



CLAWS

Seminar Report

Report on
National Seminar on
**TERRORISM IN INDIA:
CHALLENGES TO
STATECRAFT IN
NON-MILITARY REALM**

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CENTRE FOR LAND WARFARE STUDIES

National Seminar

TERRORISM IN INDIA: CHALLENGES TO STATECRAFT IN NON-MILITARY REALM

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The Centre for Land Warfare Studies (CLAWS), New Delhi, is an autonomous think tank dealing with contemporary issues of national security and conceptual aspects of land warfare, including conventional and sub-conventional conflicts and terrorism. CLAWS conducts research that is futuristic in outlook and policy-oriented in approach.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Seminar on ‘Terrorism in India: Challenges to Statecraft in Non-Military Realm’ held at Manekshaw Centre on 13 July 2016 focused on the political, diplomatic, social and cultural, and economic effects of terrorism in India.

Forms of Terrorism

There are three forms of terrorism globally and within India—the first form is the *individual terrorist* targeting specific individuals, the second form of terrorism *attacks civilians* as a part of wider strategy of a given armed struggle for independence against their perceived oppressors, and the third form of terrorism, which comes latest in time, when *terrorism is deeply influenced by religious motives and anger against people of another faith* or by the *desire to proclaim the local or regional or global supremacy of one faith over others*.

Political Effects of Terrorism

1. India is a successful democratic state, the Indian state recognises the space for accommodating the diversity in terms of the social background, primordial ties, and on multitude of identities, which is the key to Indian democracy.
2. Failure of politics has resulted in existence of prolonged violence in terrorist and insurgent affected areas have affected governance in India, thereby reducing the function of the Indian state in those areas.
3. Feeling of insecurity has impacted other aspects of state such as economic development and other development activities of the state such as education and infrastructure.

Diplomatic Effects of Terrorism

1. The normal agenda of diplomatic dialogues on countering terrorism includes exchanges of perceptions on terrorist activities and implementing the outcome of dialogues over these issues at the international fora and institutions.

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2. India's northern, eastern, and southern vectors is overshadowed by the challenge faced by the Indian diplomacy from the western vector.
3. To overcome the diplomatic challenges due to terrorism, India has to engage at the political and operational levels with its counterparts through institutional linkages.

Social and Cultural Effects of Terrorism

1. Terrorism in India challenges its diverse social and cultural harmony. Terrorism has created distrust among communities resulting in fissures in social cohesion and disturbing harmonious way of life.
2. Such distrust has resulted in communal riots which has upset and destabilized cultural stability.
3. Terrorists target specific groups of society to generate backlash or create isolation, where at times they succeed.

Economic Effects of Terrorism

1. Terrorism has resulted in forcible and voluntary displacement, changes in occupation, and increased government expenditure on displaced persons.
2. Terrorism in India has also resulted in loss of business, tourism and manufacturing activity, and investment into new industries and isolation of the affected areas.
3. Terrorism has impacted the quality delivery, sustainability of development activities, and systematic erosion of the credibility of the systems of delivery and governance.

DETAIL REPORT

Introduction

The Seminar focused on challenges posed by terrorism in India's statecraft. Additionally, the Seminar also tried to highlight different policy options in the non-military realm to counter terrorism in India. While the inaugural talk was delivered by Dr Ramachandra Guha, Shri GK Pillai, the former Home Secretary, Government of India was the Chairperson of the two sessions that the Seminar was divided into. The Seminar was addressed by the following experts:

- Professor Aswini K Mohapatra: 'Impact of Terrorism on Indian Politics'
- Amb. Asoke Mukerji: 'India's Diplomatic Challenges due to Terrorism'
- Shri Shakti Sinha: 'Is Terrorism Undermining India's Diverse Social and Cultural Harmony?'
- Professor Mahendra P Lama: 'Adverse Effects of Terrorism on Indian Economy'

Inaugural Address by Dr Ramachandra Guha

The inaugural address focused on three issues. These are as follows: (a) the distinct forms of terrorism globally and within India, (b) major challenges that India have been facing since its independence in 1947 in terms of terrorist violence, and (c) what the Indian state could think of doing to reverse the effects of terrorism in statecraft.

In modern history, there are three forms of terrorism. The first kind is the one, which started in the late nineteenth century Europe where individuals assassinated kings and monarchs. During this period, assassinations were carried across Europe by young idealistic man who often felt the need to kill the King to bring about political change to the brutal system, which the assassin perceived to be living in.

The case of Madan Lal Dhingra, a young idealistic Indian from Punjab, who assassinated a retired British ICS officer, Curzon Wylie

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in London in July 1909 was cited as a case in point. While Madan Lal Dhingra justified his act of violence, Mahatma Gandhi was of the view that violence in killing of civilians in pursuit of political and ideological aims is just not morally justifiable rather it is also counter-productive, which results in extra repression by the state on the already suffering civilian population.

The second form of terrorism is when terrorist attacked civilians as a part of a wider strategy of a given armed struggle. For instance, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), Palestine Liberation Organization PLO and Irish Republican Army IRA, carried out armed struggle for independence against their perceived colonial oppressors. The LTTE was battling the Sri Lankan Army; PLO, the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF); and IRA the British military.

The third form of terrorism, which comes latest in time, from the 1980s onwards, is when terrorism is deeply influenced by religious motives and aspirations of anger against people of another faith or by the desire to proclaim the local or regional or global supremacy of one faith over others. This form of terrorism is considered to be the contemporary terrorism where violence is no longer justified on the basis of democracy or national freedom but for furthering the victory of the faith and the faithful.

In the Indian context, since 1947, terrorism has manifested into three conceptually distinct types of terrorist violence. First is associated with the Left Wing Extremism (LWE); second, has been historically associated with nationalist or sub-nationalist movements on India's border areas – the Naga, Mizo, Assam, and Manipur insurgencies; and third, religious-inspired terrorism, which is consonant with the global perspective where the use of violence for political and nationalist aims is complimented by religious aims.

In all democracies, any free and open society will always be vulnerable to terrorism and terror attacks. Since it is not possible for India to completely eliminate terrorist threats and terrorist violence, the Indian government and its counter-terrorism strategies should focus on minimising terrorist violence and escalation of terrorist threats so that it is manageable and containable. Expectations of

help from other countries should be avoided since nations lack in values and strives only for self-interest. There are no trans-national solidarities when it comes to providing help in combatting terror. India needs to improve its police and intelligence forces, which means de-politicise them and professionalise their functions.

In spite of the great challenges that India faces as a nation as a young country, given it's size, diversity, poverty, India has done moderately well. However, India should not be complacent about especially in regards to inter-religious harmony. Indian pluralism is a fragile project. India exist as a nation because of its founding fathers who made sure that whatever Pakistan does to its minorities, even if Pakistan becomes an Islamic state, India will not become a majority religion state.

One of the things that is of grave concern over the last hundred years is that religion has come to play an increasingly important role in acts of violence. But India can avoid such types of violence by learning lessons from whatever is happening in Bangladesh, Pakistan, Palestine, Syria, and Yemen.

Session I

The Chairperson while opening the discussion highlighted certain aspects of terrorism and the challenges it has posed for India in effectively discharging state responsibilities. For instance, the most important aspect that has to be considered in context to AFSPA is that the notification of 'disturbed area' comes from the political class, who states that the civilian government cannot carry out their normal administrative work and therefore, the Army needs to be deployed. In other words, such Notification should last only for a limited period of time after which there should be a President's rule imposed on that state if the state government cannot improve the situation.

In the Indian democracy there are fundamental flaws and it is assumed that everything in law and order is a state subject, and therefore, the state Police is the main actor in maintaining law and order in a state. India does not have institutions in place to deal with terrorism or such other issues that can be directly tackled by the central

government. As such, all the states argue to be left alone stating that law and order is their domain and the central government is supposed to provide security forces only when the law and order situation in a state reaches a critical point. India does not have institutions such as the Department of Homeland of the United States, which gives a holistic view of the main internal security challenges. So, India has a situation where a Chief Minister (CM) (Bihar) of a state can say he does not have a problem as far as Maoist scourge is concerned. On the contrary, such CM's says that his concerns are related to development – building roads, schools, hospitals, and the like.

Political Challenges

Though prominent Western scholars have commented on India being a successful democratic country, discourse on terrorism in India tends to compare the Indian state to European state, Arab state or such other states inspite of inherent differences in state structures and functioning. Engagement of Naxalites, insurgents, and secessionist by the Indian state highlights how India has evolved and matured as a democratic country. However, existence of prolonged violence in certain regions of India has affected efficient discharge of responsibilities in those areas. As such, to get rid of such spoilers in efficient functioning, India has to employ its state mechanisms in full force to curb the actors that perpetrate violence and hinder discharge of efficient functions.

The Indian state and its democratic character recognises the space for accommodating the diversity in terms of the social background, primordial ties because democracy of India is created on the million identities. At the same time, it is also important to understand that the threat which is emerging should be acknowledged. Only then there will be efficacy in India's response to contemporary terrorism.

Unfortunately, previous governments of India have tried to change the narrative of Indian politics, which resulted in some kind of undesirable policymaking. If the policymakers are guided by certain philosophy and narrative, they get empowered to come up with certain measures, policy-formulations, which will help pre-empt terror strikes before it takes place. At the same time, it is

important to understand that the threat which is emerging should be acknowledged. Only then there will be efficacy in India's response to contemporary terrorism.

Diplomatic Challenges

India's diplomatic challenges due to terrorism, which are at the heart of a non-military approach to counter terrorism, can be best assessed on the basis of ground realities. Responding to such challenges through the statecraft of diplomacy requires India to engage at the political and operational levels with counterparts in other countries, primarily through institutional linkages. This includes exchanges of perceptions on terrorist activities, the situation on the ground in terms of activities of suspected terrorist, their sources of financing and equipment, and most importantly, their motivations and ideology.

India has sought support to prevent terrorism from Pakistan from two of its strategic partners, which also have significant relations with Pakistan—the United Kingdom and the United States. However, due to historical and geo-strategic reasons, the United Kingdom has hesitated to push for prosecuting terrorists based in Pakistan who target India. A similar ambivalence marks the position of the United States to counter Pakistan's use of terror against India.

The links between planners and protagonists of global jihadi terrorism, have led to a significant expansion of bilateral institutional dialogues India has with other countries, both in the region and beyond. In recent times, India has been able to successfully engage with countries like the United Arab of Emirates and Saudi Arabia to extradite terrorist suspects through diplomacy. However, the effectiveness of India's diplomatic responses to the challenges posed by terrorism would need constant engagement with its partners.

The overview of India's northern, eastern, and southern vectors is overshadowed by the challenge faced by the Indian diplomacy from the western vector. The challenge is due to a perverse mindset which uses terrorism as an instrument of state policy. Indian diplomacy has to respond both bilaterally as well as multilaterally to this threat.

While India had witnessed the use of terror even in 1947, when

Pakistani-supported tribesmen and irregulars invaded and occupied the territory of the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir, the decision on using terror as an ideology was formalized by the former Pakistan's military ruler, General Zia-ul-Haq in the 1980s. This relied on two important elements.

The first element was the policy of 'death by a thousand cuts'. Afghanistan was the battlefield where this tactic was applied initially by the Pakistani Army's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), which trained and indoctrinated Afghan Mujahedeen, with massive western assistance, against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. Following the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan in February 1989, Pakistan applied this policy single-mindedly to fomenting terrorism in a major way in Jammu and Kashmir. After the fall of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, Pakistan has applied this policy against the democratically elected Government of Afghanistan as well.

The second element was the open alignment of Pakistan's military establishment with the cause of jihad, as interpreted by the Jamaat-e-Islami, the political party of Maulana Maududi in Pakistan. This is illustrated by the reconfiguration of the motto of Pakistan's Army during General Zia-ul-Haq's time in favour of jihad ('Faith, piety, and jihad in the name of Allah'). Today, both these elements have converged to create what experts have called 'jihadi terrorism', which appears to be spiraling out of the control of Pakistan's military handlers.

Social and Cultural Challenges

Terrorism in India challenges its diverse social and cultural harmony is more in the realm of assumptions of past events. While armed insurgencies seek to achieve political power, terrorism by itself seeks to destroy societies, social cohesion, and way of life. Societies are often subjected to massive violence to re-order themselves, which greatly undermines social orders. Yet in India, despite the numerous insurgencies, the communal riots and acts of terror; India's social movements have been largely peaceful. Sections of society who were considered in the lower strata of the Indian society have moved up

the social strata by adopting certain social moors, which could be threatened by terrorism.

Communal riots can upset and destabilise cultural stability. For instance, after communal riots in India, in most of the cases, there has been breakdown of trust between communities. Terrorism does the same. Terrorism breaks the spirit of the people so that they compromise on thinking soberly, sensibly, coherently, and clearly. In the case of Jammu and Kashmir, there is a conscious shifting of argument towards religion. For instance, father of slain terrorist Burhan Wani stated that his son was fighting for Islam and not for azadi. In the past, there are instances where violence in Kashmir involved attacking Hindu temples. Such instances do not reflect any other objective but to divide the people.

The conscious decision of the terrorist to identify, isolate victims from across different communities is meant to create a backlash against their own community. While one can tell the victim not to feel 'anti' towards a given community; such exercise has proved futile rather providing terrorist room to take advantage of such social cleavages. This not only leads to breakdown in social trusts but has also led to breakdown in economic ties among communities.

Economic Challenges

The economic factor in the causation, trigger, and sustenance of terrorism are overwhelming. While dwelling on the impact of terrorism on economy, there is both negative and for some stake holders there are positive impact.

The direct cost essentially involves the direct destruction upon a terrorist attack. For instance, when a study was conducted in the period 1992-2005, it was found that in 5,300 terrorist incidents in Jammu and Kashmir, approximately 1,300 government buildings, 800 educational buildings, 3,000 shops, etc., were destroyed. Such data shows the direct physical impact of terrorism. Then there is other kind of impact. If one takes a look at groups such as the Peoples' War Group (PWG) in the state like Andhra Pradesh, one simple example is Karimnagar and Warangal districts in the then Andhra Pradesh

and now in the state of Telengana, where the tea contractors either did not bid for the annual contracts to collect leaves or chose to do business in neighbouring Chhattisgarh because of atrocities by PWG. Such incidents have occurred several times over undermining the very livelihood of the tribals there. Similarly, the terrorists attack on the Parliament has had large-scale, impact on investment, and tourism in India. For instance, one of the statements given by a foreign investor was that, 'if the investor runs for cover, which foreign investor will come?' This is also relevant in number of other issues.

The other interesting aspect is about the 'withdrawal syndrome'. Companies, groups, and productive agencies engaged in mining, road projects, and other development projects tend to withdraw from areas which are terrorist affected. For instance, in Nagaland, when the NSCN (IM) served a notice of Rs 6 million on the Oil India Company, the work at the Changlang district of Arunachal Pradesh got suspended for many years altogether. So investors and businesses alike they withdrew, which meant that whatever installations or pre-investments were done on the project became useless.

The impact of terrorism on economy is basically internal in nature. However, India has had serious exogenous shocks, which India had to absorb internally, for instance, the terrorism and the negative stakeholders' nexus in Pakistan. Such absorption of exogenous shocks also gives rise to what is known as aid fatigue, compassion fatigue, and when India talks about it, there is always hue and cry.

The other aspect of it is if there is terrorism on the other side of the border; for example, the Maoist movement in Nepal from 1996 to 2006, India is said to have absorbed the costs of the Maoist movement in Nepal significantly and quietly. In other words, when there were millions of internally displaced persons in Nepal, millions migrated to India because of 1915 peace and friendship treaty and open border with Nepal. India also has articles 6 and 7 which allow a kind of reciprocity. While Chinese did not take in a single refugee, India absorbed most of them and provided them with employment, food, shelter, etc., costs of which are not calculated. Finally, the Indian government also had to bear the cost of Sri Lankan Tamils

who came to Tamil Nadu, the Afghan refugees to name a few. The triggering factor for all this absorption of refugees by India is due to terrorism in their respective countries.

Such absorption of exogenous shocks also gives rise to what is known as aid fatigue and compassion fatigue. These are complex issues which demands for conducting studies on giving some kind of policy suggestions to policymakers pointing out at the areas – micro, macro, community, ethnic, global, regional – for which, CLAWS should spearhead to carry out such studies for their experiences on terrorism, economy, society, culture, etc.



