

Terror as Emerging Internal Security Threat: Challenges for Modi Government

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Terror remains an international threat on nation states. Although terror is quite old phenomena but since last few decades it has been witnessed in a massive way. There is hardly any week today when incidents of terror have not been reported by the media. India has been one of worst sufferer from the menace of terror. Till 9/11 terror attack on New York and Washington, America led western world was not taking Indian woes in a serious manner but after that their thinking has changed radically.

Since last few years we have witnessed decrease the act of terror on Indian soil. Kashmir is also comparatively peaceful and due to crumbling capability, Pakistan has not been able to promote terror activities within Indian soil as it was doing earlier. Of course gamut's of internal threats are still looming and it also remains a critical challenge for the Modi government. Out of 675 total districts of the country, over 200 are partially or entirely under the writ of the Maoists and that still remains a critical challenge for the government. It is also an open secret that there is a tacit understanding with these insurgents and their foreign masters as we have witnessed in Manipur case in June 2015. Nevertheless the mandate of this paper will be confined to the external terror threats. Basically it will deal Pakistan –Afghanistan based terror groups, their masters, role of Pakistani army and new in this series, Islamic State. Islamic state has officially declared that India is their target.

The NATO forces have already withdrawn from Afghanistan in December 2014 and left only a small contingent of 10,000 soldiers back. Since June 2013, all 35 province of Afghanistan is under Afghan army and since last two years they have been able to sustain security of the country. But threats are looming and that originates from Pakistan. Since inception, Pakistan-Afghanistan has had a bitter relationship. Pakistan has a very narrow hinterland and it always

perceive Afghanistan as an extension of its hinterland. It is well known as the Pakistani urge to establish 'Strategic Depth' in Afghanistan to counter India. Since December 1979, Afghanistan has been turbulent and over 3 million people have been killed in last three and half decade turbulence. Terror was exported by Pakistan in 1989 because they had already dominated Afghanistan although through proxy. Our government's mistakes are also responsible for the conversion of Kashmir as the battlegrounds for the terrorists against India. The electoral fraud of 1983 compelled opposition groups to take guns. We have mixed terror with minority appeasement as vindicated after Batla shootout during UPA-2 regime. Here it is important to mention that common minority is also patriotic citizen of the country and willing to keep the country secure as their majority brethren wishes. But the forces of pseudo secularist's compelled them to realize that they are willing to tolerate even the onslaught of terror for the sake of power. The historical mandate of 2014 is also a great reminder to these forces that people of India is fed up with these parochial politics. One of the important factors behind this historical mandate is an urge of bold step against anti-national forces. This has further increased the hope from Modi government to contain terror in an efficient manner and ideal can be Israel. In June 2015 in the aftermath of Naga groups attack in Manipur in which 18 Indian army soldiers have been killed , Indian army pursued 'Hot Pursuit' in tacit understanding with the Myanmar and killed dozens of insurgents who had camped inside Myanmar's territory. This has sent a chilling imprint on the terror groups operating from Myanmar, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal and it will be enhancing our image as a country with full will power like Israel. These countries are crucial for our counter terror operations due to our geographical proximities. We have to keep it in our mind that China-Pakistan nexus is all set to be sustainable and our emerging bonhomie with the United States will be push factor for this nexus. But in the aftermath of these incidents there was no need of media outbursts particularly from the government side. Certainly it will not in the larger interests of our future such modules of initiatives. Kautilyas has taught us that secrecy is the key of success in such situations.

We are aware about the fact that Pakistan is a crumbling state and since the assassination of former Prime Minister, Benazir Bhutto till December 2014 terror attack on army school, Pakistan has lost thousands of innocent people. But despite this prevailing truth, Pakistan has provided tacit support to Hafiz Saeed, who is addressing rallies throughout Pakistan, threatening India and the western world despite the fact that he is most wanted criminal of 2008 Mumbai

terror attack. After Mumbai terror attack, Pakistani President, Asif Ali Zardari had stated that Pakistan has no role in this carnage because non-state actors have executed it. The billion dollars question remains unanswered that non-state actors was not air dropped by divine forces but they came from Pakistan and it is duty of the state to contain these elements.

In May 2011, Osama Bin Laden had been killed at Abbotabad in a U.S commando attack. Abbotabad is British era military garrison town and even a mad person will not believe that he was hiding there without military knowledge. Now things have been revealed which vindicates that Osama was in the safe heaven of the Pakistani army and despite billions of dollars poured by the United States, he was used as a bargaining chip against the NATO forces. Pakistani military is extremely powerful and since independence till date has ruled the country directly about half time. Even not in power directly, army is ruling the roost. Constitution is a mere piece of paper for the army and it keeps violates its according to its convenience.

Former Pakistani Prime Minister, Yousuf Raza Gillani once stated in 2012 that ‘Pakistani army is not within Pakistani state but Pakistani state is within the army.’ This statement is self explanatory. Since independence almost half of the time Pakistan was ruled by the military and even in the civilian rule, military had enjoyed autonomy to pursue its own policies on mainly three fronts; Kashmir, Nuclear issue and Afghanistan.

When Benazir Bhutto took oath as the first women PM of Pakistan in 1988, then Chief of Army Staff, General Aslam Beg took three assurances from her that she will not intervene in India, Afghanistan and Nuclear issue and decisions will be formulated by the army on these affairs. The evidence is that she sustained the General Zia era foreign minister , Shebzada Yakub Khan as her FM also. Here it is significant to mention that Khan fought 1988 election on IJI ticket and got elected against Benazir’s PPP.¹ In recent history in February 1999, PM Vajpayee rides a bus to Lahore and inked historical ‘Lahore Declaration’. It was reciprocated by the army and its terror stooge through Kargil. PM Manmohan Singh had started engaging Pakistan in his first term but that was reciprocated by Mumbai terror attack in 2008. PM Modi called all SAARC leaders including Pakistani PM to be witness his swearing in ceremony. This gesture was also reciprocated by March 2015 Jammu attack. Former Pakistani NSA stressed that “ The political classes, by and large , want peace. Where the difference comes in is the religious political classes. But the biggest monster is the army. The army has always felt that India is a

very serious threat to us. Every military of the world has to have an enemy, a threat to point their guns at.”ⁱⁱⁱ

After May 2013 election, Sharif again became the PM third time. It is a record given the fragile nature of Pakistani democracy and aura of Pakistani military. Sharif was talking high about the accountability of Kargil (1999) while in opposition but remained ambiguous on the issue now. He will not like that his relations with the army would sour. Till date Pakistani army is fighting home grown insurgency particularly against Tehrik-A-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). The NATO forces have already withdrawn. They are keeping a good number of soldiers back in Afghanistan. The Afghan National Army (ANA) has been nurtured properly by the NATO forces but still it is unanswered question that how far it will be able to contain the increasing onslaught of the Taliban. Pakistan has already sustained its nurturing process of the Haqqani network despite many warning from the United States.

Afghanistan has emerged as the nerve centre for competition between India and Pakistan since ‘Operation Enduring Freedom’ has been launched in October 2001 in the backdrop of 9/11 attack on New York and Washington. Afghanistan is also crucial for India. It is vindicated with the fact that since October 2001 till date, terror acts have occurred in its bare minimum in India. Merely because that all major terror groups in Afghanistan are busy right now to safeguard themselves. Peace and stability in Afghanistan therefore is must for peace in India. India has grown phenomenally since last two and half decades and all set to grown. According to international rating agencies, India is set to grow. India has already overtaken China in annual growth rate. India is also increasingly involved in strategic infrastructure projects in Afghanistan, such as building a transmission line to provide power to Kabul, a hydroelectric project in Herat, as well as the Zaranj-Delaram road that connects the Ring Road in Afghanistan to the Iranian port in Chahbahar.ⁱⁱⁱ It has reduced the Afghan dependence only on Pakistan for sea route. It has been detrimental for Pakistani interests. Beside this India has trained Afghan civilian and military personnel and has provided scholarships to Afghan students to study in India, the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) has offered as many as 500 scholarships a year for Afghans.^{iv}

Army is dominating the formulation of Pakistan’s foreign policy. It has accepted terror as an instrument of its foreign policy. They have launched a full blown war against the terror in

FATA in 2014 but at the same time they have provided tacit support to the friendly terror groups. Saudi Arabia is with Pakistan in this project. One can recall that in 1996 when Taliban formed its own government in Kabul, only three countries gave recognition to Taliban government, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and United Arab Emirates were only three countries to provide this recognition to Taliban government. Saudi Arabia is promoting 'Wahabi' ideology, which perpetuates most violent version of Islam. Interestingly inside Pakistan they are killing Shia's, who are also Muslim by all interpretations of Islam but in India, China, Russia and western world they are fighting as the harbinger of Islam. Islamic State also falls within this category. Basically these groups are Sunni terrorist pursuing 'Wahabism' and killing Shia's everywhere but outside Muslim world trying to sell their image as an 'Islamic' terror groups.

Saudi Arabia perceives Taliban as its tacit outfit to expand 'Wahabism'. Saudi Arabia and Pakistan remains critical partner with NATO in war against global terror since 2001. But both Pakistan and Saudi Arabia have provided safe heavens and tacit support to the terror. Haqqani network has been extremely detrimental against the NATO forces but according to wikelikes, Saudi Arabia has also provided tacit support to Haqqani groups. The Saudi government has, meanwhile, not acknowledged these cables as authentic and asked its citizens to ignore them. One of the cables, signed by former Saudi Ambassador to Pakistan Abdul Aziz Ibrahim Saleh Al Ghadeer, which is marked 'confidential', narrates his meeting with Nasiruddin Haqqani, one of the sons of Haqqani network chief Jalaluddin Haqqani. The meeting between the ambassador and Nasiruddin, who was the emissary and chief financier of the Taliban-linked militant group at the time, took place on Feb 15, 2012. The venue of the meeting has not been mentioned, but the ambassador usually held meetings either at the embassy or his residence, both of which are located in the heavily guarded Diplomatic Enclave and remains under the watchful eyes of Pakistani intelligence agencies.^v Given this report it is entirely impossible that this meeting held without the tacit approval of the Pakistani intelligence agencies. Besides providing safe havens to Haqqani's, Pakistan has also provided safe heavens to Taliban emir, Mullah Omar, who is virtually running his exile government from Pakistani border town of 'Quetta'.

It is interesting to know how these groups collect funds through couriers. Wealthy Arabs in the Gulf States, who take the religious obligation of zakat very seriously, deem madressahs in Pakistan, Afghanistan, India and Bangladesh as deserving entities for their charity. They usually

assess and set aside their zakat before Ramazan and engage local religious scholars in these countries to distribute it among the deserving. Pakistani madressahs, religious parties and militant groups remain in contact with these religious scholars, who keep them on the list of the deserving. Religious scholars either visit the Gulf countries themselves or send their representatives as couriers to collect zakat. Most militant groups also send their couriers to collect such donations.^{vi}

In September 2014, new Afghan President, Asraf Ghani has taken over. He has been trying to engage Pakistan and visited Pakistan as his maiden destination. Pakistani PM, Nawaz Sharif and Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) General Rahil Sharif also visited Kabul and inked many security deals. According to reports, Pakistan is actively supporting peace moves in Afghanistan because it feels that a Taliban-occupied Kabul will threaten its security as well, write two former US officials. Mr Dobbins was US Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan from May 2013 to July 2014 and Mr Malkasian was political adviser to General Joseph Dunford, commander of US forces in Afghanistan from May 2013 to August 2014.^{vii}

In the last week of June 2015, Afghan parliament complex was attacked by suicide terrorists. Afghan intelligence services spokesman Hassib Sediqqi stated that the officer in Inter-Services Intelligence helped the Haqqani network carry out the attack outside parliament in Kabul, which killed two people and wounded more than 30 as lawmakers were meeting inside.^{viii} Almost a month ago, ISI and the Afghan intelligence agency— National Directorate of Security (NDS)— signed a landmark deal aimed at bolstering the fight against terrorism.^{ix} The nexus between Haqqani network and ISI is well known. This attack vindicates that despite many recent deals and reconciliation efforts by President Ghani, ISI is not going to allow peace in Afghanistan.

In the last week of June 2015 deadly events illustrate the capacity of the self-styled Islamic State to wreak havoc across regions beyond its direct control, as well as the need for a coordinated response from the international community in order to neutralise the extremist movement. At least two of the attacks — in Tunisia and Kuwait — have directly been claimed by IS. Clearly, the threat IS poses is not limited to the territory it occupies in Iraq and Syria. IS has already stated that it has to establish ‘Nizam-A- Mustafa’ in India and bring back the glory of Islam there. All terror groups working in India has tacit support from their Pakistan based

command system. It has been proved in Mumbai terror attack (2008). Hafiz Saeed and many other top terror icons are rooming in Pakistan and mobilizing the people for Jihad. Hafiz Saeed has made a group of Jehadi outfits and holding rallies throughout Pakistan and pouring hatred against India and the West. He is one of the conspirators of Mumbai terror carnage but Pakistan government has taken weak steps to put him behind the bar. Their call of Jihad begins and ends with India. Here it is important to mention that Pakistani army and terror groups have commonality of interests and that is promotion of terror activities in India. That has been undeclared Pakistani policy since 1989 when first time Kashmir insurgency had begun.

Concluding Remarks

The world economy is facing 1929 style recession after decades again and many economic pundits have declared turbulent economic weather ahead. Despite this dismal global scenario and process of globalization which works under the principle that it integrates, Indian economy is performing well. In the fiscal year of 2014-2015 it has increased with 7.3 % and Niti Ayog, Vice-Chairman, Arvind Panigaria has opined in June 2015 that by fiscal year of 2015-2016 it will cross 8%. World Bank has also predicted that India will cross China in annual GDP growth rate soon. It is astonishing performance given the fact that Chinese growth rate is reducing despite all round efforts of its revival. Goldman Saches has also predicated that India will surpass China soon on annual growth rate. India has already become fifth global economy and third after China and Japan in Asia.

Revival of Taliban rule or new wave of IS imprints in Afghanistan and Pakistan will all set to accelerate the pace of terror incidents in India. It is one of the utmost challenge Modi government has to face. We must strengthen our internal security system to cope with the emerging challenges. A small country like Israel has been successful to do that and India under Modi has successfully demonstrated its will while using 'Hot Pursuit' against Manipur rebels based in Myanmar. At international level India has achieved a respected level and it must use it to solicit all round support to contain terror at home and abroad.

It must revive 'Northern Alliance' spirit among Russia, Iran, Central Asian Republics and China to contain take over of the Taliban or IS in Afghanistan. Although China has thorny relations with India and all round friendship with Pakistan but knows that Pakistan has also exported terror in its insurgent infest western region of Xingjinag. Needless to say that if Modi

government will take these steps effectively it will not only minimize terror incidents but also consolidate country's all round development. Peace is must for development and Modi government must take these steps to ensure peace. We should not forget that the headquarter of international terrorism still based in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Pakistani military is hell bent to seize this opportunity and create instability in Afghanistan. It will fulfill twin purpose, first it will dent growing Indian imprint in Afghanistan and additionally propel the tentacles of terror in India. In bonus it will further strengthen their grip over power corridor in Islamabad. The terror network in India also originates from here and inbuilt anti India megalomania in Mullah-Military alliance in Pakistan has further enhanced these threats. The threats of terror as internal security dimension today are immense after 14 years. Because during this time of NATO led forces presence in Afghanistan these outfits had tough time to contain them and thus find no opportunity to propel terror in India. Any foothold of these outfits in Afghanistan will be detrimental for India's internal security. The threats of terror is looming large in the backdrop of the withdrawal of NATO troops from Afghanistan but through implementing above steps it can push away terror threats and ensure sustainable development.

ⁱ Rizvi, Hasan Aksari, *Military, State & Society in Pakistan*, St Martin Press, London, 2000, P-43.

ⁱⁱ Ibid.

ⁱⁱⁱ For a detailed account of Indian assistance, see Indian Embassy (Kabul), "India's Assistance Programme for Afghanistan's Reconstruction," <http://meakabul.nic.in/>; also see V.K. Shashkikumar, "The India Factor in Afghanistan," *Indian Defence Review* 23, no. 3 (July-September 2008), <http://www.indiandefencereview.com/2009/05/the-india-factor-in-afghanistan.html>.

^{iv} For details see the various annual reports of India's Ministry of External Affairs, http://meaindia.nic.in/mystart.php?id_2702.

^v Baqir Sajjad Syed, *Cables detail Saudi diplomat's meeting with Haqqani's son*, *Dawn*, Karachi, 28 June 2015.

^{vi} Muhammad Amir Rana, *Militants' fundraising streams*, *Dawn*, Karachi, 28 June 2015.

^{vii} *Pakistan supporting peace moves in Afghanistan: report*, *Dawn*, Karachi, 22 June 2015

^{viii} Irfan Haider, ISI officer involved in Kabul parliament attack, claims Afghan intelligence, *Dawn*, Karachi, 25 June 2015.

^{ix} Ibid