India maintains a military base at Farkhor (Tajikistan), and also has extensive military relations with Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.[16] China and India are both on the rise during the 'War on Terror' era, presenting challenges to geopolitical calculations, both now and in the future. Both these countries are in need of oil and gas as they are fast growing largest economies of the world. There is convergence of interest between Russia and China and thus there are likelihood of their cooperation to keep the direction of pipelines towards east so that both may exploit the resources at the cost of US and West. India is maintaining ambiguous statuses as it

requires building its relations on both sides and with all the players in the region continues to have oil and gas trade with Central Asian countries. Therefore, India is treading its path in Central Asia quite cautiously and deftly so that it can eat the cake without irritating US, Russia and China.

Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Other Interested Parties

Turkey also exerts considerable influence in the region on account of its ethnic and linguistic ties with the Turkic peoples of Central Asia and its involvement in the Baku-Tiblisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline. Political and economic relations are growing rapidly (e.g. Turkey eliminated visa requirements for citizens of the Central Asian Turkic republics). Thus Turkey has the interest that if the pipeline traverses through its land, it may get benefitted by transit fee as well as have the oil and gas at cheaper rate. However, Turkey seems to be on the sides of US and that makes it interesting to watch the turn of the events in future, as US is always interested that if the oil and gas of the region traverses via Turkey to the Mediterranean coast then it shall be easier for US to further transport the same to its own land. Shooting down of a Russian fighter plane by Turkey recently has proved to be a game-changer in the Russian fight against the ISIS in Syria and Iraq. This has further worsened the relations between Russia and Turkey.

Iran, the seat of historical empires that controlled parts of Central Asia, has historical and cultural links to the region and is vying to construct an oil pipeline from the Caspian Sea to the Persian Gulf. Strong ties between Russia and Iran and bitterness between US and Iran is again a point that needs to be taken note of. Iran's interest in the Central Asian oil and gas has added complexities to the geopolitics of the region.

Pakistan has a history of political relations with neighbouring Afghanistan and is termed capable of exercising influence. For some Central Asian nations, the shortest route to the ocean lies through Pakistan. Pakistan seeks natural gas from Central Asia and supports the development of pipelines from its countries. According to an independent study, Turkmenistan is supposed to be the fifth largest natural gas field in the world. The mountain ranges and areas in northern Pakistan lie on the fringes of greater Central Asia; the Gilgit-Baltistan region of Pakistan lies adjacent to Tajikistan, separated only by the narrow Afghan Wakhan Corridor. Being located on the northwest of South Asia, the area forming modern-day Pakistan maintained extensive historical and cultural links with the Central Asian region. Pakistan being a friend of US and China both further complicates the changing geopolitics of the region.

Afghanistan was the target of a US invasion in 2001 and on-going reconstruction and drug-eradication efforts. US military bases have also been established in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, causing both Russia and the People's Republic of China to voice their concern over a permanent US military presence in the region. Therefore, US presence in Afghanistan and involvement of China, India and Russia in the reconstruction and rehabilitation work within Afghanistan further complicates the geopolitical understanding of the Central Asian region. Week state structure and military strength of Afghanistan makes it susceptible to terrorism with its consequent impact on Central Asian republics.

Other potential challenges could arise from the further development of the European Union; Russia's attempted resurgence; the rise of Brazil, Indonesia and possibly other powers; and the fate of non-Islamist revolutionary enterprises, especially the 'Bolivarian socialist' one led by Hugo Chavez in Latin America, and the Maoists in South Asia. Any of these possibilities, however, could also prove illusory; yet it remains a force to reckon with and as a source of future instability and disturbance in the region.

There is hardly any doubt that the 'War on Terror" especially the way in which the United States has prosecuted it has affected the larger geopolitical context of international relations. The entities that are now or are on the cusp of becoming great powers are the United States, the European Union, Russia, China and India. Relations among these five are neither completely friendly nor completely hostile. Some of the bilateral relations among them are more friendly (especially those between America and the EU) while others are less so (the United States and Russia; China and India). One thing all five have in common, though, is that, even before 9/11, each of

these great powers had contentious relations with one or more Muslim opponents. All five are treading into different regions of the world in search of oil and gas as well as other opportunities that may further their commercial interests.

The region along with Russia is also part of "the great pivot" according to Heartland Theory of Halford Mackinder, which says that the power which controls Central Asia—richly endowed with natural resources—shall ultimately be the "empire of the world".[17]The emerging geopolitics in Central Asia is suggestive enough that the scramble for control of the region is already on its way. Western governments have accused Russia, China and the former Soviet republics of justifying the suppression of separatist movements, and the associated ethnics and religion with the War on Terror. Given Mackinder's advocacy on the one hand, and the evolving nature of geopolitics in Central Asia on the other hand, sends shudder down the spine to observers that Central Asia is scheduled to be another Middle-East or West Asia of the Future. Central Asia's re-emergence into the world brought global conflicts as well. The region's enormous oil and gas reserves, which remained largely untapped because Moscow preferred to exploit the resources of Russian Siberia, now became a battleground for the competing interests of Russia, the United States, and neighbouring countries Iran, Turkey, Pakistan, and China. In what analysts quickly came to call the "new Great Game" (after the nineteenth-century rivalry between the empires of tsarist Russia and Great Britain for control of Asia), Russia, China and the United States struggled to establish pipelines that would give them both access to natural resources and influence over the people of Central Asia.[18]

Terrorism in Central Asia

Terrorism in Central Asia is largely a cross-border phenomenon. The source of most terrorist and terrorist organizations that are active in Central Asia has thus far been Afghanistan owing to the strong presence of Taliban and the Ferghana Valley due to the Tajik Civil War. However, as discussed above the demographic structure of Central Asian countries; the growing ISIS activities in near West of Central Asia; presence of huge natural resources of oil and gas; big power rivalries over oil and gas; Russia's reassertion towards determining the world order of

its choice; political instability and ethnic divide within the region are some of the major facts with potentials to transform the region into a terrorist-ridden region if the big power is not brought to a compromise, and trade and commerce of natural resources is not allowed the legal way. Therefore, a peaceful use of natural resources with judicious share among the big powers and other players alone can keep the region stable and peaceful. A peaceful Central Asia shall have prosperity and liberty for its people given its natural resources.

One of the greatest threats to Tajikistan's stability—and Central Asia's—is the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU). Formed in 1998 by extremists who were dissatisfied with the moderation of the Islamic Renaissance Party and determined to topple the government of Central Asian strongman Islam Karimov (President of Uzbekistan), the IMU launched guerrilla attacks against the regimes from bases in Tajikistan and Afghanistan in 1999, 2000, and 2001. Under the military leadership of the charismatic JumaNamangani, the IMU has extended its jihad to the whole of Central Asia.[19] IUM is a militant Islamist group formed by TahirYuldashev, and former Soviet paratrooper JumaNamangani—both of whom are ethnic Uzbeks from the Fergana Valley. Its original objective was to overthrow Karimov and establish an Islamic State under Sharia; however, in subsequent years, it reinvented itself as an ally of al-Qaeda and the Taliban.[20] In mid-2015 its leadership publicly pledged allegiance to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and announced that the IMU should be considered as part of ISIL.[21]Moreover, as alleged by US it is receiving its fund from al-Qaeda and ISIS[22] and is also involved into illegal drug-trafficking to raise its fund. IMU first commenced its activities out of the bases in Tajikistan and Taliban-controlled areas of northern Afghanistan. It is from there that they launched a series of attacks into southern Kyrgyzstan in 1999 and 2000. The IMU then suffered heavy casualties in 2001-2002 during the American-led invasion of Afghanistan. Namangani was killed, while Yuldeshev and many of the IMU's remaining fighters escaped with remnants of the Taliban to Waziristan, in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan. Since then, the IMU has focussed on fighting Pakistani forces in the Tribal

Areas, and NATO and Afghan forces in northern Afghanistan.[23]

The membership profile of IMU is also a cause of concern in view of its growing incidence of activities in Central Asia. It was originally an ethnic Uzbek movement and its recruitment base later expanded to include Central Asians—Afghans, Tajiks, Uyghurs, and Turkmens, and other nationalities such as Arabs, Chechens and Westerners.[24] A number of the IMU's senior leaders and ideologues have been non-Uzbeks, including its Kyrgyz former military commander, Abbas Mansur, and its Mufti (religious authority), Abu Zar al-Burmi, a Pakistani national of Burmese Rohingya descent.[25] In 2011, out of the 87 martyrs that the IMU listed on its website, only four were Uzbeks from Uzbekistan, while 64 were from Afghanistan, 10 from Tajikistan, Six from Kyrgyzstan, and one each from Tatarstan, Germany and Pakistan.[26]

A. Elizabeth Jones, the US Assistant Secretary of State for Europe and Eurasia, testified on the threat of terrorism in Central Asia before the US House of Representatives' subcommittee on the Middle East and Central Asia, arguing that the greatest threats were the IMU, and the Hizb-ut-Tahrir. Jones said that despite the death of Namangani, the IMU is still active in the region—particularly in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan—and it represents a serious threat to the region and therefore to US interests.[27]

Terrorism and terroristic activities have already knocked the doors of Central Asia. Therefore, given the emerging geopolitics within the region are a dangerous sign for the future. Big power rivalries often contribute to political instability within the country thereby making it vulnerable to non-state actors like insurgents and terrorists as they get hold of natural resources in an illegal way and resort to illegal sale of the same. States also resort to appeasement of such illegal non-state actors as it makes them available the natural resources of the region at a cheaper price at a massive cost of human rights violations. States that ought to contribute towards making of the fellow-states; in fact ends up contributing towards un-making of the same for sheer vested interests.

Conclusion

Cold War was a war by other means for containment of communism. Post-Cold War era is about 'International War on Terrorism' for containment of terrorism which has been determined by the event of 9/11. The result has been nothing less than a total re-designing of the world politics, with the US government almost assuming the right to intervene whenever it wants and wherever it wants from Iraq to Iran to Afghanistan without defining any geographical limits, and is gradually making inroads into Central Asia. Rooting out terrorism from all over the world has now replaced older themes in the US foreign policy lexicon; from creating collective security, to containing communism. With the collapse of communism, the US moved on to become sole superpower and could sustain the attack on its soil because of its global geopolitical centrality and support for governments especially Israel and Saudi Arabia. Earlier the geopolitical imaginations were limited to balancing and rebalancing power within the existing world order. Oil and gas have emerged as one of the determining factor for changing nature of geopolitical imagination. A mix of oil plus gas determines the evolution of geopolitics within a region. Nation-states use and misuse terrorist groups and their organization to design and redesign the geopolitical context of a region which would suit their interests. Consequently, there arises a close relation between geopolitics and terrorism. Given the abundance of natural resources, and demographic contexts, enhances the vulnerabilities of Central Asia. There are strong probabilities that the 'New Great Game' being played by the big powers will destabilize the political order; consequently strengthening the terrorist groups already at helm of affairs within the region for they may be used by big powers for cross-purposes.

String forces like China and Russia are starting a close relation for their mutual benefit with the Balkan countries. China takes care to simplify the economic side of things. If the economic side and the strategic problems are solved, then the question of terrorism could be manageable. An anti-terrorist alliance with the Eurasian countries together with economic cooperation could target the real centres of terrorism. If Russia has a crisis, it is not good for Europe. Sanctions must stop now as Russia does not want to annex eastern Ukraine. What Russia wants

is to remain influential in the Central Asian region. Russia is against Ukraine falling to the NATO Camp as it would lead to a domino effect in Central Asia. Therefore, the US and the West must understand the aspirations of Russia as well as China in the region. On the other hand, Russia and China need to understand the aspirations of US and the West. Accordingly, they must converge and resolve the sharing of oil and gas of the region in an ambiance of bonhomie and cooperation rather than conflict. Conflict shall neither serve the purpose of East nor even of the west, but obviously it may serve the purpose of terrorist organizations and all at the cost of severe human rights violations of the common and innocent citizens of the Central Asian region. Hence, oil, gas, geopolitics and terrorism create rigmarole.

Footnotes

[1] Catherine Putz, "How Putin Plans to Fight Terrorism in Central Asia", *The Diplomat*, October 20, 2015, www.thediplomat.com The October 16, 2015 meeting brought together the leaders of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan to discuss a bevy of agreements and other procedural matters within the loose grouping of former Soviet states.

[2] Ibid., no.1.

[3] Ibid., no.1.

[4] As quoted from Registan's Noah Tucker report commissioned by USAID in Ibid., no.1.

[5] Ahmad Rashid, "Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia", (Hyderabad: Orient Longman, 2002), p.4.

[6] Ibid., no.5, p.5.

[7] Ibid., no.5, p.26.

[8] Ibid., no.5, p.26.

[9] Chapter 1, Religious Affiliation, "The World's Muslims: Unity and Diversity", *Pew Research Centre 's* Religion and Public Life Project, August 9, 2012.

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[12] CIA World Factbook.

[13] Mark N Katz, "The Geopolitical Context of the "War on Terror": War on Terror in Perspective" *Middle East Policy Council*, 2015, Retrieved on December 14, 2015.

[14] Ibid., no.1.

[15] Ibid., no.1.

[16] Erich Reiter &Hazdra Peter, "The Impact of Asian Powers on Global Developments", Springer 2004.

[17] For an analysis of Mackinder's approach from the perspective of "Critical Geopolitics" look: Mehmet AkifOkur, "Classical Texts of the Geopolitics and the "Heart of Eurasia", Journal of Turkish World Studies, XIV/2, p.76-80.

[18] Ibid., no.5, p.7.

[19] Ibid., no.5, p.9.

[20] "Pakistan's 'fanatical' Uzbek Militants", BBC News, October 7, 2014.

[21] "IMU Declares It is Now Part of The Islamic State", Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, August 6, 2015. See also "IMU Pledges Allegiance to Islamic State", *EurasiaNet*, August 01, 2015.

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[26] Jacob Zenn, "On the Eve of 2014: Islamism in Central Asia", *Hudson Institute*, June 24, 2013.

[27] Jeffrey Donovan, "US: Diplomat Sees Growing Terrorism Challenge in Central Asia", *Radio Free Europe*, October 30, 2003.

Understanding International Terrorism: Geopolitics and Beyond

Dr. Arunoday Bajpai

Terrorism and climate change have been viewed as the two major global challenges of 21st century. Both have the potential to threaten the peace and development of global community. Experts treat them as unconventional threats to human security, because both defy conventional understanding of threats and their solutions. The phenomenon of international terrorism invited global attention and concern mainly since the 9/11 incident in the US by the Afghan based terrorist group Al Qaeda. There has been more than eight time increase in the annual terrorist activities between 2001 and 2014. According to the figures compiled by the Global Terrorism Database, the terrorist activities increase from nearly 2000 in 2001 to nearly 17000 in 2014(GTD: 2015). The 9/11 prompted the US to launch 'the global war against terrorism'. Ever since then, terrorism has become a part of discourse agenda of various regional and global fora. The increasing threat of terrorism has encouraged states to devise bilateral and multilateral collaborative mechanisms and instruments. The rise of Islamic State in 2014 in the heart of the Middle East and its rapacious expansion in coming months exposes the inadequacy of global efforts to fight international terrorism. Even the end of IS may not be the end of international terrorism because its roots are deep, seeds are dispersed and regional soil of Middle East and other regions of the globe are conducive to its growth and survival. This requires a deeper understanding of terrorism in general and as a phenomenon specific to certain regions.

The problems encountered in finding an acceptable definition of the term 'terrorism' are directly proportional to the difficulties inherent in its management. The lack of consensus among the UN member states over the definition of 'terrorism' has become a major obstacle in the adoption of the *'Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism'*, which is pending before the UN General Assembly since 1996. The crux of the issue is as to how to distinguish the purpose of terrorist violence with similar violence involved in the context of national liberation movements of self-determination (Diaz-Paniagua: 2008). The definition proposed in this Convention notes that any unlawful and intentional act causing serious damage to human life or private property with the intention of intimidating people or compelling any government or international organization to do or abstain from doing any act, may be termed as an act of terrorism. The lack of an acceptable and binding definition has undermined the coordinated and concerted efforts of the international community to fight international terrorism (UNGA: 2002). In the absence of a comprehensive convention, the UN has adopted a sectoral approach to deal with this problem. Accordingly, UNGA has adopted 11 conventions since 1963 dealing with various specific aspects of terrorism like financing of terrorism or nuclear terrorism and so on. However, member states have formulated definition of terrorism under national laws to deal with problem. The Chapter 113 B of the US Code 18 defines 'international terrorism' with three characteristics: Violent acts dangerous to human life and violate state law; influence the policy or operation of the government by mass destruction; assassination or kidnapping; and transcend national boundaries in terms of means or targeted people or place of operation (FBI: 2015). This is working definition used by the US authorities to deal with acts of terrorism. The Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act, 1985 (now lapsed) defines terrorist activities. In essence, it includes all those dangerous activities, which are carried out with lethal means with the intention of intimidating government or striking terror in the minds of people.

The characteristics of terrorism make it as a unique threat in our times. The phenomenon of terrorism is unpredictable and secretive in its operations; invisible and dispersed in its locations; and highly adaptive in its behaviour with respect to changing conditions. Creating unpredictable terror or

fear in the minds of people or a target group is the essence of terrorism. The uncertainty and unpredictability about the shape, nature or timing of terror is so much consistent that sometimes it defies human imagination. Terrorism is a hydra-headed phenomenon, with social, cultural, religious, political and economic facets. Sometimes it is Al Qaeda and Taliban but other timers it may take the form of Boko Haram or Islamic State or others. However, the essence remains the same: generating terror by senseless destruction of lives and social resources in unpredictable manner. Unpredictability of terrorism is equally matched by its adaptive capacity to the changing political, economic and technological conditions. It has shown the potential to successfully use the modern means of information technology and modern weapons of mass destruction to carry out its operations. Its ingenuity to search and mobilize human, technological and technological resources, sometimes, outpaces the advanced government agencies. Thus we have new breeds of terrorism like nuclear terrorism, narco-terrorism, cyber terrorism and many more yet to come. Interaction between states and terrorism has also been problematic. It displays **three patterns**: outright hostility between the two in the states where rule of law is well entrenched; infiltration by terrorist network into the state structures in the weak states like Pakistan, Afghanistan or Sudan to get support and legitimacy; and the use of terrorist network by the states authorities against their adversaries both within and across border. The second and third patterns have the tendency to transform into a symbiotic relation between the state structures and terrorist network, giving rise to what is known as state-sponsored terrorism. The state sponsored terrorism may be a strategy of the weak states to inflict more damage to its opponents with low cost, fluid responsibility and least adverse consequences.

While all forms of modern international terrorism is adaptive to modern means and resources, its strategic goals broadly fall into two categories: First, to realize a world view, rational or irrational, to which a terrorist group is identified with. In this case, the terrorist group is aligned against the established state order and displays relatively independent existence. The Islamic State and Al Qaeda are the examples of this breed of terrorism. Second, to act as tool of a state to cause harm and damage to host

state's opponents; this is a feature of state sponsored terrorism. This breed of terrorism is relatively dependent on the support of host state. But in either case, terrorism is a strategy of the weak to fight a strong adversary with minimum cost and low reverse damage. In view of these characteristics of terrorism, the states and society are left with no option than to invent 'out of the toolbox' solutions to manage this menace.

Geopolitics of Terrorism

The origin, growth, development and spread of terrorism have invited the attention of scholars. Many social, religious, political and economic explanations have been formulated to analyze its growth and development. Basically, there are two broad approaches to origin, growth and location of terrorism. First is the socio-political approach, which views it as a result of certain social, political and economic conditions, found in any part of the globe. Second is the geopolitical approach, which views terrorism as a tendency, endemic to certain geographical regions of the world. The geopolitical explanation, prima facie, appears plausible because the contemporary phase of international terrorism is originated and sustained in a geographical region extending from the western borders of Russia to the eastern borders of Europe. In other words, the central Asia, Middle East and North Africa constitute the *'heartland'* of contemporary terrorism. Today, most experts believe that certain parts of the Middle East, Pakistan and Afghanistan are turning out to be the main power centers for terrorism. Decades of lawlessness and corruption have seen Islamic terrorist groups fill the power vacuum in this region and continue to turn out an alarming number of religiously motivated terrorists (Terrorism Research: 2015).

Geopolitics may be defined 'as a branch of geography that promises to explain the relationship between geographical realities and international affairs' (Payne: 2004). As a systematic study, the modern geopolitics originated in late 19th century in Europe. German geographer, Friedrich Ratzel in 1897 coined the phrase anthrogeographical, which describes the interrelationship between anthropology, geography and politics. Rudolf Kjellen, a Swedish scholar was the first to use the term 'geopolitics' in 1900 and is regarded as the father of geopolitics.

Alfred Thayer Mahan, a professor of US Naval Academy, studied the attributes of former great powers like Portugal, Spain and England in late 1890s and came to the conclusion that maritime commerce was essential for the prosperity of the great power. Accordingly, he stated that the control of seas was the essential ingredient of a great power. It was British scholar Sir Halford Mackinder who propounded the much popular theory of *Eurasian Heartland* in 1919. For him, Eurasia and Africa constituted the 'World Island'. He postulated that the power which commands the World Island, will command the world. And the power which commands the Eurasian heartland will command the World Island. The science of geopolitics was further expanded in 20th century with the contribution made by German scholar Houshofer, and US scholars like Nicholas Spykman, Saul Cohen, Ray Cline Immanuel Wallerstein and others.

In the wake of end of Cold War and intensification of globalization, the international relations as well as geopolitics witnessed shift in orientation. In place of rivalry for dominance among great power, the challenge to the US supremacy became the subject matter of speculation. Initially, the US policy makers were complacent about the future of global peace as they enjoyed unipolar moment amidst the 'end of history' and final victory of western values and traditions. This sense of victory and related complacency was encapsulated into Bush Administration's idea of building a 'new world order' in which states will embrace democracy, human rights and liberal democracy and would not use force to settle their disputes. However, this unipolar moment was short lived as terrorism posed a new security threat to US global interests. The resurgent Al Qaeda terrorists attacked US Soldiers in Saudi Arabia in 1995 and 1996 and launched a major attack at the US embassies in Tanzania and Kenya in 1998, killing 190 people. The US defence strategy was still attuned to face a threat from a super power (USSR), but was ad odds to deal with the new threat in the form of rising terrorism. The 9/11 terrorist attack in 2001 convinced the US and all other major powers that the terrorism has emerged as a major global challenge of 21st century. A new geopolitical theory was articulated by American scholar Thomas PM Barnett of Naval War College to take into account the origin and growth of violence including terrorism in the age of post-cold war globalized world. For Barnett, the spread of globalization and connectivity with it are the key to understand contemporary sources of violence. He classifies different countries and regions of the world into three categories: the core, the gap and the seam states on the basis of penetration of globalization process. The core states are fully globalized: the states of North America, Europe, as well as Australia, Japan and other developed states and emerging economies like China and India. The gap states are those which are least connected with globalization process: states of Middle East, Africa as well as Central Asia. The seam states are those states which are passing through the transitional phase on the way to integration with globalization. Barnett suggests that the gap states and regions are the potential source of violence and terrorism in future. This accounts for the rising contemporary Islamic terrorism in the Middle East and other similar region. The strategy to deal with violence lies in shrinking the space occupied by the gap states by strengthening the forces and networks of globalization (Payne: 2004).

Beyond Geopolitics

The geopolitical approach prompts us to focus on certain regions and spaces for understanding the origin of terrorism and finding strategies for its management. However, this premise needs further interrogation as the dynamics of the Islamic terrorism is equally mediated by other factors like religious extremism, ethnic fault lines, political instability and democratic deficit, which sustain the rise and growth of terrorism in this landscape. The problem with the geopolitical analysis is that it is static and mono-causal with overemphasis on regions and places, while disregarding other dynamic forces at work. Moreover, this approach was developed and refined to explain the strategic significance of different regions and the consequences of dominance over such regions. It is a grand narrative and not well suited to explain the phenomenon of terrorism, which is characterized by many nuisances and complexities. For example, how we will to explain the radicalization of Muslim youth in many parts of developed world and their desires to join Islamic state cadres? Or how we will explain the use of most modern tools, techniques, and all other adjuncts of globalization by terrorists to defend and protect the most obsolete Islamic values and

traditions? Contemporary Islamic brand of terrorism symbolizes the realization of traditional goals with help of modern means. In fact, various historical, social, religious, economic and political factors are at work to shape the dynamics of contemporary Islamic terrorism.

Since the World War II, the region of Middle East has been the play ground of all great powers to realize their strategic and commercial interests. The oil resources of the region were the major attraction for the global powers. The attempts of Arab unity in 1960s and 1970s in the face of Palestinian conflict were frustrated due to the interference of external powers. However, the US and European powers did not interfered in the internal affairs of the regional states. They controlled the policies of the host countries to the extent it was required for the realization of their interests. It was a brazen form of neo-colonialism. Their civilizing mission stopped at the borders of their regional partners. The principle has been that the colour of the cat hardly matters as long as its catches mouse. As a consequence, repressive, sectarian, feudal, theological as well as all forms of non-democratic regimes flourished and survived as partners of the most democratic and progressive western regimes. For four decades in succession, the region missed every opportunity for democracy and genuine development. Amidst affluences of Perto-dollars, modern amenities were arranged without any serious policy intervention to address the issues of economic inequality, diversification of economy, unemployment, or development of human resources.

There has been no internal and external stimulus for democratic process to strike roots in regional societies. The modern institutions like rule of law, independent and rational judiciary and bureaucracy, citizenship all did not get any chance to survive and flourish in feudal and theological settings. The sectarian identities overshadowed rational citizenship. The repressive, corrupt and sectarian regimes in many states like Iraq, Syria, Libya, Egypt etc. brought uneasy political stability, occasionally disturbed by either external intervention (US intervention in Iraq and Libya) or by internal forces. The Arab Spring, at the beginning of this decade was a democratic aberration, where one set of repressive ruling elites was replaced by another set of more repressive and sectarian elites. In either case the political stability was a casualty, which paved the way for the birth and rebirth of sectarian and radical groups to occupy the vacant political space. Political instability, whether caused by external forces (end of cold war or Western intervention) or emerging from within (Arab Spring), rather than the lack of democracy, has been a potential factor contributing to the rise of ongoing phase of terrorism in Middle East.

The moot question in understanding Islamic terrorism is: what is special about the Islamic theology which makes it a potential force of mobilization and support for radical extremist groups across the world amidst talk of melting of cultures in the present era of globalization? Some scholars distinguish 'political Islam' from the 'fundamentalist or the new fundamentalist Islam, in order to derive the point that it is the latter breed of Islam, which is opposed to modernity, and therefore sustains Islamic terrorism, whereas 'political Islam' is selectively prone to modernity (Moore: Retrieved 2015). This distinction appears irrelevant to our discussion as it begs the question: Why political Islam was not able to adapt to modernity and strike roots in Islamic society with its long sway in power? The real answer can be located in the prevailing political, economic, and strategic conditions over many decades. It is the cocktail of democratic deficit, poor human resource development, lack of any consensual vision for regional security and development and external support as well as intervention which facilitated Islamic theology to hold its sway with traditional framework. This has become a vicious circle. Any real or imaginary threat to its hold leads to its radicalization as a survival strategy. Even the idea of 'survival' is articulated in terms of protection of cultural and religious values and resources, rather than in terms of protection of secular resources. This survival instinct is visible not only on the face of external threats but also internal threats within the community. Clash of civilizations is the natural outcome on the face external threats to survival. The radicalization and consolidation of Shia-Sunni fault lines is nothing but a strategy to address the internal threats to survival. This fault line has complicated all challenges of Middle East and

weakened all forces which are useful for addressing those challenges.

The rise of Islamic State (IS) in the summer of 2014 from the ashes of Iraqi civil war has brought in sharp focus all contradictions inherent in the strategies and positions of all major actors playing in the murky waters of Mediterranean Sea. Much to the dismay of developed societies, it has displayed the ability to radicalize youth all over the world. Primarily, these youth are led to believe on the basis of theological justification, unlike as it's believed that it's injustice, poverty or an aggrieved person joins fundamentalist outfits (Ghose: 2015). States are hard pressed to check this rising tendency. The Islamic State is a Sunni terrorist group and has rapidly gained control in the parts of Iraq and Syria to realize its goal of Islamic Caliphate. It is fighting with Syria's Assad regime. Both The US and its European allies and Saudi Arabia have been trying for last four years to replace Assad regime. However, they now face a unique predicament. If they fight with IS, it will strengthen Assad regime and alternatively if they fight with Assad regime, the IS may become stronger. The rivalry between Shia Iran and Sunni Saudi Arab for regional influence and Russian intervention in Syria in 2015 for protecting her strategic space are the other factors which influence the dynamics of terrorism in Middle East. Whatever may be the fate of Islamic terrorism, none of the major players- the US, European countries, Russia, Iran and Saudi Arabia- is going to compromise her strategic interests. This fact is of vital significance in the management and control of Islamic terrorism.

The Way Out

If we review the responses of the international community including the national and international legal instruments, bilateral and multilateral cooperative mechanisms, development and mobilization of appropriate technological, financial and human resources as well as generating popular awareness, they may be at best described as adaptive strategies (in terms of the vocabulary of climate change management) to manage the menace of terrorism with minimum harm to human lives and property. The comprehensive, coordinated, and concerted efforts of international community are bogged down due to lack of consensus on the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism, which is pending for approval before the UNGA for last ten years. But more than that, the serious shortcoming of the global fight against international terrorism is the absence of any mitigation strategy to root out those conditions which breeds the culture and ideology of terrorism. It is crystal clear that the prevailing conditions in the Middle East, Central Asia or North Africa are prone to sustain the radical and extremist tendencies. Al Qaeda, Taliban or Islamic States are not the last generation of terrorism. They will continue to take rebirth till the tendency to terrorism exists.

Alex P Schmid (2011) has identifies 12 rules to prevent terrorism and one of the rule is to counter the ideology of terrorism, which sustains it. But it is not a simple task, particularly when the Islamic terrorism has articulated its goals in close association with Islam. Opposing the ideology of Islamic State is, many times, taken as opposition to Islam itself. It is very difficult to convince its followers that Islam, which literally means peace, is opposed to violence and terrorism. Moreover direct opposition to an ideology becomes counterproductive. After the World War II, the Western powers made their best efforts to contain the spread of Communism in East Europe, but hey failed. However, later communism crumbled down with its own weight and contradictions. Yet credit goes to the western world for exploiting those contradictions by consistently pushing ahead with an alternative vision. This strategy of pushing ahead with alternative vision of peace and development in the Middle East may succeed to root out conditions giving rise to terrorism. In view of their narrow and short term strategic interests, the major players- the US, European states, Russia, Iran, Turkey and Saudi Arabia- may fail to develop consensus for an alternative vision of regional peace and development. However, their long term interests may encourage them to do otherwise. After all, the political instability and violence in the Middle East has caused a grave refugee crisis in Europe and the IS has radicalized youth across the world. In the present globalized and interdependent world, peace and development are no more local or regional issues. The real challenge before the international community is to make people, society and state in the Middle East as real stakeholders in peace, democracy, rule of law, development and protection of human rights.

Transformation in affiliations is the key to mitigate terrorism.

Conclusion

The following concluding remarks may be made on the basis of foregoing analysis of international terrorism:

1. International terrorism is a major global challenge of 21st century. The end of Cold War and the process of globalization appear to have contributed to its rise and growth. The incident of 9/11 has prompted global community to wage global war on terrorism.

2. The phenomenon of terrorism is unpredictable and secretive; invisible and dispersed in its locations; and highly adaptive with respect to changing conditions. Creating unpredictable terror or fear in the minds of people or a target group is the essence of terrorism.

3. The adaptive nature of terrorism has not only allowed it to use modern technological and other resources, but has resulted in the growth of its new forms like nuclear terrorism, narco-terrorism, and cyber terrorism, state sponsored terrorism. In the last form, the terrorist groups act as a tool of its host state.

4. Geopolitical approach to terrorism focuses on the regional dimensions of terrorism bur it is not adequate to capture its dynamics, which is mediated by various social, economic, political and other factors.

5. The modern international terrorism has taken the form of Islamic terrorism, with successful exploitation of Islamic theology for its support and survival. It is nor Islam as such but he prevailing historical, political, economic factors, which facilitated exploitation of theology by terrorists as a survival strategy.

6. The strategic interests of the major players and the existing Shia-Sunni fault lines have complicated the management of terrorism in Middle East. The rise of IS in 2014 has exposed contradictions inherent in the strategy of major players.

7. The efforts of the international community are at best adaptive in nature to manage the menace of terrorism. Lack of consensus on comprehensive convention on international terrorism undermines the coordinated efforts of global community. There is a need to go for mitigation of terrorism- eliminating those conditions which give rise to tendency of violence and terrorism.

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Understanding Terrorism and Geopolitics in West Asia
Dr. Sudhanshu Tripathi

Introduction

With almost sudden spurt of Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) led terror activities particularly in Iraq and Syria in the recent past, though the entire West Asia has become a burning cauldron of terror for the last many decades thereby turning the region into a virtual war zone, a new dimension in the phenomenon of terrorism is being seen in the world where hapless innocents are being butchered or shot dead in their forehead or back, or being burnt alive in a cage, or hanged upside down ultimately for killing and several hitherto unknown inhuman ways and these cruelties are being recorded to make viral on internet so that entire population upon earth may watch to their utter dismay and disgust. Besides causing several adverse indelible impacts upon the normal human psyche, the continuing ghastly massacre by the ISIS in the region has resulted into an uncontrolled mammoth flow of migrants/ refugees from West Asia into Europe thereby raising the issue of geo-politics. Unlike Al-Qaida, the ISIS has never been a hit-and-run jihadist group as its leader Abu Bakr al- Baghdadi has had his political ambitions very clear since 2013, when he fought for territories in Syria and Iraq and steadily expanded its reach, capitalising on the power vacuum created in these two countries by the wars led and sponsored by the West and their regional allies. This strategy paid off initially. The ISIS now controls territories as large as Great Britain and comprising some 10 million people. But of late, under counter-attack from different militia groups such the Peshmerga, Hezbollah and the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), the ISIS' expansionary project has come under enormous pressure. In such a horrific scenario if any one single act could make Europe truly understand the meaning of German philosopher General Carl von Clausewitz's phrase that "war is an act of force to compel the enemy to do our will" (substitute the word terrorism for war), then it was the November 13 terror attacks in Paris this year. It has left a permanent scar on French ethos and that now reverberates across almost entire Europe. It has had serious repercussions in neighbouring Belgium too, which shut down for a while. Meanwhile, an entire continent has developed a siege mentality and European countries are being compelled to review and change their laissez-faire procedures and security doctrines under the huge pressure of uncontrolled flow of refugees from West Asia and other regions, besides terrorism. Obviously, terrorism or any kind of uncontrolled violence perpetrated upon innocents for long in the past had resulted into large scale displacement of communities all over the world as everybody wants safety and protection of one's life and person. But that raises many demographic as well as economic and political issues as huge influx of refugees tends to change the composition of existing native population as happened in India's Pak-occupied Kashmir (POK) in the state of Jammu and Kashmir immediately after independence where thousands of Pakistani tribal population intruded into valley and settled down there and that has fundamentally changed the demographic character of the valley today, besides affecting its economy and political setup. Earlier, the long course of Second World War saw the division of Germany into East and West thereby weakening its position as a powerful nation. The ideological schism between the Capitalists and Communists emerged after the First World War led to formation of United Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR) as a powerful bloc and strong entity from the erstwhile single Russia. Even much earlier, the painful Balkanisation of Europe during 16th century brought to close by the famous Peace Treaty of Westphalia of 1648 had traumatised the consolidated power of Europe and that fear again looms large due to continuing civil wars in Syria and Iraq which has now metastasised into Lebanon, Jordon, Turkey and now into Europe. As a consequence, hundreds of thousands of refugees have crossed to seek asylum in Europe and such influx is continuing. The real fear is that the combination of pressures had the potential to create a situation leading to the disintegration of a united Europe. Thus terrorism or war has its marked

impact upon geopolitics of a country or a continent but geopolitics too has its impact upon terrorism which, in fact, may aggravate several causes of violence or terror to disturb peace and harmony in a country. For example, the geographical factors like rugged terrains, hillocks and mountains or extremely cold season and poverty etc. in Afghanistan has made it a breeding ground of violence and terror or revolution since long as they had always been the valiant fighters in yester years and had taken resort to violence even in normal course.

This paper is concerned with the issue of terrorism including the ISIS terror, and the geo-politics in West Asia and also the possible relations between them affecting each other. The first part is introduction discussing the problem. The second part details the challenge of terrorism, including global terrorism, together as a macabre menace and how that affects geographical factors. The next one describes the issue of Geo-politics-as a branch of study which deals with the relations between geography and politics including international politics and affairs because of huge influx of refugees from West Asia may change the composition of native population and that may also affect the prevailing nature of political systems in the region- and its evolution since ancient times. The last part is conclusion highlighting the need of immediate end of terrorism for ensuring peace and security in the region as well as the whole world and also for stable geo-politics.

Terrorism and Global Terrorism

In fact, Terrorism is an elusive concept. It has paradoxical consequences. However, it comprises of 'terror' and 'ism' which may simply translate as the philosophy of creating terror of fear or destruction among the people, like fascism or imperialism. The first category is global terrorism and the second is domestic and both are same in the wider context. Terrorism means different things to different people; terrorism has always been a threat to people since times immemorial. People are stuck in the middle of a fight between these extremist groups and the government, irrespective of whichever country it may be. Extremism is a precursor of terrorism; it is an overarching belief system that is used by terrorists to justify their violent behaviour. In fact, terrorism is a nebulous term. The origin of the term is derived from the Latin word "terreri", meaning thereby to tremble or fear, panic and anxiety. The word 'terrorism' had its French origin from 'regime de la terreur' prevailing in France in 1793-94 when the great revolutionary leader Robespierre was at helms of the affairs, and 40,000 people were guillotined on flimsy charges of treachery – he being the last to be executed by way of a counter- inquisition by the revolutionary government. Robespierre, however, glorified terrorism of the type he unleashed in during French Revolution in 1789. In his words: "Terror" is nothing other than justice, prompt, severe, inflexible; it is, therefore, an emanation of virtue." During the revolution, Sir Edmund Burke, the British political philosopher, wrote that 'thousands of these hell-bound called terrorists were creating havoc and panic in the country'. He demonised the term "terrorism" for its innate brutality. Since the French Revolution, terrorism was shown as a useful means for political change by revolutionaries like Italian Carlo Piscane and thinkers like Karl Marx. The Russian 'Populist', followed by 'Anarchists' and 'Communists' unleashed terrorism targeted against the Government or a particular class of people, but not against commoners. The world also witnessed state sponsored terrorism in Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy and Stalinist Russia, but there also the targets were not the whole people. After the Second World War, nationalist and anti-colonial movements against western powers adopted, at times, terrorist means against foreign occupants. The leaders of those freedom movements never targeted the people of their homeland. Terrorism has become a widespread phenomenon in most of the contemporary global system. It poses challenge not only to the state power but also the national security and sovereignty.

A macabre global menace

Thus how can one conceptualise terrorism as a theory which is a macabre global menace today and is a worst ever threat before humanity since the dawn of civilisation. Why is it not being contained despite the best efforts is a particular cause of concern. Instead, it has acquired a frightening and diabolical dimension due to quantum jump in the technology of terror in the post-Kalashnikov and post-RDX era. When few terrorists can convert a civilian aircraft into a deadly missile and a gas cooker & a tiffin box as a bomb, besides human bombs, cycle bombs, car bombs etc.

it should not be a surprise that terrorism has become as much a scourge as AIDS, with hapless humanity groping in the dark. Again the emerging possibility of nuclear weapons falling into hands of terrorists along with chemical, biological and narcotic agents being used them poses an unimaginable horrible scenario before us. Although use of violence or terror tactics has been in vogue since times immemorial for achieving solutions to contentious problems, whether national or international, they were practised under some regulation either of religion, customs, conventions or traditions or fear of God. As an eminent scholar, Brian Jenkins argued in the mid 1980's that 'simply killing a lot of people has seldom been one terrorist objective…terrorists operate on the principle of the minimum force necessary… as long as killing a few suffices for their purpose. But today's terrorism has crossed all limits where sanity is no more and hearts are devoid of conscience. It is not simply about deaths and loss of properties. It is, in fact, about a slow erosion of the authority of a state and challenge to its core ideals. Its rapid global spread threatens the very foundation of freedom, democracy and development to an extent that it has become a substitute of modernism. As terrorism is, perhaps, the most complex psychological and socio-political phenomenon having various shades and form with mutating character, its understanding also becomes very difficult and complex for theoretical purpose of investigation and analysis and theory building. The word terrorism has pejorative implications. Terror, as a concept, means 'intimidating' but this intimidating is in great intensity and capable of creating sudden feeling of extreme fear. Even though terror is a frequently used term for the actions in question today, there is no other definition accepted and recognised by all. Many new definitions of terrorism have been framed by experts and scholars all over the world so far, but that has failed to evolve a common approach resulting into a common concept. This is particularly so because the person who is declared as a terrorist by one country is often called a freedom fighter by another. As the existing genre of writings on terrorism form a vast literature containing a spectrum of commentaries focussing on both theoretical and practical aspects of this issue, unpackaging the terminology on terrorism and associated forms of violence becomes difficult for conceptual clarity. The problem of using them, either by themselves or in an umbrella fashion, is that each term – such as insurgency, terrorism, guerrilla warfare, Islamist militancy, jihad, radicalism and fundamentalism- has a specific connotation when applied to a particular context or situation. In fact, terrorism is an umbrella term currently in usage, best defined as the use of violence to create a psychological sense of fear. Within this framework, *terrorism can be defined as an extremely violentand horrible tactic used by its perpetrators or insurgentsto terrorise the populace into accepting its cause as legitimate.*

In South Asia and India, in particular, terrorism has emerged from nascent political dissent. This has transformed itself into secession and insurgent terrorism- the primary reason being that internal administration is unable to deliver while external help is available for generating money and weapons to fuel local grievances. In the Middle East and South Asia etc. it was due to intervention by Super and major powers for apparent reasons of restoring democracy and civil society, although actual reasons were different in the form of oil and natural gas for running their industries. As a matter of fact, terrorism is not a new concept as it has been there since time immemorial either in one form or the other. It has its presence as early as the 1st century; known to the Romans as Sicarie- a daggerman- because they carried an underground campaign for assassination of Romans. The origin of the modern terrorist was rooted in the organization of zealots of Judea. Even though both the zealots and assassins operated in antiquity, they are still relevant today. By the time kingdoms and principalities became nations, they had sufficient means to enforce their authority and suppress activities such as terrorism. During the late 19th century, radical political theories and improvements in weapons technology spurred the formation of small group revolutionaries who effectively attacked nation-states. Once upon a time, it existed for the sake of nation or country where there was selflessness and the spirit of sacrifice but, unfortunately, the present form of terrorism is based upon brute and naked violence towards selfish ends and is completely devoid of sanity. Another trend in the late 19th century was the increasing tide of nationalism spreading through the world wherein the nation and state were combined. Nationalism became a much greater ideological force in the 20th century.

During the early 20th century, the effects of two world wars inflamed passions and hopes of nationalists throughout the world and severely damaged the legitimacy of the international order and governments. Consequently, nationalism intensified during this period as excessive nationalism or xenophobia and that had already spurred much of geo-politics leading to several marked changes in the world like integration of divided Germany or disintegration of erstwhile USSR.

Evolving Geo-politics

The geo-politics is a study which deals with relations between geographical factors like climate, quality of soil and potable water etc. and politics including international politics and affairs. These relations were, perhaps first of all, explored and established for theoretical purpose in ancient Greece by a great Greek political philosopher Aristotle. Afterwards, other political philosophers like Bodin and Montesquieu, both from France, also found the same relations between geography and politics. But these findings were not based upon any scientific investigations. Writes John T. Payne in his "Geopolitics, Globalization and the Age of Terrorism"(April 29, 2004) that it was Professor Ratzel who coined the phrase anthrogeographical, meaning a combination of anthropology, geography and politics. He believed, like Spencer, that states have many of the characteristics of living organisms. He thought a state had to grow and must expand or die. He also introduced the idea of "living frontiers",that borders were dynamic and subject to change. Expanding on Ratzels' earlier thoughts Professor Rudolf Kjellen,a Swedish Professor of geography at Gothenburg University, is usually regarded as the founder of the science of geopolitics. He was the first to use the term geo-politics (in Swedish "geopolitik") in his work, *Introduction to Swedish Geography,* Gothenburg Press, 1900. An American Rear Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan was early associated with the ideas of geopolitics. Admiral Mahan, a professor at the U.S. Naval Academy, published the first of many works,(*The Influence of Sea Power Upon History 1660-1783*, New York: Sagamore Press, 1957) on the subject in 1890. Based on a study of previous world powers, Portugal, Spain and England, the Admiral concluded that maritime commerce was essential to the economic prosperity of a great power. In his view, in order to ensure the safety of a nation's maritime commerce that nation had to control the seas. Thus, the development of a strong navy was as an essential ingredient to a powerful state as the country's location. The country with the most power would be the one whose relative location was accessible and connected with a long coastline and good harbours. A nation with naval supremacy could defeat a country that was militarily pre-eminent. It was Admiral Mahan's' ideas that led the United States to develop a powerful naval fleet, which was to lead the country into its experiment with empire in the Spanish-American War of 1898. But the present is the age of air power and the US is far ahead from all other countries as a pre-eminent air power in the world.

Another geopolitical school, says Paynethat was developing in England under Sir Halford Mackinder proposed the most widely discussed concept of geopolitical studies. Mackinder first outlined his ideas in 1904 and that appeared in his work *Democratic Ideals and Reality*, New York: Norton and Co.1962, and further developed his ideas in 1919. The core of Mackinder's land based power was the Eurasian "Heartland" of Russia. Eurasia and Africa constituted the "World Island". In Mackinder's view, the power that could control the "Heartland" would become what we now call a superpower. Mackinder summarized his ideas in three sentences that would symbolize geopolitics for generations:

Who rules East Europe commands the Heartland;
Who rules the Heartland commands the World-Island;
Who rules the World-Island commands the World.
(ibid. p.150)
After First-World War, a German geopolitical school was developing under General and Professor Karl Haushofer, according to Payne. Professor Haushofer combined the basic concepts of Ratzel, Kjellen and Mackinder in forming the German geo-political school. From Ratzel came the idea of Lebensraum or space, from Kjellen came the term Autarky or national self-sufficiency and from Mackinder came the idea of the "Heartland". As a result of Nazi Germany's association with geopolitics the whole field of study fell into disrepute after World War II. In addition to the guilt by association with the Nazis, geo-politics also was open to criticism for being too deterministic. The critics of geo-politics charged that geo-political theory tended to ascribe a single cause to the success

or failure of a country. It did not take into consideration human choice. During World War II, in the United States another theory of geopolitics was developing. Professor Nicholas Spykman felt that Mackinder had put too much emphasis on the Heartland in his book *The Geography of Peace*, New York: Harcourt Brace, 1944. He believed that both sea and land power were important. He disagreed with Mackinder's Heartland Theory. He felt that the real potential of Eurasia was in the "inner crescent" which he defined as the area covering Western Europe, the Middle East, South Asia, Southeast Asia and the Far East. This "Rimland was important because the region had access to the sea and to interior regions. His summary became:

Who controls the Rimland rules Eurasia;

Who rules Eurasia controls the destinies of the world. Professor Spykman'sRimland theory eventually served as one factor justifying the U.S. policy of containment of the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China in order to stop the spread of communism.

As a result of the great advances made in the field of aviation during second-World War II, A. P. de Seversky developed a geopolitical theory which incorporated aviationin his work *Air Power: Key to Survival*, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1950. Seversky felt that the development of air power made land battles a thing of the past. He concluded that whoever controlled the skies would be the world power. When Seversky published his ideas, the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. were the two most important air powers. In discussing his theory he used an azimuthally equidistant map projection centred on the North Pole to show the air dominance of the two superpowers - U.S. and U.S.S.R. On this map he outlined an area of intersection, which he called the "area of decision." In his theory whoever controlled this "area of decision" would become the dominant world power. During the 1960s, Dr Saul Cohen, a Professor of Geography at Boston University and visiting Professor at the Naval War College outlined a new geopolitical theory which looked beyond the nation-state and viewed the world in terms of spatial patterns not containable within national boundaries. His ideas evolved in his *Geography and Politics in a World Divided*. Cohen divided the world into geostrategic regions. The two main regions are the

Maritime Realm, which is dependent on trade, and in the Eurasian Continental Realm, which is interior in direction. He gave the most powerful states within a Realm the title of first-order states. First-order states in Cohen's maritime realm were Japan, U.S. and the European Community while those in the continental realm were China and the former Soviet Union. He described those states which separated the realms as "shatter-belt" states. Cohen's model also contained independent states such as Pakistan, India, Thailand, and Vietnam. Gateway states were those lying between realms and regions which acted as linkages. The model also described asymmetrical states as those within a region that behaved differently than the others like Israel and North Korea located in the "shatter-belt."

In the 1970s, two significant refinements of geo-political theory were produced details Payne. The first of these was the "World System" developed by Dr. Immanuel Wallerstein at State University of New York in his book *The Modern World System,* New York: Academic Press, 1974. Professor Wallerstein developed his model over the period 1974-89. Professor Wallerstein described two types of world systems: First, a "world empire" system in which there is a single political system over most of the area and second, a "world economy" system where a single political system does not exist. Wallerstein believed that the "world economy" system developed in Europe during the 16th century contained three geographic areas. Core states were advanced areas of the "world economy." These core states had strong state structures, a national culture and an integrated people. Core states were economic powers connected by trade and technology and were exploiters of the periphery. Peripheral areas were weak states. They were either colonial states or states with a low degree of autonomy. Wallerstein also outlined a third region, which was comprised of semi-peripheral areas and acted as a buffer between the core and the periphery. Wallerstein's model contains several shortcomings. First, his world system reflects determinism. He believed that the world system had been fully developed by the 1950's, and no new country would be able to enter the system and be able to successfully compete. He also believed that those countries in the periphery would probably never be able to catch up economically to the core countries. In spite of its

shortcomings Wallerstein's theory is important for its introduction of linkage between geography, politics and economics. There is also some agreement with Cohen's earlier model of geo-strategic realms.The second significant development in the 1970s came from Dr. Ray Cline's book *World Power Assessment: A Calculus of Strategic Drift,* Washington,D.C. Professor Cline's study was undertaken in the wake of Vietnam and the Arab oil shock. It was a period when "the U.S. finds itself in a state of markedly diminished influence and strategic confusion" (ibid. p3). Cline's model was an attempt to quantify the overall power of 50 nations of the world comprising 90 per-cent of the world population at the time. The variables measured for each nation were: population, territory, economic capability, military capability, strategic purpose and the will to pursue national strategy. Cline's conclusion was in order to contain the totalitarian threat the U.S. needed to form a limited system of core alliances patterned after the Athenian League. He then proceeded to outline the makeup of this new "Oceans Alliance" based on a calculation of perceived power. If it could have been attained the "Oceans Alliance" would have contained 26 nations possessing 70 per-cent of the perceived power at the time, and thus, would have successfully contained the foe.

According to Payne, the development of geo-political theories did not come to a halt in the 1970s with the ideas of Professor Cline, but rather the development was radically changed by the growth of something called globalization and liberalization after the end of the cold war. Unfortunately, the uneven effects of globalisation further widened the gap between the developed and developing nations and, in fact, where fruits of globalisation are less or absent, plagued by politically repressive regimes, widespread poverty and disease, routine mass murder and most important - the chronic conflicts-all these incubate the next generation of global terrorists and that adversely impacts the geo-politics.

Conclusion

Thus the present phase of continuing terrorism, particularly by the ISIS, has already caused the large scale migrations from West Asia into Europe, besides other places. The ISIS itself has covered a large area of territory in its bid to establish a powerful Islamic state having hidden but ultimate agenda of forming a global caliphate with Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi as supreme Caliph, thereby gravely disturbing the prevailing configuration of the region as well as the nature of politics and international relations therein which will also cause to propel a fresh wave of terror across the world. And that will adversely impact the on-going course of democratisation and liberalisation of global politics and affairs in the present age of globalisation. Further, though the geography of the region is not going to change but political geography will be considerably changed and that will seriously impact the regional balance of power in West Asia, encouraging various terror and other religious fundamentalist groups of all shades and forms to run after and capture political power in any way possible. What will then be the form of consequent geo-politics affecting the region and also the world? Because mounting terrorism and counter terror operations will result into excessive use of fire weapons, if not biological and nuclear weapons, polluting the environment and gravely affecting the geographical parameters like purity of air, water, soil and rising temperatures of the region, besides endangering human health and their settlements. As the entire region is oil and gas rich-for energy purposes-and as the dependence of many of even highly industrialised and advanced countries on such energy is not going to lessen or subside in near future, the pre-eminence of the region will remain more or less same for their said purpose of energy security and the region will remain a prominent focus of attention and resultant battle-field for all powers of the world, as it continues to be since decades. As a matter of fact, the on-going wave of terrorism and religious fundamentalism presents many unique challenges before humanity. The absence of a bi-polar world combined with increasing proliferation of weapons of mass destruction has given individual terrorists enormous ability to wreak havoc on an unprecedented scale. The phenomenon of globalization has increasingly tightened the connectivity of nations in the developed regions of the world while at the same time widening the gulf between the developed and the developing nations. This division between the two must be narrowed if the war on terror is to be won forever and the geo-politics is to remain stable for ensuring a permanent peace and security of West Asia and also that of the whole world.

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The Rise of Islamic State and Evolving US Strategy

Dr. Monish Tourangbam and Aersh Danish

The Rise of Islamic State and Evolving US Strategy

It will be an understatement to state that West Asia is in turmoil and it will be long before the dust settles down. The emergence of the Islamic State (IS) and the security threat it portends for the region and beyond is something that occupies the mindscape of regional and extra-regional countries with stakes in West Asia. IS has also been variously referred to as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria or the Islamic State of Iraq and al Sham (ISIS). The organization grew out of Al Qaeda, which gained global notoriety post the 9/11 incident and had grown to become one of the most feared terrorist groups in the world. Utilizing the socio-political chaos in various regions of the world, Al Qaeda had managed to spread its tentacles far and wide. Al Qaeda grew on a base of misconstrued idea of Islam, preaching violence as a mean to religious salvation. It argued that the west and the western culture were a threat to the Islamic identity, thereby calling Muslims to fight – creating the "us versus them" rhetoric.

IS followed the same radical path and but broke barriers that Al Qaeda had not experimented with. It intruded homes through a media blitzkrieg, and using cyberspace, it created fear in the minds of its opponents. This was done by unleashing an unforeseen amount of violence - and most gruesome at that too. Further, it had won territory in Iraq and Syria. The speed with which it took over certain cities of Syria and Iraq came as a surprise to the international community. The IS propaganda has found takers across the globe and various lone wolf attacks have been influenced by them. The phenomenon of the steep and sudden rise of IS therefore has set into motion a set of developments with far reaching implications. Not since the Al Qaeda, has the world seen a terrorist group able to wrought such fear and hatred across the spectrum.

In the face of rise of such an enemy, the United States was forced to take a stand. However, a nation that was already burdened with the aftermath of Afghanistan, found it difficult to actively secure its interest in Iraq and Syria. The 2003 US intervention of Iraq had drawn severe criticism both inside and outside the United States. To be precise, America had become a nation tired of long drawn wars, and yet it knew that it had to hold the vanguard. The involvement of multiple players, both allies and countries inimical to US interests has further complicated the scenario for US foreign policy postures towards West Asia. America's long-held strategy to balance its interests in West Asia and maintain regional stability has been severely shaken with the civil war in Syria, and the rise of an entity like the IS. A conflict that primarily revolved around the demands for ouster of the Assad regime evolved into a more complicated dimension, with shifting priorities of the countries involved in the quagmire - that is Iraq and Syria. The rise of the IS and the diabolical impact it has had on Islamic extremism in the region and beyond has taken the contours of US strategy to a different dimension. The rapidly shifting sands of the politics over the fight against the IS and the fate of the Assad regime in Syria complicates the nature and the extent of US involvement. Hence, before analyzing the debates inside America regarding its response to the threat of IS, it is imperative to understand the genesis of the IS (by corollary the fault lines that US policy opened in West Asia) and the basis on which the notoriety of the IS and its attraction to recruits rest.

Genesis of the Islamic State

Ironically, the rise of IS has also been attributed to the US intervention in Iraq during the Bush government in 2003. It led to tectonic changes in West Asian politics. Iraq under President Saddam Hussein, a Sunni dictator ruling a Shia dominated country, had professed a relatively tolerant attitude towards religious and social demarcations. However,

the toppling of the Hussein regime by the Americans damaged the delicate social balance. The placing of a Shia leadership in Iraq in the form of Nouri al Maliki was seen as an attempt to empower the Shias, and threatened the Sunni Arab nations. The Arab leaders saw in it an opportunity under which Iran would use the Shia link to increase its influence in the region. Maliki's tenure as the Prime Minister led to a severe social breakdown in Iraq, some of which were brought about by his own doing.

First, the Americans, post the intervention, initiated a policy of de-Baathification (delegitimizing Saddam Hussein's Ba'ath Party) that left many people without jobs. Under Hussein's rule, it was mandatory for professionals to be a part of the party to be eligible for perks and promotions. Thus, delegitimizing the Party wholesale led to rampant unemployment as any person involved with the Ba'ath party was removed from their position and was banned from future employment in the public sector as per the Coalition Provisional Authority Order Number 1.[1] Further, the new government under Nouri al Maliki was perceived as being indifferent because it had a pro-Shia tilt and failed to address the needs of the Sunni population, who were denied any kind of help from state authorities, including the security forces and the police. Lack of social setups resulted in dissatisfaction among the Sunni population and forced them into creating their groups to support themselves. This led to vigilantes groups being created to help maintain law and order.[2]

The alienation of Sunnis was initially exploited by Al Qaeda to re-establish in West Asia. Abu Musab al Zarqawi had formed Tawhid wal Jihad in Iraq in 2002. It became one of the umbrella organizations of Al Qaeda in 2004 and was renamed as Al-Qaeda in the Land of the Two Rivers (Al Qaeda in Iraq, or AQI). Since its inception, AQI was known for the sheer gore and violence that it unleashed in Iraq. The brutality was such that even the Al Qaeda leadership was scared that it would lead to decline in popular support base. In ways this fear of Al Qaeda did come true, as the Sunnis horrified and disgusted with the violence, organized themselves to fight Zarqawi and his men. This uprising came to be called as the Sahwa movement or the Anbar Awakening, where the Sunni militia was actually successful in fighting the AQI.

Documents by Wikileaks reveal that an arrangement was brokered by the US between the Maliki government and the Sahwa militants that at least 20 percent of these militants would be absorbed into the Iraqi army. However, Maliki did not stick to his side of the bargain, probably because he was afraid of Sunnis getting strong in the armed forces which might then result in a coup, and him losing power.[3] This led to a disgruntled Sunni population, a situation that was later exploited by AQI for its benefit.

Meanwhile, another radicalized individual, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, along with some associates, had created Jamaat Jaysh Ahl al Sunnah wal Jamaah (JJASJ) in 2003 to protect the interest of Sunnis, and this group operated in Samarra, Diyala, and Baghdad. Baghdadi headed the Sharia Committee in JJASJ. Baghdadi had also spent time in US custody at Camp Bucca for ten months in 2004. He was released since he was not viewed as a major threat by the US. This was also the time when AQI was going through certain organizational changes and rechristening, primarily because AQI leader Zarqawi wanted to distance himself from the Al Qaeda tag. This was the result of a strained relationship between Al Qaeda leadership and Zarqawi. So, AQI changed its name to Majlis Shura al-Mujahidin (Mujahideen Shura Council or MSC) in early 2006, and that is when the JJASJ's leadership pledged 'baya'a' (oath of allegiance) to Zarqawi.[4]

Later, AQI was again reorganized and renamed as the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI) after Zarqawi's death in 2006. Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi headed the Sharia Committee of ISI and took over the reign of ISI when its leader Abu Omar died in 2010. Gradually, ISI still under the control of Al Qaeda started to act more independently. ISI had direct influence on the field and hence it could garner support from the local populace much better unlike the leaders of Al Qaeda who were issuing orders from their safe havens in Afghanistan. The defiance of ISI was reflected in the manner in which it was taking up feuds with the other affiliates of Al Qaeda such as the Jabhat al Nusra (the al Nusra Front), which operated in Syria. Al Qaeda had rooted itself in Syria and based itself on the popular discontent that was spread against the Syrian President Bashar al Assad. The AQI was primarily responsible for

coordinating the activities of Al Qaeda in Iraq while the al Nusra Front was responsible of the same in Syria. However, with its growing strength, the AQI started interfering in Syria as well. On 15 June 2013, Abu Bakr al Baghdadi defied a direct order from Ayman al-Zawahiri (the Al Qaeda leader after Osama Bin Laden's death) directing the AQI to stop its fight in Syria. This incident is regarded as the point where the AQI officially split from the Al Qaeda to develop itself as an independent terrorist group, now called the ISIS, ISIL or the IS.

Baghdadi's Caliphate

On 28 June 2014, ISIS declared the captured territory of Iraq and Syria as "Islamic Caliphate" and its Chief Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi as the first "Caliph of Islam" and sought allegiance to him. The ISIS was renamed as Islamic State (IS) on this day. The declaration of Caliphate and renaming itself as IS seemed to be aimed at widening the support base from existing Iraq and Syria to the entire globe. The ISIS declaration seeking allegiance to Baghdadi challenged the authority of Al-Qaeda. The declaration was criticized by Al Qaeda, Middle East countries, Muslim scholars and leaders.[5] The announcement of the Caliphate is an important milestone as it conveys not just a political entity but also a path to salvation for Muslims. A Muslim, in order to attain his rightful place after death, is bound to express his oath of allegiance or baya'a to the Caliph. Thus, by declaring the formation of the Caliphate, the IS fulfilled a major Islamic obligation. However, the process of declaring someone as a Caliph is not simple. To be the Caliph, one must meet the following conditions outlined in Sunni law:

• Be a Muslim adult man of Quraysh[6] descent;

• Exhibit moral probity and physical and mental integrity; and

• Have 'amr', or authority.

This last criterion is the hardest to fulfill as it requires that the caliph have territory in which he can enforce the Islamic law. It is the territory that grants legitimacy to the Caliph, and in theory, all Muslims are obliged to immigrate to the territory where the Caliph is applying these laws. The Caliph is required to implement the Sharia. Any deviation will compel those who have pledged allegiance to inform the caliph in private of his error and, in extreme cases, to excommunicate and replace him if he persists. Baghdadi seems to be fully aware of this condition and it can be reflected in his speech when he said "I have been plagued with this great matter, plagued with this responsibility, and it is a heavy responsibility."[7] However, the fact that legitimacy is obtained out of the control of a physical territory explains why the IS needs to exist as a geographical entity. Now, it not just has territory, but its leader Baghdadi is a learned religious scholar having obtained a PhD in Quranic Studies from the University of Baghdad, and most importantly he comes from the Quraysh tribe. These cement his position as the Caliph and is the primary reason why large throng of people are moving to the regions controlled by the IS to express their support to the group.

Another religious concept that is a recurring theme in IS propaganda is that of apocalypse. The idea of apocalypse is integral to the plans of the IS. These include the belief that there will be only 12 legitimate Caliphs, and Baghdadi is the eighth. The other set of belief is that the armies of Rome will mass to meet the armies of Islam in northern Syria; and that Islam's final showdown with an anti-Messiah will occur in Jerusalem after a period of renewed Islamic conquest. The ancient texts speak of a battle and refer to the enemy as Rome. Who or what "Rome" is, now that the Pope has no army, remains a matter of debate. But scholars argue that Rome refers to the Eastern Roman empire, which had its capital in what is now Istanbul. Hence, Rome becomes the Republic of Turkey—the same republic that ended the last self-identified Caliphate, 90 years ago. Other IS sources suggest that Rome might mean any infidel army, which could refer to America as well. The IS has attached great importance to the Syrian city of Dabiq, near Aleppo. It named its propaganda magazine after the town, and celebrated when it forcefully acquired control over Dabiq. This is because of the religious significance attributed to the city of Dabiq in the ancient texts. It is here, the Prophet reportedly said, that the armies of Rome will set up their camp. The armies of Islam will meet them, and Dabiq will be Rome's Waterloo. At Dabiq, the IS awaits the arrival of an enemy army, whose defeat will initiate the countdown to the apocalypse.

It is believed that after its battle in Dabiq, the Caliphate will expand and sack Istanbul. Interestingly, there is a mention of an anti-Messiah, known in Muslim apocalyptic literature as Dajjal, who will come from the Khorasan region of eastern Iran and kill a vast number of the Caliphate's fighters, until just 5,000 remain, cornered in Jerusalem. Just as Dajjal would prepare to finish them off, Jesus — the second-most-revered prophet in Islam — would return to Earth, spear Dajjal, and would lead the Muslims to victory. Who or what "Dajjal" or "Jesus" may refer to in the modern context would be a matter of great debate and conspiracy. However the movements of the IS towards achieving their "apocalyptic" goals further throws light at how it plans to use religious beliefs to gain legitimacy. In a way, one can argue that it is waiting for fight at Dabiq, and the probable enemies allude to America, Iran and Turkey. The fact that these nations are taking steps to militarily counter the growth of the IS only plays into the IS strategy where it seeks to defeat these states and hence claim the ultimate victory for its people. It is a classic example of good vs. evil story, a narrative which is also repeated by the west often, where the terrorists are represented as evil.

Evolving US Strategy against the IS

The killing of British and US citizens put pressure on their governments to act against the IS. US had tried to involve West Asian countries in anti IS operations. The efforts of the US had met with partial success with formation of a coalition of about 20 countries, which launched air offensive against IS in September 2014. Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates commenced air strikes against IS in September 2014, which was a half-hearted effort since none of them were willing to support the ground offensive and put their soldiers on ground. Many Arab partners of the US were suspicious of the Shia axis and believed that IS was fighting for the greater Sunni cause. The best bet for the US against Islamic State militants were Kurd Peshmerga fighters in the besieged Syrian town of Kobani.[8] Kobani, though strategically insignificant without having major oil or water resources, was hyped up in the media and made to be a symbol of prestige between the US and IS. The oil rich areas of Syria and Iraq, which provided Islamic State with the revenue, were not attacked by the US. That the IS cannot be dealt with in the manner in which Al Qaeda was handled had seemed to have well dawned upon 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. Greater emphasis on countering IS' propaganda on social media, and the understanding that IS' strength lies in its rapid and successful recruitment, is perhaps why President Obama insisted on not taking a knee jerk action, and has not deployed boots on the ground, although Special Operation Forces have been sent to Iraq.

The battle of images - one in which the brutality of the IS has been pitched against a determined President - is on. The question that arises is whether the US strategy to support the ethnically divided militia forces in Syria, while working with nations, all of whom (including the US) are looking to satiate their own national interests will be successful in fighting a terrorist group, which more than anything wants to bring the war to the grounds? The IS strategy soaked in religious and mythological tales, and driven by a leader who understands the complexities of modern warfare will not be easy for America to combat. After the terrorist attacks in Paris and San Bernardino, California; debates over US strategy against the IS have been ignited to a different level, reflected in the campaign trail as well as Obama's repeated defence of his strategy. The global war on terrorism that started as a response to the 9/11 attacks by Al Qaeda took centre-stage in America's national security strategy and the fight against Al Qaeda in its different avatars around the world continues unabated. However, the rise of IS as a force to reckon with and the civil war that ensues in Iraq and Syria, is presenting new threats for regional and global security.

Although differing viewpoints persist regarding the nature of threat that the IS poses to homeland security, there is no doubt that the IS presents a major dilemma for US foreign policy contours in West Asia, post its withdrawal from Iraq. The dangers to security in the United States from lone-wolf attacks inspired by the IS assume a major area of concern for the national security apparatus. Moreover, the issue of immigration regulation, especially regarding Syrian refugees has produced polarizing views.

Donald Trump's proposal to temporarily ban Muslims from entering the United States as national security measure has, if nothing else, generated much heat and attracted widespread criticism, although he has found takers among his supporters. His views have been slammed not only in the Democratic camp, but have not been appreciated by other Republican presidential contenders either. Ben Carson apparently likened some of the Syrian refugees to "rabid dogs" while expressing fear that some refugees might be linked to the IS. He called for a vetting of Syrian refugees and said, "We must always balance. We must balance safety against just being a humanitarian."[9] Jeb Bush also propagated the view that Christians should be the focus of any assistance going to refugees in the "Middle East." Supporting a stricter vetting process for those who come to the United States, Obama said, "…it is the responsibility of all Americans — of every faith — to reject discrimination. It is our responsibility to reject religious tests on who we admit into this country. It's our responsibility to reject proposals that Muslim Americans should somehow be treated differently. Because when we travel down that road, we lose. That kind of divisiveness, that betrayal of our values plays into the hands of groups like ISIL."[10]

The dynamics of the region can fool anyone who tries to predict the course of events, though there have been reports that the training given to the Iraqi forces and the coalition airstrikes are slowly but surely making their significance felt in the field. This is being seen in the fight for Ramadi, a strategic stronghold that fell to the IS in May 2015. The new inroads by the Iraqi forces reported is largely being attributed to a change of tactic on the field from counter-insurgency to conventional war, given the nature of IS and their aim to hold territory. The training provided by the United States to Iraqi forces post 2003 is undergoing a change according to Lieutenant General Sean MacFarland who leads the US-led coalition against the IS, also referred to as Operation Inherent Resolve. Ramadi is one R of the triple-pronged '3 Rs' strategy that Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter propounded. The other Rs are 'Raids', and 'Raqqa' — the de facto capital of the IS in Syria.[11]
President Obama seems clear on his intent - that while intensifying America's efforts, the US should not take dramatic steps in the wake of the Paris attacks just

to "look tough." Besides, Obama has also hinted that defeating the IS military and ideologically, and preventing lone-wolf attacks was going to be a long-term pursuit. Efforts are also underway from the Obama administration to press upon Sunni regimes and American allies like Saudi Arabia in West Asia to do more in the fight. The Obama administration desires its Arab allies to help recruit and build up a Syrian Arab force of ground troops to fight against the IS.[12] Obama's willingness to send up to 50 special operators in Syria to help organize the Arab and Kurdish fighters is a major step to up the ante as far as American involvement in the raging civil war is concerned.

According to Defense Secretary Carter, the Pentagon will also expand its Special Operation force in Iraq, that "…will over time be able to conduct raids, free hostages, gather intelligence and capture" IS leaders. Moreover, Obama has already sent 3,500 American troops to Iraq, though mostly to advise and train Iraqi troops, with Carter saying that the numbers might increase. The new steps have come in the wake of criticism, especially from Republican lawmakers that the administration has not been doing enough to defeat the IS. Senator John McCain of Arizona, the Chairman of the Armed Services Committee, contended that the deployment of more troops was "a belated step forward" and called it "yet another reactive and incremental step," adding that, "a comprehensive strategy to defeat ISIL is totally absent, urgently needed and long overdue." Jeb Bush argued that a successful strategy requires arming the Kurdish forces in Iraq directly, something another Republican aspirant Marco Rubio also assented to, saying that he would arm the Kurds directly than routing much of the assistance through the Iraqi government in Baghdad. Democratic presidential contender Hillary Clinton has called for "a new phase" that includes "more allied planes" and "more strikes" on terrorist enclaves in Syria and Iraq. Calling for an "intensification" and "acceleration," of Obama's strategy, she vouched for augmenting air campaigns, ground efforts in Syria and Iraq, supported by greater intelligence support. Clinton's strategy also includes a no-fly zone over northern Syria. Her Democratic opponent Bernie Sanders vouched for a broad coalition against the IS, and said, "a new and strong coalition of Western powers, Muslim nations, and countries

like Russia must come together in a strongly coordinated way to combat ISIS, to seal the borders that fighters are currently flowing across, to share counter-terrorism intelligence, to turn off the spigot of terrorist financing, and to end support for exporting radical ideologies."[13]

Airstrikes, arms to Kurdish and Arab militias, building coalitions are some of the major steps that candidates in the reckoning have called for and these are all part of the current administration's strategy. As Obama pointed out during his address to the nation after attacks at San Bernardino, "…airstrikes, Special Forces, and working with local forces who are fighting to regain control of their own country — that is how we'll achieve a more sustainable victory. And it won't require us sending a new generation of Americans overseas to fight and die for another decade on foreign soil." Warning against any ethnocentric approach to the fight against IS that would further amount to discrediting the contribution of Muslim Americans and provide recruiting rationale to the terrorist group, he said, "We cannot turn against one another by letting this fight be defined as a war between America and Islam. That, too, is what groups like ISIL want. ISIL does not speak for Islam. They are thugs and killers, part of a cult of death, and they account for a tiny fraction of more than a billion Muslims around the world — including millions of patriotic Muslim Americans who reject their hateful ideology."[14]

Conclusion
The rise of Islamic State has been unprecedented in terms of the threat that it entails for security and stability in West Asia and across the world. The evolution of IS, with its invocation of the Caliphate has created religious connotations that has been absent in other fearsome global terrorist networks like the Al Qaeda. The religious provocation orchestrated and disseminated by IS and the territorial conquest it has undertaken in Iraq and Syria gives a whole new paradigm to the way terrorist entities have been understood in history. The horde of recruitment that IS has been drawing from beyond the region and the inspiration it creates for lone-wolf attacks presents a clear and present danger. The evolution of the IS juxtaposed with the civil war in Syria to oust President Assad, the involvement of multiple players in the crisis

in the aftermath of the US withdrawal from Iraq creates new challenges for US foreign policy contours in West Asia. In addition, foreign wars have been highly unpopular among the American public because of the reverses suffered in the Afghanistan and Iraq.

Simultaneously, the Obama administration also faces flak for its restraint in involving the United States in the quicksand of Iraq and Syria. There have been calls to do more to defeat the IS, although differing views persist as far as the extent and nature of American involvement is concerned. The strategy against the IS is highly dynamic given the rapidly shifting sands of geopolitics in the region and the responses of the countries, including American allies, that have stakes and influence in the region. Given that the election campaign for the presidential seat is heating up in America, the candidates are currently engaged in hyperbolic rhetoric and anti-incumbency criticism that are normal recipes of the campaign season. However, in most likelihood, whoever comes to the White House, will eventually take forward and tie the threads of what President Obama has already been doing and aims to do in his remaining days.

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Geography, Politics and Terror at Play: Case of Northeast India

Dona Ganguly

Current conflicts in the international arena are wars of insurgent action. Insurgencies have become the building blocks of violent regime change. Using violence as a means of political discourse, insurgent and guerilla action has utilized weaknesses in the state to increase their political demands, changing the shape of international discourse. Geographical isolation, systemic failures in the areas of economic advancement, cultural and ethnic marginalization, inefficient political bureaucracy and resource management encourage the environment breeding insurgent activities in many parts of the world today. The North Eastern part of India is a typical example. The present article aims at delineating the various aspects of the geography-politics-terror nexus that has plagued the region since the birth of the Indian Union in 1947.

Geopolitics, Terrorism, Insurgency

The term 'geopolitics', coined by the Swedish legal jurist Rudolf Kjellén (1864–1922), entails three core elements: a bio-organic notion of the state, a social-Darwinist view of inter-state relations defined as a struggle for Lebensraum[living space], and the concept of imperial rivalries interpreted as power struggles over territories for the purpose of political control over space. Geopolitical studies attracted a corpus of influential writers including Halford Mackinder, Alfred Mahan and Friedrich Ratzel. Writing in the latter part of the nineteenth century, the German writer Friedrich Ratzel (1844–1904) expressed some of the dominant trends in classical geopolitics including racial and environmental determinism. Distinguishing between settled and nomadic communities, Ratzel argued that the settled Aryan races in particular were vulnerable to the marauding and thus hyper-mobile Ural–Altaic races.[1] As a consequence of this perceived vulnerability, the Aryan races were the earliest to develop state-like

structures designed to organize defense against other races. Ratzel contended that contemporary Germany should strive to secure additional land and resources so that it was better able to secure the survival of the nation-state in the face of eastern races and their traditions of mobile existence. The term Lebensraum (living space) is particularly associated with the writings of Ratzel as a consequence of his interest in the interrelationship between environment, state and culture. [2] While Ratzel's writings were instilled by the racial and environmental indices, the British writer Halford Mackinder (1861–1947) highlighted another aspect of classical geopolitics- concern for *grand strategy*. [3] Mackinder warned that traditional sea powers such as Britain were under threat from new land-based powers that might, with the help of new transport technologies such as the railway, be able to mobilize their populations and resources in a decisive manner. Intrigued by the historic significance of migrant empires such as the Mongols, Mackinder divined a future possibility based on new great powers (such as the latter day Soviet Union) using what he termed the 'heartland' to project power over the European continent. Vast quantities of coal, oil, gas and other minerals, transported by railways, would quite literally empower those who controlled the heartland. In his famous epithet, Mackinder warned his readers that 'who rules East Europe commands the Heartland. Who rules the Heartland commands the World-Island. Who rules the World-Island commands the World'[4]. While Mackinder's Heartland-theory emphasized on the superiority of the territorial power, Admiral Mahan's 'Aquatological' theory identifies the decisive factor in power politics in the fleet-based domination of the sea.[5] However the mainstream geopolitical theory came under severe criticism at the end of the Cold War. The end of superpower rivalry and the dismantling of the bipolar world structure which had been the core concerns of

the geopolitical thought for over 40 years, gave rise to what is known as 'critical geopolitics' revolving around our understanding of spatiality and subjectivity in world affairs. In terms of spatiality, it shifts the focus from territorialized understandings of politics toward the understandings of the complex spatialities of power.[6] In terms of subjectivity, critical geopolitics broadens the analysis of geopolitics from state actors located in formal institutions, such as government ministries, universities or think tanks, to *non-state* actors and everyday life. [7]Among the various non-state actors, the terrorist and insurgents/guerrilla groups and their criminal activities are the principal cause of concern in international politics today.

The **UN General Assembly Resolution 49/60** (adopted on December 9, 1994), titled "Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism," contains a provision describing terrorism: Criminal acts intended or calculated to provoke a state of terror in the general public, a group of persons or particular persons for political purposes are in any circumstance unjustifiable, whatever the considerations of a political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or any other nature that may be invoked to justify them.[8] **UN Security Council Resolution 1566 (2004)** defines terrorism as criminal acts, including against civilians, committed with the intent to cause death or serious bodily injury, or taking of hostages, with the purpose to provoke a state of terror in the general public or in a group of persons or particular persons, intimidate a population or compel a government or an international organization to do or to abstain from doing any act. [9] O'Neill defines insurgency (or internal war) as: "a general overarching concept that refers to a conflict between a government and an out group or opponent in which the latter uses both political resources and violence to change, reformulate, or uphold the legitimacy of one or more of four key aspects of politics" - (1) the integrity of the borders and composition of the nation state, (2) the political system, (3) the authorities in power, and (4) the policies that determine who gets what in societies" [10] Insurgencies thrive in situations where societal divisions are combined with economic and political disparities, rising unemployment and underemployment, unequal distribution of wealth, inadequate distribution of essential goods, elitist control of the political structure, and corrupt leadership.

Guerilla warfare and insurgencies are often assumed to be synonymous with terrorism since often they have similar goals. However, if closely examined specific differences emerge. A key difference is that an insurgency is a movement is a political effort with a specific aim. This sets it apart from both guerilla warfare and terrorism, as they are both methods available to pursue the goals of the political movement.[11] Another difference is the intent of the component activities and operations of insurgencies versus terrorism. There is nothing inherent in either insurgency or guerilla warfare that requires the use of terror. While some of the more successful insurgencies and guerilla campaigns employed terrorism and terror tactics, and some developed into conflicts where terror tactics and terrorism became predominant, there have been others that effectively renounced the use of terrorism. [12] The ultimate goal of an insurgency is to challenge the existing government for control of all or a portion of its territory, or force political concessions in sharing political power. Insurgencies require the active or tacit support of some portion of the population involved. External support, recognition or approval from other countries or political entities can be useful to insurgents, but is not required. A terror group does not require and rarely has the active support or even the sympathy of a large fraction of the population.[13] While insurgents will frequently describe themselves as "insurgents" or "guerillas", terrorists will not refer to themselves as "terrorists" but describe themselves using military or political terminology ("freedom fighters", "soldiers", "activists"). Terrorism relies on public impact, and is therefore conscious of the advantage of avoiding the negative connotations of the term "terrorists" in identifying themselves.[14] Terrorism does not attempt to challenge government forces directly, but acts to change perceptions as to the effectiveness or legitimacy of the government itself. This is done by ensuring the widest possible knowledge of the acts of terrorist violence among the target audience. Rarely will terrorists attempt to

"control" terrain, as it ties them to identifiable locations and reduces their mobility and security. Terrorists as a rule avoid direct confrontations with government forces. A guerilla force may have something to gain from a clash with a government combat force, such as proving that they can effectively challenge the military effectiveness of the government. A terrorist group has nothing to gain from such a clash.[15] This is not to say that they do not target military or security forces, but that they will not engage in anything resembling a "fair fight", or even a "fight" at all.

Terrorists use methods that neutralize the strengths of conventional forces. Bombings and mortar attacks on civilian targets where military or security personnel spend off-duty time, ambushes of undefended convoys, and assassinations of poorly protected individuals are common tactics. Insurgency need not require the targeting of non-combatants, although many insurgencies expand the accepted legal definition of combatants to include police and security personnel in addition to the military. Terrorists do not discriminate between combatants and non-combatants, or if they do, they broaden the category of "combatants" so as to include all members of a nation or ethnic group, plus any citizen of any nation that supports that nation as "combatants". Ultimately, the difference between insurgency and terrorism comes down to the intent of the actor. While insurgency movements and guerilla forces can adhere to international norms regarding the law of war in achieving their goals, on the other hand, the terrorists are by definition conducting crimes under both civil and military legal codes. Terrorists routinely claim that were they to adhere to any "law of war" or accept any constraints on the scope of their violence, it would place them at a disadvantage vis-à-vis the establishment. [17]

Northeast Insurgency

Northeast India is located in the north eastern corner of the Indian Union with international frontiers on three sides. It lies, geographically between 22º and 29º North latitude, and 89º. 46' and 97º.5' East longitude and covers an area of 25,5083 sq.km. The region is in a strategically vulnerable geographical situation and hemmed in by countries like China, Myanmar, Bhutan and Bangladesh from three sides. It is linked with the rest of the country by a narrow corridor of 22km wide (Chicken Neck) running through Siliguri, West Bengal. [18] Politically, the region is divided into eight units: Assam, Nagaland, Manipur, Tripura, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Sikkim. However, the geography, history and traditions, transcending the political boundaries, have brought the whole region into a single geo-political entity. Northeast India is inhabited by races of Mongoloid stock, besides Indo-Aryan groups. Barring the Khasis and Jaintias who belong to the Austric linguistic group (now branded as Monkhmer cultural groups of Burma), almost all hill tribes belong to the Tibeto-Chinese linguistic family and Tibeto-Burman sub-family. The non-Aryan languages, being prominent in this region, shelter more than 125 major groups each having distinct cultural traits.[19] Peripheral location, geographical isolation, and the land-locked character of Northeast India, surrounded by countries like Bangladesh, Myanmar and China having ambivalent attitude towards India, has great geo-political significance in the domain of insurgency. It plays a pivotal role in escalating extremist activities. The border line and the length (roughly) between states and other countries are as follows: Assam-Bhutan 500 km, Arunachal Pradesh-Burma 525 km, Bangladesh-Assam 200 km, Manipur-Burma 425 km, Mizoram-Bangladesh 275 km, Tripura-Bangladesh 625 km, Meghalaya-Bangladesh 400 km. Total border with three neighbouring countries comes out to be 4825 km.[20] The flame of insurgency, which has jeopardized normal life of the peace loving tribals and plainsmen of this part of the country, arises from economic backwardness and political alienation of the tribal population from the national mainstream. Essentially their economic backwardness stems from the unexploited natural resources, inadequate infrastructural development, rampant corruption and the strong nexus between the politician-contractor-insurgent in the region.Conflicts in the region range from insurgency for secession to insurgency for autonomy; from 'sponsored terrorism' to ethnic clashes, to conflicts generated as a result of continuous inflow of migrants from across the borders as well as from other States. Conflicts in the region can be broadly grouped under the following categories.[21]

a.   'National' conflicts: Involving concept of a distinct 'homeland' as a separate nation and pursuit of the realization of that goal by its votaries.

b.   Ethnic conflicts: Involving assertion of numerically smaller and less dominant tribal groups against the political and cultural hold of the dominant tribal group. In Assam this also takes the form of tension between local and migrant communities.

c.   Sub-regional conflicts: Involving movements which ask for recognition of sub-regional aspirations and often come in direct conflict with the State Governments or even the autonomous Councils. Besides, criminal enterprise aimed at expanding and consolidating control over critical economic resources has, of late, acquired the characteristics of a distinct species of conflict.

The roots of the insurgency environment in the North East are embedded in the socio-political, geo-economic and historical legacies of the region. During the colonial era, the British rulers kept the people of this region away from the mainstream by creating the *Crown Colony* commonly known as *Coupland Plan* with an idea to make it a launch pad against India, Burma and China. Further, the British colonial policy of Excluded Area or Partially Excluded Area, Inner line Regulation etc., restricted the social and political mobility between the hill and the plains people. With the passage of time and exposure to modernity, along with the changes in the life style and social ethos, political perceptions have changed. Mutual distrust between the hill people and the plains developed. The plains people consider the Mizos or Naga or Khasis as nomadic and uncivilized. These people, on the other hand, equally look upon the plains people with distrust and regard them as outsiders which transpires from their use of such disparaging terms like Dakhars (Khasi), Vais (Mizo), Mayang (Manipuri).[22]   This refractory attitude from either side has poisoned the friendly relations among different groups of people, and thereby opened the gates of hostility. Apart from the hills-valley (read plains) dichotomy revolving around the geographical area of residence, these Tibeto-Burman people also nurture a sharp awareness of their ethnic and cultural difference from the national mainstream. Given the

physiographic constraints, geographical isolation, peripherialization of the region, deep communication gap, long years of neglect, indifference of the nation to the hardships, worries of their compatriots in this strategic region, unimaginative government policies and gross ignorance of the tribal ethos have compelled them to tilt towards making closer affinities in the Shan and Kachin states of Burma and Bangladesh's Chittagong Hill Tract.

On the other hand, unabated infiltration of Bangladesh nationals into Assam and Tripura has shaken the foundation of Assamese social structure and created solidarity among the Assamese even while generating cleavages between the indigenous Assamese and the indigenous tribals. It has influenced the educational, social and economic aspiration of countless Assamese, determined their central political cognizance (it has) given rise to powerful assimiliationist and nativist sentiments and backlash separatist agitation, to massive conflict over languages, education and employment policy.[23] The disturbances caused by this demographic distortion in the region have often been overlooked by the state and the union government. Even the sixth schedule approach in the form of the district council did not serve the purpose because the councils did not have adequate powers. The subsequent accords such as the Naga Accord (1960), the Shilong Accord (1975), Assam Accord (1985), Mizoram Accord (1986), signed between the Indian state and the insurgent leaders aimed at preservation of the distinct cultural identity of the tribals and quicker development of the region but none of these accords has been seriously implemented. Further with the rapid rise of money economy, the tribal economy and their antiquated way of livelihood became archaic in the modern economic race. Economic hardship due to poor and underdeveloped agriculture, alarming mass unemployment problem, rampant corruption, and lack of educational and medical facilities, exorbitant prices and shortage of essential commodities in the far-flung areas of the northeast forced the promising youth to turn towards extremist activities and create numerous insurgent outfits in all the states of North East India. Extremist outfits of various states in the northeast

region have transgressed beyond the state boundary. There is an understanding among them and they are encouraged by Bangladesh and Pakistan. All militant groups have training and logistic planning bases in Bangladesh managed either by Bangladesh Army personnel or Pakistan Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI).[24] Till the birth of Bangladesh, batches of Naga and Mizo insurgents made regular visits to Dacca to seek financial and military help. Even today, Bangladesh Army provides all arrangements for insurgent's training in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT), even after signing of the Ganges water sharing accord. Taking advantage of geographical surroundings, ethnic homogeneity, Bangladesh had given shelter and provides safe sanctuary to many of the militant outfits like United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA), People's Liberation Army (PLA), National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN), Meghalaya United Liberation Army (MULA), National Democratic Front of Bodoland, Mizo National Front (MNF) etc.[25] Similarly few years back an agreement was made between NSCN President, S.S. Khaplang and National Front President, John Khaw Kim Thang to bolster insurgency with the active support of Kachin Independence Army (KIA) in the Indo-Burma area. Similar close nexus among the regional militant outfits has been strengthened. A few years ago NSCN (K), ULFA and ULLF formed Indo-Burma Revolutionary Front (IBRF) for joint action against Indian forces, but a decline in their fortunes limited the effectiveness of IBRF. The apex-insurgent body underwent a change in April 1993 when the IBRF got a new name, the Indo-Burma Liberation Front (IBLF) with Muivah of NSCN (IM) in the saddle. [26] The strategic importance of the Indo-Burma border area, favourable topography for guerrilla warfare, existence of ethnic affinities across the border and the long experience of underground movements have made NSCN (I-M) such a hegemonic power that it has become the lone rallying point for all insurgent groups operating in the region. There is evidence of a joint meeting of Meghalaya United Liberation Army (MULA) People Liberation Army (PLA), All Tripura Tribal Force (ATTF), National Socialist Council of Nagaland INSCN)-Muivah faction and Mizo National Front (MNF) in Dacca. The MULA, which wants to evict

all non-tribals from Meghalaya, has set up sanctuaries in Nilphamari Army camp near Mymensing, Jaintiapur (Sylhet) and Joydebpur (Dacca). The PLA fighting for an independent Manipur, has bases at Chhotdhamai, Naya Pattan, Longla, Ram Nagar, Ambarkhana, Adampur, Sonrupa Tea Estate and Bhanugach (all in Moulabi bazar, Sylhet district), ATTF, which is waging war for greater autonomy of the tribals in Tripura, operates from its camps in Reza, Rasalong, Myani Reserve Forest, Zopai and Thangnang in Chittagong Hill Tracts. Muivah-led faction of NSCN has its sanctuaries in Salopi and Chacheng in Bandarban of Chittagong Hill Tracts. A disgruntled faction of MNF led by L. Piangais is trying to revive insurgency in Mizoram. This faction has camps in the Aljidam area of Chittagong Hill Tracts. ULFA, the most dreaded of all the militant outfits has six camps set up in Mymensing, Jaintiapur, Joydebpur, Adampur, Bhanugarh and Srimangal. Bodo Security Forces has bases in Nilpharmari and Gaibandha Army campus.[27] From the intelligence reports, it appears that a large number of volunteers of Muslim United Liberation Tigers of Assam (MULTA) have crossed over to Bangladesh. It has also been financed by other Islamic countries for training and subversive activities. The Islamic Revolutionary Front (IRF), another Muslim terrorist group which includes Pangla Muslims of Manipur and Bangladesh settled in North Cachar and Karimganj district of Assam has the patronage of Pakistan Inter Service Intelligence (ISI) operating from bases in Bangladesh.[28]

Apart from the socio-economic and geopolitical factors responsible for the rapid influx of insurgency movements in the region, the regional ruling elite (politicians)-terrorist nexus is another predominant factor for the same. The ruling elite seem to allow the insurgent movements to perpetuate in order to make themselves indispensable in state politics as well as to ensure their political security. It may be recalled that while the possibility of a negotiated settlement of the ULFA movement became bright in the early nineties and the stage for such a settlement was set following several rounds of talks between the ULFA leadership and the central government, the ruling elite in Assam headed by Hiteswar Saikia

reportedly sabotaged this move.[29] Thus, the ruling elite in Assam, instead of forging a political solution, coaxed a vertical split within ULFA and followed the policy of divide and rule in order to secure their own political fortunes.

Conclusion

In the modern era of nation building, insurgencies, and the use of guerilla and terrorist tactics, have been beneficial in reshaping the political and state structure of the globe since the onset of political governance. While many regions of the globe have benefitted from this action, and most still do, tools available to the insurgents have become a curse to the international community. Acts of terrorism, while increasing the propaganda effect of insurgencies and eliciting increased popular support, have placed many insurgent groups at odds with the rest of the globe, endangering the lives of millions of people and international security. A close examination of the turbulence and frustrations evident in the northeast would indicate that the northeastern insurgency has to be tackled with political prudence. This would be possible only if the centre and the northeastern states evolve a two-point agenda to solve the problem. Such an approach involves both: negotiations with the various extremist outfits and simultaneously ensuring adequate socio-economic development of diverse ethnic groups, political and economic advancements, reductions in unemployment and underemployment, land reforms, transparent governance, and inclusionary conditions for minority political participation. Without any further delay the northeastern insurgency has to be solved in order to prevent the balkanization of the India's North East and to integrate the region politically, economically and socially with the rest of the country.

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Pathankot Airbase Attack and India's Fight Against Terrorism
Dr. Deepak Yadav

On 2nd January 2016, a heavily armed group attacked the Pathankot Air Force Station, part of the Western Air Command of the Indian Air Force. Six attackers and three security forces personnel were killed in the initial battle. The gun battle and the subsequent combing operation lasted about 17 hours on 2 January. The attackers, who were wearing Indian Army fatigues, were suspected to belong to Jaish-e-Mohammed, an Islamist militant group designated a terrorist organization by India, US, UK and the UN. The attack was described as a terrorist incident in the Indian and foreign media. A further three soldiers who were admitted to hospital with injuries died, raising the death toll to seven soldiers. On 3 January, fresh gunshots were heard, and another security officer was killed by an IED explosion. The Pathankot–Jammu highway was sealed off as soon as news of the attack broke.[1] According to Indian intelligence officers, the attackers may have entered India on 31st December 2015 along the banks of the Beas River which cuts across the Pakistani border.[2] The attackers were aiming to destroy the aircraft and helicopters in the base, according to a call interception report.[3]

Gunshots were heard on the morning of 3rdJanuary, 2016, leading to speculation that more attackers were still in the airbase. A fresh IED explosionon3rdJanuary injured three National Security Guard personnel. A National Security Guard officer who was injured during the blast died in a hospital. Around noon, it was discovered that two attackers were still at large in the airbase. Security forces continued the operation on 4 January with reinforcements being deployed to the location. A fifth attacker was confirmed killed later during the day. The neutralisation of the sixth attacker was reported at 4.15 PM on5th January. The operation launched by the Indian Army to neutralise the attackers was called "Operation Dhangu" or "DhanguSuraksha", named after the place Dhangu where the base is located.[4]The operation continued on 4 January, and

a fifth attacker was confirmed killed. The United Jihad Council claimed responsibility for the attack on 4th January, 2016.[4]

The hijacking of a car of a superintendent of the Punjab Police the previous day was reportedly linked to the attack. People hijacked his car for transport. They did not know that it was a police car since the police lights were off. Media reports suggested that the attack was an attempt to derail a fragile peace process meant to stabilize the deteriorated relations between India and Pakistan, as several pieces of evidence were found linking the attackers to Pakistan. In Mid-January, Pakistan made the arrests of several members of the Jaish-e-Mohammed, which India suspects of involvement in attack.

Reports claimed that the people who carried out the attack in Pathankot were in regular touch with their Pakistani handlers. A report revealed that the two phone numbers to which calls were made by the attackers were from Pakistan. According to the report, the first number probably belonged to the mother of one of the militants, while the second one belonged to one of the handlers of the attackers. Intelligence Bureau officials told TOI that the attackers called their handler "ustaad" while describing their positions inside Punjab after crossing over from Pakistan.

The attackers called a number at 21:12 on 31 December from the phone of taxi driver Ikaagar Singh. Perpetrators also received four phone calls on Ikrar Singh's number. "On this number, in fact, the terrorist is heard telling the attacker to kill the taxi driver," the official told TOI. One of the attackers called up his mother in the middle of attack from the mobile phone of jeweller Rajesh Verma. The call was made at around 08:30, five hours after the attack was launched on the airbase. Maulana Masood Azhar, chief of Jaish-e-Mohammad, and his brother Abdul

Rauf Asghar, mastermind of IC-814 hijack case, are among four persons identified by Indian intelligence agencies as "handlers" behind the attack. The agencies found evidence that the conspiracy was hatched near Lahore. Indian defense Minister Manohar Parrikar said there are indications that some of the materials used were made in Pakistan.[5]

The Pakistan Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a press release condemning the attack and offered condolences. Foreign office spokesman Qazi Khalilullah said. "Building on the goodwill created during the recent high-level contacts between the two countries, Pakistan remains committed to partner with India as well as other countries in the region to completely eradicate the menace of terrorism afflicting our region."[6] Pakistan also complained that India accused the Pakistani state of the attack. Special assistant to Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, Irfan Siddiqui, said, "India should understand that Pakistan itself had been one of the greatest victims of terrorist attacks on its soil." He regretted that only after a few terrorist attacks India begins hurling baseless allegations. He advised India to review its stance by further saying, "India should create an environment of trust, as unfounded allegations only hamper the process of dialogue." Former foreign secretary of Pakistan Riaz Khokhar said, "India was trying to tarnish Pakistan's image and is using such attacks to derail talks. Pakistani news channel ARY News reported today that "some arrests" have been made in this regard but police did not confirm any arrest related to the Pathankot attack, as per PTI.

India's Strategy to Fight Against Terrorism

Terrorism in India, according to the Home Ministry, poses a significant threat to the people of India. Terrorism found in India includes ethno-nationalist terrorism, religious terrorism, left wing terrorism and narco terrorism.[8] The regions with long term terrorist activities have been Jammu and Kashmir, east-central and south-central India (Naxalism) and the Seven Sister States. In August 2008, National Security Advisor M K Narayanan has said that there are as many as 800 terrorist cells operating in the country.[9] As of 2013, 205 of the country's 608 districts were affected by terrorist activity. Terror attacks caused 231 civilian deaths in 2012 in India, compared to 11,098 terror-caused deaths worldwide, according

to the State Department of the United States; or about 2% of global terror fatalities while it accounts for 17.5% of global population.[10]

The Indian government uses the following working definition of terrorism, same as one widely used by Western nations as well as the United Nations, proposed by Schmid and Jongman in 1988.[11]

"Terrorism is an anxiety-inspiring method of repeated violent action, employed by (semi-) clandestine individual, group or state actors, for idiosyncratic, criminal or political reasons, whereby the direct targets of violence are not the main targets. The immediate human victims of violence are generally chosen randomly (targets of opportunity) or selectively (representative or symbolic targets) from a target population, and serve as message generators. Threat and violence-based communication processes between terrorist organization, victims, and main targets are used to manipulate the main target (audience(s)), turning it into a target of terror, a target of demands, or a target of attention, depending on whether intimidation, coercion, or propaganda is primarily sought."*Alex Schmid and Albert Jongman*[12.]

India subdivides terrorism in four major groups:[13]

1.Ethno-nationalist Terrorism - This form of terror focuses either (a) on creating a separate State within India or independent of India or in a neighbouring country, or (b) on emphasizing the views/response of one ethnic group against another. Violent Tamil Nationalist groups from India to address the condition of Tamils in Sri Lanka, as well as insurgent tribal groups in North East India are examples of ethno-nationalist terrorist activities.[14]

2.Religious Terrorism - This form of terror focuses on religious imperatives, a presumed duty or in solidarity for a specific religious group, against one or more religious groups. Mumbai 26/11 terror attack in 2008 from an Islamic group in Pakistan is an example of religious terrorism in India.[15]

3.Left wing Extremism - This form of terror focuses on economic ideology, where all the existing socio-political structures are seen to be economically exploitative in character and a revolutionary change through violent means is essential. The ideology of Marx, Engel, Mao, Lenin and others are considered as the only valid economic path. Maoist violence in

Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh are examples of left wing terrorism in India.[16]

4.Narco Terrorism - This form of terror focuses on creating illegal narcotics traffic zones. Drug violence in northwest India is an example of narco-terrorism in India.[17]

Major Terrorist Groups Active in India

There are scores of insurgent and terrorist groups operating in the country. Those recognized by the U.S. State Department as Foreign Terrorist Organizations (FTO) or other "groups of concern" are: [18]

● *Lashkar-e-Taiba* (LeT), whose name means "Army of the Pure," is a militant Islamist group operating in Pakistan as well as in Jammu and Kashmir. The group reportedly received funding from Pakistan's intelligence services until 2001, when the United States designated it an FTO and Pakistan froze its assets. LeT, which has ideological, but unconfirmed operational ties to al-Qaeda, aims to win sovereignty for Jammu and Kashmir and spread Islamic rule across India. The group is blamed for some of the most high-profile terrorist attacks in India, including the July 11, 2006 bombing of the Mumbai commuter rail.

● *Jaish-e-Muhammad*,(JeM),meaning "Army of Mohammed," is another Pakistan-based terrorist group operating in Jammu and Kashmir. Founded in 2000 by the former leader of the now-defunct group Harkat-ul-Ansar, Jaish-e-Muhammed seeks to drive India out of Jammu and Kashmir and transfer control of the region to Pakistan.

● *Harakatul-Mujahadeen* (HuM), or the "Islamic Freedom Fighters' Group," was founded in 1985 as an anti-Soviet group fighting in Afghanistan. When Soviet forces withdrew in 1989, the Pakistan-based HuM shifted its focus to Jammu and Kashmir. HuM seeks to battle "anti-Islamic forces" and its members have helped carry out operations as far away as Myanmar, Tajikistan, and Bosnia.

● *Harakatul-Jihad-I-Islami* (HUJI) was founded in 1980 to fight Soviets in Afghanistan but has since concentrated its efforts in Jammu and Kashmir. HUJI, which is based in Pakistan and Kashmir, primarily attacks Indian military targets, but it is believed to be linked to the abduction and slaying of five Western tourists in Jammu and Kashmir in 1995.

● *Jamiatul-Mujahadeen* is a small group of pro-Pakistan Kashmiri separatists operating in or near Pakistan. It is thought to be responsible for a pair of 2004 grenade attacks against political targets in India.

Strategies to Counter Terrorism in India

India's vulnerability to terrorism to a large measure is attributable to its geography – its borders are not secure. An open border with Nepal, a porous border with Bangladesh as well as the long Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir which allows for infiltration, contribute to the unhindered movement of terrorists from across the borders. India's coastal security also needs to be beefed up, as the Mumbai terrorist attack has demonstrated. Home grown terrorist groups, abetted and aided by external help, have also established a foothold. Socio economic and political motivations have also been contributing factors to violent activities.[21]

National Counter Terrorism Centre (NCTC) - The National Counter Terrorism Center (NCTC) is a proposed federal anti-terror agency to be created in India, modelled on the National Counterterrorism Center of the USA. The proposal arose after the 2008 Mumbai attacks aka 26/11 attacks where several intelligence and operational failures revealed the need for a federal agency with real time intelligence inputs of actionable value specifically to counter terrorist acts against India. The proposal has however met with much criticism from the Chief Ministers of various states who see this as a means of weakening India's federalism. The NCTC will derive its powers from the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act, 1967. It is to be a part of the Intelligence Bureau and will be headed by a Director who will report to the Director IB and the Home Secretary. But the modified original draft of NCTC says that this system does not come under purview of Intelligence Bureau and states are taken into confidence before the Centre carries on any operation in their territories. The NCTC will execute counter-terror operations and collect, collate and disseminate data on terrorism besides maintaining a data base on terrorists and their associates including their families. The NCTC has been empowered to analyses intelligence shared by agencies like the Intelligence Bureau and select what it deems suitable. It has also been granted powers to conduct searches and arrests

in any part of India and will formulate responses to terror threats.[20]

However, the body has not seen the light of the day because of the opposition of states who consider it as diluting the federal structure of the country. This is because unlike the American National Counterterrorism Center, which deals only with strategic planning and integration of intelligence, or the British Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre, which has also has a coordinating role, the NCTC has sweeping powers to conduct operations. This, the states say, goes against the constitutional provisions which place law and order under the state's list. While the government has altered the original provisions by keeping the NCTC out of IB and handing over arrested suspects to state police, but these have still not satisfied states and resultantly, the all-important terrorism fighting organization remains hanging in limbo.

The state police and its intelligence set-up: Under India's federal Constitution, the responsibility for policing and maintenance of law and order is that of the individual states. The central government in New Delhi can only give them advice, financial help, training and other assistance to strengthen their professional capabilities and share with them the intelligence collected by it. The responsibility for follow-up action lies with the state police.

The national intelligence community: This consists of the internal intelligence agency (the ministry of home affairs' Intelligence Bureau), the external intelligence agency (the Cabinet secretariat's Research and Analysis Wing), the Defence Intelligence Agency, and the intelligence directorates general of the armed forces.

The IB collects terrorism-related intelligence inside the country and RAW does it outside. The DIA and the intelligence directorates general of the armed forces essentially collect tactical intelligence during their counter-terrorism operations in areas such as Jammu and Kashmir, Nagaland, etc. where they are deployed.

Physical security agencies: These include the Central Industrial Security Force, responsible for physical security at airports and sensitive establishments; the National Security Guards, a specially trained intervention force to terminate terrorist situations such as hijacking, hostage-taking, etc; and the Special Protection Group, responsible for the security of the prime minister and former prime ministers.

Paramilitary forces: These include the Central Reserve Police Force and the Border Security Force, which assist the police in counter-terrorism operations when called upon to do so.

The Army: Their assistance is sought as a last resort when the police and paramilitary forces are not able to cope with a terrorist situation. But in view of Pakistan's large-scale infiltration in Jammu and Kashmir and the presence and activities of a large number of Pakistani mercenaries, many of them ex-servicemen, the army has a more active, permanent and leadership role in counter-terrorism operations here. What India is facing in J&K is not just terrorism, but a proxy war being waged by the Pakistani Army through its *jihadi* surrogates.[22]

What needs to be Done?

• All cities must establish a network of mohalla committees and housing societies to monitor all suspicious movement in their own locality. Each city must have a dedicated police officer to man this 24x7. This measure will enhance both intelligence gathering as well as alert police to movement of terrorists. Police can circulate photographs and information of the fugitive suspects to these committees. In short a city wide concept of 'neighbourhood watch' needs to be implemented immediately. This will cost next to nothing,

● In many western countries the police or intelligence agencies have launched 'sting operations' to lure and nab would be terrorists before they commit an act of sabotage. It is time our security establishment did the same;

● Like guerrillas without help similarly terrorists without local help would be like fish out of water. Infringement of laws to support acts of terror either for money or due to ideology needs to be viewed

seriously by both the police (and especially) the judiciary;

● There is an urgent need to create a well thought out standard operating procedure in case of a terrorist incident. Once an incident is declared as a 'terrorist incident' by the designated authority (could be the police commissioner in case of a city) then all resources civil, military or private must come under the pre-designated commander. All agencies must be obliged to obey his orders. It is the lack of unified command and pooling of resources on 26/11 that resulted in the terrorists holding out for over 72 hours and recent Pathankot attack took almost four days.

● The judiciary must deal with terrorism related cases quickly and punish the mass murderers. It is time that the judiciary sheds its proclivity to give the benefit of doubt to the criminals while doubting the intention of the law enforcers. If not corrected in time, we may soon come to a situation where the honest policeman will prefer not to act.[23]

Conclusion

Pluralism and freedom of choice is the core value of Indian civilization. Pluralism of worship, thought, language, dress and aesthetics has been embedded in the Indian past for at least 5,000 years. This is the best guarantee for the religious or ethnic minorities and not merely the constitution. India has not become secular or plural because of the constitution. It is the other way round and that is because majority of Indians believe in pluralism that India enacted a constitution that does not discriminate on basis of caste or creed.

There's a connection between Modi's visit to Pakistan and the terrorist attacks, but not a fundamentally causal one. Rather, the visit was a trigger for carefully laid plans in a pre-existing terrorist playbook. The idea to attack Pathankot didn't first arise on December 25, when Modi touched down unexpectedly in Pakistan. Such attacks are months in the making. India needs to be alive to the probability that Pakistani terrorists and their ISI handlers have plans to attack every major military installation within range of Pakistan. There are also plans, surely, for assaults on Indian nuclear installations and naval bases, as well as Indian diplomatic missions.

India cannot afford mismanagement of a strategic border state. Corruption not only distorts the local economy and politics, it destroys morale, creating the perfect conditions for terrorist infiltration and attack. Now that it's apparent that terrorists (and the ISI) have widened their incursive focus beyond Kashmir, India cannot let any of its western border states be so rotten.

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Indo-US Cooperation on Countering Terrorism: Zero – Tolerance

Dr. Sanghamitra Patnaik

Introduction

The root of modern geopolitics was found in the work of a German geographer Professor Friedrich Ratzel in 1897 who coined the phrase anthrogeographical, meaning a combination of anthropology, geography and politics. A Swedish Professor of geography at Gothenburg University, Professor Rudolf Kjellen was usually regarded as the founder of the science of geopolitics in 1900, who used the term geopolitics (in Swedish "geopolitik"). The term geopolitics means a study of the influence of such factors as geography, economics, and demography on the politics and especially the foreign policy of a state. The behavior of nation-states varies in response to the geography, economy and demography in the international scenario.

For example, Rear Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan a professor at the U.S. Naval Academy published the first of many works on the subject of geopolitics in 1890. Based on a study of previous world powers, Portugal, Spain and England, he concluded that maritime commerce was indispensable to the economic prosperity of a great power. So according to Admiral Mahan it led the United States to develop a powerful naval fleet that was engaged in the Spanish-American War of 1898.

During World War II, another theory of geopolitics was developed in the United States. Professor Nicholas Spykman felt the importance of both sea and land power. He located the real potential of Eurasia in the "inner crescent." He defined this area as Western Europe, the Middle East, South Asia, Southeast Asia and the Far East. This "Rimland was important because the region had access to the sea and to interior regions. Professor Spykman's Rimland theory eventually served as an imminent factor justifying the U.S. policy of containment of the spread of communism during Cold War. The end of Cold War and the onset of globalization created a challenging geo-political scenario in international politics.

The Aftermath of Cold War and Onset of Globalization

The culmination of Cold War did not bring an end to international tensions. During Cold War, the United States and the Soviet Union acted like the cork in a champagne bottle- a stabilizing force. The balance of power was maintained by both the super powers by limiting the use of force. With the fall of Berlin Wall, it was like pulling the cork out of the bottle, all the individual nation states were free to go their own way. As Richard Haass, in his book *Intervention*, pointed out "Duopolies, or systems based on two poles, are simpler and easier to manage than those with multiple decision-making centers (Hass, 1994).

The term globalization has been interpreted differently by different writers. It is a concept that paves for the inexorable integration of markets, nation-states and technologies. It enables individuals, corporations and nation-states to reach round the world farther, faster, deeper and cheaper than ever before. The unprecedented revolution in global communication system brought a radical change in the international politics. It weakened the influence of nation-state. The increased communications make it very difficult for state to control individual behavior. The impact of regional organizations and multi-national corporations limited the power of a state to control the events within its territory than in the past.

The revolutionary changes in both conventional and unconventional military technologies enhanced the capability of small groups / individuals to alter the structure of the international system as propounded by the neo-realists like Kenneth Waltz. The groups like ISIS and other terrorist groups became more powerful to unleash instability and terror throughout the world. Richard Haass calls this a period of 'international deregulation'- a period where

"There are new players, new capabilities and new alignments, but as yet, no new rules."(ibid)

The Geopolitics of Global Terrorism

In the late 1990s, Dr.Thomas P.M. Barnett, a professor at the Naval War College, while studying the post Cold War situation, looked at the factor of globalization and its impact on individual nation-states. His studies point out that the globalization is simply too big and too complex to reach any clear-cut conclusion to evaluate its impact as good or bad.

According to him, the terrorist attack of September 11, 2001 was not an attack by a great power, or a nation, or even an army, but by a group whose bases of operation were located in gap states of the world. He defines Gap states are those states where globalization is absent or have less impact. The progress is thwarted by repressive regimes, widespread poverty and disease, frequent mass killings and conflicts that encourage the global terrorists. The operating base of Osama Bin Laden and Al Qaeda were in Sudan and Afghanistan. The U.S. Special Forces were deployed in northwestern Pakistan, Somalia and Yemen which all fall in the same category. Dr. Barnett's said, "A country's potential to warrant a U.S. military response is inversely related to its globalization connectivity." (Barnett, 2002) Military strategists were made to start thinking about operations in those gap states of the world which seem to be the breeding ground of global terrorism. The September 11, attacks was a clear alert from the gap states against the core states and against the whole concept of globalization. Al Qaeda started from Afghanistan, one of the Gap states by using icons of international connectivity as weapons (United and American Airlines) to smash World Trade Center in New York City -the financial nerve centers (symbols of globalization).

One year after the September 11 attacks, the Bush administration published a new National Security Strategy designed to deal with the post-Cold War world. It reflected very closely the principles outlined by Dr. Barnett. While emphasizing on the New Strategy, President Bush described the current situation by saying, "Enemies in the past needed great armies and great industrial capabilities to endanger America. Now, shadowy networks of individuals can bring great chaos and suffering to our shores for less than it costs to purchase a single tank (Bush, 2002).

He also says that terrorists are organized to turn the power of modern technologies against United States. In pointing out the differences of the current world from the Cold War era, he said, "Today, the world's great powers find themselves on the same side - united by common dangers of terrorist violence and chaos." In emphasizing the problems of the gap states, the president said, "The events of September 11, 2001 taught us that weak states, like Afghanistan, can pose as great a danger to our national interests as strong states. Poverty does not make poor people to become terrorists and murders. Yet poverty, weak institutions and corruption can make weak states vulnerable to terrorist networks and drug cartels within their borders"(Bush, 2002).

The new National Security Strategy outlined 8 goals (ibid) which all fit into the geopolitical theory pointed out by Dr. Barnett. The 8 goals of the strategy are:

- Champion aspirations for human dignity.
- Strengthen alliances to defeat global terrorism and work to prevent attacks against us and our friends.
- Work with others to defuse regional conflicts.
- Prevent our enemies from threatening us, our allies and our friends with weapons of mass destruction.
- Ignite a new era of global economic growth through free markets and free trade.
- Expand the circle of development by opening societies and building the infrastructure of democracy.
- Develop agendas for cooperative action with the other main centers of global power
- Transform America's national security institutions to meet the challenges and opportunities of the twenty-first century.

The New Strategy emphasized on strengthening alliances and tackle global terrorism by collaborating with the main centers of power. India as an emerging power fits well in to the new pattern of US strategy. The Indo-U.S. Strategic relations came as a welcome step in this direction.

Indo-US Cooperative Engagement

The Indo- US relations represent a new landmark in the changed international scenario. They are the proud fore- runners of the two most populous democracies of the world. The determined effort of the US administration to assist in India's rise as a major power has significant implications for US interests in Asia in general and South Asia in particular. The collapse of the Soviet Union has changed the balance of power. Every country including India is looking for an appropriate place in a new international matrix.

The whole Cold War period had seen hardly any significant economic cooperation and political convergence between India and the United States except the brief interlude of cooperation during the Indo-China War in 1962, military aid between 1954 and 1964 (worth $10 billion) and Memorandum of Understanding signed in 1984 on transfer of technology.

The growing Indo-US defence cooperation of 1980s was reflected by efforts to increase reciprocal exchange of information and personnel. The military-to-military interaction stated to improve under the 'Kickleighter proposals' (April 1991). The Kickleighter's proposal was formalized by the 'Agreed Minute on Defence Cooperation' in January 1995. A Defence Policy Group (DPG) was established to become a primary mechanism to guide the Indo-US defence ties (Chari 2003). The period of 1990s was a period of cooperative engagement between the two countries. The end of the Cold War brought modifications in Indian nonalignment policy, leading to the intensification of strategic interaction between the US and India.

When the Indo-US relations began to move in a positive direction in the 1990s, issues like signing of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), the Kashmir issue, the human rights issue and India's nuclear test put hurdles on the path of Indo-US relations. Indian nuclear tests triggered a set of stringent US sanctions. Still, the US tried to retain as much of the military-to-military relationship as possible as Clinton, instead of isolating India, followed the 'Strategy of Engagement' (Talbott 2004). There was a bilateral strategic dialogue between the US Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott and Indian External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh in June 1998 (Singh 2006).

However, during the George W. Bush administration the growing Indo-US bonhomie entered into a 'strategic partnership'. The Bush administration redefined Indo-US cooperation as they saw strategically important India as a potential partner in providing peace and stability in the Indian Ocean by conceptualizing new Asian balance of power amidst the rising China. The United States recognized India as a rising power, as it has world's second fastest growing economy with a stable and successful democracy. Consequently, in May 2001, US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage visited India to explain President Bush's strategic framework including a Missile Defence Programme. He hinted at countering of rogue states like Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea and some in India's neighborhood those support terrorism. India's unconditional support for a missile defence system and full cooperation with the US after 9/11 was seen positively by the Pentagon.

The high level military and political leaders' visits between both the countries became more frequent. ('Text of Ambassador Robert Blackwill's Speech',2003). The cooperation in the defence and military sector emerged as one of the most crucial components in the Indo-US bilateral relationship, paving the way for another breakthrough in the form of the Next Step in the Strategic Progress (NSSP) in 2004.

The Indo – US partnership that has made a new beginning in the latter parts of the Clinton Administration reached a new high with the US-India agreements in June and July 2005 between US President George W. Bush and Indian Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh. The Joint Statement issued by them showed their resolve to establish a "global partnership" through increased cooperation on various issues. The post-9/11 Indo-US cooperation that highlighted various important issues like 'Counter – Terrorism', 'Energy', 'Agriculture' and 'Health', 'Science & Technology' 'Education', 'Business', and 'Culture', were widely viewed as the reflections of the positive new trajectories to carve out a The Indo-U.S. strategic Dialogue initiated in the 2010 through

5th Strategic Dialogue 2014 underlines the following areas of convergence:

● To broaden and deepen the US-India global strategic partnership and
· To chart a vision for the future- centered on promoting shared prosperity, peace and stability.

● counterterrorism cooperation,
● cyber security,
● aviation safety,
● women's empowerment,
● scientific cooperation and clean energy,
● information sharing, and higher education

Indo-U.S. Strategic Dialogue Global Campaign against Terrorism

The terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon and their aftermath made US to realize its vulnerabilities, and sensitized it to the issue of terrorism; with which India has been suffering from almost two decades. The United States adopted a more reserved approach towards state-sponsored terrorism until it became a victim in September 2001. The unprecedented event compelled US to cover half of the globe to fight terrorism in Afghanistan. However, the US Administration gave way to the strong diplomatic effort of India when US Secretary of State, Colin Powell acknowledged the terrorist attack in Kashmir as a heinous crime that affected India like other nations of the world.[1] Since then India has been recognized as a key partner in the global coalition against terrorism.

The Indo-US joint effort of the global campaign against terrorism was rightly been manifested in the Joint Working Group (JWG), established in the year 2000.It was "proved to be a useful mechanism for exchange of information, intelligence sharing, anti-terrorism training programs and strengthening institutional links between crime prevention agencies in the two countries."

Counterterrorism

United States and India are jointly striving to expand the scope of their counterterrorism cooperation, which includes work on bioterrorism and cyber security. The emerging "strategic partnership" between United States and India is increasingly focusing on counterterrorism cooperation. In November 2001, US President, George Bush and then-Indian Prime Minster, Atal Bihari Vajpayee had shared their great concern when they agreed that terrorism was not only a security threat to United States and India, but it was also a danger to freedom, democracy, international security and stability. In 2002, the Indo-U.S. Cyber Security Forum was launched to protect their critical infrastructures from cyber attack. On June 2005, the 'New Framework for the U.S.-India Defense Relationship' enlisted terrorism and violent religious extremism as the key security interests, and also called for strengthening their respective mutual defense capabilities. In April 2006 session of Indo US- Joint Working Group on Counterterrorism, both the countries had reflected their determinations to further advance bilateral cooperation and information sharing on areas like bioterrorism, aviation security, cyber-security and terrorism, weapons of mass destruction and terrorist funding. In May 2006, United States came forward to assist India in demining, counterinsurgency training for police forces and providing humanitarian relief for displaced persons affected by the Maoist rebellion.

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Indo - US Fight Against Terror

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Indo-US Joint Working Group on Counterterrorism

In February and November, 2007, the Indo-U.S. joint working group on counterterrorism met in New Delhi as well as in Washington to discuss various strategies to counter the global menace of terrorism. The discussions primarily included regional counterterrorism efforts, threat assessments in South Asia and the Middle East, bioterrorism, weapons of mass destruction, and the on-going Anti-terrorism Assistance Training Program. They also discussed about terrorist finance and money laundering, the ideological dimensions of terrorism, information sharing, and widened cooperation for preventing terrorist acts.

Operation Vajraprahar' –Indo-US joint maneuvers on counter-terrorism

Operation Vajraprahar' was three week-long joint maneuvers by Indo-American Special Forces on counter-terrorism in Mizoram. On August, 2008, around thirty American Special Forces personnel took part at Vairengte Counter-Insurgency and Jungle Warfare School -100 km away from Aizawl. The focus was on tackling terrorism in urban landscape, which drew upon the experiences of both US and Indian forces in Afghanistan and Iraq and in Jammu and Kashmir respectively.

The program facilitated the forces to be acquainted with destroying missions in the dense jungles, jungle survival tactics, and mock operations involving helicopters, jungle reflexive shooting and fast roping techniques called slithering. In addition, the personnel are trained in interrogation techniques and identification and diffusion of improvise explosive devices (IEDs). (http://www.india-defence.com/reports-3941)

The interplay of terrorism, weapons of mass destruction and countries those adopt as their state policy to transfer these weapons to the terrorists pose a great danger to humankind. It attracts urgent attentions of both the countries to chalk out a new strategy to tackle terrorism from the global as well as regional perspectives. The dynamics of Indo-US relations depend much on carving out a well-guarded policy by redefining terrorism in the context of state-sponsored terrorism like Pakistan's involvement in 26/11 Mumbai attacks. In this complex situation, United States need to give a fresh look, while analyzing Pakistan's policy of defining terrorists as freedom fighters in Kashmir and offering them all types of technical and monetary support. The US drone attack on the Al Qaeda and the Taliban in Waziristan, tribal areas of Pakistan, makes the issue more sensitive by questioning the sovereignty of Pakistan.

Prime Minister Modi and President Obama reiterated their strong condemnation of terrorism with 'zero tolerance' and reaffirmed their deep concern over the continued threat posed by transnational terrorism including by groups like Al Qaida and the ISIS. They reaffirmed the need for joint and concerted efforts to disrupt entities such as Lashkar-e-Tayyiba, Jaish-e-Mohammad, D Company and the Haqqani Network. They agreed to continue ongoing efforts through the Homeland Security Dialogue as well as the next round of the U.S.-India Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism in late 2015 to develop actionable elements of bilateral engagement. They also agreed to continue to work toward an agreement to share information on known and suspected terrorists. They also reiterated their call for Pakistan to bring the perpetrators of the November 2008 terrorist attack in Mumbai to justice. The President and the Prime Minister appreciated the positive cooperative engagement between the Indian and the U.S. authorities to counter the threat of IEDs and to develop counterterrorism best practices.

During President Obama's visit to India in November 2010, the Indo-US joint endeavor on Homeland Security Dialogue was initiated to emphasize on operational cooperation, counter-terrorism technology transfers and capacity building. In 2011, the U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano while visiting India in May 2011 held the first round of the dialogue. The second meeting of this Dialogue was held in May 2013 in Washington D.C. The Dialogue reviewed the progress/ activities of each of the Homeland Security Dialogue Sub-Groups, namely: (a) Megacities Policing; (b) Combating Illicit Finance, Bulk Cash Smuggling, and Counterfeiting; (c) Cyber-security and Critical Infrastructure Protection; (d) Port, Border, Maritime, Transportation and Supply Chain Security; (e) Science and Technology Cooperation; and (f) Capacity Building. In December 2013, India-U.S Police Chief Conference on homeland security was organized in New Delhi.

U.S.-India Homeland Security Dialogue 2014
The Department of Homeland Security and Ministry of Home Affairs planned to hold a third U.S.-India Homeland Security Dialogue to enhance homeland security cooperation. They emphasized on building up capacity in cyber security and critical infrastructure protection, countering illicit finance, global supply chain security, megacity policing, and science and technology. In January 2014, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement repatriated to India three recovered stolen sand stone sculptures dating from the 11[th]century, valued at more than $1.5 million. U.S.-India Counterterrorism Joint Working Group stressed on continued exchange of senior experts of both the countries to hold an in-depth exchange of views on common areas of interest and collaboration to further mutual U.S.-India counterterrorism goals. The cooperative efforts include coordination in international fora including the UN and GCTF, and mutually agreed bilateral capacity building measures.

Law Enforcement Collaboration
This emphasized on ongoing cooperation and consultations between the State Department's Office of the Legal Adviser, the U.S. Department of Justice and India's Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of External Affairs. This includes efforts by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the National Investigative Agency to share of electronic evidence to combat cybercrime and mitigate the threat of terrorism.

Indo-US Joint Efforts on Combating Terrorism-2015
On September 23, 2015 the U.S.-India Joint Declaration on Combating Terrorism was announced by Secretary of State John Kerry and Indian Minister of External Affairs Sushma Swaraj on the occasion of the inaugural U.S.-India Strategic and Commercial Dialogue. Secretary of State John Kerry and Minister of External Affairs Sushma Swaraj reaffirmed the commitment of India and the United States to combat terrorism in all its forms, which is a profound threat to global peace and security, and to uphold the common values of democracy, justice, and the rule of law. They reaffirmed to translate President Obama's and Prime Minister Modi's vision to transform the U.S.-India relationship into a defining counterterrorism partnership for the 21st century .The meeting reiterated the threat posed by Al-Qa'ida and its affiliates, Lashkar-e-Tayibba, Jaish-e-Mohammad, D Company, and the Haqqani Network, and other regional groups that seek to undermine stability in South Asia. There was a call for Pakistan to bring to justice the perpetrators of the 2008 Mumbai attack. They strongly condemned the July 27, 2015 terrorist attack in Gurdaspur, Punjab, and August 5, 2015, attack in Udhampur, Jammu and Kashmir.

There was a clear reorganization of the serious threat posed by ISIL/Da'esh to global security and affirmed efforts to degrade and defeat this threat in accordance with the provisions of United Nations Security Council Resolutions 2178, 2170, and 2199. The agreement was signed in January 2015 between the U.S. Department of Treasury and India's Ministry of Finance to enhance cooperation against money laundering and terrorism financing.

There was great appreciation for the 15 year anniversary of the U.S.-India Counterterrorism Joint Working Group and the provision of Anti-Terrorism Assistance (ATA) training for more than 1100 Indian security personnel since 2009.

They recognized India's participation in the February 2015 White House Summit on Countering Violent Extremism and reaffirmed their support for a

UN Comprehensive Convention against International Terrorism that advances and strengthens the framework for global cooperation and reinforces that no cause or grievance justifies terrorism. There was an agreement on the U.S.-India Megacity Policing Exchange, an initiative to deepen collaboration on training and community policing between local and state law enforcement. Both the countries moved forward in signing the Memorandum of Understanding between the Indian National Police Academy (Hyderabad) and the New York Police Department. They proposed for the next meeting of the Homeland Security Dialogue in early 2016.

Conclusion

The Indo-US cooperation on countering terrorism can reinvigorate their relationship if both the countries understand the sensitivity of the issue from each other's point of view and act accordingly. This is a challenge from the non-state actors with global membership. It can only be tackled with collaborative efforts on the part of both United States and India- the largest and oldest democracies of the world. They should join hands to build up the firewall of 'Zero Tolerance' along the line of the gap states so that those states can be deterred from exporting the man and materials to play havoc in seam and the core states.

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Geopolitics of Counter-Terrorism in Afghanistan: SCO's Strategy is in Question

Dr. Bawa Singh

Since its political independent existence 1747, Afghanistan had been useful for the great empires for sustaining the balance of power. The geopolitical rivalry between British India and Tsarist Russia from the last century (1880-1901) to date had complicated the security situation in Afghanistan. It was not the issue of sovereignty rather it was security concerns of British India and Russia that determined Afghanistan as a state.

In the 1980s, Afghanistan was entrapped in the internal political conflict on account of the Communist coup. The security situation started getting worsened due to aid and support rendered by the opposing external powers having divergent geopolitical and geostrategic interest in Afghanistan. In order to restore peace, under the Geneva Accords of April 1988, it was decided to stop the aid to both conflicting sides in Afghanistan. But geopolitics played its role and rather than being helpful in the implementation of the accord, it created the Mujahedeen, who became headache for not only for Afghanistan and creators but also for the entire globe. The SCO was established to face the security challenges arising out of Afghanistan. During the Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) that was launched by the US and ISAF, the SCO did not want to get engage militarily in Afghanistan. However, all the neighbouring countries have supported the global war on terrorism (GWOT) of the US and NATO in Afghanistan by sharing intelligence inputs and whatever the possible support to the OEF except the militarily support. The killing of Osama bin Laden and changing geopolitical and geostrategic dynamics compelled the ISAF to withdraw which has started by the end of 2014.

According to an expert of the Eurasian issues (D.A Mahapatra 2014), the geostrategic location, its ethnic composition, and geo-cultural proximity of Afghanistan with countries in the Eurasian region, makes it a zone of interest to the SCO including the new joined members India and Pakistan. Sharing geographical proximity with SCO members, its peace and stability becomes a major concern for SCO members. In this context, he argued that perhaps it is the regional organization -the SCO is one of the most appropriate platforms to discuss the Afghanistan issue as it holds security as a key rationale behind its existence.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is considered primarily as a China-centric organization. It is considered that SCO has been serving more or less China's strategic objectives and end-games. SCO is China centric and in order to counter Chinese hegemony, Russia has been supporting Indian membership whereas at the same time China is in favour of Pakistan. Ultimately after a long deliberation of one decade or so, in the Ufa Summit 2015, SCO has formally accepted India and Pakistan as full members. Indian strategic commentator Subash Kapila has argued in one of his articles that joining of these both countries would plague the organization with lot many contradictions. These countries have been accusing one another for fomenting the terrorism activities.

Institutional Engagements: SCO and Afghanistan

In order to control the spill over effect of this problem, the SCO wanted to seek cooperation by institutionalising its engagements with Afghanistan. The engagements between SCO and Afghanistan have started formally in the year of 2005 when the SCO and Afghanistan Contact Group protocol was signed. The main focus of this group was to enhance cooperation and to discuss peace related issues. In this group, diplomats and experts from both sides were included and it was also decided to make interaction with institutions of Afghanistan. The establishment of this group was vital for both sides because it

provides the opportunity to interact and cooperate with each other (The SCO-Afghanistan Contact Group between the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, 2005).

In June 2012, SCO has granted the observer status to Afghanistan. The inclusion of Afghanistan into SCO proved a milestone as both the parties could help out each other to face and check terrorism, drug trafficking and weapon smuggling etc. which are becoming the major regional security challenges. Luan (2012) has argued that Afghanistan being on-board of SCO, it would be easier for organizational members to counter the terrorist and separatist groups, who are using Afghanistan as a base for the activities in the region like IMU.

Afghanistan's entry in SCO was supported by all the organization members in general and encouraged and supported by Russia in particular. According to Russian Foreign Minister, the engagement and interactions between both SCO and Afghanistan would be very helpful for the eradication of terrorism and for regional stability as argued by a perceptible thinker Kundu (2012). Afghanistan is making efforts to get full membership of the SCO. Afghanistan's Pajhwok news agency reports that Dmitry Mezentsev, the General Secretary of the SCO has confirmed this report.

Afghanistan: A Victim of Geopolitical Curse

Since the inception of Pakistan, the bilateral relations had remained off the keel due the latter's big brotherly attitude whereas relations between India and Afghanistan have remained very warm and cordial. All the major and regional players are having geopolitical interests in Afghanistan. The vested interests changed into a geopolitical war between the US and former USSR in Afghanistan. The communism was expanding in Afghanistan on account of Russian influence. In order to check communism in Afghanistan, the US along with UK, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan started supporting financially the warlords (Mujahideen) who could reign the communism of the Afghanistan central government as well as weaken the pro-Soviet regime (Osinga 2005; Saikal&Maley, 1990).[1]

Aligning of Afghanistan with Soviet Union in general and the West in particular enraged Pakistan. Pakistan wanted to keep Afghanistan under its control and aligning of the latter's with the West further enraged Pakistan. João and Guilherme (2013) argued in their article that Pakistan's Minister of Interior, Neseerullah Babar, recruited, trained and armed a number of madrasa students to join a few former Pashtun Mujahedeen fighters (da Silva &Simionato, 2013).[2]

Terrorism in Afghanistan

Afghanistan has been highly infested with terrorism. Geopolitics, religious fanaticism, internal fighting, poverty, inequality and underdevelopment were some of the causes responsible for the growing of terrorism in Afghanistan. The first group of terrorism in Afghanistan was known as Afghan Taliban. It is believed that it is being operated and sported from Pakistan becoming the core of the Afghan insurgency. This faction is divided into two groups- one is liberal, open to talks with government and other one believes in extremist ideology and because of this, conciliation is becoming hard to realize. Katzman has argued in one of his articles that this terrorist group has not only been sharing close proximity with Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate (ISI) but also the fact is that it is being protected, supported and for hurting the Indian interests in Afghanistan as well. Hikmatyar is another terrorist group, operating in Afghanistan. It is considered as a liberal group who wanted to keep the options open for reconciliation with the Afghan government. Laskhar-e-Tayyiba (LET), another small Pakistani group based in Afghanistan, used to oppose Indian control of Kashmir. Lashkar-i-Janghvi, another small terrorist group has often been accused of conducting attacks on Afghanistan's Hazara community (Katzman 2013).[3]

Genesis of SCO and Its Potential Security Challenges

Originally established it was Shanghai Five in 1996, rechristened itself as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization after the inclusion of Uzbekistan in 2001 that comprised of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan as member countries. Its charter also necessitates the promotion and cooperation in politics, trade, economy, and culture

to education, energy, and transportation. It has two permanent headquarters, the secretariat in Beijing and the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) in Tashkent, the Uzbek capital.

The political instability and radicalisation of Afghanistan also affected the Central Asian Republics. The new members- India and Pakistan of SCO are likely to join formally in 2016 which have also been facing terrorism and separatism. The established links among these terrorists groups are being used to smuggle narcotics from the largest producer- Afghanistan via Central Asia to its end-use markets in Russia and Europe through Central Asia. Almost all countries of SCO and other regional countries are becoming the markets for drugs from Afghanistan. On account of these contagion diseases, SCO has been making efforts to take Afghanistan on board to check these major challenges in general and terrorism in particular.

By the end of 2014, the partial withdrawal of International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) has taken place; however, it has failed to root out terrorism and brought the rival factions together in Afghanistan. Worsening security situation, the pre and post phase of withdrawal of ISAF remained one of the major concerns for the SCO members. The Secretary of the Russian Security Council, Nikolai Patrushev, who participated in the Dushanbe Meeting 2014, said, "Russia and its SCO partners share their concerns over a possible negative development of the situation in Afghanistan after this year's planned withdrawal of the International coalition forces." During this meeting, the re-emerging of terrorist groups, the violation of human rights, proliferation of religious fanaticism, and drug trafficking to neighbouring regions are some of the prospects that heavily surfaced in the calculations of the SCO members. Despite one and half decade of the OEF, there is no improvement in security situation; rather it is becoming a regional security concern. Stability and security of Afghanistan has direct or indirect impacts for the region and in view of this, the re-emerging of terrorism is becoming one of the major security challenges for the SCO members. The fear of an unstable Afghanistan was the factor behind the creation of the SCO. Vorobiev said,

"One should not forget that the SCO emerged as a response to immediate threats of terrorism and drug trafficking, which came from Afghanistan in the late 1990s. The SCO idea was born from a collective demand for a regional coalition to combat them" (Vorobiev 2012).[4]

SCO: Changing Geopolitical Dynamics

SCO has been created for the protection from three major evils: separatism, terrorism and extremism. But on account of its internal geopolitics, it has been moving in that direction at snail's speed. Two new members- India and Pakistan have joined this organization. Both the countries see SCO as an important regional organization to capitalize their geostrategic and geopolitical interests.

Getting engaged with SCO by these countries is fraught with multiple challenges, linked to the complex geopolitical environment from the prism of regional factors like Russia, China, Central Asia and Pakistan. India is holding a very dominant position in South Asia. Its neighbours are very apprehensive of its hegemony. In order to restrict the Indian influence in South Asia, the neighbouring countries in general and Pakistan in particular wanted to engage China in SAARC. Whereas on the other side, China and Russia are the prime movers of the SCO, but on account of the strong economic presence of Chinese in Central Asia, the latter one is being outfoxed. Thus, Russia wanted to counterbalance China in SCO, and for that it wanted to engage India in the organization whereas the latter is very reluctant to support the full membership of India. China supported Pakistan's membership to the SCO. With the changing geostrategic dynamics, Umair Jamal has argued in one of his articles that close cooperation of India and Pakistan has become compulsion for Chinese and Russian security concerns particularly from Afghanistan where the former ones are having diverging interests. With the divergent and contrasting geopolitical interests, the SCO members are not supporting one another in the counter-terrorism strategies.

SCO's Strategy for Counter-Terrorism

The terrorism, separatism and extremism have been identified as the major security threats of the members as well as the contiguous regions. During the Tashkent

Summit (Uzbekistan), held on 16–17 June 2004, the Regional Antiterrorism Structure (RATS) was established. The cross-border drug crimes under the counter-terrorism were also decided to fight in 2006. However, Grigory Logninov argued that the SCO has no plans to become a military bloc but with the increased threats of "terrorism, extremism and separatism" compelled to make necessary a full-scale involvement of armed forces (Fahim, 2010, p.183).[5]The organization has also signed an agreement with the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) in October 2007, encompassing the issues like as security, crime, and drug trafficking (Bae& Kim, 2014, p. 173). [6]

According to Neves Junior and Piccolli (2012), there were two different approaches to Afghanistan problem of terrorism in and the declaration of the "War on Terror": the interventionist approach, practiced by the United States; and (ii) the regional institutionalization of the fight against terrorism, put into action by China and Russia, with some influence from India. In contrast to the first strategy, the second one gives importance to the role of the state in fighting terrorist and insurgent menaces. Neves and Piccoli have argued that the second one is a broader conception of radical Islamism and it stood for the principle of non-intervention in internal affairs; rather it works for rebuilding or strengthening of national states in South Asia. The SCO has been in favour of the second strategy in which it has tried to strengthen Afghanistan strategically, politically and economically.

The first strategy was put into action by the US along with NATO. The U.S. government started Global War on Terror (GWOT) by launching the - Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) in Afghanistan on October 7, 2001. The aim of the US intervention in Afghanistan was to capture or kill Osama-bin-Laden and other Al-Qaeda members, to dismantle the Al-Qaeda bases in Afghanistan, and to remove the Taliban from power and to establish a democratic government in Afghanistan (Stephen &Snetkov, 2012).[7]

The SCO has adopted the second strategy in this regard, where more importance is given to the state. The SCO started to institutionalize its engagement with Afghanistan in order to take it on board. The first step in direction was extending observer status to Afghanistan in Beijing Summit 2012 (Xinhuanet 2012). The Afghan government and the SCO Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure have instituted a protocol for sharing important information in order to collaborate on averting, identifying and eliminating terrorism. Currently, SCO is also considering the Afghanistan full membership as the nation has officially petitioned the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) for membership.

Afghanistan figured prominently in SCO's strategy in 2005, when the SCO-Afghanistan Contact Group was established. This group acted as a forum for dialogue and cooperation between both the sides. Rahimov has argued that the main issues of concern before the two sides were how to restrain the spill-over effects of terrorism and drug trafficking. Strengthening of Afghanistan's state capabilities and the enhancement of cooperation for anti-narcotics security were given the top priorities (Rahimov, 2013).[8] In order to seek cooperation from other regional organizations, dialogue initiatives with the European Union concerning Afghanistan have been launched. The SCO has been inviting Afghanistan to be a participant in its Annual Summits since 2005. In the Summit 2007, all the heads of the member countries expressed deep concerns and expressed their commitment for the containment of terrorism in Afghanistan. In this case, the Russian President suggested for creating a 'belt of counter-narcotics security' around Afghanistan and hunting down the financial roots of drug trade in the region (Roy, 2007). [9] In 2009, the Moscow Conference was organized under the aegis of the SCO. In this conference, a 'Plan of Action' was signed to combat terrorism, illicit drug trafficking and organized crime. In order to train the officers of the relevant SCO in this regard, it was also agreed upon to create a Regional Anti-Drug Centre and a Specialized Training Centre for the training in this regard. The two sides have also agreed to strengthen anti-terrorism efforts by focusing on border control, joint operations to counter terrorist threats and involving Afghanistan in a phased manner in the SCO's counter-terrorism framework.[10]Zhang Deguang, Chairman of China Foundation of International Studies (CFIS) and former SCO Secretary General, strongly believed that SCO has a

very constructive role in Afghanistan stability. According to him, the SCO position on Afghanistan was very similar to that of China, and it stood for stable, independent, peaceful, and prosperous Afghanistan.

Many other steps were in offing to help out Afghanistan out of this crisis such as conducting international conferences, assist in reconciliation talks between Taliban and governmental regime etc. Individually, the SCO members have also been playing very significant role in providing economic help. The major members of SCO like Russia, China and India have been thinking to provide strategic assistance such as training to Afghanistan National Security Forces (ANSF) and Afghanistan National Police (ANP). Some of the newspapers have reported that these countries are ready to provide weapons to the Afghanistan.

Some of the commentators were of the opinion that as far as security and stability of Afghanistan is concerned, India and Pakistan could play key role in the same. Mahapatra has argued that full integration of India and Pakistan with the SCO would be beneficial for the stabilization of Afghanistan. This would also be helpful in the prosperity of both the regions. Beyond doubt, some projects related to the flow of energy like IPI and TAPI pipelines started moving ahead. This would pave way for Eurasia to emerge as an integrated economic zone.

SCO Strategy for War on Terrorism: A Question
Though SCO has been making its best efforts to counter terrorism in Afghanistan, the security situation has not shown the desired result. In the post 2014 withdrawal, if many reports from international media and substantially validated by the terrorist activities happening in Afghanistan are to be believed, there would not be any doubt in saying that Taliban has been re-emerging in the country. The track record of the SCO in this respect has been doubtful as Richard Weitz (2015) has argued in his article. According to this commentator, the SCO has not made any substantial contribution to the Afghanistan's security. The difference among the SCO's member related to strategy have grown to the level of making its strategy ineffective (Weitz, 2015).[11] Moreover SCO has confined its security activities only in the north of the Afghan border making only collective statements, sharing intelligence about drug trafficking and Afghan terrorists, and conducting intermittent joint counterterrorism training exercises but has not taken practical actions. However, the CSTO has taken constructive role in this regard for preventing terrorists and narcotics from entering Central Asia from Afghanistan. According to Weitz, the SCO has failed in taking the constructive steps whereas the NATO has played a very constructive role in terms of providing equipment and training to the Afghan National Army. Economically, the SCO's role has been very negligible for the stability of Afghanistan.

Along with these inherent problems, the SCO strategy for Afghanistan stabilization has been plagued by the geopolitical interests of its members. In view of this, China has supported very strongly for Pakistan's membership in the SCO. With the joining of these two members, SCO which has already facing geopolitical challenges will get further heightened. However, the Russian-Pakistani relations have been strengthened due to changing dynamics but the Russian diplomats no longer remained hesitant to call Pakistan a potential failed state. They strongly convinced that Pakistan could pose a serious threat than the other adversaries to Russia. Richard Wietz has argued in one article written for an online journal-the Diplomat, that Sino-India relations are not on the even keel on account of the latter's strategic ties with the US and Japan. Similarly, India is also having acidic kind irritation due to the former's support for Pakistan's nuclear aspirations and blind eye towards Pakistan-linked terrorism in India. In this situation, Afghanistan is not keen to get help from these countries in sorting out its security problems.

If we believe scholars from Pakistan like Pervez Hoodbhoy, Fauzia Syed, Tarek Fatah and many more from the country, it could be safely assumed that Pakistan is supporting dangerous non-state actors. Dean Nelson working with The Telegraph (London) has commented in his report that the President of Pakistan Asif Ali Zardari (2008-2013), himself admitted Pakistan had "created and nurtured" terrorist groups to achieve its short-term foreign policy goals (Nelson, 2009, July)[12]

Pakistan's admission and accusation by international organizations, a number of countries, scholars, commentators and think tanks regarding the state-sponsored terrorism, raised many questions on the credibility of Pakistan's help in its war on terrorism. This state sponsored terrorism has inflicted a lot of sufferings in terms of man and material loss in Afghanistan. The Afghan Taliban and the Haqquani Network (HQN) have been strongly used against the legitimate government in Afghanistan that are created by Pakistan. Ankit Panda working with online journal – The Diplomat has observed Pakistan has been using the Taliban to topple the government and create a Pakistan favourable to strategic depth in Afghanistan (Panda, 2015, June, 25).[13]

Both Afghanistan and India are the countries in SCO which are suffering a lot on part of terrorism. Seeing the exponential increase in terrorist activities in these two countries, India brought a resolution in the UN vis-à-vis Pakistan to control terrorism on its land. Ankit Panda, a journalist who is working for online journal Diplomat commented that as usual China has blocked the Indian resolution and stood with Pakistan. Its sponsored terrorism is inflicting a lot of suffering on Afghanistan as well as India. It has been observed in the recent past, that the counter-terror remedies have been suggested by India, but it has not been gone well with the prime movers of SCO-China and Russia. The track record of Pakistan in this regard is very much of double standards. Now, how it can be fruitful for SCO in the stabilization of Afghanistan when the latter has been accused of providing safe haven for the terrorists operating in Afghanistan? The Afghan President Hamid Karzai regularly alleged that Pakistan has been operating training camps of militants and used those groups for carrying out terrorist attacks. These terrorist groups, after their attack, find their hideouts in Pakistan (The Dawn, 2008, August11).[14]After the Kabul attack in which more than 50 killed and about 500 people have been killed, the Afghanistan President Ashraf Ghani once again accused Pakistan for these attacks.

Chris Alexander, author of the book, "The Long Way Back: Afghanistan's Quest for Peace," who has also served as ambassador in Afghanistan, while speaking to CBC television news program said, "The civilian government there (Pakistan) doesn't

control military policy, strategic policy... but the army and the intelligence service do.... and they have denied the obvious, postponed this reckoning for years with so many terrorist groups, including al-Qaeda." But he was not stopped there, rather he further argued that it is not only Afghanistan rather the major troubling spot like Iraq, Syria and Russia were also suffering on part of Pakistan's policy (Williams, Christine, 2014, April 7).[15] The comment was further validated by a report written by online editor Zachary Laub of a think tank, Council of Foreign Relations (Washington based), in which it has been well argued that without any hitch the support is very well going on till date. Afghanistan and India are the two neighbouring countries that are suffering a lot because of this.

The United Nations has been making a lot of efforts and institutionalizing the policy in direction of counter-terrorism. Seeing the role of Pakistan in terrorism and the accusation from many quarters, the UN has chided Pakistan for its inability for reigning the activities of Taliban leaders who have been designated by the UN as terrorists along the Afghanistan border (Minder, Raphael, 2007, January 9).[16]

Apart for international organization, suffering countries like Afghanistan, India, commentators, thinkers and policy maker, have also opined the same. Apart from geopolitically weak strategy, inherent institutional hiccups chronically underfunded and have limited powers to take decisions independently of their member governments as argued by Richard Weitz, senior fellow and director of the Center for Political-Military Analysis at the Hudson Institute, further weaken the war on terror strategy of the SCO. Matthew Crosston, professor and director of the International Security and Intelligence Studies Program at Bellevue University says that the member states of SCO have also penchant for pursuing "micro-agenda" which is undermining the group cohesion.

The SCO has lacked Capacity for Regional Initiatives for countering the terrorism as argued by some commentators. The prime movers of SCO like Russia and China have not been on the same board regarding some issues related to the stabilization of Afghanistan. Russia wanted to give more focus related to security issue in which it strongly believes in the strategic role of Collective Security Treaty

Organization (CSTO) as its regional security forum in the stabilization of Afghanistan. On the other hand, China was in favour of the economic issues in order to get Afghanistan out of poverty. Poverty stricken Afghanistan can only be stabilized by economical help from the SCO members.

What SCO Should Do?

Since its independent political existence 1747, Afghanistan has been entrapped in geopolitical web. Its security conditions have been further worsened due to vested geopolitical and geostrategic interests in Afghanistan. SCO has come into existence out of Afghanistan's security concerns. SCO has designed its strategy in which state *i.e* Afghanistan must be given important place in its war on terror strategy. It has institutionalized engagements with SCO by which security concerns of Afghanistan be sorted out. In 2015, the geopolitical expansion of SCO has taken place by admitting India and Pakistan in the Ufa Summit of 2015. The prime movers of SCO- Russia and China and newly joined members India and Pakistan have divergent and contrasting interests in Afghanistan. In the post-2014, the security situation has already been worsening. Pakistan that has been accused of sponsoring terrorism and unable to control the same which is not only operating in Afghanistan and India, rather the most troubling spots like Iraq, Syria, Central Asia, Russia and China are also suffering from the same. In this light, the geopolitical expansion further aggravates the situation in Afghanistan. What SCO should in this situation? The SCO has leverage against Pakistan by putting pressure and Pakistan should be asked to control the menace. Only strategic solution is not sufficient, rather economic option will help more to bring Afghanistan out of this crisis. Till the time contrasting geopolitical interests are not left behind, the war on strategy would just remain an eye wash.

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Reflecting on the Dynamic Geopolitics of Northeast India: A Contemporary Perspective

Ms. Bipasha Lakra

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has set the right foot in reinventing the dynamics of cordial foreign relations with its neighboring political entities in Northeast India while all the critics were eyeing on his political moves. Receiving the baton of democracy from the UPA government in 2014, the Prime Minister's approach towards its neighbouring nations surrounding Northeast was a strategic move. From the instances of inviting his regional colleagues, the Modi government had set the right political tone in the burgeoning geopolitics of India.

It is to be highlighted that the strategic importance of Northeast region vis-à-vis the neighbouring nations and formulation of India's foreign policy should be held high viewing the rules of political diplomacy. The acceptance of invitation by all the head of governments of SAARC was noted well by the media and citizenry marking revised editions of political camaraderie. The first Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru in his book, The Discovery of India, in 1944 says:

The Pacific is likely to take the place of the Atlantic in the future as the nerve center of the world. Though not directly a Pacific state, India will inevitably exercise an important influence there. India will also develop as the center of economic and political activity in the Indian Ocean area, in South–East Asia, right up to the Middle East. Her position gives an economic and strategic importance in a part of the world which is going to develop in the future. Further, Nehru wrote, India will have to play a very great part in security problems of Asia and the Indian Ocean, more especially of the Middle East and South-East Asia.[1]

Though Nehru's attempt of refashioning the North East Frontier Agency (NEFA) as known earlier, was nuanced in the then foreign policy writings of thinkers and academicians during his times. However, in present times it has been gaining much criticism and skeptics argue of his fault lines in demonstrating the Indian Foreign Policy. However there are marked changes and shift in the Foreign Policy paradigm pertaining to the Northeast India.

Why Northeast India matters?

Karl Haushofer a German General, geographer and geo-politician argues that the study of geopolitics demonstrated the "dependence of all political events on the enduring conditions of the physical environment"[2]. Explaining the meaning of geopolitics, in a radio address in the year 1931, he remarks,

…geopolitics takes the place of political passion and development dictated by natural law reshapes the work of the arbitrary transgression of human will. The natural world, beaten back in vain with sword or pitchfork, irrepressibly reasserts itself in the face of the earth. This is geopolitics! (Haushofer translated in Bassin, 1987:120).

Northeast India screens a mosaic of cultures, lucrative economic opportunities and numerous political strategic alliances that ought to be beneficial if taken in right spirit. It has always acted as a buffer zone for belligerent forces from causing harm to the Indian nation-state. Indeed, the North East shares borders with China, Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar, and Bangladesh culminating in a 4500 long international border. With Myanmar alone, the prime gateway for the North East to South East Asia, the states of Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Mizoram, and Nagaland share a 1643 km long land border. [3]

The present President of India, Pranab Mukherjee, at a seminar held in Shillong in 2007 on "Look East Policy", highlighted the mutual benefit that would be gained by political, social and cultural marriage of the region vis-à-vis India's Northeast. He speaks of globalization ushering in humongous cross border market access that could eliminate social foes such as poverty, economic deprivation thus bringing in prosperity. He emphasizes "geography" as an "opportunity" thus marking new vistas for a

strategic region as Northeast in India. He says, "it brings benefits to populations residing in those regions in a much more direct and participative manner then before"

Political dimensions of foreign policy towards South, East and South East Asia have an important bearing on the political, security, social and economic developments in Northeastern region. Regional associations like SAARC and ASEAN have heavy economic investments and commercial opportunities along with cultural connotations affecting largely the people of northeast along with citizens from other side of the border.

However, there have been challenges met by the Indian government on issues of illegal migration, drug trafficking, illegal trade, trade in narcotics, arms trafficking, trafficking of women and insurgency-related issues have always been kept alive perpetually by political agents or lapses in the border security leading to unwanted tensions between the neighboring nations and India. It could be mentioned that much security of India lies in the cordial comradeship between Indian region of northeast and its neighbours- Nepal, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Bhutan and China. This makes the study of geopolitics in this arena vital for a scholarship on Foreign policy.

Concept of Northeast as being a homogenous entity and constructing singular ethnic identity post-independence has done much harm than to develop it. It is rough terrain and geographical inaccessibility led to further ignorance by the politico-administrative setup. However, each state of northeast India is vital in its own way in safeguarding its territories thus creating a virtual shield for India. For instance Bangladesh shares a long boundary with Assam, Tripura and Meghalaya; Sikkim with Nepal, Bhutan and China; Arunachal Pradesh with China; Manipur, Mizoram and Nagaland with Myanmar respectively. Each state of India generates intrinsic complexities where national borders meet international ones.

In terms of political and social lapses, the region provides a congenial ground to thriving anti-social elements in spreading political doldrums to the entire nation. Reports of terrorist activities are on a high given the porous borders in the region. One of

India's leading newspaper Hindustan Times reports that there were leaflets distributed in Assam and West Bengal citing Jihadist plans purported by Al Qaeda for establishing an ISIS-style caliphate in Bangladesh influencing the eastern region of India.

If we manage to establish a Syria-like reign here (in Bangladesh) then Muslims from Assam, Arakan (former name of Burma's Rakhine State) and West Bengal too would be able to come here for hijrat (migration with religious agenda). Simultaneously, anti-India revolts would intensify in seven eastern Indian states," says the pamphlet. This would be a huge blow for India, one of the key non-Muslim states in the changed situation of the world.[4]

Moreover, reports of Maoist activities in the Indian side as well as assistance from Nepal have been other factor that has kept the Indian officials on their toes. Other such fundamentalist forces and elements working in the northeast cannot be denied. Maoists operating in the 'Siliguri corridor' and insurgent groups within North-East are a cause of concern. This is a narrow corridor, approximately 25 Kilometers wide providing road and rail access to North-East. Efforts by ISI/Maoist in collaboration with other insurgent groups to infest this area could lead to serious repercussions for the whole of India and particularly North-East.

The 'strategy' of the strategic political visits: Revamping relationships in Contemporary times

It is to be acknowledged that inception of new power in the hands of the Prime Minister of India has opened new vistas of hope, positive diplomacy and bridging gaps in foreign policy ordeals. The invitation of different heads of the SAARC nations was a welcome gesture in the diplomatic and realist environment present in the current scenario. President Hamid Karzai from Afghanistan, Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury the speaker of Jatiyo Sangshad (House of the Nation) accepted the invitation on behalf of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of Bhutan Tshering Tobgay, Sushil Koirala from Nepal were invited and present in the swearing-in-ceremony of Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi. Amongst others who were present were Head of the state and

governments from Pakistan, Maldives, Mauritius, and Sri Lanka.

After six months of taking charge of the government Prime Minister, Narendra Modi attended the 18th SAARC Summit held in Kathmandu, Nepal signaling the onset of importance given to the regional nations first or a "neighborhood first" policy. The ongoing policy of SAARC initiatives has economic, political as well as cultural repercussions. It is usually derided as all talk and no action by critics and skeptics was now to be shed. In a good gesture of goodwill Narendra Modi visited all the neighboring countries which lie to the East of India.

New Vistas of Politico-Cultural and Economic ties with a 'Look East Policy'
I. India-Bhutan: Counting on Gross National Happiness

Barely a day after the swearing in ceremony of Narendra Modi as Prime Minister of India, he met his Bhutanese counterpart Tshering Tobgay in New Delhi. Moreover, after a month he himself visited Bhutan for enhanced strategic ties. On June 16th 2014 he spoke to the legislators in Thimphu stressing the importance of visiting India's neighbor first rather than visiting a developed nation. He says,
"My inner voice said that my first foreign visit as the Prime Minister of India should be to Bhutan." "I did not spend a lot of time thinking about it or planning it; it was a natural thing for me to do."[5]

The key word here is "natural," and underscored the organic nature of the India-Bhutan relations, which are underpinned by not just diplomacy or strategy, but by centuries of Buddhism-inspired civilizational links and people-to-people contacts. In other words, while the head rules in the world of real-politick, the India-Bhutan relationship is a union of hearts and minds.[6]

Shri Modi said the plans to harness Bhutan's hydropower potential were not just about Bhutan's economy, or meeting India's energy needs, but a small contribution to the fight against global warming. The Prime Minister also talked about the large contribution made for education in Bhutan's budget, and said this reflected Bhutan's investment in the future generations. He said India was keen to make a contribution to this cause. He said India would help set up an e-library in Bhutan, for the benefit of the youth, which would help them connect with the world. He said India would also double the scholarships that are being given to Bhutanese students.

Stating that India and Bhutan must think of how to take the relationship even further, Shri Modi suggested that the Himalayan states of India, along with Bhutan, and perhaps Nepal, could hold a sports meet every year. He said connecting people through sports, brings sportsman spirit, and that contributes to happiness.[7]

Addressing a joint session to the legislators in Thimphu, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that Indian space and technology could also be harnessed to help Bhutan further its developmental activities. He said Himalayas as a single common treasure between the two countries and that it could be used as a source of strength by studying its various aspects. As India had already set up a National Action Plan for Climate Change, a National Mission for sustaining the Himalayan System could be considered in the future. He spoke other important intentions of India of establishing a Central University for Himalayan Studies, wherein scholars from both the nation could benefit. He spoke well of tourism too while combining efforts from Northeast India and Bhutan saying, "Tourism unites and terrorism divides".[8]

India remains Bhutan's biggest developmental and trading partner acquiring aid and assistance from the former. India has invested on an array of projects such as airport at Paro, the Bhutan Broadcasting Station, the Bhutan-India microwave link, 1 million-tonne Dungsum Cement Plant, Bhutan Institute of Medical Sciences, and all exploration, survey and mapping of mineral resources. India's sizeable financial assistance to Bhutan's five year plans telescopes special partnership between the two countries. The Indian government provided over Rs. 5000 crores for the 10th FYP. Out of this, Rs. 2000 crores was project tied assistance focused on 70 projects spanning key socio-economic sectors such as agriculture, ICT, media, health/ hospitals, education/schools, capacity building, energy, culture and infrastructure. Small development projects have

had an enormous transformative impact on the lives of Bhutanese people.[9]

A hydropower capability of Bhutan has ushered in new sources of generation of power and its supply to India. Rivers of Bhutan have a potential of 35,000 MW ensuring more power facilities to Bihar, West Bengal and Delhi. India has pledged to buy 10,000 MW by 2020 which would make both India and Bhutan enjoy trade surplus in entire South Asia. Three more HEPs totaling 2940 MW, i.e., the 1200 MW Punatsangchu-I HEP, the 1020 MW Punatsangchu-II HEP and the 720 MW Mangdehchu HEP, are under construction, and are scheduled to be commissioned by 2018.[10]

II. Geopolitics of India- Nepal Relations

Re-examining India – Nepal ties from a geo-strategic point of view requires balancing act of explanation as a change in regime from UPA to NDA has brought in various positive as well as negative views from across the borders in terms of their respective foreign policies. With this it also need to be mentioned that a change in the style of government system in Nepal with the introduction of the Constitution and new form of democracy has had important links as well as having political repercussions to the foreign policy calculus. SAARC Summit in November, 2014 and External Affairs minister of India, Sushma Swaraj's visit to Kathmandu in July, 2014 was indeed a strategic. The very act of formalizing a meeting with Nepal seemed diplomatically important, for reasons obvious being, China.

Owing to free movement in Indo-Nepal border areas and interiors as well, Nepal is an important nation for employing healthy foreign relations. China and India have equal vested interests in Nepal. Nepal poses as both a positive element acting as a buffer zone in the northern Himalayan belt as well as could act as a medium of Chinese aggression against India. Therefore in order to maintain a clear sky in the rationale of the relationship, positive diplomacy becomes the order of the day. Cultural and social ties have led to interweaving of the economic ties as well. In accordance to a government report by Ministry of External Affairs: Two-thirds of Nepal's foreign trade is with India, with bilateral trade estimated to be around USD 4.7 billion.

India accounts for 47 per cent of foreign direct investment in Nepal. The trade treaty, which was revised in 1996, has proved to be a pivotal point in economic relations between the two countries. Since 1996, Nepal's exports to India have burgeoned more than eleven times and bilateral trade more than seven times. Indian firms are the biggest investors in Nepal, accounting for about 40% of total approved foreign direct investments. There are about 150 operating Indian ventures in Nepal which encompass diverse sectors, including manufacturing, services (banking, insurance, dry port, education and telecom), power sector and tourism industries. Top Indian investors in Nepal, among others, include ITC, Dabur India, Tata Power, Hindustan Unilever, VSNL, TCIL, MTNL, State Bank of India, Punjab National Bank, Life Insurance Corporation of India and Asian Paints.[11] Moreover, according to foreign affairs expert in India, Nepal has a total potential of 80,000MW hydel power, and if used in a technical and sound manner it could cater to its neighboring countries as well and becoming richest nation in South Asia. The Indian government has granted heavy funds for an inclusive progress to the Himalayan state and extended two lines of credit (LOC) of US 100 million and USD 250 million to the Nepalese government respectively. The earthquake assistance to Nepal by India was a humanitarian cause with a soothing effect on its political ties.

However, amidst political flux in Nepal, it is an imperative of the Indian side to work in a rational manner as there are an array of issues such as drug peddling, women and child trafficking issues related to the border, illegal arms and rise of Maoist activities in the region has seen a spurt in recent times.

III. India-Bangladesh- Revisiting its Geopolitical Strategies

India's relation with Bangladesh is that of history, literature, colonial beginnings and departure, politics, culture and heritage. Times have brought in variation to existing patterns of lives amidst the garb of democracy and governance, society and religion. It cannot be denied that Bangladesh once known as East Pakistan and now Bangladesh is more to India than Pakistan. There have been numerous agreements and disagreements in political decisions,

criticisms, and skepticisms in the relations of India and Bangladesh.

Strategic importance of Bangladesh increased as India was marking its plans for a 'Look East Policy' spreading its influence to ASEAN region and beyond. To mention I.K Gujral and his doctrine, popularly known as 'Gujral Doctrine' was of utmost importance in shaping India's image as a regional player. The year 1996 witnessed the two nations sign the historic 30-year treaty sharing of the Ganges waters. This issue opened up better opportunities for management of water and environmental issues. However, there has been a spate of problems since the inception of Bangladesh. The change of regime in both the countries, reflexive attitude of nationalism, federal politics, impact of trade, illegal migration, recently resolved problem of enclaves were never ending problems being dealt by both nations. In the past one year, the political scenario has been diluting into a favorable one. However since the UPA II regime, the relationship between the countries have been in doldrums as Prime Minister Dr.Manmohan Singh's visit was shrouded amidst political upheaval in domestic politics, especially in West Bengal, as Mamta Banerjee Scheduled to visit Bangladesh with Dr.Manmohan Singh got stalled as there were some differences regarding the terms of Agreement on the Teesta Treaty. The Indian Supreme Court's judgment on 27th February 2012, in favour of "nationalization of and interlinking of rivers" of India- being Teesta and Tipaimukh had immense potential of affecting India Bangladesh relations. This is so because Bangladesh has 57 cross-boundary rivers of which 54 are shared with India and remaining with India. Any change of course to rivers in India would have adverse affect in Bangladesh leading to severe displacement if such disaster followed. Therefore, such fragile issues were handled strategically. India has serious illegal migration issues with the other side of the border. However on paper numerous regulations are in place, but the security fails to record such ones where there cannot be a real boundary. Most of the border areas are marsh areas, where residents easily slip in to India. This is major security concern as not only the population demography changes but also in terms of ethnic clashes between the migrants and the Indian residents. Reports of Jihadi elements operating in Bangladesh and planning to influence the Muslims in India are ripe. A spate of arrests of two Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh terrorists (JMB) in Noida by anti-terror squads of Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal in January 2015 is a prime example of the same.[12]

India shares a 4,096-km-long border with Bangladesh and 262 km with Assam alone. The border region is densely populated with numerous Indian enclaves in the Bangladesh region and Bangladeshi enclaves in Indian region. India has constructed a 3,406-km fence of barbed wire and concrete just below three metres in height to prevent smuggling. The Land Boundary Agreement was tabled in 2013 in Indian Parliament to decide the fate of all such enclaves' population. The year 2015 witnessed a historic agreement that was signed between India and Bangladesh known as the Land Boundary Agreement. The Protocol (referred to as the 2011 Protocol) to the 1974 LBA, signed on 6th September 2011 during the visit of the Prime Minister to Bangladesh, paved the way for a settlement of the outstanding land boundary issues between the two countries. In the exchange of enclaves, India transferred 111 enclaves with a total area of 17,160.63 acres to Bangladesh, while Bangladesh transferred 51 enclaves with an area of 7,110.02 acres to India.[13]

The officials secured positive response to the agreement and ensured to be vigilant of any untoward incident in the Indian region bordering Bangladesh. A senior official of State Intelligence Bureau said that they were already on the job to collect ground zero intelligence on the particular matter. '*The Hindu*' reports:
"With the long-awaited swapping of enclaves between India and Bangladesh now complete, ensuring security so that these areas do not become a hub of anti-national activities seems to be of prime concern of security agencies. I have already written to the Union Home Ministry that security in coordination with IB, BSF and state police should be strengthened so that anti-national elements can't use this as an opportunity. I have serious apprehensions regarding this issue, he said."[14]

Thus in all respect, cordial Bangladesh relations with Bangladesh is important as it not only

entails political, social or cultural repercussions but ideological too.

IV. Dynamic synergy between India and Myanmar: Contemporary perspectives

Myanmar could be regarded as the gateway to South East Asia and bridging South Asia. Moreover, it makes Northeast India all the more strategic due to its geographical proximity. There is popular connect being Buddhism, Burma teak, Bollywood, business and Bharatanatyam between the two nations. However, economic and strategic importance has been gaining ground. After about five decades of military rule, the present government led by Aung San Suu Kyi of the National League for democracy has had immense impact on international issues. Certain restrictions by the earlier Junta rule have been abolished paving way for a democratic polity. However, in 2012 visit by Dr.Manmohan Singh and in 2014 by Narendra Modi to Myanmar was a strategic one owing to the growing clout of China in the region. A major arena where India was earlier skeptical about is the Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar economic corridor, China's major *One road project*. Critics believe that it was to strengthen the "string of pearls". Now it seems that India should face the realities of times as this would help in broadening its Look East policy and making inroads to South East Asia. Interestingly both India and China have cooperated well in Myanmar. As one observes, ONGC Videsh and GAIL India have stakes in A1 and A3 blocks of Shwe offshore gas field in Myanmar. Both the countries are participants of South East Asia Pipeline Company Ltd, where CNPC has a majority of stakes.[15]

Arrays of businesses are thriving in areas such as energy, food security, development cooperation and economics apart from development in political ties. It is interesting to note that there are vested interests in Myanmar from both India as well as China known to be diplomatically hostile to each other. It is in the interest of Myanmar as to how does it catapult its resources and exploit it to the benefit for its new nation.

Conclusion

In an era of globalization India's northeast is no exception to political or economic vices. It has enjoyed support as well as faced challenges leading to awkward situation and political turmoil at the expense of its people. Governments and regimes change but one aspect of all such entities remain constant is 'change' itself. It is the changing times of each unit in the geopolitical arena that brings in renewed aspects of statecraft. Northeast would always remain an entity of strategic importance. The present NDA government seems to usher in renewed forms of dynamism in the Look East Policy and through its lens one gets to observe the vitality of North East India. Since assuming office as Prime Minister, he himself has made foreign visits to neighboring nations instead of visiting any developed nation, and while on his visit emphasizing their importance to India. This marks a shift in the policy module of the present government from the earlier one.

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Analysis of the Growing Strategic Threat of ISIS Rebellion in Iraq and Syria

Dr. Chanchal Kumar

Introduction

Since June 2014, the extremist terrorist group known as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant *(ISIL or ISIS)* has expanded quickly and seized significant territory in Iraq and Syria. It not only threatens the very existence of the Iraqi government, but also has changed the nature of the Syria conflict, and its influence is spilling over outside of the region. In 2014, the Islamic State expanded its militant forces from over 10,000 to more than 90,000 (over 50,000 in Syria, and over 30,000 in Iraq) in three months, [1] controlling an area of up to 260,000 square kilometres and selecting Raqqa as its temporary capital. Regarding the composition of its militant forces, the backbone is made up of the al-Qaeda Branch of Iraq and the Chechnya Islamic militants. Later on they also took in about 3,000 jihadists, hailing from dozens of countries around the world, including second and third generation Muslims with American or European citizenship; dozens of Caucasians from Europe and the United States who converted to Islam, and dozens of ETIM terrorists. Since July 2013, the Islamic State has hijacked several prisons; demanding that prisoners become jihadists or be killed, save for those who can provide a special excuse under Islamic law. [2]The *"Islamic State"* accepted several thousand military and government officials from the former regime of Saddam Hussein and the rebel Syrian military personnel.

What is the 'Islamic State?'

The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIS, also known as ISIL) used to be known as Al- Qaeda in Iraq. After the 2006 U.S. troop surge in Iraq seriously hampered the group's ability to carry out terrorist actions, ISIS reorganized and began to rebuild its strength. The Islamic State is not just a terrorist group. It is a political and military organization that holds a radical interpretation of Islam as a political philosophy and seeks to impose that worldview by force on Muslims and non-Muslims alike. Expelled from Al-Qaeda for being too extreme, the Islamic State claims

to be the legitimate ruler of all Sunni Muslims worldwide. They have established what they regard as a state which includes large swaths of territory in Syria and Iraq, governed from Raqqa in Syria. [3] It advances a number of theological opinions to support its claims. Its adherents hold that they are merely practicing Islam fully, pronouncing those who disagree with them takfir (heretics). This designation is used as religious justification for killing the Islamic State's opponents, typically slaughtering them wholesale. [4] In 2013 they joined the Syrian Civil War, but rather than focus on defeating the regime of Bashar al-Assad, they focused on building their Islamic state. On June 29, 2014, the Islamic State declared the establishment of an Islamic caliphate with its leader being Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the caliph.

The foundations of the ISIS were formed following the US-led invasion of Iraq (2003). The ISIS or the ISIL was formed by the insurgents of the Tanzim Qaidat al-Jihad fi Biladal-Rafidayn, also known as the Al-Qaeda in Iraq (aQI). This group has been given the title of *"terrorist organization"* by the United Nations, European Union, the United States, Saudi Arabia, and many others. ISIS now controls or can operate with impunity in a great stretch of territory in western Iraq and eastern Syria, making it militarily the most successful jihadi movement ever. Since ISIS has controlled more territory both in Syria and Iraq it has increasingly been able to fund itself from the proceeds of organised crime, including protection rackets and bank robberies, and by selling natural resources. The ISIS tactic is to make a surprise attack, inflict maximum casualties and spread fear before withdrawing without suffering heavy losses. ISIS specialises in using militarily untrained foreign volunteers as suicide bombers either moving on foot wearing suicide vests, or driving vehicles packed with explosives. ISIS is already a threat to the United States. ISIS is not only dangerous in a regional context because it is overthrowing modern state boundaries in ways that incur massive ethno-sectarian killing and

cleansing. ISIS is also a global jihadist organization that shares al-Qaeda's ideology, such that its progress drives towards a post-state and apocalyptic vision that involves the destruction of the modern state system. ISIS already threatens to escalate violence between states in the Middle East that have been fighting proxy wars in Syria for several years such that ISIS military operations may cascade into a broader regional conflict. ISIS is now a direct threat to neighbouring states in the Middle East and ISIS is broadcasting the intent to attack Saudi Arabia, Israel, and the West. The threat of attacks against the U.S. is present.

ISIS took root in the new era created in Iraq after the Americans took control of the country in 2003. The Second Gulf War led to the overthrow of Saddam Hussein's regime, the dismantling of the Iraqi army and the destruction of the existing governmental structure. As a result, a security and governmental vacuum was created and the country's fragile social fabric (in the middle of which was the volatile Sunni-Shi'ite schism) was severely damaged.

Ideology of ISIS

The ideology of the Islamic State is that of Salafist-jihadism. [5] It is important to remember that for them there is no distinction between religion and state. All decisions are based on a hard-line interpretation of sharia (Islamic law), which is brutally enforced in the areas controlled by the Islamic State. The ideology is almost exactly the same as that of other groups such as Al-Qaeda and the Taliban. It differs in its approach to the proper timing and the conditions necessary to establish a caliphate. Groups such as Jabhat Al-Nusra (Al-Qaeda's official affiliate in the Syrian Civil War) believe that although the long term goal is to establish an Islamic caliphate, the time is not yet right for such a move. [6] *Salafist* thought is based on the idea of returning to the supposedly pure form of Islam practiced by the successors to the founder of Islam, Mohammed, and the earliest Muslims.[7] They reject any later additions as bid'ah (innovation) and un-Islamic. Their doctrine allows them to proclaim as takfir (heretics) Muslims who deviate from their strictly defined interpretation of Islam. The penalty for heresy is death. There is an ideological split within the Salafist community based on engagement in the political process and the acceptability of the use of violence. [8] Salafism as a movement began in Egypt. Its ideological forefathers are the same as those of the Muslim Brotherhood. It developed concurrently with Wahhabism, the doctrine of Mohammed IbnAbd al-Wahhab (died 1792), the cleric whose austere and violent interpretation of Islam became the state doctrine of Saudi Arabia. Salafism and Wahhabism are very closely connected, partly because of the movement of Salafist, Muslim Brotherhood-linked clerics to Saudi Arabia in the1960s and 1970s. The terms are often used interchangeably, but strictly speaking Wahhabism is a subset of Salafism, a broader movement to emulate the earliest Muslims. Wahhabis call themselves Muwahideen (monotheists), a term used often in Islamic State literature. [9] Both movements draw extensively from the writing and thought of the 14th century Islamic jurist, Ibn Taymiyya. Sayyid Qutb, the Muslim Brotherhood ideologue hanged by Egyptian President Nasser in 1966, is also a major influence on all jihadist groups, the Islamic State being no exception. Qutb's contribution to jihadism was to take the idea of jahiliyya, the concept that Arabs were in a state of ignorance prior to the appearance of Mohammed and his Islamic teachings, and turn it into a concept of political philosophy. Qutb termed anything other than strict adherence to sharia law and Islam jahiliyya, including all contemporary Muslim regimes. He then advocated the violent overthrow of all such regimes in order to replace them with an Islamic state. In developing this concept, Sayyid Qutb built on the earlier work of Ibn Taymiyya and the early 20th century Indian Islamist Abu Ala Maududi.[10] These ideas were further developed by the thinkers and jihadists that would go onto form Al-Qaeda: Abdullah Azzam (the father of global jihadism) and Osama bin Laden. [11]

Propaganda of ISIS

ISIS makes intelligent use of the Internet, especially the social networks, to send messages to specific target audiences. Most important to ISIS are the Western countries and their Muslim communities. Intensive propaganda aimed at them is intended to deter the West from attacking ISIS; increase the image of the organization's strength; frighten Western public opinion; spread ISIS's jihad ideology to the Muslim communities in the West and encourage foreign fighters in Western Muslim communities to

enlist in the ranks of ISIS. Its propaganda activities include posting notices, videos, audio messages and pictures. So far its strategy has been very successful and it has positioned itself as the West's number one enemy and gained support from the Arab-Muslim street, jihadi organizations and Muslim communities in the West. The social networks, especially Facebook and Twitter, play an important role in ISIS's propaganda activity in the West. [12] ISIS exploits its military successes, such as its victories in northern Iraq and the executions of its rivals and Western abductees, for propaganda to frighten and deter the West and to recruit foreign fighters. Its propaganda demonized ISIS in Western public opinion and played an important role in setting the stage for the campaign against ISIS initiated by the United States and its allies. As a result of publicizing ISIS's violence and atrocities, its Facebook and Twitter accounts were closed, cutting it off from one of its main channels for spreading its propaganda. That forced it to look for new ways to disseminate its propaganda. It turned to less popular social networks, such as VK [13] and DIASPORA. [14]

The popular group of hacktivists Anonymous has announced a new campaign dubbed Operation NO2ISIS against some nations it accuses of funding or arming the radical Islamic terror group ISIS. In particular, Anonymous will target three states suspected of offering support to the Islamic State of Syria and al-Sham (ISIS). Anonymous is promoting a recruiting campaign to organize a series of major attacks against digital assets of its enemies. The ISIS group is also very active in cyberspace, and though it has not yet demonstrated capabilities like the Syrian Electronic Army, it conducts an effective propaganda campaign through the principal social media. Analysing the Twitter platform it is possible to note that several accounts were created to under the hash tag #No2ISIS to protest against ISIS activity in Iraq and to spread information on its cruel attacks. On the other side, a group which named itself ISIS Electronic Army is declaring war on Western countries and to the Anonymous collective.

ISIS weapons and their sources

Most of ISIS's weapons were apparently looted from the Iraqi and Syrian armies. Large quantities of Iraqi army weapons fell into ISIS hands when Mosul was occupied in June 2014. [16] ISIS also received weapons from rebel organizations in Syria or captured them from rebel organizations. In addition, ISIS purchased weapons in Iraq and Syria and abroad. So far, the ITIC cannot map ISIS's weapons according to their distribution in the provinces controlled by the organization.

According to a study carried out by Conflict Armament Research [17], the weapons captured by the Kurdish forces in Iraq and Syria indicated that ISIS uses captured American army weapons and ammunition. They had been given to the so-called "moderate" rebel organizations in Syria by Saudi Arabia. According to the study, ISIS operatives captured a significant quantity of light American arms including M16 rifles stamped "Property of U.S. Government". The study also showed that anti-tank rockets used by the Syrian organizations were the same as the M79 90mm rockets delivered to the Free Syrian Army by Saudi Arabia in 2013. They were manufactured in the 1980s in the former Yugoslavia (Conflictarm.com, August-October 2014). ISIS also has ammunition manufactured in Iran between 2006 and 2013 (possibly captured by ISIS from the Syrian army and its supporters, such as Hezbollah).

ISIS has light arms, various types of rockets (standard and locally produced), mortars, anti-tank missiles and launchers, and anti-aircraft weapons. ISIS also has heavy weapons and advanced technology captured from the Iraqi and Syrian armies. According to media reports issued by ISIS, the organization has tanks, various types of artillery, various types of shoulder-launched anti-aircraft missiles, one or more Scud missiles, one or more MIG-21s, air-to-surface missiles and various types of armoured vehicles. It also has mustard gas and possibly other types of gasses it used against the Iraqi security forces.

SOHR and an Arabic news site reported that ISIS had taken control of the Syrian air force base of Al-Jarrah, located in the rural region around Aleppo. According to the news site, six planes had fallen into ISIS hands. It was also reported that ISIS was trying to locate professional pilots to fly them. In August 2014 pilots arrived in Al-Jarrah from Iraq and joined ISIS's ranks. [19] In terms of equipment, the "*Islamic*

State" has taken over more than ten government arsenals, obtaining a large amount of military equipment. In January 2015, ISIS was also confirmed to have a military presence in Afghanistan [23] and in Yemen [24]. Additionally, in early February 2015, it was revealed that ISIS was smuggling fighters into the European Union, by disguising them as civilian refugees [25]. An ISIS representative said that ISIS had successfully smuggled 4,000 fighters, and that the smuggled fighters were planning attacks in Europe to retaliate for the airstrikes carried out against ISIS targets in Iraq and Syria. However, experts believe that the ISIS claim of 4,000 was exaggerated to boost their stature and spread fear, although they acknowledged that some of the Western countries are aware of the smuggling [26].

Financial capabilities

ISIS is the richest terrorist organization in the world. It took over most of the oil and gas fields (6-8 oilfields) in Syria and several oilfields in Iraq. Its main source of revenue is the profit it makes from marketing petroleum products, estimated at several million dollars a day. Other sources of revenue include various criminal activities, collecting taxes from local residents or demanding protection money, demanding head taxes from non-Muslims, donations from the rich and ransoming captives. Following the aerial attacks by the Americans and their allies which focused on ISIS's oil refineries, its oil profits declined to about $1 million a day. [27]Thus ISIS is an extraordinary example of a terrorist organization that acquired quasi-national financial capabilities though military success. The large sums of money flowing into its coffers every month liberate it from dependence on Al-Qaeda and donors in the Arab-Muslim world, and provide it with financial independence. That enables it to increase the number of its fighters, feeds the momentum of its military successes, allows it to establish alternative governmental systems in its self-declared Caliphate State and to wage an intensive battle for hearts and minds throughout the world to glorify its reputation and increases its capabilities.

According to various estimates, ISIS receives several million dollars a day from the sale of petroleum products, that is, close to $100 million a month (updated to September 2014). Its profits increased significantly in the summer of 2014 after it took control of Mosul and other areas of northern Iraq, and established itself in eastern Syria. However, the aerial attacks of the Americans and their allies on ISIS's oil refinery facilities in Syria hurt its ability to refine and market petroleum products and decreased its oil revenues to about $1 million a day.

Estimates from various sources

According to a senior Israeli intelligence officer, ISIS's revenues are between $3 and $6 million a day. [28] According to an American army estimate, ISIS sold refined oil from the refineries attacked by the Americans at the end of September 2014 for about $2 million a day. [29] According to David S. Cohen, US Treasury Undersecretary for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence, ISIS earned close to $1 million a day from selling petroleum products, as of mid-June 2014.According to the Iraqi Energy Institute, ISIS controls the production of 30,000 barrels of crude oil a day in Iraq and 50,000 barrels in Syria. It is sold on the black market at the reduced price of $40 a barrel (as opposed to $90 a barrel on the free market). As a result, ISIS earns $3.2 million dollars a day from the sales, or almost $1.2 billion dollars a year. [30]According to Masrour Barzani, head of the intelligence apparatus in the Kurdish autonomous region of Iraq, ISIS's daily revenues are estimated at $6 million. The money comes from the sale of oil and wheat, the levy of taxes in the occupied cities, ransom and donations.

According to the British newspaper The Guardian, October 30, 2014, ISIS earns $1 million a day from the sale of oil. In "*The Islamic State*" Richard Barrett quotes estimates according to which oil production from facilities under ISIS control is between 30,000 and 80,000 barrels a day. He notes that even selling the oil at the heavily discounted price of $25-$50 per barrel would provide daily revenues of $2-$4 million. ISIS pays monthly salaries to an estimated 25,000 operatives, costing the organization between $200 and $600 per operative, according to the operative's nationality and family size. ISIS also has to maintain the logistics of its military forces. Monthly salaries for administration personnel vary between $300 and up to $2,000 for senior management positions. [31]The main source of funding for ISIS predecessor organisation al-Qaeda

in Iraq at the beginning of its existence was likely to have been wealthy Gulf individuals [32].

ISIS control of the national infrastructure

In addition to its control of oil and gas, it controls other facets of the national infrastructure:

• ISIS controls three hydroelectric power plants and one thermal power plant in the regions of Aleppo and Al-Raqqah in northern Syria.

• After ISIS took over Mosul, it was reported that it took control of the city's Central Bank and the funds deposited in it (estimated at $420,000). Apparently ISIS also took over funds deposited in other banks in Mosul.

Activities and Impact of the ISIS Rebellions in Iraq and Syria

The rapid advance of the Sunni Muslim militant group ISIS in Iraq has completely changed the balance of power in the country; this threatens not just the integrity of Iraq itself but could also lead to the redrawing of borders across the wider region. ISIS has systematically enforced rules and codes of conduct on civilians living within its areas of control, which fundamentally abuse a range of basic human rights protected by international and Iraqi law. It has also enforced its rules summarily, often inflicting harsh penalties, and even death on those who transgress or refuse to accept those rules. Among the range of rights not respected by ISIS and associated armed groups are the rights to freedoms of religious belief, expression, and assembly and association. ISIS has imposed severe restrictions on the right to freedom of movement, particularly on women. It has imposed unlawful trials in areas under its control that do not respect due process or fair trial standards of those brought before them, and breaches in particular the rights and protections required for children. ISIS has directly and systematically targeted Iraq's various diverse ethnic and religious communities, subjecting them to a range of gross human rights abuses, including murder, physical and sexual assault, robbery, wanton destruction of property, destruction of places of religious or cultural significance, forced conversions, denial of access to basic humanitarian services, and forced expulsion.

Amnesty International says it has new evidence Islamic State militants are carrying out "a wave of ethnic cleansing" against minorities in northern Iraq. The human rights group said IS had turned the region into "blood-soaked killing fields". ISIS directs violence against Shia Muslims, indigenous Assyrian, Chaldean, Syriac and Armenian Christians, Yazidis, Druze, Shabaks and Mandeans in particular. The UN estimated that 5,000 Yazidis were killed by ISIS during the takeover of parts of northern Iraq in August 2014. In late May 2014, 150 Kurdish boys from Kobani aged 14–16 were abducted and subjected to torture and abuse, according to Human Rights Watch. In the Syrian towns of Ghraneij, Abu Haman and Kashkiyeh 700 members of the Sunni Al-Shaitat tribe were killed for attempting an uprising against ISIL control. The UN reported that in June 2014 ISIS had killed a number of Sunni Islamic clerics who refused to pledge allegiance to it. ISIS has recruited Iraqi children as young as nine to its ranks, who can be seen with masks on their faces and guns in their hands patrolling the streets of Mosul. According to a report by the magazine Foreign Policy, children as young as six are recruited or kidnapped and sent to military and religious training camps, where they practise beheading with dolls and are indoctrinated with the religious views of ISIS. Children are used as human shields on front lines and to provide blood transfusions for Islamic State soldiers.

The Economist reports that ISIS has taken "as many as 2,000 women and children" captive, selling and distributing them as sexual slaves.[34] There are many reports of sexual abuse and enslavement in ISIS controlled areas of women and girls, predominantly from the minority Christian and Yazidi communities.[35] According to one report,[36] ISIS's capture of Iraqi cities in June 2014 was accompanied by an upsurge in crimes against women, including kidnap and rape. [37] The Guardian reported that ISIS's extremist agenda extended to women's bodies and that women living under their control were being captured and raped. [38] Fighters are told that they are free to have sex with or rape non-Muslim captive women. [39] Haleh Esfandiari from the Woodrow Wilson International Centre for Scholars has highlighted the abuse of local women by ISIS militants after they have captured an area. It claims that the Quran allows fighters to have sex with captives, including adolescent girls, and to beat slaves as discipline. [44]The pamphlet's guidelines also allow

fighters to trade slaves, including for sex, [45] as long as they have not been impregnated by their owner. The Islamic state justifies sexual slavery by quoting Quran 23:5-6: It is permissible to have sexual intercourse with the female captive.

To finance its activities, ISIS is stealing artefacts from Syria [46] and Iraq and sending them to Europe to be sold. It is estimated that ISIS raises US$200 million a year from cultural looting. UNESCO has asked for United Nations Security Council controls on the sale of antiquities, similar to those imposed after the 2003 Iraq War. UNESCO is working with Interpol, national customs authorities, museums, and major auction houses in attempts to prevent looted items from being sold. ISIS will also benefit from the very large amounts of cash looted from Iraqi banks, reportedly as much as $495 million.

Commercial Implications

• The risk environment will deteriorate significantly in Iraq itself but also (in descending order of severity) in Syria, Jordan, Turkey, Iran, Lebanon and the GCC states

• The global arms industry can be expected to receive a significant boost to sales, particularly in relation to drones

• Capital flight will detract from investment (and therefore growth) in Iraq, but will benefit the Lebanese and the Gulf states' financial sectors

• Intra-regional trade, investment, jobs and remittances will all be adversely impacted, as will tourism

• Security spending, particularly in the hydrocarbon sector, can be expected to increase not just in the short term, but in the longer term too

• Global energy prices will include an 'Iraq' premium in the near term at the least

• Iran is set to benefit as its international rehabilitation is speeded up

Perhaps most important, ISIS military capabilities could be significantly boosted by the capture of large numbers of Iraqi army vehicles, weapons, and ammunition, as well as by the addition of new recruits. At minimum, these gains will allow the group to arm and equip more fighters, enhance its mobility, and increase its firepower. This assumes that ISIS is capable of recovering, integrating, and maintaining the captured equipment. New videos have shown the movement of such equipment into Syria, and ISIS units in Iraq are already employing captured Humvees and trucks; they could potentially employ captured tanks and artillery as well. The effects of these developments may soon be felt in Syria.

In 2014 World Bank address this issue and quantify both the direct and indirect economic effects of this war on the countries in the greater Levant area—Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Egypt. The direct effect comes from the decline in the size and skills of Syria's labour force due to loss of life and refugee outflows, infrastructure destruction, the trade embargo on Syria, cost-of-doing-business increases, and a decline in productivity. The results suggest that Syria and Iraq bears the brunt of the direct war costs, losing 14% and 16% in per capita welfare, respectively. The embargo on trade with Syria is a major factor behind this country's real GDP decline, which is estimated at 30% and is much larger than its per capita output decline of 13%, due to the effect of Syrian refugees and war casualties on the population count. All other Levant economies lose in per capita terms, but not in aggregate terms because the inflows of refugees boost population numbers, and therefore aggregate consumption, investment, and labour supply. The escalation of transport costs is represented as deterioration in the efficiency of shipping goods from each of the six Levant economies. Oil exports from Syria are assumed to decline dramatically (by 90%) due to a combination of factors, including sanctions imposed by the EU and the US and loss of infrastructure. 20% of Syria's physical capital has been destroyed - a decline as large as the decline in Syria's labour force. The decline in oil exports from Syria and Iraq is offset by a corresponding increase in the production of oil by the GCC countries so that the effect on the world oil price is negligible. The embargo on trade with Syria has been a major factor behind the deterioration in Syria's per capita welfare, reducing it by more than 15%, while capital destruction and loss of workers are responsible for declines of more than 5% and 7%, respectively. Syria's economy shrinks by almost a third due to the massive outflow of Syrian refugees and war casualties. By contrast, Iraq's aggregate welfare loss of 11% is smaller than its per capita welfare decline because a large number

of Iraqi refugees in Syria have returned to Iraq during the period 2010-14. All other Levant economies gain in aggregate terms as the influx of refugees boosts their population numbers, increasing demand for goods and services and labour supply.

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Misconception of Islamic Terrorism in the World:
A Case of Da'esh
Dr. Saleem Ahmad

Islamic Terrorism

According to the US Department of Defense Publication, "Terrorism is the unlawful use of or threatened use of force or violence against individuals or property to coerce or intimidate governments or societies, often to achieve political, religious, or ideological objectives." While terrorism is not an Islamic phenomenon by its definition, it cannot be ignored that the terrorist acts most of them in recent years have been perpetrated in the name of Islam. This fact has sparked a fundamental debate both in the West as well as in the Muslim world regarding the connection between these acts and the religious teachings of Islam.[1] Most analysts have identified such acts with the *bona fide* teachings of Islam, one of the world's great religions; at the same time, others have preferred to view these links as a misconception about Islam and its teachings that is essentially based on peace, love and tolerance. On the one hand, Western leaders such as George W. Bush and Tony Blair have reiterated time and again that the war against terrorism has nothing to do with Islam. It is a war against evil.[2] At the same time, for Western media, related to the Islam, bad news is good for their business. The more non-Muslim world fears from Islam, the more security threats are hyped, the more attention they are getting. Islamic terrorism has not posed as large a threat as reporters and the public think—certainly not as large a threat as *Al-Qaeda* and its affiliates intended.[3] But it still left the question of how a group that calls itself Da'esh and uses Islamic scripture to justify its actions can possibly be described as Islamic. It was created during the US occupation of Iraq and gaining the support during the revolution against the Assad's regime in Syria.[4] In June 2014, the group formally declared the establishment of a "caliphate" a state governed in accordance with Islamic law, or *Shar'ia*, or *Caliph*. It has demanded that Muslims across the world swear allegiance to its leader *Ibrahim Awad Ibrahim al-Badri al-Samarrai*, better known as Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi and migrate to territory under its control.

Da'esh seeks to eradicate obstacles to restoring God's rule on Earth and to defend the Muslim community, or *Umma*, against infidels and apostates. Da'esh members are militant jihadists who adhere to an extreme interpretation of Sunni Islam and consider themselves the only true believers. They hold that the rest of the world is made up of unbelievers who seek to destroy Islam, justifying attacks against other Muslims and non-Muslims alike. Beheadings, crucifixions and mass shootings have been used to terrorize their enemies. Da'esh members have justified such atrocities by citing the *Qur'an* and *Hadith*, but the majority of the Muslims world has strongly denounced them.[5] In Iran, the official media persists in asserting that Da'esh is a Western fabrication. They operate as a tool of the White House, the Élysée, Buckingham Palace, and Tel Aviv, with funds from Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the UAE, and their servants Turkey and Jordan, and carry out the plans of the United States of America. According to Pew Research that publishes annual reports of attitudes in 10 Muslim majority countries, they were overwhelmingly negative towards Da'esh. It found that 99% of Lebanese and 94% of Jordanians, for instance, held very unfavourable views of the group. Even in Saudi Arabia, a country whose *Wahabi* creed is seen as a source of jihadism, there is little indulgence: in a face to face poll in September 2015 sponsored by the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, a think tank, a scant 4% of Saudi respondents expressed any degree of support for Da'esh.[6]

Misconception

The question of whether Da'esh, or popularly known as the Islamic State, really Islamic is a complex one. But it is very important to understand so that people can make decisions based upon the facts rather than feelings; because this question is the foundation of this critical debate which is taking place now and how Muslims fit into the broader fabric of Western conspiracies. William Mc Cants, a fellow in *Brookings's Center for Middle East Policy*, argues

that Da'esh sees itself as more faithful to the Islamic scripture than other Muslims, and they have got religious scholars in their ranks and who are able to make finely crafted arguments to that end. Its commitment to what it sees as the correct interpretation of Islam. But that does not mean Da'esh's interpretation of Islam is correct, of course, and sometimes when it goes against widespread understandings of Islam, it is not out of ignorance, and it is exactly the point. They want to restore the early *Islamic Empire* called the *Caliphate* and eventually take over the whole world. But that is not possible in near future.[7] As Sunni Muslims, particularly of the ultra-conservative variety, they believe that the *Caliphate* is required in order to properly implement Islamic law and Islamic governance. They consider other systems of governance, even if there is a Muslim sitting at the top, as illegitimate as long as the *Caliphate* is absent. Da'esh justifies all of its actions by citing Islamic scriptures and the example of Prophet Mohammed. The leader or *Caliph* at the top of the organization is a scholar of the *Qur'an*; he has a Doctorate in the field of Islamic Studies. He knows Islamic scripture. As for the foot soldiers, most of them do not know a lot about the Islamic scripture, but that does not necessarily mean they are not attracted to the religious message which Da'esh is preaching.[8] It has been argued that many of the Muslims from different countries joining Da'esh for a variety of reasons, and primarily, they are attracted to the religious message of Da'esh. *In fact*, it has made good on its promise to rebuild God's Kingdom on Earth. This recruitment pitch has been especially powerful among foreign Muslims, particularly younger Muslims what it takes to excite a young person to leave his family, leave his friends, leave his job and travel abroad, the idea that the world is coming to an end at any moment and that you want to be fighting on the side of God as everything comes crashing down can be a very powerful motivator. Scholars have argued that Da'esh's claim to have re-established the *Caliphate* is illegitimate because they did not consult with the leaders or religious scholars. They just did this by their own decree and saying that Da'esh sees itself as more faithful to scripture than other Muslims.[9]

The self-proclaimed Da'esh is a militant movement that has conquered territory in western Iraq and eastern Syria, where it has made a bid to establish a state in territories that encompass some six and a half million residents. In June 2014, after seizing territories in Iraq's Sunni heart land, including the cities of Mosul and Tikrit, claimed exclusive political and theological authority over the world's Muslims. Its state-building project, however, has been characterized more by extreme violence, justified by references to the *Qur'an*. Its claim to be a *Caliphate* has raised concerns that its ambitions have no geographic limits, and a series of attacks in France highlighted its ability to strike beyond its territorial base.[10] First it was Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant or Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, with the Levant and Syria referring to a region stretching from southern Turkey through Syria to Egypt. Then in June 2014, the group renamed itself Islamic State, suggesting its ambitions to be a worldwide *Caliphate* rather than just in the West Asian region. Now they are claiming to represent all Muslims everywhere in the world and they have declared the establishment of a new *Caliphate*. A fourth name, Da'esh is now gaining favour. It is a loose acronym of *Al- Dawla al-Islamiya al-Iraq al-Sham* but sounds like the Arabic words *Daes* (one who crushes something underfoot) and *Dahes* (one who sows discord). According to *The Guardian*, the acronym has even become an Arabic word in its own right, with its plural "*Daw'aish*" meaning "bigots who impose their views on others".[11] Da'esh's victories in Iraq and Syria, which have been broadcast around the world by an effective social-media strategy, have attracted more sympathizers across the globe. Islamic State's new brand of Islam is novel for many countries where it is trying to expand its sphere of influence by portraying the distorted image of Islam.[12]

Is it really Islamic?

Calling it Islamic is a form of recognition that this group has never dreamed of and which no Muslim country, not even the governments perceived to 'sympathize' with it, has ever bestowed on it. Calling it a 'State' is another recognition that is totally out of place and surely outright illegal. It calls itself the 'Islamic State' in order to draw legitimacy from the religion of Islam which over a billion people across the world embrace willingly and happily, but is it really Islamic? Does it subscribe to any heavenly value? Can any religion on earth condone or tolerate the

barbaric acts that Da'esh perpetrates every day? Many Muslim feels that referring to Da'esh as 'Islamic' is an insult to them, and their religion which preaches peace and fear of God.[13] Consequently, the Muslim world recognizes that terrorism committed in the name of Islam must be confronted on all fronts, the first of which is theologically. There are clerics out there who provided them with the necessary theological justification to go out and recruit young and inexperienced youth to perpetrate atrocious terrorist acts. We live in a dangerous world and where media is the number one source of information for most of the people. Ordinary people take anything they hear in the media as true. Therefore, the media must act with the responsibility. They must use the right terminology for events and concepts.[14]

On the contrary, there is no doubt that the Islamic State is Islamic. Militant jihadists use Islamic rhetoric, symbols, and concepts in the construction of their ideology. They endlessly debate fine intricacies of Islamic theology. They direct their arguments at Muslim audiences and seek new recruits from among Muslims. They invoke the *Qur'an*, quote the *Hadiths of Muhammad*, and find bases for their beliefs in the jurisprudence of Islamic law. They claim to be Muslims indeed, the only true Muslims and they explicitly claim that their religion motivates, inspires, and even commands them to commit their horrific acts of violence.[15] They believe that Islam has a great deal to do with their behaviour. Some scholars have argued that the clash between rival interpretations of Islam should be seen as a civil war within the Islamic world— jihadists, Islamists, traditionalists, and reformers all attempting to pull Islam in different directions. Islam has become entwined with the politics of countries and militant jihadists have invented theological justifications to attack their enemies. Jihadist ideology ultimately seeks the dominance of its new brand of Islam over the world.[16]

Palestinian writer Edward Sa'id, among others, has insistently pointed out that Islam holds very different meaning for different people. The religion is as heterogeneous as those who believe and follow it.[17] You may hear about Islamic State, but make no mistake: The militants refer to themselves as members of Da'esh. It is essential to emphasize the people to make distinction between Islam and

Islamic terrorists. It is also essential to acknowledge that there are portions of the Islamic texts that are used by these groups to justify mass murder in the name of *Allah* and for the propagation of their fabricated faith. It seems that people see no connection between the acts of terror and the terrorists' interpretation of Islamic teaching and Shar'ia law.[18] There are radicalized group of Muslims that pick and choose portions of the religious texts, interpreting them as instructions to pursue jihad and impose their religion on the whole world. Killing of infidels is to these extremists a religious obligation that will gain them a rewarding life in *Jannat* (Heaven). The overwhelming majority of Muslims do not hold these beliefs. We must encourage Muslim leaders to show the world that these groups represent an antiquated and inhumane interpretation of Islam. These leaders need to loudly and dramatically speak for the hundreds of millions of Muslims who worship a peaceful, merciful and loving God.[19]

Moreover, almost 70,000 Muslim clerics have come together to pass a fatwa against global terrorist organizations, including the Taliban, Al-Qaeda and the militant group that calls itself the Da'esh. During an annual gathering of South Asian Sunni Muslims in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, they wanted to spread the message that they do not consider groups like the Da'esh to be true Islamic organizations nor do they view members of these organizations as Muslims. This terror group has killed far more Muslims than Christians, westerners or any other religious community. It is a terror group with political ambitions.[20] Daisy Khan, Director of the Women's Islamic Initiative for Spirituality and Equality, told CNN that there is "nothing Islamic in anything they [ISIS] say." They are "psychopaths," adding that they have caused "huge problems" for the Muslim community. Politicians have to "stop portraying the Muslim community as a national security threat," as a result; they "feed into the hands of Da'esh." Although it can be persuasively argued that Da'esh is an aberration of Islam and its first aim is to recreate the *Caliphate* of Baghdad that is, make it into a single, theocratic, one world government, as proposed by many devout Muslims. Muslims who say this has nothing to do with Islam are simply trying to liberate their consciences to say they disagree with them. They disagree is fine, but to say Da'esh is not

representing Islam is wrong. They have misused fundamentals of the Islamic tradition, sometimes clearly taking instructions from the *Qur'an*, such as when they kill a non-believer."[21] Therefore, Da'esh members are using religion to advance a political vision, rather than using politics to advance a religious vision. To give themselves a bit more legitimacy, they use Islam as their justification. It is not about religion, it's about identity . . . You identify with the victims, [with] the guys being killed by your enemies. Religion, according to this view, plays a role not as a driver of behavior but as a vehicle for outrage and, crucially, a marker of identity. Religion is important in the sense that it happens to "define your identity", and not because you are "more pious than anybody else".[22] The origins of Da'esh as a terror group lie not in this or that Islamic book or school of thought, but in the "slaughter of Sunnis in Iraq" since the decline of the former President Saddam Hussein. In April 2013, when there was a peaceful Sunni demonstration asking the Shi'a led Maliki government in Baghdad to reapportion to the various provinces what the government was getting in oil revenues, Iraqi security forces shot into the crowds. "That was the start of this current insurrection."[23]

Islam v/s Western Media

In the wake of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the US, the threat of militant terrorism has taken center stage in the Western media. Often Islam is the target and the subject of accusation and mainly if some terrorists from the West Asian countries, who hold Muslim names. Then media for a deliberate reason or another rushes and start accusing Islam and Muslims whether it is due to the lack of knowledge, about what is Islam? Or who are the Muslims or to distort the image of Islam to the world in general and the Western people in particular. There is a difference between Islam's ideology and between people using Islam as cover to hide the other face of theirs. A lot of people have struggled to come up with a definition.[24] Walter Leguaure wrote in his book International Terrorism, that the aspects of terrorism in the use of extraordinary violence... have goals and objectives beyond the creation and destruction, injury and death... the aim of terror is its psychological impact on individuals. In a certain time, different groups, organizations and persons and at their action, causes circumstances, and what feelings and emotions

people, writers, journalist had toward those people. Emotion profoundly affects the response to terrorism, for a large portion of the audience such violent behaviour is beyond their experience and understanding. For those people terrorism is abhorrent, abnormal and psychotic. For others, terrorists are heroes, liberators of their country: The success of the movements has overshadowed their violence....the once feared revolutionary terrorists have become in some cases respectable and in some instances, national heroes and international cult figures. But, Terrorism is as old as mankind. It can be traced down to Greek and Roman periods. Terrorism from below has emerged in many different forms as religious, protest movement, political, revolts and social uprising. According to the Islamic scripture, human blood is sacred, in any case, and cannot be spilled without justification. Human life is very valuable; it was created and not to be killed. If anyone violates this sanctity of human life by killing a soul, without justification, the *Qur'an* equals it to the killing of the entire mankind. Islam grants everyone a total freedom but also it does not deny others their freedom. Freedom of religion, the right to be what you want to be as *Qur'an* says: "Let there be no compulsion in religion, truth stands out clear from error, whoever rejects evil and believes in God has the strongest bond that never breaks and God knows and hears all things."[25]

Islamic terrorism, for various reasons, has been questioned in academic sphere. Western scholars and media frequently use Islamic terrorism to mean acts of violence perpetrated by Muslims in the name of Islam. For example, the recent Paris attacks on 13 November 2015 constitutes Islamic terrorism since they were allegedly committed by Muslims and the suspects belong to a militant organization, Da'esh, adds fervour to calling it Islamic terrorism. The perpetrators are Sunni, Shia, Wahabi, or even non-practicing Muslims. But western media brands such violence as Islamic terrorism. Interestingly, Islam and terrorism are correlated only when violence is committed against Western targets or unleashed inside a Western nation, such as the attacks in France. Within a day, France launched massive airstrikes against Da'esh targets in Syria and Iraq.[26] It is still unclear as to how many innocent people have been killed in these airstrikes. Whenever

a terror attack occurs in a Western nation, Muslim communities are placed under instant surveillance. Suspect houses are raided. Suspect persons are detained. Muslim men are profiled. Muslim women are harassed. Mosques are infiltrated. Even Muslim doctors, engineers, lawyers, accountants, mothers at home, and Muslim children in school feel the pressure of omnipresent culpability. Western politicians, journalists, and terrorism experts begin to attack Islam, even if perpetrators are not practicing Muslims.[27] In the Western media, their leaders have frequently argued that "Not all Muslims are terrorists, but all terrorists are Muslims." And more interestingly, even some reasonable people have uttered this statement. And that comment is often followed up by the question: Why do not we see Christian, Buddhist, or Jewish terrorists? Obviously, there are people who sincerely view themselves as Muslims who have committed horrible acts in the name of Islam. But in reality, their actions are not based on any part of their faith but on their own political interests. According to a 2013 poll by the Pew Research Center, "Muslims around the world strongly reject violence in the name of Islam," including overwhelming majorities that reject suicide bombing, by any reasonable measure, Muslims are not terrorists but western media deliberately trying to portray all the Muslims of the world as terrorist?[28]

Consequently, Muslim nations have attacked the Western media for wrongly associating Islam with terrorism at the international conference in Geneva organized by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation in June 2013 as part of the US-Turkish led "Istanbul Process". A central theme of the conference was how to balance freedom of speech with freedom of religion. At the conference, Indonesia stated that freedom of speech is not absolute, and it must come with restrictions based on legitimate grounds. Mr. Taskin Soykan, an adviser on combating intolerance and discrimination against Muslims, says that freedom of religion is "sacrosanct but not absolute," and that individuals have responsibilities in exercising the right.[29] Ambassador Ömür Orhun, the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, regretted the use of the term "Islamic terrorism" by the Western media following terrorist attacks. "There is no such thing as Islamic terrorism," he said. The US Ambassador Michael G. Kozak responded that terrorists are often labeled as such in Western countries precisely because this is what they term themselves. Most "Islamic terrorists" are self-proclaimed as such. To successfully disassociate Islam from terrorism, the OIC would need to address such issues. The OIC Secretary-General Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu commented on how the western media can unfairly distort perceptions on both sides. Western media tends to highlight the reaction of radical Imams and their fellow religious fundamentalists, while Muslims worldwide are exposed exclusively to follow the teachings of the Qur'an.[30] As Graham Fuller once argued, even without Islam, world politics would have been facing similar scenarios. Islam or no Islam, there are enough reasons within the functioning of the international system that require its urgent reform or a complete change. Those who are the least affected by the global system of injustice are looking for reasons outside and, most conveniently, in Islam and Islamic societies which have constituted the largest religious political community. Muslims look at the current state of politics, both at the domestic and international levels, very differently indeed and very critically. In the wake of Da'esh, political Islam is failing or retreating in Egypt, Tunisia, Libya, Yemen, Iraq and Syria.[31] It may be too early to say that Da'esh is replacing political Islam, but it has certainly posed the most serious intellectual challenge to political Islam whose proponents have to respond to many ugly questions, which have been ignored by them so far. By focusing debate on Islam and its religious texts and then linking Muslims' actions to these texts, as in the case of Da'esh, we are caught in an unstoppable cycle of traps. Da'esh is not just a group of some miscreants. It is an idea against the ongoing politics in Iraq and Syria. A fight against Da'esh will have to win both territory as well as the trust of the people influenced by its propaganda.[32] Moreover, in a radio address to the nation, President Obama reminded US citizens that "Terrorists like Da'esh are trying to divide us along lines of religion. That is how they stoke fear. That is how they recruit," he warned. He urged the West, as well as the Muslim world, not to allow the extremists to turn this into a religious war, as doing so would hurt all. And just as Muslims around the world have to keep rejecting any twisted interpretation of Islam, all of us have to reject bigotry in all of its forms. Terrorist attacks in San Bernardino and in Paris have increased anti-Muslim feelings in the West. The US President Obama noted

that at a recent rally in Texas a woman was carrying a sign saying, "We love our Muslim neighbors. We are all part of the same American family. It is a message all of us can deliver parents to our children, teachers to their students, leaders in politics and business and entertainment."[33]

Conclusion

In a nut shell, we can see that western media and their leaders continuously try to portray the misconception of Islamic terrorism and they have deliberately linked Islam with this notorious term, terrorism, and the public opinion is mobilizing against the religious teachings of Islam. Now the Islamic terrorism has become a threat to the world peace and efforts are being made to encounter this collectively. While Islam that is known as a religion of peace and tolerance now it has become "axis of evil" that is responsible for terrorist's activities in the western countries. Some scholars have argued that this war is just between Islam and Christianity. But one must remember that western countries have exploited the term Islamic terrorism to fulfill their own political interests and as long as their interests are there they will use this term in future to fulfill their vested interests. Now come to the Islamic State, *in fact*, they are the followers of Islam but they have nothing to do with the teachings of Islam. Are they not true Muslims or their teachings are not based upon the Holy Qur'an and Hadiths. Like western countries, Da'esh has its own political agenda and vested interests and it is simply using Islam to fulfill their own interests. Both Da'esh as well as western countries is deliberately distorting the sacred image of Islam and its teachings just for the sake of their political interests by playing dirty politics in the Muslim countries of the West Asia region. In a word, politics is based upon the issues and without issues there is no politics. In international politics, issues are created and suppressed according to their interests like Al-Qaida and now Islamic terrorism has become one of the big terrible issues in international politics. Consequently, the issue of Islamic terrorism is serving the interests of Da'esh as well as western countries and this war will be continued in future.

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Nuclear Terrorism in the Indian Subcontinent
Souradeep Sen

Terrorism is a term with no agreed definition among governments or academicians, but is almost used exclusively in a pejorative sense, to describe life-threatening actions perpetrated by politically motivated self-appointed sub-state groups.[1] A more accurate definition has been proffered by the International Institute for Strategic Studies, London: terrorism is the use of violence, often against people not directly involved in a conflict, by groups operating clandestinely, which generally claim to have high political or religious purposes, and believe that creating a climate of terror will assist attainment of their objectives.[2] Briefly, nuclear terrorism involves the actual or potential use of nuclear materials to generate fear, while in pursuit of political goals.[3]

Public interest in matters of terrorism grew substantially in the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks and it was widely acknowledged that the world is facing a so-called 'new terrorism'. According to David Carlton, the 'old terrorism' of 1960s and 1970s only emphasized the territorial grievances and their operations tended to focus on limited geographical areas. Their methods, albeit ruthless, were not intended to maximise bloodshed, as they wanted many people watching rather than many people dead. On the other hand, the 'new terrorists' are nihilistic, inspired by fanatical religious beliefs and are willing to seek martyrdom through suicide. They rarely set out aims that appear remotely attainable, give no warnings and do not engage in bargaining and compromise. They are willing and eager to carry out mass slaughter of non-combatants and they frequently do not claim responsibility for their deeds, as they feel ultimately accountable to their own understanding of God.[4] With the possibility of mass slaughter, how real could be the threat of WMD (more specifically, nuclear) terrorism in the 21st century, especially in an area infested with (new) terroristic activities, such as the Indian subcontinent? Furthermore, what steps could be taken to prevent the catastrophe resulting from the probable achievement and detonation of WMDs by fanatical, terroristic elements within the Indian Subcontinent?

By 'Indian subcontinent', the present paper would refers to the area enclosed by the two most important territorial rivals of South Asia –India and Pakistan. The paper would first try to understand nuclear terrorism and is followed by an analysis of how real is the threat of nuclear terrorism in the Indian subcontinent. This would involve brief delineation of theoretical understandings of the prospects of nuclear terrorism in the region; the ground realities of nuclear safety and security adopted by both India and Pakistan; also incorporating the voices of analysts who feel that nuclear terrorism in the subcontinent is a remote possibility. The paper would also analyse the prospects of nuclear theft and terrorism in case of a deterrence failure and conventional conflicts in the subcontinent. The conclusion of the paper would focus on the recommendations of diverse groups of academics and policy-makers on the prevention of nuclear terrorism in the subcontinent.

Nuclear Terrorism: Definition and Dimensions
As has been mentioned in the introduction, nuclear terrorism involves the actual or potential use of nuclear materials to generate fear, while in pursuit of political goals. The definition of nuclear terrorism discounts the mention of state terrorism as in practice states are unlikely to sponsor terrorism involving WMDs, since loss of control over terrorists in control of WMDs would have adverse consequences for them.[5] Nuclear terrorism could involve the use of stolen nuclear weapons or weapons manufactured from fissile materials such as highly enriched uranium (HEU) and plutonium obtained from military or civilian sources. It may also involve the deliberate leaking of radioactive materials from 'dirty' bombs, leading to radiological contamination; and it can also be caused by sabotaging a nuclear reactor or facility to cause unacceptable deaths by contamination.[6] Nuclear weapons are the most destructive among WMDs.

With the rise of terrorism as a political phenomenon since 1945, analysts have grappled with the question of what horrors such individuals and groups with malcontent might produce?

The zenith of 'new terrorism' was reached with the 9/11 New York attacks. As the Director General of the IAEA, Mohamed El Baradei warned that it made the scenario of terrorists targeting nuclear facilities 'far more likely' and it is imperatives for the states to cooperate to stop them as 'radiation knows no frontiers'.[7] There was a growing fear that the al-Qaeda was engaged in an effort to acquire nuclear weapons, which made the world focus on the area adjacent Pakistan and India. Both countries, by then had developed nuclear programs, and both have been plagued by conflicts, terrorism and political instabilities. There were some notions regarding the acquisition by al-Qaeda, of fissile materials from the subcontinent, or an attack on its nuclear installations as retaliation against the decision of India and Pakistan to join the US-led war on terror.[8] While nothing of that sort happened, we still cannot discount the threat of nuclear terrorism to the region.

The range of possible terrorist actions pertaining to nuclear/radiological materials in the subcontinent is wide: a) a hoax threatening a nuclear explosion or the release of radioactivity in populated areas; b) the takeover of a nuclear plant or seizure of materials during transportation, followed by the threat of a radioactive release; c) the release of radioactivity in an isolated area as a warning of impending damage at a higher level; d) an attack on nuclear materials during transportation so as to cause a release of radioactivity; e) a radiological attack on symbolic targets with a relative immediate impact; f) a radiological attack on industrial targets; g) a radiological attack on government centres and military targets; h) a conventional attack on a nuclear reactor or a waste storage/disposal site; i) a nuclear explosion aimed at any of the aforementioned targets. The actual physical damage may range from non-existent to horrific, but the ends of terrorism would be realised –that of creating terror in the minds of people.[9]

The motive of a terrorist to go nuclear has been a matter of scholastic debate throughout the world. Switching to nuclear terrorism for mass annihilation does appear to have serious rational constraints, such as the difficulty of establishing mass slaughter as an acceptable strategy. Nuclear terrorist threats have been rare, but the indicators of trends toward 'new terrorism' and its penchant for mass killings warn of an augmented risk of nuclear terrorism.[10] Terrorist groups are now more tech-savvy than before and there is a steady supply of nuclear materials illegitimately, not to mention unsecured storage of radioactive materials in some facilities. Most importantly, the bane of religion-based terrorism is often accompanied with higher levels of violence as their ultimate audience is not the government or the people, but God! The biggest threat comes from 'megalomaniacal hyper-terrorists', who dream of altering the course of world history by their singular acts of violence.[11] Osama bin Laden, being the greatest example of this cult, whose *The Nuclear Bomb of Islam* exhorted Muslims to perform their sacred duty and prepare as much force as possible to terrorize the enemies of God: a statement which might be construed to mean acquisition and detonation of WMDs in the name of religion.[12]

The Probability of Nuclear Terrorism in the Indian Subcontinent

Being an aspect of 'new terrorism', it might seem plausible that nuclear terrorism is a thing of the future. A single successful act of nuclear terrorism could have far reaching consequences nationally and globally. For Leventhal and Chellaney, if risks can be calculated as 'probability-time' consequence (the low probability of nuclear terrorism is multiplied by the astronomical consequence of a successful act) the risk of nuclear terrorism is burgeoning, especially with respect to increases in nuclear weapons, materials and facilities and the rise of global terrorism.[13] All these aspects lead us to focus on the Indian subcontinent and analyse how real is threat of nuclear terrorism within this area?

The Indian subcontinent ranks as the most terrorism-infested region in the world, followed by the Middle East and Western Europe. This, along with the region's growing nuclear prowess have placed onus on both India and Pakistan to adopt effective policies to counter nuclear terrorism threats. The menace of terrorism has grown not only in intensity, but has affected newer regions, becoming more

technologically advanced. Terrorists are looking for ever bigger and more dramatic acts to draw regional and global attention. The Indian subcontinent is a region where terrorists are sophisticated in their strikes, weaponry and strategy. Combating this menace has become the biggest political challenge to the respective leaderships of India and Pakistan. Trends since 1987 suggest that there is indeed the growing danger of atomic blackmail and terrorism in the subcontinent, which is home to about a fifth of the world's population.[14] In order to understand the risks, the paper would focus first on the theoretical side of the debate. Theoretically, the strengths of terrorism in the subcontinent and the prospects of nuclear terrorism in the region could be discussed.

For Leventhal and Chellaney[15], in the Indian subcontinent, terrorist groups derive strengths from five important factors: a) The ability of groups to work across national frontiers; b) Technological sophistication; c) State sponsorship of terror; d) Drug-dealing for gathering resources; e) Martyrdom for terroristic activities. These aspects of terrorism in the subcontinent make it all the more imperative to closely monitor shipments of nuclear materials, rigorous surveillance of nuclear facilities and installation of upgraded anti-sabotaging systems to deter atomic terrorism. Theoretically again, the risks of nuclear terrorism in the subcontinent appear high, due to three important reasons, according to Leventhal and Chellaney[16]: a) The extreme, civilian-targeted nature of terrorism; b) Availability of portable weapon systems; c)The internationalization of domestic terrorism.

According to experts, resort to nuclear terrorism might be a tempting proposition to 'old terrorist' groups, as a means of their resurgence. The longer they have operated underground, the more brutal they tend to become and the greater is their desperation to attract international attention. Such terrorists might not have any qualms in attacking or sabotaging nuclear facilities or resorting to WMD usages.[17] To sum up, Leventhal and Chellaney have cited four reasons for nuclear terrorism in the subcontinent: a) the rapidly expanding nuclear programmes of India and Pakistan; b) their growing stockpiles of nuclear material; c) the enduring problem of terrorism faced by both countries; d) the increasing tactical sophistication of terrorists.[18]

So much for the theoretical part of the debate, the focus should now shift to the ground realities of nuclear safety and security in the subcontinent. If we make a comparative analysis of the extent of nuclear safety levels adopted by India and Pakistan, we get a more reassuring picture. But, the question of nuclear theft and sabotage in the case of conventional conflicts must be discussed subsequently to complete the analysis of the actual threats of nuclear terrorism. But, first the measures adopted by the countries to prevent nuclear terrorism: a) Prevention of nuclear terrorism in Pakistan: The security of Pakistan's nuclear facilities was a matter of concern for the USA in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks. The most feared scenario was the abdication of nuclear warheads by pro-Taliban forces within the country. There were various perceptions of insecurity, mostly involving ex-Soviet nuclear scientists, the ISI and the Pakistan Army. There were unconfirmed reports of the al-Qaeda being close to achieving nuclear status. The government was quick to take note of such reports and assured the international community that its nuclear installations were safe and additional measures have been introduced after 9/11. Historically, after Musharraf's coup in 1999, the control and decision-making of nuclear facilities went to the army and the small size of Pakistan's nuclear arsenal makes it easy for the army to maintain centralized control over it.[19] Pakistan's main uranium enrichment facilities at Kahuta, Sihala and Golra, along with plutonium extraction sites at Nilhore and Khusab in central Punjab and its two important nuclear power plants, one at Karachi and the other at Chasma are all under stringent military surveillance. Nuclear weapons and fissile materials are stored near military bases which insulates it from direct attacks from extremist elements. Pakistan's nuclear weapons are neither operational nor on high alert and are kept in unassembled form, with the components stored separately. Most experts view this arrangement as a security measure against theft and unauthorized use. However, adequate security is required in case of assembling the weapons during conventional conflict to counter theft and unauthorized use by terrorists, during conventional war between Pakistan and India.[20]

Not much is known about the transportation of nuclear weapon components and fissile/radioactive materials in Pakistan. A National Command Authority has been set up to control and manage nuclear programme and check the possibility of unauthorised use of nuclear weapons. In January 2001, the Pakistan Nuclear Regulatory Authority (PNRA) was established for control, regulation and supervision of all aspects of nuclear safety and radiation protection.[21] After 9/11, all these measures were reviewed by the government. The existing security measures at nuclear installations were reinforced; nuclear materials were transported under high security to different locations, as the government was fearful of air raids on nuclear installations. The PNRA streamlined nuclear disaster management in 2002. In spite of these measures, analysts have been sceptical of Pakistan's ability to maintain credible security for nuclear installations due to its volatile political and economic conditions.

The track record of the Pakistani polity shows repeated failures 'to establish enduring and credible political institutions'.[22] These problems were accentuated by a sagging economy in the 1990s. Religious extremism began to develop against the backdrop of political uncertainties and deteriorating socio-economic conditions. Although Islamic political parties and groups always existed in Pakistan, the political vacuum only led to the strengthening of these groups. Pakistani and Afghan Islamic groups gained strength as material resources became available to them (mainly from the US CIA and Saudi Arabia) for bolstering their armed resistance to Soviet troops in Afghanistan (1979-89). The Pakistani military authorities, especially the ISI, developed strong linkages with Afghan and Pakistani Islamic groups during the Afghan war period. They continued with this relationship after the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan to help spread terror in India.[23] The military government turned its back on the Taliban in Afghanistan and the extremist Islamic groups in Pakistan after 9/11. It was in this context that they vowed to dislodge the Pakistan government and began to engage in violence in different parts of the country in order to undermine the credibility of the government and derail the economy.[24]

b) Prevention of Nuclear Terrorism in India: Militancy and violence have been constant features of the Indian political landscape. The process of uneven economic development has been accompanied by relentless struggles among a plethora of social groups for an adequate share of a relatively small economic pie. While much attention has been given to the Islamic threat in recent years, the Indian experience has encompassed a wide variety of terrorist and similar violent threats. Notably, the secessionist movement in Kashmir has drawn support from the Pakistan government, and attracted a large number of non-Kashmiris, who have given it an increasingly Islamic-fundamentalist character.[25] How serious are these threats from the standpoint of nuclear terrorism? To date, most of the violent movements in India have localized interests and have not shown an inclination toward indiscriminate mass violence. But, the day after the 9/11 attacks in the United States, Sheikh Jamil-ur-Rehman, leader of the Tehrik-ul-Mujahideen, a terrorist group active in Kashmir, vowed to attack nuclear facilities in India.[26]

India's AEC stands at the apex of an extensive nuclear infrastructure that incorporates warhead manufacture, electrical power production, fuel fabrication and reprocessing, waste management, mining, research, and medical and industrial applications. The physical security of nuclear installations is managed by an independent body, the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) under the Ministry of Home Affairs. A study by Prof. Chari notes that the Indian Army provides air defense cover, security is strict, and access control is maintained through physical barriers and electronic systems.[28] But, no security system is foolproof. Numerous cases of theft have occurred over the years. For instance, in July 1998, the CBI recovered over 8 kilograms of natural uranium stolen from the IGCAR in Chennai.[29] Besides, it is difficult to ensure security over materials that are outside the control of the CISF, such as radiological sources in the possession of hospitals and industries. In July 2002, a gamma radiography camera containing iridium-192 with a radioactive strength of 19.7 curie was stolen during transportation in the north-eastern state of Assam. A disturbing aspect of the incident was that the camera, a highly radioactive device (a potential dirty bomb), was left unlocked in the trunk of a public bus in a region plagued by terrorist activity.[30] It is also known that terrorists have periodically penetrated zones of high-level military

security since 2001-02, and such incidents illustrate the relative ease with which high-security areas penetrated by small numbers of determined terrorists.[31] Moreover, intelligence officials disclosed that at least three of the six Army ammunition dump fires in India (2001-02) were caused by sabotage.[32] There have been security breaches during India's 1998 nuclear tests, not to mention the infiltration of the high-security zone of the Indian Parliament by armed terrorists in December 2001.

Notwithstanding these lapses, the security establishment in India points out that, Indian nuclear plants are characterized by a high level of built-in safety, which indirectly makes them relatively less vulnerable to sabotage. India's nuclear plants are enclosed by heavy concrete walls which makes it impossible for terrorists to attempt a WTC-like airplane attack on it.[33] But, radiological materials used in medical and industrial areas are never secure and can very easily be stolen or released in the form of an RDD or dirty bomb. Like Pakistan, Indian nuclear weapons are also kept in a disaggregated state. While this reduces the risk of inter-state war, unassembled weapons remain vulnerable to terrorist threats. The problem in India is that it has to deal not only with internal, but also external sources of terrorism.

Given its long-standing experience of secessionist violence, India has developed measures to guard against the general threat of terrorism. Moreover, in the aftermath of 9/11 it was decided to create a National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA) and similar agencies at the level of the states to prepare comprehensive guidelines for disaster management, train paramilitary forces for rapid deployment in case of a terrorist attack (including a WMD attack), draw up lists of vulnerable targets, strengthen fire and medical services, and revamp communication networks.[34] All these broad measures contribute to countering the threat of nuclear terrorism. At the international level, India had already begun to develop numerous avenues of cooperation to counter the terrorist threat. Within 2002, India became a signatory to all UN treaties relating to terrorism. India has been a longstanding member of the SAARC Regional Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism. After the 9/11 attacks, the Indo-US Joint Working Group on Counter-terrorism met regularly, established

antiterrorism training programs (including a workshop on WMD for senior Indian officials in December 2001), and began developing cooperation on a wide range of issues that covered homeland security, forensic capability, aviation security, and cyber-terrorism.[35]

In spite of these developments, certain grey areas persist. Undoubtedly, border control remains the most difficult issue for India. The length and porosity of the India-Pakistan border makes unilateral control difficult. India engaged in a massive build-up of armed forces along the border in order to exert strong pressure on Pakistan to stop its support for extremist groups active in Kashmir. The outcome of this exercise has an important bearing on the nuclear terrorism threat to India, since, as the 'jihadists' fighting in Kashmir have the greatest potential for indiscriminate mass destruction.[36] Nevertheless, cross-border flow of terror and their lethal onslaughts have not ceased.

Based on this comparative analysis, we can draw certain inferences regarding how real the threat of nuclear terrorism in the Indian subcontinent is. To start with Pakistan, the most pessimistic and alarming scenario for the future of Pakistan and security of its nuclear arsenal is that Pakistan will increasingly become ungovernable. The availability of sophisticated weaponry to the Islamic groups, coupled with this could cause considerable political instability, economic turmoil, and societal anarchy. A high degree of turbulence can cause serious threats to the security of Pakistan's nuclear program.[37] However, optimistic scholars put the probability of such a scenario at minimum, due to the competence of the Pakistani military and bureaucratic establishments. The probability of Islamists overwhelming the state is also considered low as it thrives upon the patronage of the military and the ISI. While the theoretical possibility of this development cannot be ruled out, its chances are remote in the near future. Furthermore, the highly professional, hierarchical, and disciplined Army may use the Islamic elements to advance its goals but the senior commanders are not expected to let the initiative slip into the hands of the Islamic elements.[38] When we try to analyse the effects of these scenarios on the safety of nuclear materials and installations, we are bound to feel that the threats

have been exaggerated, but not totally unfounded. Given the fact that Pakistan's nuclear program began in a clandestine manner, both civil and military governments have always been very sensitive about its confidentiality and security. Pakistan's nuclear weapons are not expected to fall into unauthorized hands.[39]

The pessimistic viewers of the country's security establishment proffer a different scenario. If the terrorists were able to enter the main installation of a nuclear facility, they might blackmail the government or damage the installation. If they gained access to radioactive material, they might use it for making a dirty bomb. The greater probability is that radiological material would be slipped out of Pakistan for use elsewhere. Islamic groups may be hesitant to use a dirty bomb within Pakistan due to the fear of losing goodwill at the popular level. To justify their theory, these analysts have opined that 'Insider-outsider' collusion provides a possibility for undermining security, resulting in the theft of equipment or documents, or facilitating some terrorist action against a nuclear facility. However, these security challenges, albeit considerable, are not insurmountable.[40]

Insofar as nuclear terrorist threats in India are concerned, the government has always taken it seriously, but lapses have been encountered. The vulnerabilities evident even in high-security contexts reveal that the absence of a nuclear terrorist incident so far may have as much to do with lack of interest or effort on the part of terrorists as with the measures that deter them. Certainly, the experience of 9/11 gives us reason to expect the highly improbable.[41] According to one study, four areas need to be attended to for enhancement of nuclear security: a) investment in technology to counter terrorism in a holistic manner; b) organizing and training personnel involved in handling nuclear materials to minimize chances of terrorism and theft; c) public education and information regarding the potential effects of nuclear terrorism, to minimize confusion and chaos; and d) independent monitoring of nuclear-related organizations to ensure accountability.[42]

Thus, the actual risk of nuclear terrorism is insignificant, yet present. This is largely due to the ubiquity of terrorist outfits in the subcontinent, the political and economic volatility of Pakistan and the recurring bane of terrorist violence in India. Most importantly for Indians, the lackadaisical attitude of security forces and the ubiquity of security breaches even in high-alert zones. In spite of the exhortations of optimists regarding the impossibility of nuclear terrorism incidents in the subcontinent, there is another aspect to this riddle that they often miss. What if terrorists take advantage of an ongoing conventional conflict between India and Pakistan and steal or launch nuclear weapons to add to confusion and achieve their preconceived political ends?

Experts like Prof. Chari opined that chances of nuclear terrorism in the subcontinent are low, characterizing it as a 'low probability, high consequence' event. According to him, terrorists would have insurmountable difficulties in acquiring unassembled nuclear weapons/materials which are armed using secret electronic codes, kept separately to ensure against accidental detonation. Furthermore, the problems faced to acquire nuclear materials are no less acute.[43] What about the unstable deterrence between India and Pakistan? Wherever there are nuclear weapons, some sort of deterrence framework is bound to be present. And it can be proved that the nuclear deterrence framework between India and Pakistan is inherently unstable, largely due to the preponderance of armed conflicts between the two, since the 1970s, which run parallel to nuclearization in the subcontinent. Moreover, the two countries have shown marked reluctance to formulate and implement Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) and Nuclear Risk Reduction Measures (NRRMs). For this reason, the chances of conventional war is high in the subcontinent, which could serve as an opportune moment for terrorists to steal or detonate nuclear warheads to achieve their own political ends.

Deterrence stability comes with the fulfilment of two interrelated concepts, viz. control of the bomb and prevention of conflicts having escalatory potentials.[44] In the context of India and Pakistan, due to the absence of binding diplomatic agreements in the nuclear domain, as well as the lackadaisical attitude towards implementing existing CBMs and NRRMs, both these elements of stable deterrence have not been completely secured. Thus, deterrence is inherently unstable, which means that chances of

conventional war and nuclear risks persist on the subcontinent. Insofar as controlling nuclear arsenals are concerned, both countries have proper nuclear command and control systems in place. If there are chances of accidental discharge of weapons, deterrence stability is not achieved. Ties between India and Pakistan have been too volatile to allow verification of nuclear sites and despite the presence of measures regarding non-attack of nuclear facilities, prohibition of chemical weapons and reducing risks of nuclear accidents, no meaningful gestures have taken place to increase trust by implementing measures. Furthermore, the control of nuclear warheads is contentious in various ways. It is known that Pakistan keeps the 'nuclear first use' option open and also advocates early nuclear use in case of a conventional war, which exudes a lack of strategic depth in nuclear policy making.[45] Moreover, unauthorized use of nuclear weapons by terrorists remains a significant risk during a war or a crisis. Notwithstanding the extreme precaution that India and Pakistan take for their nuclear assets, the probability of security breaches, especially during conventional crises remain high, as there are no NRRMs and other agreements in place to ameliorate such risks.[46]

Moreover, the four reasons cited by Leventhal and Chellaney for chances of nuclear terrorism in the subcontinent could be reinforced if we take seriously the findings of Prof. U. Choudhury in this respect: a) despite protecting nuclear installation facilities from air-raids, both countries have left ground protection of such facilities to mere barb wires and primitively armed civilian personnel. Thus, the chances of nuclear theft, smuggling and sabotage by terrorists are high. Numerous cases of radiological thefts in India are clearly due to such indiscretions; b) terrorists are motivated by religious and not political causes, and the resulting fanaticism could convince them that using WMDs would help expand the 'Empire of God'; c) Pakistan might continue to face domestic instabilities, which would affect nuclear stability in two ways –during turmoil, nuclear facilities might remain unguarded, augmenting chances of theft and unauthorized use, moreover, political instabilities may lead terrorists to believe that a moment of opportunity is approaching, which must be exploited to achieve their sinister goals.[47]

Conclusion

To conclude this paper, we can infer that the risks of terrorists gaining access to nuclear weapons/materials are present, especially during times of conventional crises in the Indian subcontinent. But, threats must not be exaggerated to the point of sensationalizing it. However, in order to minimise any threat of nuclear terrorism, analysts have proffered an array of recommendations.

At the national level, some desirable measures include: a) India and Pakistan must continue to track the numerous groups and individuals engaged in overt or covert violent activities or terrorism in their respective countries; b) enhanced measures should be adopted to control the movement of goods and people across their respective international borders; c) both need to acquire modern technology and equipment to upgrade the physical security of nuclear weapons components, and nuclear materials and installations, including radioactive waste storage and disposal facilities; d) greater attention must be given to scientific background checks of new entrants into their respective nuclear infrastructure; e) India and Pakistan should acquire the latest technologies for secure transportation of fissile/radioactive materials; f) an autonomous and highly trained security force should be established for protecting nuclear facilities and materials instead of depending on a nationwide security agency that undertakes other assignments as well; g) there should be coordinated efforts among the various organizations that are related to the nuclear infrastructure; h) finally, provisions for disaster management are also imperative.[48]

Bilaterally, India and Pakistan could cooperate in matters of preventing nuclear terrorism. According to experts: a) cooperation between the border security authorities of India and Pakistan in interdicting unauthorized movement of goods and people across their boundaries is desirable; b) monitoring the activities of transnational terrorist groups, exchanging information on these groups, and making joint efforts to disrupt their connections, transactions, and movements could be another measure; c) a formal agreement on maintaining nuclear arsenals in a non-operational form could consolidate the tacit cooperation already in existence. This would not only strengthen strategic stability

directly, but also help reduce the scope for terrorists to target nuclear weapons.[49]

Multilaterally, both India and Pakistan have participated in the subsequent Nuclear Security Summits since 2010. Although the outcome of their participation has been mixed, both the countries have signed major conventions to reduce the risk of nuclear terrorism. India has joined the Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials and the International Convention for Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. Further, India's execution of the 2004 UN Security Council Resolution 1540 (to enforce measures on WMD proliferation and their delivery systems) has been exemplary. It is especially intended to prevent terrorists and criminal organisations from obtaining nuclear weapons. Towards this end countries need to prohibit support to non-state actors seeking WMDs; adopt effective laws prohibiting activities involving the proliferation of WMDs to non-state actors; and, enforce effective measures to reduce the vulnerability of many legitimate activities to misuse and the proliferation of WMDs to non-state actors.[50]

Nevertheless, the gray areas need to be worked upon by India. According to Prof. Chari, India could adopt a more transparent nuclear programme, and become more forthcoming about its emergency response systems. It could implement its earlier commitments to establish an independent nuclear regulatory authority and a Centre of Excellence to train personnel in nuclear safety and security matters. India could add to its USD 1 million contribution to the IAEA, and offer training facilities to its personnel in its Centre of Excellence. Both India and Pakistan have not accepted the 2014 NSS Guidelines for Nuclear Security (aimed at reducing the national stockpiles of plutonium and HEU).[51] In the end, there is much that India and Pakistan can contribute to the Netherlands Security Summit of 2016, in order to further minimise the threats of nuclear terrorism in the subcontinent.

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Terrorism, Organized Crime and Conspiracy against Humanity

Chandra Kamal Borah

Introduction

The trend of massacre committed by terrorist organizations has once again alarmed the humanity. Earlier, the devastating two world wars have compelled nations to go for a stable decision on world peace; as a result United Nations Organization was brought about, to save the succeeding generations from the scourge of war with a primary objective to establish world peace. The growth of ISIS, brutal acts of Boko Haram in Nigeria; the attack on School children at Peshawar, Paris attack, Pathankot infringement, all these once again compel us to rethink about the terrorist problems in a different way. We need to look at terrorist issue from humanistic dimension, not merely from political dimension, because most of the time, such problems are characterised as political creation. Even the counter terrorism measures often appear as counterproductive; so humanistic way of dealing with the problem is of utmost importance. There are many questions to be answered, how terrorist organizations and organized crime groups are getting stronger? Who are the parties, supporting them in getting arms and ammunitions and why? Is not it a conspiracy against Humanity? Detailed understanding on it is the need of hour.

There is a crucial link between terrorism, organized crime and conspiracy against humanity. Terrorist threats are not always external or carried out from a foreign territory; rather there were always internal engagements of radicalised people[1] in most of the terrorist attacks including Peshawar, Paris and recently in San Bernardino. One recent trend of the Islamic terrorist propaganda carried out by the ISIS is that, they are no longer using their military strength to threaten the world; rather they are using ideology as their weapon. Paris and San Bernardino attack clearly indicates this plan. Recently, on January 07, 2016 a radicalised US citizen seriously wounded a police officer in Philadelphia and later confessed that, he carried out the attack 'in the name of Islam'[2]. It is not easy to defeat an ideology, but the radicalised people (whom we cannot identify unless they commit crime) can be debarred from executing their indiscriminate killing and crime against humanity, by taking a few cautionary measures.

It is not that only western countries are facing this problem. Almost all the major countries are suffering from internal destabilising elements. For e.g. China form the Uighur community of Jinxing province, India from the Kashmiri militants, the red corridor and the North-eastern region, Pakistan from the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) etc. In China, armed violence is relatively less, because of their strict border policy and security measures. The same policy deficiency is palpable vis-a-vis other countries, which is creating internal security concerns.

Organized Crime: Geopolitical implications

The question of organized crime is relevant with the growing massacre activities of terrorists; it is because the organized criminal groups are becoming backbone of the terrorist groups. Simultaneously, the organized crime is getting strength from the problem of Military Industrial Complex. Military Industrial Complex as a problem was first realised by US president Dwight D. Eisenhower and expressed in his farewell speech in his words "in the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of un-warranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist."[3] So, military industrial complex has been an issue of serious concern which has direct or indirect relationship with terrorist or organized criminal activities; which have been backing each other for their mutual interest. The point is simple; severe existence of military industrial complex in the arms exporting countries may be a cause of growing use of arms and ammunitions; because the industrialist needs to increase its use and the users are known as 'Terrorist Groups' or 'Organized Criminal Groups'.

Organized Crime or transnational gangs have become an issue of serious concern in Europe since late 1980's (Kleemans, 2007). However, the problems of organized crime have been largely underestimated. It engages in some hard core areas like arms, drugs, money laundering etc. Only after the United Nations Convention against Transitional Organized Crime, November, 2000, this issue got global importance. This convention has defined organized crime as "a structured group of three or more persons, existing for a period of time and acting in concert with the aim of committing one or more serious crimes or offences established in accordance with this Convention, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit"[4] This definition has given importance on 'structured' and 'durational' aspects of organized crime. That means organized crime is not something unstable or sporadic criminal activity which appears and disappears suddenly; rather it has a permanent nature of continuing the crime. Organised criminal groups or transnational gangs work in semi covert or semi overt way, sometimes tacitly supported legitimate bodies or big industries. The 'Golden Triangle' and 'Golden Crescent' are the best (or worst) example of stable organized crime in Asia.[5] The large network of organized crime has been actively operating in these areas; as a result, the insurgent organizations active in the 'Golden Crescent' area are getting their arms, ammunitions, most importantly financial support to continue massacre like 'Peshawar incident' and militants active in the north east India or in red corridor of India[6] are also getting arms, ammunitions or secured assistance from these extended networks. The investigations followed by the Pathankot attack on Indian air base reveals the nexus between terrorist and drug mafias. So, it will be a conspiracy against humanity, if 'military industrial complex' is contributing to 'organized crime' which is contributing to 'terrorist groups' which are regularly causing 'Crime against Humanity'.

Another example can elucidate the point is the 'Golden Triangle'. The 'Golden Triangle' is primarily famous (or infamous) for illicit drug business, cultivation, manufacturing and trafficking narcotics. The British colonizers started the trend of poppy cultivation during 1980's and now it became popular business. Geographically 'Golden Triangle' refers to the delta between Mekong River and Mae Sai River. Geographically this zone has proximity with India especially north east India because Myanmar being a state of 'Golden Triangle' region is close to India. The pace of drug business is becoming rampant. The practice of 'drugs for the army and an army for drugs' has boosted illicit drug trafficking in Burma.[7] The proximity between Army and Drug network will enable these organized criminal forces to gather small arms and hence may lead to arms trafficking. This is not exactly military industrial complex understood by US president Dwight D. Eisenhower; but it is definitely a military trade complex which is equally serious to understand. This is even getting serious. According to the United National Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention or UNODCCP, the poppy growing area has expanded from 51,000 hectares in 2012 to 57,800 hectares in 2013 with an opium output of 893tons.[8] This growth rate implies the seriousness of this issue. The same organization 2013 report says that opium production of golden triangle rises 22 per cent from 2012 and contributes 18 per cent to total global opium production.[9] It is a matter of serious concern related to organised crime and henceforth financial assistance to terrorist groups.

The same organised criminal groups are becoming backbone of the Daesh or ISIS. There is no disagreement that the Daesh or ISIS is a dangerous organisation with their formidable intentions. Unfortunately, the organised criminal network is becoming backbone of their organisational strength in terms of finance and arms supply. Surprisingly, these organised criminal groups are based in Europe and working through transnational networks. So the forces or organized criminal groups, who are engaging in black marketing of crude oil produced by ISIS or engaged in human parts trafficking in consonance with ISIS is obviously severe crime against humanity. ISIS had gone far beyond traditional way of gathering funds; so without removing the root of large financial networks it became difficult for US and its allies to counter illicit financial activities. A former US treasury officer Matthew Levitt who is currently working as Director of the Program on counterterrorism and Intelligence at Washington Institute of Near East Policy, Washington DC, says; "Our ability to counter ISIS's local criminal enterprises is severely limited"[10] and the fact is clear. Unless we counter their financial

sources it is difficult to crush down such brutal powers and for that we must crush the organised criminal activities from the root which is possible if adequate importance is given to that. This clearly indicates the vicious link between the organised crime and brutal terrorist groups.

Control of Small Arms: Domestic and International Concerns

Like the organised criminal groups, who are like the backbone of the terrorist organisations, the illicit arms and light weapons are the backbone of the organised criminal groups, hence of the terrorist groups in terms of finance and lethal strength. There are several factors that contributed towards the growing trend of illicit arms trafficking, these are - newly opened borders, massive post cold war arms surplus and rapid expansion of arm manufacturing, production and its unrestricted trade. Small arms and light weapons are circulated through three viable channels viz. legal, gray and black markets (Lumpe, 2001). The legal trafficking of the small arms or light weapon is primarily happens between the state parties or from a private party to a state party with due legal procedure, which is relatively considered as safe. On the contrary, the gray and black market is severely problematic. The concern is also on 'Gray Market Sales' which are difficult to classify. It includes legally ambiguous transfer of arms, which might be semi-overt and semi-cover. Illegal arms trading can be merged with the 'Gray Market Sales'. The brokering of arms through heavy racket of organised criminal group is engaged with it. Even, most of the states unable to regulate brokering networks too. For e.g. the US gun lobbies like- National Rifle Association, Second Amendment Foundation etc are also politically organised and active (Efrat, 2010). Barak Obama, while paying tribute to a victim of gun shooting, conceded that, the gun lobby has taken the congress as hostage. His words, clearly manifests the strength of the gun lobbies and the presence of military industrial complex as anticipated by President Eisenhower in 1960s. The concerns are even growing. No one knows with precision about the number of illicit arms available outside the lawsuit of the state, but credible source of private researcher and reiterated by the UN officials that, the estimation is 500 million.[11] As an obvious repercussions, there are at least 200,000 casualties occur annually due to homicide, suicide, intentional or unintentional shooting in non-conflict situations (Small Arms Survey 2004, chap. 6, and 2005, chap. 9. Cited in, Efrat, 2010).

There are more than 1200 arm exporting companies from more than 90 countries annually export arms worth of $10 million.[12] And it is rising. In fact there is no attempt by the major arms exporting countries to halt this trend. Major arms exporting countries like the US, China, Russia were always liberal towards regulation of the arms market because of their vested interests. Even, at the domestic level also some of them are quite liberal. For e.g. the USA has a very liberal small arm policy; and they are also the most frequent victim of lunatic gun firing. There are many examples of gun firing in the USA by mentally disturbed people, but the recent trend of conscious and deliberate use of gun by a radicalised Muslim couple has brought the issue into the limelight. This is just a beginning. The provocative speeches of the Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump, which was also used by Al Qaida to recruit more fighters, might contribute to radicalise more number of young people to carry out future brutal activities. Concerns about the proliferation of small arms grew from the very beginning of this new millennium.

The seriousness of the issue of illicit arms came to the floor of UN, when the UN peacekeeping forces in Africa notice the flooded presence of small arms and light weapons, which directly contributed to civil wars during 1990s. After that, the UN Security Council took initiative and hold ministerial level meeting for gun control in 1998 and 1999 especially focusing Africa. As a follow up initiative, the 'UN Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects', held in New York in 2001, suggested for small arms control mechanism and also adopted Program of Action or PoA in this regard. But the PoA was a loose framework and also was of non-binding nature. Moreover, there was no monitoring or verification agency to look after the matter in a sustained manner nor they allow any third party for verification. Even, PoA fails to ban arm supply to unauthorised non-state actors. Although some institutional mechanisms or export control regimes like- Wassennar Arrangement, Missile Technology Control Regime etc. are there, these are not universal in nature and also nor seriously

concerned about small arms and light weapons; instead they are concerned about heavy weapons and dual use technologies.

The Canadian government in 1998 proposed for a binding international law to bar supply of arms to non-state actors without permission of the recipient state. It was the US that opposed it labelling it 'too inflexible' (Lumpe, 2001). The US intension was to continue their influence in conflicting regions with the help of fringe groups, whom they label as 'terrorist' or 'democratic fighters' depending on for who they are fighting the war. Such double standard policies have kept the loopholes for further ramification of the problem.

In many cases the UN has imposed arm embargo to many states and conflicting zones particularly during 1990s. For e.g. Somalia in 1992, Angola UNITA in 1993, Rwanda in 1994, Sierra Leone in 1997, Afghan Taliban in 1999 etc. Such embargos were necessary to check massacre, genocide and bloody civil wars in conflict zones. Unfortunately, problems persisted, arms supply sustained. To implement the UNSC Arm embargo, a state needs to enact national laws. Unfortunately, apart from a dozen of countries, most of the countries have not criminalised violation of the UNSC arm embargo. So, the US arm embargo remained futile. This was the reason, why traceability of the firearms was another heated debate during the first US conference of illicit arms.

In 2006, a workshop was held in Thailand to 'review progress made in implementing the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects at both the national and regional levels.'[13] This workshop reaffirms the need to reassess 'national law' and 'regional boundary security' mechanisms to check illicit trafficking. Since international threat emerges from the flaws of 'domestic law' so reforms in 'domestic law' no longer remain as a sole national concern. But, the attempt to achieve such common ground never succeeded. The UN Review conference on Small Arms was held in New York in 2006 to reassess the progress but did not produce any agreeable document. It was just a reaffirmation of the 2001 conference decisions.

The UN Arms Trade Treaty, 2013 and came into force in 2014 has also brought small arms and light weapons under its gambit along with seven other major categories of weaponries and weapon systems including battle tank, armoured vehicle, artillery systems, combat aircraft, attack helicopters, warships and missile systems. This treaty has forwarded legally binding mechanisms for regulation of arms trade including small arms and light weapons. It is certainly a positive development. But, as anticipated, the countries like Turkey, US with gray export norms and military industrial complex debarred from rectifying the treaty.

The above discussion clearly manifests the seriousness of proliferation of small arms and light weapons and the risk associated with it and also the mechanisms that restrict such proliferation. Unfortunately, many state parties are going beyond their liabilities and continuing their small arms and light weapon proliferation. The result is obvious; the dark world is getting requirements fulfilled. Such act of the state party is obviously a conspiracy against humanity. The prism of conspiracy theory definitely suits such development.

Conspiracy against Humanity

The Oxford dictionary defines 'Conspiracy' as a "secret plan to do something unlawful or harmful". Recently, in a CNN interview on January 07, 2016, the US president categorically used the term 'Conspiracy' to explain the problem and complexities to tighten 'gun control'. There is no legal document defining 'Conspiracy against Humanity' but the 'Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court' has defined Crime against Humanity; which means 'widespread or systematic attack directed against any civilian population.'[14] Coming beyond the legal definitions of crime against humanity, we can easily understand that in recent period terrorists are causing the most sophisticated form of crime against humanity, and we need to investigate the whole course of crime that who has the share of these crimes?

The geopolitical complexities can be seen here and the countries responsible for such encouragement to terrorist forces are certainly committing conspiracy against humanity. Turkey has given space to organised criminal networks (may not

be necessarily ISIS) to carry out their illegal activities including oil smuggling and human trafficking. On the other hand, Pakistan has given the space to terrorist organisations, especially to those directed against India. The US has armed may rebel groups in many places, which later turned violent. These nexus of organised criminal groups and terrorist organisations became so deep rooted that they can even manipulate geopolitics of a region. For example, terrorist groups, backed by Pakistani army and Inter Service Intelligence (ISI), have clearly impacted the India-Pakistan political relations. Some people may say it coincidence, but it is true that, terrorists have disrupted every India-Pakistan peace process. For instance, the Agra Talk of 2001 was followed by Parliament attack; 2007-2008 secretary level engagement was followed by Mumbai attack; the Modi visit to Lahore was followed by Pathankot infringement etc. The problem is so deep rooted that mere political level gesture and goodwill cannot bring a sustained change. The heavy racket of organised criminal groups, arms traffickers and terrorist groups needs to be extinguished from its root.

Large numbers of Muslim population have defied the legitimacy claim of ISIS and not only the western countries but also many Islamic countries joined hand to wage war against ISIS. Yet, the ISIS is receiving arms from some countries to carry out their massacre. These supplier states are certainly carrying out conspiracy against humanity. In fact, ISIS acquired MANPAD or Man Portable Air Defence System; by using it they gunned downed one Jordanian fighter aircraft in December 2014. If they acquire more such weapons, that will certainly jeopardise operation and air strike against ISIS. Regarding the sources of their arms, the ISIS gathered weapons from the Iraqi army, who left their weapons in the battleground and fled. But that cannot be the unending stack of arms and ammunitions. These are rackets of black marketed arms. For e.g. David Axe, an American strategic thinker and writer says that Croatia has a thriving small arms industry, with black market ties. From Turkey, the weapons are moved overland into Syria. The New York Times report in 2014 unveils examined air traffic data and found that planes fly with weapons from the Gulf to Turkey, or sometimes head to third countries like Croatia to pick up weapons first and then to Turkey (Woolf, 2014). Such dual standard of actions and polities are certainly 'conspiracy against humanity'. Officially, Turkey, Qatar and Saudi Arabia deny that their citizens support ISIS in any way. Qatar and Saudi Arabia even point to laws they have passed that make it difficult for individuals to send aid to militants. However, research conducted by the Brooking Institution reveals the enforcement of such laws and policies have been compromised. It proves the common allegation that money from the Gulf is used to acquire weapons from black markets.

The nexus of the Turkey and the oil smuggling organised criminal groups is so deep rooted that Turkey has taken the risk of shooting down Russian jet, which was deployed to carry out strikes against such oil smugglers. The Russian military has released a detailed report of oil trafficking towards Turkey. The entire geopolitics got a different turn. Bringing the link between Crime against Humanity and Conspiracy against Humanity, it is vital to understand that crime against humanity and conspiracy against humanity are two sides of the same coin. The state actors are enabling the non-state forces to commit crime against humanity; hence the state actors are engaging in conspiracy against humanity. Sometimes, this conspiracy may be known or unknown to them; but they must realise it as a conspiracy; only then such problems can be better understood.

Sometime flexible domestic law also helps in illicit arms trading and support base for fanatic ideologies from inside. For e.g. US law on Arms trade shows the flexibility which is enabling the private forces to access international arms market; US domestic law deals with small Arms industry and has flexible control over exports. "The items subject to the jurisdiction of the International Traffic in Arms Regulation or ITAR, i.e., ''defense articles'' and ''defense services,'' are identified on the ITAR's U.S. Munitions List (USML) (22 CFR 121.1). With few exceptions, items not subject to the export control jurisdiction of the ITAR are subject to the jurisdiction of the Export Administration Regulations"[15] which is under the US Department of Commerce. The bulk of arms include the small and light arms for which the private parties have flexibility except that all the 'strategic' or 'tactical' weapons are under strict control.[16] That means they are allowing the private

groups to make their free trade of arms which cannot directly threaten a state's security but can cause death of common people through violence, massacre etc., which is a by-product of the larger 'Conspiracy against Humanity. It is not only in case of United States but also most of the developed countries, having strong existence of the private forces in the defence sector and has similar kind of rules and regulations, which are causing unexpected situations around the world. Moreover, there were no federal measures to check background of the gun buyers. Barack Obama, after the recent gun firings, initiated to take federal background check measures to the gun buyers.[17] The second amendment of the US constitution allows the US citizens the right to keep arms, but this right is being availed in such a flexible way, where there is larger possibility of acquiring arms by radical people or by lunatic people. The enormous numbers of examples are there to validate this argument.

What can be done?
Few steps may help in making these problems reduced and robust debate on these areas may bring out more lights to our understanding. Firstly, enforcement of strict border land policy. The concept of borderland has been a matter of intellectual debate. Some scholars, especially post colonial scholars argue that borders are artificial and political creation which is causing division among local people. Again, the conventional wisdom accepts borderland as a matter of national security or territorial integrity by drawing inspirations from the 'Treaty of Westphalia, 1648'. The networks of transnational criminal organizations operate particularly in the borderlands for e.g. Iraq Syrian border, Turkey Syrian border, PoK areas, Afghan Pakistan border etc. The mandatory border security policy and international authority to supervise crucial border lands may play significant role in this regard.

Secondly, the United Nations should criminalise the supportive activities of nations towards organized criminal organizations on the basis of international security consideration because as long as this act affects other nations, it is no longer remains at the domestic domain of a nation. The UN arms trade treaty which has not covered domestic domain should be revisited to check this problem. Every arms market domestic or international should remain under supervision of international organ. It is not yet happening, as the developed states are not interested for it because they have a big domestic market which is causing problems.

Thirdly, the cultivation of narcotics corps should be brought under international supervision. The major problem stood against the poppy cultivation is poverty and local farmers engage in poppy cultivation out of poverty but this cultivation is strengthening the dark world. So, a better way to deal with this issue is to regulate the market instead of imposing complete ban on that. The way to remove such 'disease' should begin gradually; first regulation with flexibility, secondly, reduction of production, thirdly, replacement of production by other crops, and at last banning all these items with appropriate alternative measures. Following such long term measures may help in dealing with the menace. The Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961 urges the states "to limit exclusively to medical and scientific purposes the production, manufacture, export, import, distribution of, trade in, use and possession of drugs", but it debarred itself from taking international action. Unless there is cooperation, there is less chance for success. Lastly, the laws regulating arms industry must be observed under international mechanism. Recommendations should provide on domestic laws regulating arms industry. It is time to come out from the trap of political domain to humanism. If the powerful nations believe that war, massacre, destruction in the other part of the world will make their economy well it is the high time to understand, this may cause destruction to them too. This reality was firmly realised by Dwight D. Eisenhower that the vested interest should not demoralise the democratic principles of the nation; otherwise the world will move towards a dark future.

Conclusion
Gun control would be able to halt proliferation of and sustenance of organised crimes, which buttresses the terrorist organisations of any kind. The US president Barak Obama's recent vow for strict gun control policy clearly reflects the need of the hour. In fact, the global collaboration of strict gun control and restriction and proper monitoring of the 'Gray Market Sales' is needed. We may conclude reiterating the importance of the issue in comparison to so called 'weapons of mass destruction'. The weapons of mass

destruction have enormous possibility of mass killing, but small arms and light weapons have been killing uncountable number of people and the number is growing in daily basis. This is going unnoticed.

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2 See, Reuters: Gunman citing Islamic State ambushes Philadelphia policeman; January 08, 2016.

3 From the farewell address of Eisenhower; the President of the United States, 1961

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5 The Golden Triangle area includes Myanmar Loas and Thailand; the Golden Crescent area includes Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran. There is a large network of organized crime in these areas.

6 Red corridor is an inner Indian zone; identified by IDSA; where Maoist activists are maintaining their extensive network.

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