



Terrorism in India

by Vidisha Barua



Institute for the Study of Violent Groups

Project Manager

Richard H. Ward

ISVG Directors

Carolyn Martinez

Daniel Mabrey

Chris Hale

Research Supervisors

Hasan Arslan

Michael Gensert

Research Assistants

Marlon Bailey

Wen Chih Huang

Vesna Markovic

Shaun McKey

Consultants and Advisors

Jane Buckwalter

Adam Dulin

Joseph Serio

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Office of International Criminal Justice
Sam Houston State University
Huntsville, Texas 77341

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Sam Houston State University, Criminal Justice Center
Box 1819, Huntsville, TX 77342-1819, USA
Telephone: (936) 294-3173 — Fax: (936) 294-4053
e-mail: books@oicj.org — www.oicj.org

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Foreword

Historically, political and religious extremism in India has taken various forms and in this monograph Vidisha Barua provides an overview and analysis that explains terrorism from a regional perspective. Drawing upon data from the Institute for the Study of Violent Groups (ISVG) at Sam Houston State University, and her own research and experience as a journalist in India, Ms. Barua makes a major contribution to our understanding of global terrorism.

Unlike most countries, India's diverse religious and political spectrum has led to years of violence that goes beyond the conflict with Pakistan. Sectarian, separatist, ideological, and political differences have spawned a great many groups who view violence as the only avenue for change. The author identifies 51 extremist groups, some operating only in a particular region and others in more than one part of the country. Her analysis offers a unique insight into the ways in which these groups operate, and the politics of violence.

The monograph is part of a series of reports prepared by ISVG as a means of helping practitioners, researchers and government leaders better understand the dimensions of global terrorism.

Richard H. Ward
Dean and Director
Criminal Justice Center

Introduction

A Brief History of Secessionist Movements in India

In his article “Why Independence (Freedom) for Tamil Nadu from Indian Rule?” Thanjai Nalankilli wrote, “No one needs to explain to the French why France should be an independent nation (independent country), and not part of Germany or Britain or some other country. No one needs to explain to the Germans why Germany should be an independent nation, and not part of France or Poland or some other country...”¹ That is how the different states of India with their different cultures, languages and faiths feel about the imposition of the concept of “India.” John Strachey, in *India: Its Administration and Progress in 1888*, wrote, “This is the first and most essential thing to remember about India—that there is not and never was an India, possessing ... any sort of unity, physical, political, social or religious; no ‘Indian nation,’ no ‘people of India’.”²

Many challenged the assumptions of nationality and nationhood that the Congress Party upheld, and, as the departure of the British from India became imminent, the question of who should be an Indian became an urgent issue. Under the leadership of Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the Muslims of the sub-continent opted out of India, carving out a new nation, Pakistan. Many other regions wanted to opt out of the Indian nationhood, but those ideas did not bear fruit then. Over the years, while the Northeast, Jammu & Kashmir, Punjab, and the South have developed a strong desire to break free, the Hindu fundamentalist groups, permeating mostly in the Hindi-speaking primarily Hindu states have developed a strong desire to bring together Hindu India as “Hindustan” and expel their Muslim brethren. With time, the secessionist and “Hindutva” ideas have intensified and turned violent.

Terrorism and Violence in North India

North Zone Map of India
North India



Overview

The seed of the problems in north India, in Jammu & Kashmir, and Punjab was planted at the time of the Partition of India in 1947, a consequence of the two-nation theory of Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah. The idea was to make two nations divided on the basis of

religion. Pakistan was to comprise the Muslim population while the non-Muslims were to remain in India. There was a lot of communal violence, and the tales of massacres are still fresh in the minds of those who went to either side at the time of Partition. There was no clear demarcation because many Muslims continued to live in India. As a result, the northwestern region of India remained a weak spot.

In the late 1970s there was violence once again in north India, in Punjab, a state bordering on Pakistan which had been divided by the Partition. This time the violence was a result of internal politics within India. There was insurgency in the state. Terrorists are no longer active in Punjab, but the movement for Khalistan, the demand for a separate independent Sikh state, took 21,469 lives before it was crushed by police force in 1993.³

One of the best descriptions of the emergence of insurgency in Punjab has been given by K.P.S. Gill, who, as Punjab police chief, played a key role in quelling the violence in the state. He wrote:

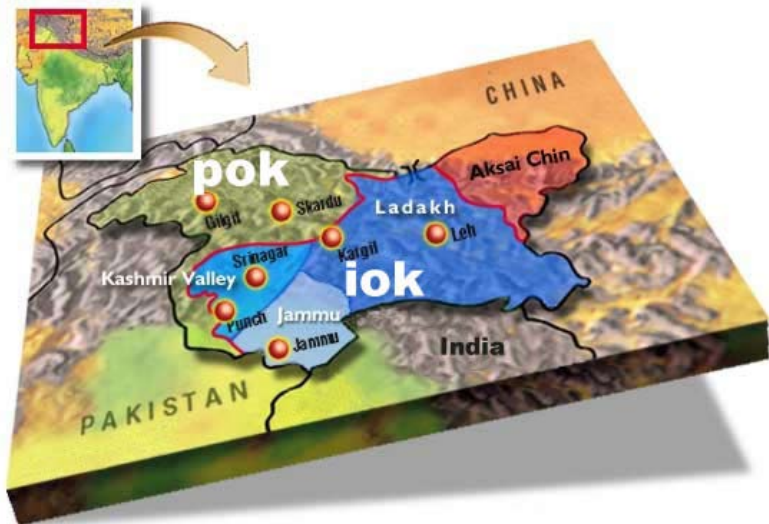
Terrorism in Punjab has, on occasion, been projected as a natural consequence of the unfulfilled collective aspirations of the Sikhs, as 'an idealistic movement for the creation of a state... among the Sikhs of Punjab'. The fact, however, is that, the movement for Khalistan was created out of a pattern of venal politics, of unscrupulous and bloody manipulation, and a brazen jockeying for power... It will suffice to state here that each of the major political players in the state and the national arena participated in the creation of this calamity, and the Congress (I) and the Akali Dal were the most culpable formations. This, indeed, was the first stage where a pernicious pattern of political intervention contributed, not to the resolution, but to the creation and nurturing of terrorism.⁴

Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India from 1966-77 and 1980-84, tried to use Sant Jarnail Singh Bhrindanwale, a politically ambitious Sikh preacher, to undermine the position of a local political party, the Akali Dal, that was a strong rival of the Congress (I) in the state. Although the strategy met with some success, Bhrindanwale and his followers created a lot of violence and mayhem in the state. In June 1984, on the orders of Ms. Gandhi, the group was removed from the Golden Temple, the most holy place of the Sikhs located in Amritsar, Punjab, where they had taken shelter. The attack on the Golden Temple infuriated significant sections of the Sikh population

leading to the assassination of Ms. Gandhi on October 31, 1984. Between 1987 and 1991, Punjab was placed under President's Rule and governed directly from New Delhi. Eventually, an election was held in the state in February 1992. Voter turnout was poor. The newly elected Congress (I) government gave a free hand to the police chief of the state, K.P.S. Gill; he significantly weakened the insurgent movement during his administration.

In 1989, the Kashmir Valley experienced its share of violence and terrorism which has since grown dramatically. The erstwhile 'Paradise on Earth' is today a haven for terrorists. India interpreted the situation as follows: "Failing to match India's military power, it (Pakistan) launched a low intensity war through militancy in 1990 which took a toll of 20,000 human lives besides destroying private and public property."⁵ Pakistan has a different story to tell: "Since 1989, the situation in Occupied Kashmir has undergone a qualitative change. In that year, disappointed by decades-old indifference of the world community towards their just cause and threatened by growing Indian state suppression, the Kashmiri Muslim people rose in revolt against India."⁶

Kashmir as viewed by India and Pakistan



pok = Pakistan occupied Kashmir

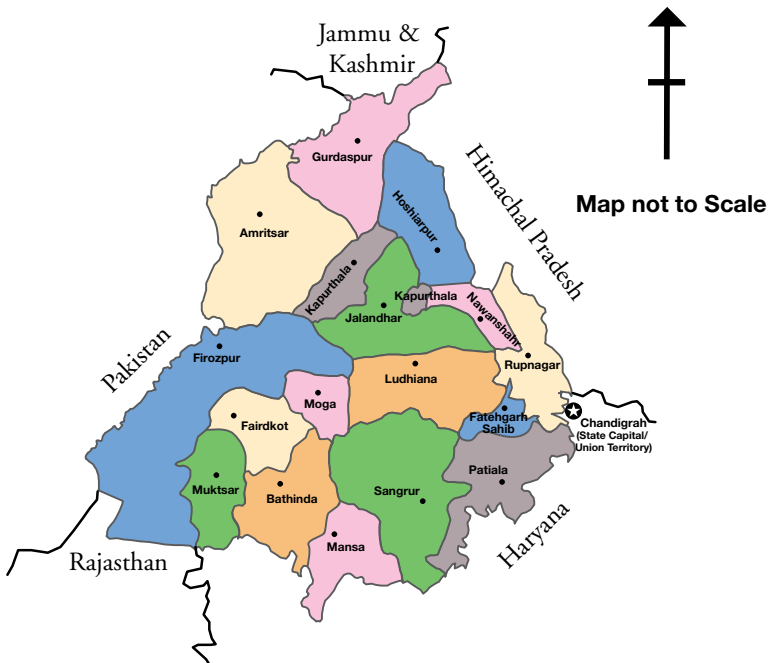
iok = India occupied Kashmir

Retrieved March 4, 2005, from

www.geocities.com/republic_of_kashmir/pokiok.html

Between 1990 and 2001, an officially estimated 10,000 Kashmiri young men crossed over to Pakistan for training and procurement of arms.⁷ As of June 1999, an estimated 400,000 army troops and other federal security forces were deployed in the valley, including those positioned along the Line of Control. Since 1990, it is estimated that more than 40,000 people, about half of whom are civilians, have been killed in Kashmir. According to official publications, 2,477 civilians were killed by Indian security forces, 6,673 civilians and 1,593 security personnel were killed by the militants, for a total of 19,866 killings as of 1998; an additional 982 Hindus and Sikhs were killed as of 1999. An estimated 36,000 Hindu families and 20,000 Muslim families fled the Valley by 1993, and many of them are still in refugee camps in Jammu and Azad Kashmir. Terrorism and violence in both Punjab and Kashmir are primarily funded by Pakistan's external intelligence agency, Inter Services Intelligence (ISI).

District Map of Punjab



Present Situation in Punjab

Though Punjab has been free from terrorism for more than a decade, there are still Indian and international Sikh groups working

towards the creation of Khalistan, the “land of the pure.” According to the South Asia Terrorism Portal’s assessment, in 2002 Pakistan made fresh attempts to revive terrorism in Punjab through its external intelligence agency, the ISI.⁸ Official sources claim that Pakistan-based terrorist groups like the Khalistan Commando Force–Panjwar (KCF-P), Babbar Khalsa International (BKI), Khalistan Zindabad Force (KZF), and International Sikh Youth Federation (ISYF) are in close touch with the ISI and are waiting for the right opportunity to strike terror in the state. Apparently, the ISI is trying to create a common front between Khalistani and Kashmiri terrorist groups. The ISI has directed the Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) to train these pro-Khalistan terrorist organizations. Both the BKI and the ISYF are funded by the ISI and by terrorist groups based in Germany.

Select Terrorist Groups

Babbar Khalsa International (BKI)

This is the oldest and most organized terrorist Khalistani group, founded in Canada in 1981. Wadhwa Singh is the leader of the BKI which is currently active in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Belgium, Norway, Switzerland, and Pakistan.⁹ The BKI has allegedly established a nexus with Dawood Ibrahim, the fugitive Indian underworld kingpin presently residing in Karachi. With the help of the Dawood Ibrahim gang in Mumbai, India, the group sold stolen cars and trucks to collect money for procuring arms and ammunition.

Major Incidents of the BKI

- June 23, 1985: The BKI was accused of masterminding the mid-air explosion of Air India flight-182 Kanishka off the coast of Ireland. A total of 329 persons were killed in the incident.
- 1992: Talwinder Singh Parmar, the alleged mastermind of the mid-air explosion of Air India flight-182 Kanishka, off the Irish coast, was killed in Punjab.
- February 28, 2001: British government proscribed Babbar Khalsa, as per the provisions of the new U.K. Terrorism Act 2000, which became operational in July 2000.

- August 18, 2001: Under the leadership of the BKI and other groups, pro-Khalistan activists and sympathizers held a protest demonstration in front of the Indian consulate in Frankfurt, and burned the Indian tricolor.
- April 30, 2004: The United States included the BKI in its Terrorist Exclusion List.

International Sikh Youth Federation (ISYF)¹⁰

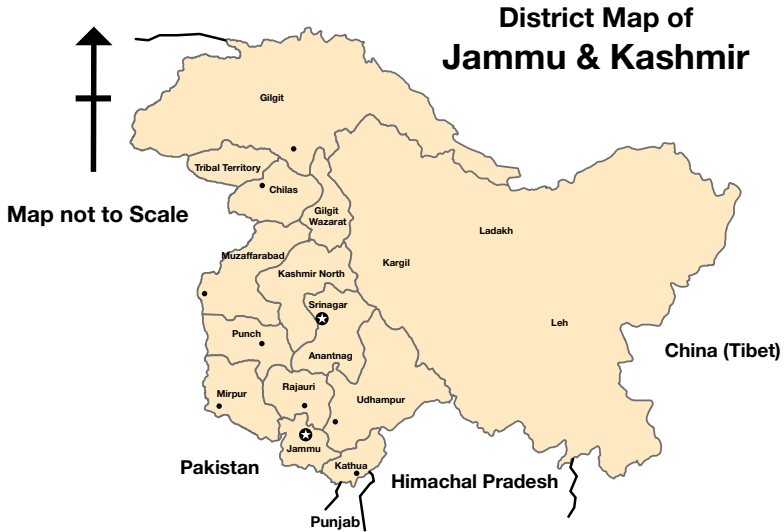
The International Sikh Youth Federation (ISYF) was formed in the United Kingdom in 1984 after Operation Blue Star removed Sikh terrorists from the Golden Temple. The founders of the ISYF were Amrik Singh and Jasbir Singh Rode, a nephew of Sant Jarnail Singh Bhrindanwale. Bhrindanwale, the key figure in Punjab terrorism, was killed in Operation Blue Star. The ISYF's support base extends across the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, and some western European countries. The group reportedly raised large sums of money from the Sikh Diaspora. It established a human rights organization, Khalsa Human Rights Group, that became a significant fundraising unit for pro-Khalistan terrorists in foreign countries.

Major Incidents of the ISYF

- July 30, 1997: Two persons linked to the ISYF were arrested near the Indo-Pak border, near Amritsar, after infiltrating into India at the behest of Lakhbir Singh Rode reportedly to assassinate the (then) Chief Minister of Punjab, Prakash Singh Badal.
- March 29, 2001: The ISYF was declared a proscribed organization in the United Kingdom, along with 20 more organizations, following the approval of the Terrorism Act 2000 [Proscribed Organizations (Amendment) Order 2001] in the House of Lords, on March 27.
- August 18, 2001: At a protest demonstration organized by the ISYF in front of the Consulate in Frankfurt, Germany, the Indian flag was burned.
- February 10, 2002: Addressing the media in Vancouver, ISYF spokesperson Amrit Singh Raj said the ISYF had been

disbanded and would no longer exist in Canada. He said that after the ISYF was branded a “terrorist” group, its image stood tarnished and made its functioning impossible.

- March 22, 2002: The ISYF was banned in India under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA).
- April 30, 2004: The United States included the ISYF in its Terrorist Exclusion List.



Present Situation in Kashmir

The indigenous militant groups include the pro-independence JKLF and the pro-Pakistan Hizbul Mujahideen (HM).¹¹ The HM, which is backed by Pakistan, increased its strength dramatically during the period between 1990 and 2001. The ISI (Pakistan’s secret service), which favors the HM over the secular JKLF, cut off financing to the JKLF and, in some instances, provided intelligence to India against the JKLF. The JKLF faction led by Yasin Malik announced a unilateral ceasefire in 1994 and pursued a political agenda under the All Parties Hurriyat (Freedom) Conference (APHC). Since 1995, foreign militant organizations with an Islamic agenda, such as Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT), Harkat-ul-Mujahideen, and the HM have dominated the militancy scene in Kashmir, all of them under the umbrella of the United Jehadi Council (UJC).

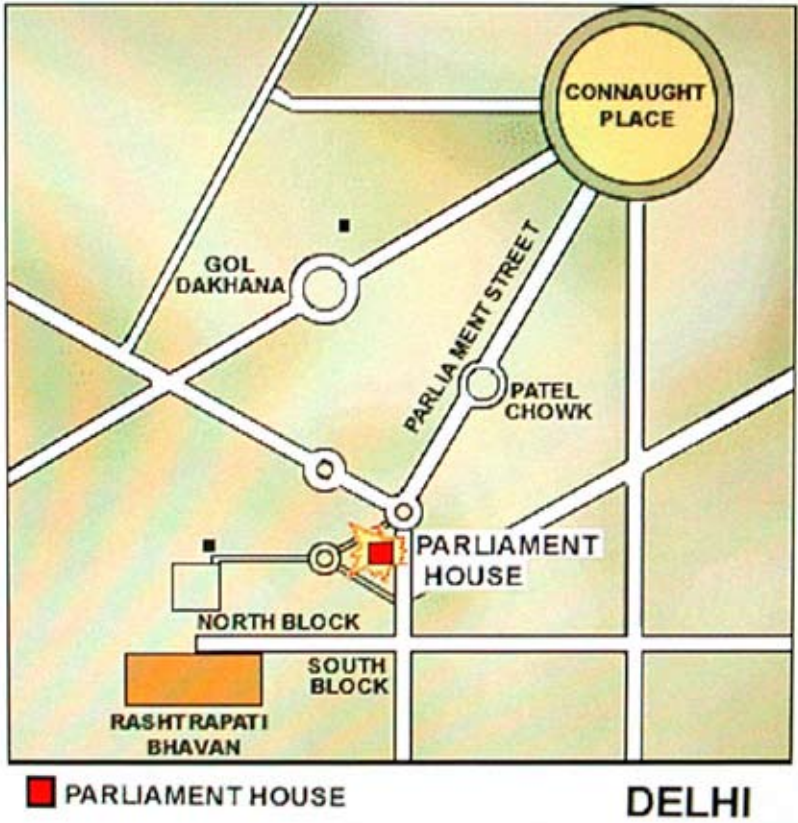
Between December 24 and 31, 1999, a Delhi-bound Indian Airlines Aircraft IC-814 was hijacked from Kathmandu to Kandahar by Harkat ul-Ansar (HUA) activists. After a week of negotiating with the government of India, three terrorists, Maulana Masood Azhar, Syed Umar Sheikh, and Mushtaq Latram Jerger, were released in exchange for the 155 hijacked hostages. One of the hostages was killed. On December 13, 2001, terrorists attacked the Indian Parliament in New Delhi, an act considered by Indians as equivalent to the September 11, 2001, terrorist attack on the United States.

IC 814 Hijack trail



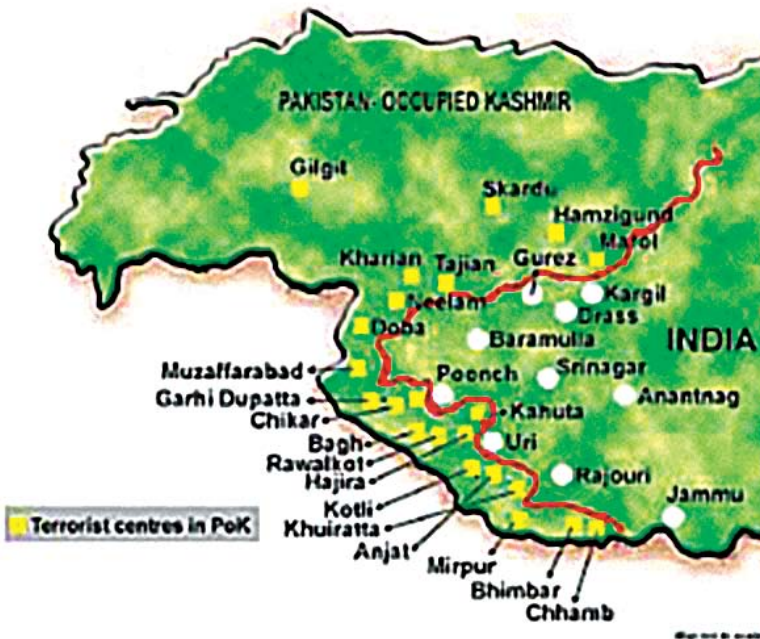
Retrieved December 20, 2004, from <http://users.senet.com.au/~wingman/hijack.html>

Attack on Indian Parliament



Retrieved December 20, 2004, from <http://www.rediff.com/news/2001/dec/13map.gif>

Map showing terrorist camps in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir



Retrieved March 1, 2005, from <http://www.tribuneindia.com/2001/20011006/windows/main1.htm>

Select Terrorist Groups

Hizbul Mujahideen (HM)

The Hizbul Mujahideen, the largest terrorist group in Kashmir, was formed in September 1989 under the leadership of Master Ahsan Dar with the objective of integrating Kashmir with Pakistan and “Islamizing” the state. The HM was established with the support of Pakistan to counter the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), a secular group aiming at an independent Kashmir attached to neither India nor Pakistan. Headquartered at Muzaffarabad in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (POK), the group has an estimated strength of about 1,500 and is headed by Syed Salahuddin. The HM is close to both the Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) in Pakistan and Kashmir, and most of its members are drawn from the JI.¹² The HM has training camps in Pakistan and in POK. When the Taliban came on the scene in Afghanistan, the training camps for the HM were closed, because they were viewed

as the militant wing of the Jamaat-e-Islami.¹³ The Taliban does not have cordial relations with the Jamaat-e-Islami of Pakistan because they support the Taliban's opponents in Afghanistan.

The major source of the HM's finances has been the ISI.¹⁴ The ISI and its mercenary groups, such as the Harkat ul-Ansar and the LeT need local intelligence and support; this is provided by the HM which has the strongest presence in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. According to reports, the HM receives nearly 10 million Rupees (approx. US \$229,148) from the ISI and is the biggest beneficiary of the funds given by the ISI. However, the ISI, according to Indian intelligence sources, is now promoting Masood Azhar's Jaish-e-Mohammad rather than the HM. The HM's modus operandi includes killings, kidnappings, arson, bomb blasts, and landmine explosions.

Major Incidents of the HM

- March 18, 1994: Wali Mohammed Itoo, a National Conference leader and the former speaker of the Legislative Assembly was shot dead while returning home after Friday prayers in Jammu city. Two Pakistani trained activists, Ghulam Hassan Lone and Bashir Ahmed Padroo, to whom the HM had entrusted the task of killing Itoo, escaped.
- April 26, 2001: HM spokesman, Salim Hashmi, claimed that its mujahideens killed 51 Indian soldiers, injured 137 and destroyed 34 barracks during a two-day operation against the Indian army in Kashmir. The HM had given an ultimatum to the Indian army that it would carry out at least 35 attacks between the nights of April 23 and 24.

Harkat ul-Mujahideen (HuM)

The Harkat ul-Ansar was formed by the merger of two Pakistani groups, the Harkat ul-Jihad-i-Islami and the Harkat ul-Mujahideen, in October 1993 with Maulana Saadatullah Khan as its leader. In 1997, the Harkat ul-Ansar was designated a terrorist organization by the United States for its ties to Osama Bin Laden. In 1998, the group renamed itself the Harkat ul-Mujahideen. The HuM's goal is to sever, by violent means, Jammu and Kashmir from India and merge it with Pakistan. It is a jihadi organization aiming at increas-

ing awareness about jihad. The Al-Faran is suspected of being its front organization.

The group is based in Muzaffarabad, the capital of Pakistan controlled Kashmir, but its operations are carried out mainly in Kashmir. It is claimed that the HuM is also fighting in the Philippines, Bosnia, Tajikistan, and the Middle East.¹⁵ The HuM has armed supporters in Azad Kashmir, Pakistan, the southern Kashmir and the Doda regions of India. Senior Pakistani intelligence officials estimated that the HuM commands at least 500 well-trained militants. However, according to the South Asia Terrorism Portal, the group's strength is estimated at about 1,000, nearly 60 per cent of whom are Pakistanis and Afghans.¹⁶ The HuM is composed of mostly Pakistanis and Kashmiris, but also has Afghans and Arab veterans of the Afghan war. The HuM uses light and heavy machineguns, assault rifles, mortars, explosives, and rockets.

The HuM's major source of funding is donations from sympathizers in Saudi Arabia and other Gulf and Islamic states and from Pakistanis and Kashmiris. The HuM's financial collection methods include soliciting donations from magazine ads and pamphlets. In anticipation of asset seizures in 2001 by the Pakistani government, the HuM withdrew funds from bank accounts and invested in legal businesses, such as commodity trading, real estate, and production of consumer goods. Its fundraising in Pakistan has been constrained since the government clampdown on extremist groups and freezing of terrorist assets.

Major Incidents of the HuM¹⁷

- September-October, 1994: Four foreign nationals (three British and one U.S. citizen) were abducted from Delhi. The abduction was carried out by a core group of five Pakistani nationals. The kidnapers demanded release of a number of terrorists in the custody of the Indian government.
- July 4-10, 1995: The Al-Faran, considered a front group for the HuM, kidnapped four British citizens, three U.S. citizens, one German, and one Norwegian to use as hostages in their demand for the release of three important HuM terrorists of Pakistan and some other militants. Three ladies among the hostages were later released, one American managed to es-

cape, the Norwegian was killed by decapitation on August 13, 1995, and the other four were killed in December 1995.

Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT)

Lashkar-e-Toiba literally means the “army of the pure.” The group was formed in 1990 by Hafiz Muhammad Saeed and is a military wing of the Markaz-ud-Dawa-wal-Irshad (MDI), an Islamic fundamentalist organization of Pakistan. In the 1980s, the LeT was involved in the resistance against the Soviet forces in Afghanistan but moved its focus to Jammu & Kashmir in the 1990s.

The LeT’s objectives, per a pamphlet titled “Why are we waging jihad?” include restoration of Islamic rule over all of India and uniting all Muslim majority regions in countries that surround Pakistan.¹⁸ As such, it is active in Jammu and Kashmir, Chechnya and other parts of Central Asia. The LeT claimed that it had assisted the Taliban and Osama Bin Laden’s Al Qaeda in Afghanistan during November and December 2002 in their fight against the U.S.-aided Northern Alliance. After the HuM was declared a terrorist organization by the United States in 1997, Pakistan’s ISI began supporting the LeT. The LeT reportedly receives considerable financial material and other forms of assistance from the Pakistan government, primarily through the ISI.

The LeT has an estimated strength of 300 and operates in the Srinagar Valley and the districts of Poonch, Rajouri, and Doda.¹⁹ They run training camps at Kotli, Sialkot, and Samani in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir; their current headquarters is in Muzaffarabad, the capital of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir.²⁰ There is a network of training camps and branch offices within Pakistan that recruits militants and collects funds. The modus operandi of the group includes attacks on security force targets, massacres of non-Muslims, and suicide attacks. The LeT members prefer death to being caught and exercise a higher level of brutality than other militant groups.

Major Incidents of the LeT

- December 13, 2001: Delhi police officials suspected that the LeT provided logistical assistance to the JeM in carrying out the attack on Parliament.

- December 14, 2001: The LeT denied reports of its involvement in the December 13 attack on the Indian Parliament in which 12 persons, including six terrorists, were killed.
- January 18, 2002: Two hawala (illegal money) operators were arrested in Mumbai for allegedly facilitating the funding of the LeT.
- June 28, 2003: A 41-count federal grand jury indictment is returned against 11 LeT terrorists who were charged with conspiracy to “prepare for and engage in violent jihad” against foreign targets in Kashmir, Philippines, and Chechnya. The 11 included eight persons arrested by agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation in Maryland, Virginia, and Pennsylvania on June 27 and three others believed to be in Saudi Arabia.
- June 16, 2004: A U.S. court sentenced three persons for conspiring to aid the LeT. Federal Judge Leonie M. Brinkema imposed life imprisonment on Masood Khan, an 85-year term on Seifullah Chapman, and a 97-month sentence on Abdur Raheem. All three were members of the Virginia jihad network.

Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM)

The Jaish-e-Mohammad Mujahideen e-Tanzeem (JeM) (Army of Mohammed) is a relatively new Islamic extremist group. The organization was linked to the kidnapping and beheading of *Wall Street Journal* reporter Daniel Pearl in Karachi in 2002.²¹ The JeM was formed in Karachi on January 31, 2000, by Maulana Masood Azhar. Azhar was one of the terrorists released by India in exchange for the 155 hostages released on December 31, 1999, following the hijacking of the Indian Airlines Flight IC 814.

The JeM is based in Peshawar and Muzaffarabad, but members conduct terrorist activities primarily in Kashmir. With the LeT, the JeM has been implicated by the government of India in the December 13, 2001, attack on the Indian Parliament in New Delhi. The JeM reportedly maintained training camps in Afghanistan until the fall of 2001.

The group has several hundred armed supporters in Pakistan, in India's southern Kashmir and Doda regions, and in the Kashmir valley, including many former HuM members. JeM supporters also include Afghans and Arab veterans of the Afghan war. JeM militants use light and heavy machineguns, assault rifles, mortars, improvised explosive devices, and rocket grenades. Their modus operandi includes mostly fidayeen (suicide terrorist) attacks.²² Terrorists storm a high security target. They then either fortify themselves within the target, killing as many security force personnel and civilians as possible before they are killed by retaliatory action, or they kill and injure as many as possible before attempting to escape.

Most of the JeM's members and material resources come from the militant groups (e.g., the Harkat ul-Jihad-i-Islami [HUJI] and the Harkat ul-Mujahideen [HuM]).²³ They reportedly have close links with Afghan Arabs and the Taliban; Osama Bin Laden is suspected of providing funds to them. The JeM also collects funds through donation requests in magazines and pamphlets. Anticipating asset seizures by the Pakistani government, the JeM, like the HuM, withdrew funds from bank accounts and invested in legal businesses, such as commodity trading, real estate and production of consumer goods. The United States added the JeM to the Foreign Terrorist Organization list in December 2001. By 2003, the JeM splintered into the Khuddam ul-Islam (KUI) and the Jamaat ul-Furqan (JUF).

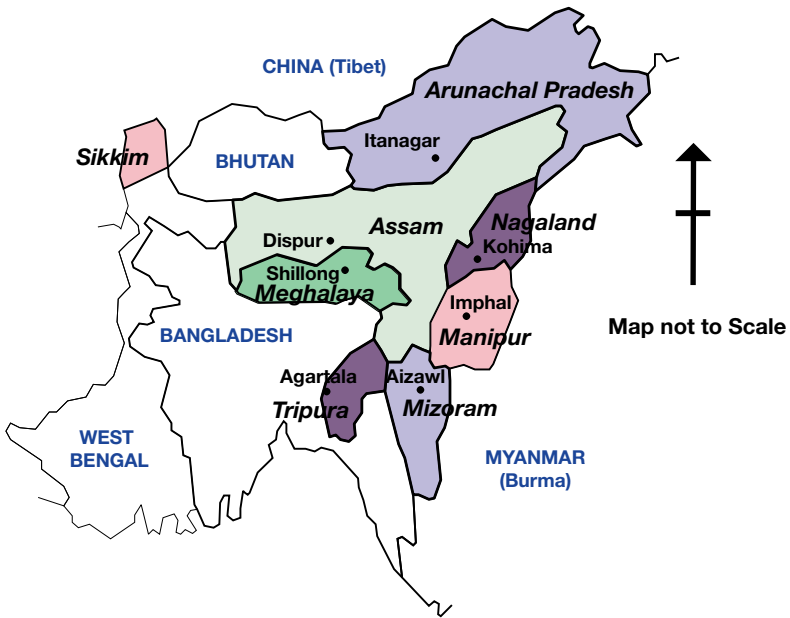
Major Incidents of the JeM²⁴

- December 31, 1999: Maulana Masood Azhar and two other terrorists were flown to Kandahar, Afghanistan, and released in exchange for the hijacked IC 814 and its passengers.
- January 31, 2000: The JeM was launched in Karachi by Maulana Masood Azhar.
- December 13, 2001: Five terrorists, later identified as Pakistani JeM mercenaries, attacked India's Parliament in New Delhi. Eight security force personnel, a Parliament staff member and the five mercenaries were killed.
- December 14, 2001: India's External Affairs Minister held the JeM and the LeT responsible for the attack on Parliament.

- March 14, 2002: Adnan (alias Sunny), a JeM member and self-proclaimed killer of Daniel Pearl, was arrested in Lahore. He appeared at a local Urdu daily's office and claimed he had slain Pearl.
- December 18: Mohammad Afzal and Shaukat Hussain Guru, JeM terrorists in the December 13, 2001, attack on Parliament, were sentenced to death by a special court in Delhi.
- December 29, 2003: One of the two suicide bombers who targeted President Musharraf on December 25 in Rawalpindi belonged to the outlawed Jaish-e-Mohammed and was freed from an Afghan prison in 2002, unnamed intelligence officials were quoted as saying in the Daily Times.
- March 5, 2004: Senator Lt. General (retd.) Javed Ashraf Qazi said in Islamabad that the outlawed JeM was involved in the December 2003 assassination attempts on President Pervez Musharraf.

Terrorism and Violence in Northeast India

Northeast Zone Map of India



Overview

Ever since India gained independence in 1947, northeast India has been divided into several smaller states and autonomous regions. Earlier, the autonomous regions of Karbi Anglong, Bodo, and Meghalaya were all part of pre-Independence Assam. In 1948, the North Eastern Frontier Agency, which became Arunachal Pradesh in 1987, was separated from Assam. In 1963, Nagaland was formed. In 1970 Meghalaya became an autonomous state, and in 1972 it was declared

a state of the Indian Union. The same year, Mizoram became a Union Territory, and in 1987 it was granted statehood. This separatist tendency in the northeast has continued over the years to such an extent that some of the states want to secede from the Indian Union.

The separatist tendency in the northeast of India is often attributed to the British policy of divide and rule in governing the difficult region. In an article titled “Northeast India: Target of British Apartheid,” Ramtanu Maitra and Susan Maitra wrote:

The root cause of the problem is the conditions set in place by British rule in the Northeast since 1826 and the formation of East Pakistan in 1947. New Delhi's inability to integrate the region stems from its failure to recognize that the British Raj had converted Northeast India into a human zoo, where each tribe was allowed to roam free within its “own territory,” but was not allowed to cross the boundaries set forth by their British masters and establish contact with the rest of India.²⁵

This was perhaps facilitated by the fact that each tribe in the northeast spoke a different language, had a different culture, and was largely self-sufficient.

Although known as the seven sisters, the states in India's northeast region are becoming more and more separated from one another. The region once lived in harmony, before being divided into individual states. Each ethnic group is now asserting its identity, mostly by violent means, and demanding a separate territory. This may be a way of drawing the attention of the central government to the region: the populace has always strongly felt and resented a perceived neglect by the central government.

This dissatisfaction is facilitated by some policies of the government, such as acceding to demands for separate territories by creating autonomous regions for different ethnic groups. As more and more such regions are created, the need—or demand—for more increases.

The policy of preferred treatment for former terrorists has also been a problem for people in the region. The government policy of awarding large sums of money to surrendered militants has resulted in unruly young men leading lives of abandon. The whole society is suffering because of this situation. In Assam, for example, the surrendered militants of the United Liberation Front of Asom, known as SULFA (surrendered ULFA), are creating an untenable situation for

the general population. The government's intentions in supporting these former militants may have been good; the results have not been. Instead, people feel little hope of having a healthier society.

The timid policies of the government may be meant to counter military operations that continue to create havoc in the region; at times more so than the terrorists. The atrocities of the army are most severe in the remote areas of the region, known to be the stronghold of the militants. Many innocent people are tortured on the pretext of having ties with the militants. Young men in particular are suspected of being terrorists. The severe measures taken by the military have done little to curb the insurgent groups which continue to grow dramatically. All the insurgent groups in the northeast and north of India have connections with and are supported by the ISI of Pakistan.

District Map of Assam



Retrieved, February 20, 2006, from www.geocities.com/cyberguwahati/districtas-sam.htm

Present Situation in Assam

The insurgency problem in Assam and the problem of illegal migrants are closely interrelated. The migrant problem has contributed immensely to the rise of insurgency in the state. Pre-independence protests of the Assamese against the Bengali migrants continued post-independence and subsequently turned into the six-year-old Assam agitation from 1979 to 1985. This ended with the signing of the Assam Accord by the then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. Two

months after the signing of the accord, the leaders of the agitation formed a political party, the Asom Gana Parishad (AGP), and won the elections by a vast majority. However, it did not take long for the people to realize that the AGP was also following the path of other political parties, much like the pigs in George Orwell's *Animal Farm* being "more equal," and so they were later ousted from power. The illegal migrant issue was deeply ingrained in the Assamese psyche, and it found expression in the birth of the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA), a violent group. ULFA and the National Democratic Front of Bodoland are now demanding "ethnic cleansing" in their respective areas. Assam is one of the worst affected areas of the northeast.

Select Terrorist Groups

United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA)

The United Liberation Front of Asom gained in prominence as a sequel to the AGP's failure in office and was a violent version of the Assam Agitation²⁶ with the same objectives and grievances. ULFA was formed on April 7, 1979, around the same time that the Assam Agitation began. ULFA's objective is "to liberate Assam, (a land of 78,529 square km), through armed national liberation struggle from the clutches of the illegal occupation of India and to establish a sovereign independent Assam."²⁷

As per the South Asia Terrorism Portal,²⁸ over the years, ULFA developed linkages with several officers and personnel of the Royal Bhutan Army (RBA) and the police; this ensured, among other things, a steady flow of rations, logistical support and aid and contacts for money laundering. The group also established links with the National Socialist Council of Nagalim and through it with the Kachin Independence Army of Myanmar. ULFA also has connections with the ISI of Pakistan and the Directorate General of Field Intelligence (DGFI) of Bangladesh.

During one of his visits to Karachi in 1996, facilitated by the ISI, ULFA leader Paresh Barua reportedly met with Osama Bin Laden. The ULFA leader was taken to a camp on the Pakistan-Afghanistan border where he received, not only assurance of military help in the form of arms and ammunition, but also assurance of cooperation and logistical support of all international organizations owing allegiance to Bin Laden, including the International Jihad Council, the Tehrik-ul-Jihad, Harkat-ul-Jihadi-e-Islami, and Al Qaeda. The

Muslim United Liberation Tigers of Assam (MULTA) and the Muslim United Liberation Front of Assam (MULFA) are reported to be the chief suppliers of arms to ULFA through Bangladesh.

ULFA has a number of training camps in Bangladesh where militants are trained. These camps are also a source of income for the organization. Besides these training camps, ULFA has launched several income generating projects in Bangladesh. It has set up a number of firms in Dhaka, including media consultancies and soft drink manufacturing units. It is also reported to own three hotels, a private clinic, and two motor driving schools in Dhaka. Paresh Barua is reported to own or have controlling interests in several businesses in Bangladesh, including a tannery, a chain of department stores, garment factories, travel agencies, shrimp trawlers, and transport and investment companies. It has been alleged that ULFA is trafficking in drugs to fund their operations.

Major Incidents of ULFA

- May 9, 1990: The ULFA leadership, having established contacts with Pakistan, flew to Karachi from Dhaka, Bangladesh. They were reportedly taken to Islamabad and kept in safehouses for two days before being sent for training to Peshawar, a base of the Afghan mujahideen and terrorist network. The ULFA leaders met with Gulbuddin Hekmatyar in Peshawar, along with a number of Arab members of the Afghansi. ULFA undertook a month-long intensive training with the mujahideen under the supervision of ISI agents.
- September 1990: The Indian Army's "Operation Rhino" caused havoc in the ULFA ranks. Paresh Barua and Sunil Nath, then publicity secretary of the ULFA, again went to Pakistan, and ISI agents took them to Darra in the North West Frontier Province. Reportedly, ISI agents pressured the ULFA leaders to handle high-powered explosives for large-scale application within Assam to counter the Army offensive and to launch strategic attacks on government officials, politicians and key installations. Barua, however, declined the offer, saying that it would alienate the group from the people.²⁹

- November 28, 1990: The central government imposed President's rule in Assam as terrorist activities unleashed by ULFA reached unprecedented heights. The entire State of Assam was declared a "disturbed area;" ULFA was banned under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967; the army launched Operation Bajrang.
- July 1, 1991: ULFA resumed terrorist activities by abducting 14 people, including an engineer, a national of the Soviet Union.
- July 4, 1997: Prominent and popular social activist Sanjoy Ghosh, general secretary of the non-governmental organization AVARD-NE, was killed by suspected ULFA terrorists.

National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB)

As previously mentioned, the secessionist movements in the northeast of India stem largely from the neglect by the central government, though there are geographic and historical factors involved as well. Within the northeast, the Bodos, a major community in Assam, started their movement largely due to the neglect of the Assam state government. Their grievances were that they were not treated equally, both socially and economically. This feeling led to their demand for a separate Bodo autonomous region within India, and later for a separate country along the lines of ULFA and the NSCN. The Bodos initiated their own form of insurgency to fight against the possession of their tribal land by Bengali settlers and the native Assamese, the neglect of the Bodo language, and to express a sense of being exploited. In 1986, the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB) came into being as the Bodo Security Force (BdSF) under the leadership of Ranjan Daimary, alias D.R. Nabla.

The NDFB was formed to secure a "sovereign Bodoland" in the areas north of the river Brahmaputra. Bodos come from the area of Karbi Anglong, which forms a triangular wedge between the borders of Mizoram and Nagaland. The NDFB claims that the Assam Accord of 1985, signed by the Asom Gana Parishad (AGP) and New Delhi, favored the Assamese and did not meet the demands of the "indigenous groups" in Assam. The NDFB's main targets are migrant Muslims from Bangladesh, Nepalis, and Santhals. All these people have settled in areas the NDFB claims as part of "Bodoland."

The NDFB carries out its operation of cleansing non-Bodo communities through plunder, arson, massacre, persecution, bomb explosions, kidnapping, and extortion. In fact, extortion and looting are their basic sources of funding. The funds are then used to purchase arms and ammunition for the organization. In 1991, the Goodricke group allegedly paid about 1.5 million Rupees (US \$31,250) for the release of the manager of the Nonoipara tea estate.³⁰ In 1992, an executive of the Williamson Magor company, which has nearly 45 tea gardens in the area, was abducted by the NDFB militants, and the company had to airdrop 1.3 million Rupees (US \$27,833) at a specified NDFB hideout for his release. In 1996, the army claimed to have seized a NDFB document which showed that the Williamson Magor group paid 2.4 million Rupees (US \$50,000) between September and October 1994. Another tea company, the Assam Frontier Company, with 15 gardens, paid 900,000 Rupees (US \$18,750). In addition, smaller companies paid regular installments.

On September 20, 1997, the Tata Tea Company published a report in the newspapers explaining how NDFB terrorists were extorting funds from the company. Another report revealed that in 1995-96 government departments such as Sales Tax, Forest, and Inspectorate of Motor Vehicles accounted for nearly 50% of the NDFB's collection of about 1.3 crore Rupees (US \$270,833).

In 1997, the police arrested six officers of the Transport department in the state on charges of providing funds to NDFB militants.³¹ The Calcutta-based Macleod Russel Company paid the NDFB about \$400,000 to release a plantation manager who was kidnapped.³² According to some estimates, nearly \$14 million was extorted from different companies in 1989 and 1990.

Bibhu Prasad Routray of the Institute for Conflict Management³³ wrote: "Dutch NGO's such as the Landlijke India Werk (LIW) and the Netherland Council of Indigenous Vodlesgeist (NCIV) are alleged to have provided funds for the outfit." The organization's extortion drive is directed against non-Bodo families in various parts of the Bongaigaon and Kokrajhar districts. Civilians and business establishments are served with regular notices for payment of tax and donations. Routray further wrote, "The NDFB also indulges in collecting Bodoland tax from the people in various districts of lower Assam ranging from 4,000 Rupees (US \$83) to 20,000 Rupees (US \$417), depending on their financial position."

The Army, operating in the lower Assam districts of Kokrajhar and Bongaigaon, claimed that the NDFB is involved in illegal felling

of trees as well. They collect taxes from other illegal timber contractors at the rate of 20,000 Rupees (US \$417) per truck. Those who fail to pay are attacked. In July 2000, the chief minister of Assam alleged that the NDFB and ULFA were channeling funds through the “Bhutanese diplomatic pouch” to their leaders based in Southeast Asian capitals.

Bodo Liberation Tigers (BLT)

The Bodo Liberation Tigers (BLT), also known as the Bodo Liberation Tiger Force (BLTF), was established on June 18, 1996, under the leadership of Prem Singh Brahma. Its major objectives were creation of a separate state of Bodoland on the north bank of the Brahmaputra, creation of an autonomous district council on the south bank of the Brahmaputra, and inclusion of the Bodos of Karbi Anglong district in the Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution.

On December 6, 2003, 2,641 BLT members renounced violence and surrendered along with arms and ammunition at Kokrajhar, marking an end to seven years of insurgency. On December 7, an interim 12-member executive council of the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) was formed in Kokrajhar. Representatives of the Union government, the Assam government and a BLT delegation met in New Delhi on February 10, 2003. The BLT’s demands were met and a Memorandum of Settlement (MoS) for the creation of the BTC was adopted.

Major Incidents of the NDFB and the BLT³⁴

- 1991: The Goodricke group allegedly paid about 1.5 million Rupees (US \$31,250) for the release of its manager of the Nonoipara tea estate.
- July 23, 1994: The Bodo Security Force surrounded the village of Bansbari, in Assam, where a large number of refugees from Bangladesh had settled. The BDSF opened fire on the sleeping villagers, killing 50 and injuring at least 100. The group also looted the armories of central paramilitary forces, including the Central Reserve Police Force and the Border Security Force.
- May 1996: Ethnic riots broke out between the Bodos and the Santhals in the Kokrajhar and Bongaigaon districts of lower

Assam leading to the death of many. Nearly 50,000 people settled in relief camps. The army claimed to have seized an NDFB document which showed that the Williamson Magor group paid 2.4 million Rupees (US \$50,000) between September and October 1994.

- May 1998: A riot between the Bodos and the Santhals left many dead and nearly 25,000 homeless.
- September 25: One hundred people were injured, 40 of them seriously, in a bomb blast by the NDFB, which derailed the North East Express at Baghmari in Bongaigaon district.
- June 29, 2003: A report indicated that ULFA and the NDFB had formed a new group named the Gorkha Bhutan Liberation Front (GBLF) with 300 Nepalese Gorkha youths from Bhutan.

Present Situation in Nagaland

The goal of the resistance movement of the Naga people is to maintain their independent status against the “expansionist colonial policy of the Indian State.”³⁵ More than 25,000 people have been killed in the Naga rebellion (the longest-running separatist insurgency in India) since it was launched in 1947 at the time of India’s Independence from British rule.³⁶

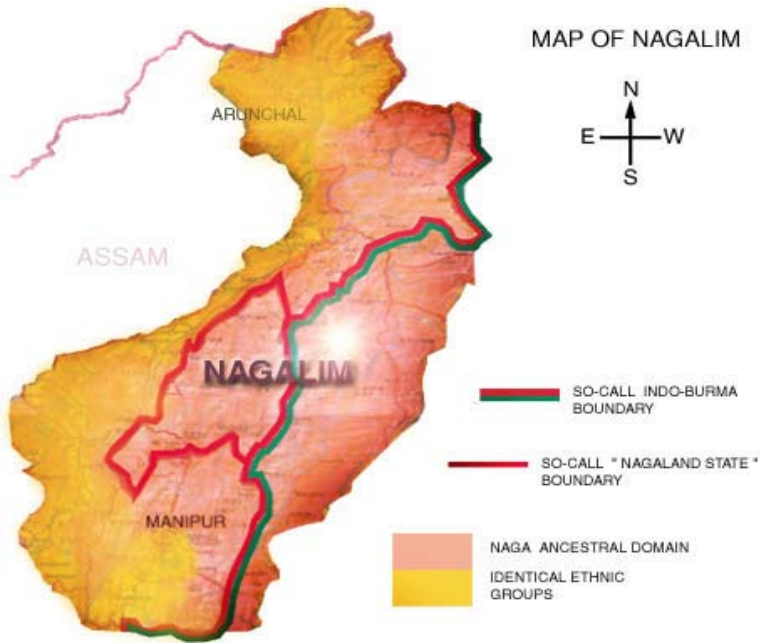
The National Socialist Council of Nagalim (NSCN) entered into a ceasefire with the central government in 1997, and the two sides have had several rounds of talks since then in Switzerland, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Thailand, Japan, and Malaysia. The exiled NSCN leaders (Isak-Muivah faction) leaders came to India in December 2004 at the invitation of Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. Currently peace talks are going on in New Delhi between the central government and NSCN (IM) leaders Isak Chishi Swu and Thuingaleng Muivah who want to make the Naga cause a single one. Both the NSCN(IM) leaders have held discussions with various cross-sections of the Naga society. They conducted the historic fourth Naga Peoples’ Consultative Meeting on January 20 and 21, 2005, where about 8,000 delegates from various Naga inhabited areas of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam and Manipur, and Nagaland adopted a four-point declaration on the ongoing peace process.³⁷



Select Terrorist Groups

National Socialist Council of Nagalim

The National Socialist Council of Nagalim (NSCN) was formed on January 31, 1980, by Isak Chisi Swu, Thuingaleng Muivah, and S.S. Khaplang opposing the Shillong Accord signed by the NNC (Naga National Council) with the Indian government. Differences surfaced within the NSCN over the issue of commencing a dialogue with the central government. On April 30, 1988, the NSCN split into



two factions: the NSCN-IM, led by Isak Chisi Swu and Thuingaleng Muivah and the NSCN-K led by S.S. Khaplang.

Retrieved November 29, 2004, from the NSCN official website www.nscnonline.org

National Socialist Council of Nagalim (NSCN-IM)

The NSCN-IM has established a government-in-exile called the Government of the People's Republic of Nagaland (GPRN) which interacts with formal and informal world bodies and the media. The NSCN-IM has adopted an annual budget of 200 million Rupees to 250 million Rupees each year.³⁸

The main objective of the NSCN-IM is to establish a "Greater Nagaland" ("Nagalim" or the People's Republic of Nagaland) based on Mao Tse Tung's ideology³⁹ which put forth the concepts of mass mobilization and continuous revolution. Its manifesto is based on the principle of socialism for economic development and a spiritual outlook—"Nagaland for Christ." "Their twin issues are those of nationality and identity," said Assamese filmmaker Shankar Borua whose film, "If God be with us" is about the "Naga Nation."

Drug trafficking from Myanmar is reported to be a major source of income for the NSCN-IM: they reportedly engage in extortion,

bank robberies and other criminal pursuits to obtain funds. They also generate funds through international mobilization. The NSCN-IM and the NSCN-K run parallel structures of “taxation” (extortion) throughout the regions that they dominate.

As per the South Asia Terrorism Portal, until 1971 the United States was a major provider of arms, financing, and intelligence for the NSCN-IM. East Pakistan had also allegedly supplied money and arms. Until the late 1980s, China provided support to the group. Pakistan’s ISI now provides a large part of the NSCN-IM’s financing, arms, and logistic support. The NSCN-IM has connections with Naga groups operating in Myanmar, and drug trafficking from Myanmar is a major source of income.

The NSCN-IM has also established contacts with other groups (e.g., the U.N. Human Rights Organization in Geneva, Unrepresented Nations People’s Organization [UNPO] at the Hague, and the U.N. Working Group on Indigenous People [UNWGIP]).

Major Incidents of the NSCN-IM

- April 30, 1988: The NSCN split into two groups, following severe inter-factional clashes. One faction was led by Isak Chisi Swu and Thuengaling Muivah (NSCN-IM) and the other by S.S. Khaplang (NSCN-K).
- October 4, 1988: The two top leaders of NSCN-IM, Isak Chisi Swu and Thuengaling Muivah, met with Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee in Paris. Vajpayee said that secession was not an option as talks must be held within the framework of the Indian Constitution.
- May 3-7, 2000: As many as 70 terrorists were killed in fierce fighting between the rival factions of the NSCN-IM and the NSCN-K in Mon district.
- March 3, 2001: The NSCN-IM served extortion notices on Coal India Limited (CIL) in Margherita in Dibrugarh district, demanding 5 million Rupees within 15 days.

- March 31, 2004: Naga peace talks between the Union Government and NSCN-IM began in Thailand's capital, Bangkok.

National Socialist Council of Nagalim (NSCN-K)

The NSCN-K was formed April 30, 1988, when the NSCN split into two factions. The NSCN-K, comprising the Konyak Nagas, was led by S.S. Khaplant. The objective of NSCN-K is similar to that of NSCN-IM: to establish a "Greater Nagaland" or Nagalim. Like the NSCN-IM, the NSCN-K runs a government-in-exile called the Government of the People's Republic of Nagaland, NSCN-K. The general headquarters of the GPRN/NSCN-K is located in eastern Nagalim (Myanmar).

Major Incidents of the NSCN-K

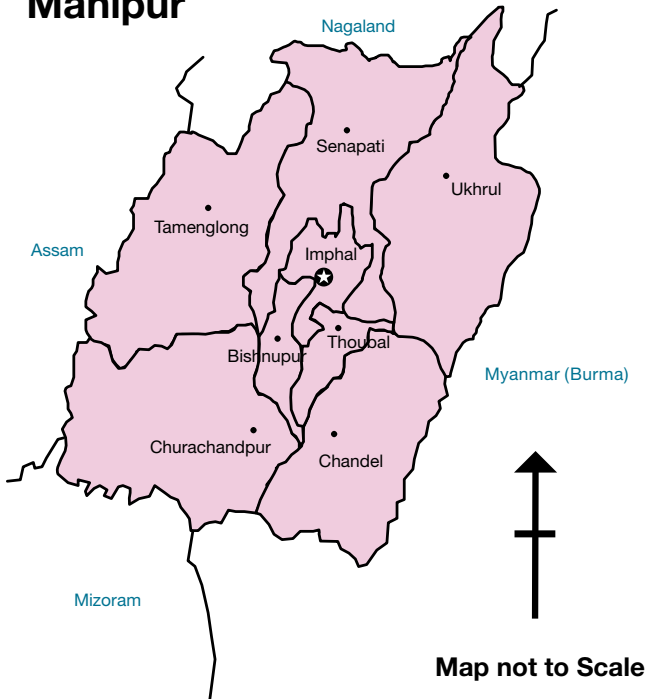
- March 1993: The NSCN-K fell out with Gen. Ne Win's government in Myanmar and launched an operation called "Da" (named after a traditional Naga weapon shaped in the form of a straight scythe), destroying four outposts of the then-Burmese Army.⁴⁰
- November 28, 2002:⁴¹ Three hundred NSCN-K members were reported to have extorted huge sums of money and to have committed acts of vandalism, mainly in Chetapbashi, Baregharia, and Sonapur, along the Assam-Nagaland border.
- September 30, 2003: The NSCN-K launched a tactical operation code named "Operation Rocket" to regain lost ground in the Tirap and Changlang districts of Arunachal Pradesh and to extend its base to parts of neighboring Assam.
- January 13, 2004: Reports indicated that the government of India was likely to begin its formal peace process with the NSCN-K during the last week of February 2004 in Thailand's capital, Bangkok.

Present Situation in Manipur

B. Raman's article of June 7, 2004, titled "The Creeping Cancer," aptly describes the present situation in Manipur, the state most affected by the narcotic-insurgency nexus. Raman writes:

Visit Manipur in India on the Myanmar border, which has been a favorite destination of heroin smugglers from the Golden Triangle.⁴² The increasing availability of heroin has weakened the administration, governance, the maintenance of law and order, public morality, public health and productivity and retarded economic development. There has been a mushrooming of insurgent groups, many of them not even having any political or economic or other objective. They have taken to insurgency because it pays and it pays because of the support they give to heroin smugglers. Insurgencies thrive because of the support of heroin-smugglers. Heroin-smugglers thrive because of the support from insurgents. That is what we call narco-insurgency. Manipur is a disturbing example of a failed state.⁴³

District Map of Manipur



Select Terrorist Groups

United National Liberation Front (UNLF)

The UNLF, the oldest Meitei insurgent group in Manipur, was established on November 24, 1964, under the leadership of Areambam Samrendra Singh. The objective of the UNLF was to establish an independent and socialist Manipur. In 1990, the group decided to launch an armed struggle for the “liberation” of Manipur from India. In the nineties, the front undertook a social reformation campaign against rampant alcoholism, gambling, drug peddling, and drug abuse.

On May 22, 1990, the UNLF, along with other insurgent groups operating in the northeast—the National Socialist Council of Nagaland-Khaplang, the United Liberation Front of Asom, and the Kuki National Army—floated a pan-Mongoloid coalition called the Indo-Burma Revolutionary Front (IBRF) to wage a “united struggle for the independence of Indo-Burma.”

The UNLF has been at war with the NSCN-IM since 1991. The main reason for this conflict is attributed to the NSCN-IM’s demand for the inclusion of four districts of Manipur in “Greater Nagaland” to which the UNLF is firmly opposed. The UNLF has accused the NSCN-IM of instigating first the Naga-Kuki bloodbath of 1993 as part of their ethnic cleansing plan, and then initiating the Paite-Kuki bloodshed.⁴⁴ The group’s main source of funding is extortion from government employees, businessmen, and contractors. In December 2002, a large stock of arms, ammunition and gem stones was seized from UNLF’s hideout in the Tamu area of India and Myanmar border by the Myanmarese Junta; it is assumed that UNLF is involved in gem and gold smuggling to finance its activities. Highly placed official sources said that the UNLF has procured large stocks of weapons from black markets in Thailand, Singapore, and Cambodia and is selling arms and ammunition to several underground organizations in the northeast of India. There are reports that the front has sold weapons to the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) and the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB) and has also supplied arms and ammunition to Tripura’s insurgent groups such as the All Tripura Tribal Force (ATTF).

Major Incidents of the UNLF⁴⁵

- November 24, 2001: The UNLF declared that the idea of a joint “liberation struggle” initiated by the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA), NSCN-K, and UNLF with the formation of the Indo-Burma Revolutionary Front IBRF in 1990 was slowly but definitely becoming a reality.
- December 2001: The Myanmar Army arrested 192 UNLF terrorists from Tamu and Kalamayeo areas following a series of raids on their hideouts. The arrested men included UNLF chairman R.K. Meghen. The Myanmar Army seized approximately 1,500 sophisticated weapons, over 10 million Rupees in cash, a huge quantity of gold, and 20 rocket launchers from their hideouts.
- September 25, 2002: The Manipur People’s Liberation Front (MPLF), of which the UNLF is a member, called for the people’s support to strengthen traditional brotherhood among peoples and to forge revolutionary solidarity to fight the common enemy.
- June 12, 2003: Rival terrorist groups of Manipur—the UNLF and the United Kuki Liberation Front (UKLF)—agreed to end hostilities between themselves and to work towards resettling villagers displaced as a result of their conflict.

People’s Liberation Army (PLA)

The People’s Liberation Army (PLA) was organized on September 25, 1978, under the leadership of N. Bisheshwar Singh. Although a Meitei group, the PLA claims to be trans-tribal. Its objective is to bring together all the ethnic groups including the Meiteis, the Nagas, and the Kukis and fight for the liberation of Manipur. The PLA began as a movement against the Hinduvaishnavite sect that has a large following in the Imphal Valley populated by the Meitei community.⁴⁶ The activists urged the young Meiteis to reassert their Meitei identity and to reject the Bengali script, which the group claimed had suppressed their language and culture.

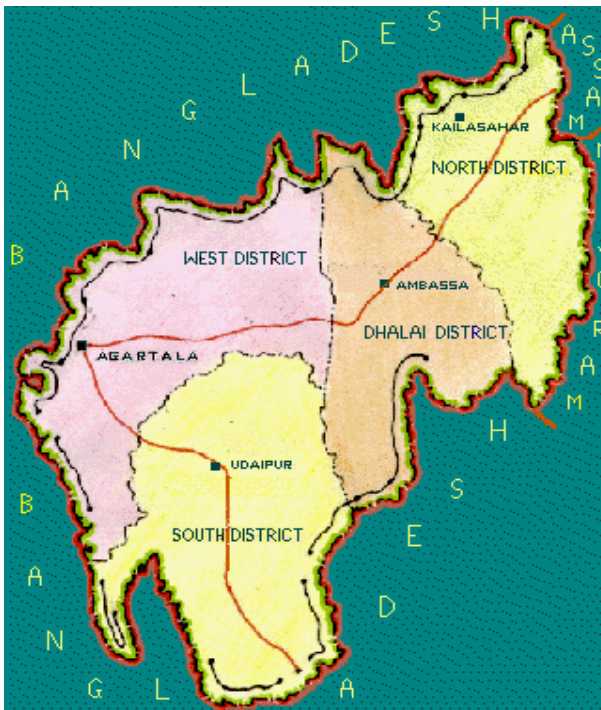
The PLA’s political wing, formed in 1989, is called the Revolutionary People’s Front (RPF). Like the NSCN-IM and the NSCN-K, the RPF maintains a government-in-exile in Bangladesh with

Irengbam Chaoren as its president. The PLA is active mainly in the Imphal valley. The PLA activists are equipped with sophisticated arms; they received weapons and training in exchange for hard cash from the Kachin Independent Army (KIA) of Myanmar. They are also trained at NSCN camps. The group has been involved in widespread extortion operations.

Major Incidents of the PLA

- 1992-93: The state excise department seized 161,642 kg of ganja (marijuana), 7,163 kg of opium, and 4,014 kg of 95 per cent pure heroin, worth millions of dollars in the international market.
- January 21, 2003: The PLA demanded 1 million Rupees for the release of abducted Food Corporation of India, Dimapur District Manager, R Sadashiban.

Tripura District Map



Retrieved December 8, 2004, from <http://tripura.nic.in/trimap1.htm>

Present Situation in Tripura

Tripura's basic problem is the huge influx of foreigners into the state: Hindu Bengalis came from East Pakistan after the Partition of India in 1947 and, later, both Hindu and Muslim Bengalis came in 1971 after the Indo-Pak War and the creation of Bangladesh. Bangladeshis continue to come to Tripura in much the same way they enter Assam. The great influx of foreigners has upset the demographic composition of Tripura. The indigenous Tripuri people constituted more than 85 per cent of the total population at the time of annexation by India; they now constitute less than 29 per cent of the present population of three million.⁴⁷ The presence of the indigenous people in the urban areas is under five per cent. This influx of Bengalis has become the gravest threat to the existence of the small indigenous Tripuri population and is the cause of the secessionist movement.

Select Terrorist Groups

National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT)

The National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT), an overtly Christian group, was formed on March 12, 1989, with Dhananjay Reang (former vice-president of the Tripura National Volunteers) as its chairman. Its objective is to liberate Tripura from India through an armed struggle. The NLFT was outlawed in April 1997 under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967, following its involvement in terrorist and subversive activities. It is also proscribed under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA) of 2002. The headquarters of the NLFT is at Sajak, a camp in the Khagrachari district of Bangladesh.

The Southern Baptist Church is said to be funding and providing arms to the NLFT.⁴⁸ In April 2000, Nagmanlal Halam, secretary of the Noapara Baptist Church in Tripura, was caught providing the group with 50 gelatine sticks, five kg of potassium and two kg of sulphur and other ingredients for making explosives. Halam later confessed to buying and supplying explosives to the NLFT for the past two years.⁴⁹ In Tripura, such arrest and seizures of arms and explosives from the members of the Baptist church is commonplace, and the nexus between the NLFT and the Southern Baptist Church is a well-established fact. It is estimated that around half of Tripura's 200,000-tribal community is Christian and support the NLFT.⁵⁰

The NLFT allegedly also has links to Pakistan's ISI and to its counterpart in Bangladesh, the Directorate General of Field Intel-

ligence (DGFI).⁵¹ During 1997-98, NLFT leaders visited Pakistan to receive training and arms from the ISI. The NLFT has developed trans-border linkages in Myanmar and Bhutan. In addition, according to the Tripura police, the NLFT also has links to the Nagaland-based National Socialist Council of Nagaland-Isak-Muivah, the Manipur-based Kanglei Yawol Kanna Lup, and the National Democratic Front of Bodoland, which is active in Assam.

Major Incidents of the NLFT

- August 22, 2002: Bikram Bahadur Jamatia, head priest of the Jamatia Hoda, a tribal Hindu group in Tripura, alleged that the NLFT forcibly converted approximately 14,000 tribals in the state to Christianity in the past five years.
- March 25, 2003: Chief Minister Manik Sarkar alleged that Pakistan's ISI was providing arms training to terrorists operating in the northeast region, including the NLFT and the ATTF in Bangladesh.
- June 3, 2003: A report indicated that the ATTF and the Nayanbasi Jamatiya and Biswamohan Debbarma factions of the NLFT attended a meeting, allegedly convened by Bangladesh's DGFI in March 2003 in the Chittagong Hill Tracts area. Representatives of the Jamaat-e-Islami, Pakistan's ISI and Al Qaeda were also reported to be present at the meeting.
- October 30, 2004: Twenty-five NLFT members surrendered to the director general of police at Agartala.

All Tripura Tiger Force (ATTF)

The All Tripura Tiger Force started as the All Tripura Tribal Force on July 11, 1990, formed by a group of Tripura National Volunteers (TNV) members. These were members who did not surrender as per the August 1988 Accord concluded between the TNV and the Union government. Instead, they formed the ATTF under the leadership of Ranjit Debbarma. The group adopted its present name in 1992.

The ATTF has three objectives: expulsion of all Bengali-speaking immigrant settlers who entered Tripura after 1956, restoration of land to the tribals under the Tripura Land Revenue and Land Reforms Act,

1960, and removal of the names of migrants who entered Tripura after 1956 from the electoral roll.⁵² The group received training in Bangladesh where it has a large number of bases. Interestingly, although the group is seeking expulsion of Bengali-speaking immigrant settlers, it is based in Bangladesh.

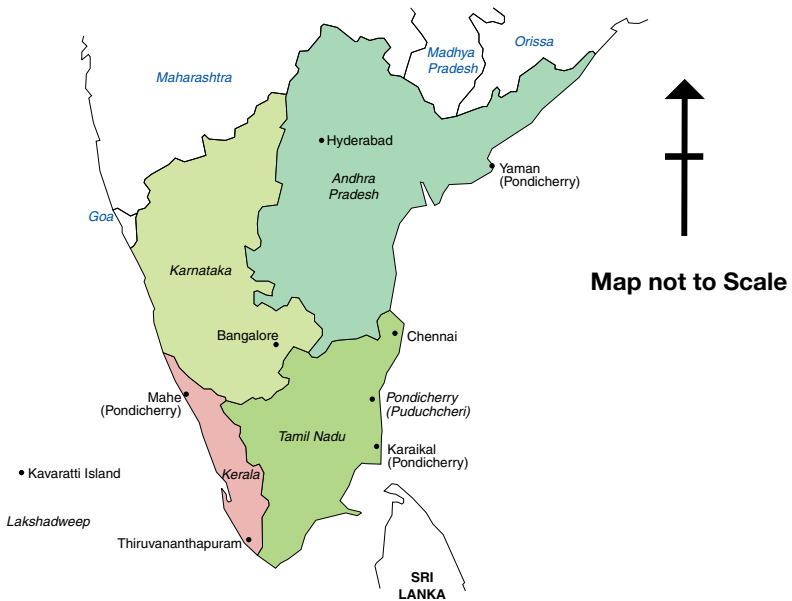
Major Incidents of the ATTF

- October 28, 1991: Security forces launched massive bombing operations against ATTF terrorists.
- September 6, 1993: Seven hundred thirty-nine ATTF activists surrendered.
- June 3, 2003: A report indicated that the ATTF and the Nayanbasi Jamatiya and the Biswamohan Debbarma factions of the NLFT attended a meeting, allegedly convened by the Bangladesh's Directorate General of Field Intelligence (DGFI) in March 2003 in the Chittagong Hill Tracts area. Representatives of the Jamaat-e-Islami, Pakistan's ISI and Al Qaeda were also reported to be present at the meeting.
- June 21, 2003: Reports indicated that ULFA, the Manipur People's Liberation Front (MPLF) a conglomerate of three terrorist groups—United National Liberation Front (UNLF), People's Liberation Army (PLA), and People's Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak (PREPAK)—and the Tripura People's Democratic Front (TPDF), a front for the ATTF, operating in Tripura under a common agenda launched over 2 years ago a "Coordinated Regional Military Offensive for liberation of the Region from Indian colonial occupation," code named "Operation Freedom." The reports further said that attacks under the operation started on June 17.
- August 17, 2003: Tripura Chief Minister Manik Sarkar alleged that the ATTF had killed 30 non-tribals in the West Tripura district on August 14 at the behest of Pakistan's ISI.

Chapter Three

Terrorism and Violence in South India

South India



Overview

The cardinal grievance of South India is the “Hindianization”²⁵⁴ of India. The people resent the imposition of Hindi as the official language, a language spoken only in the Hindi heartland. This policy not only marginalizes all other Indian languages, but also their cultures and identities. While certain other regions have tried (although mostly against their will) to learn Hindi, the southern states of India are still set against it. They do not want to learn the language, and they do not wish to associate themselves with India as a country, the idea of India as an ancient country being a myth for them. In his article,

“Why Independence (Freedom) for Tamil Nadu from Indian Rule?” Thanjai Nalankilli wrote: “India, as a country, by any name, never existed before the British colonial rule in all history, in spite of the oft-repeated false propaganda of the long history, oneness and unity of India.” The movement in the southern states is thus based on the three issues of nationalism, ethnicity, and language.

The southern states, like the northeastern states, feel neglected by the central government. They believe the Hindi heartland receives more funds from the government than the southern states. This feeling is strongest in Tamil Nadu whose citizens believe in “Tamil Nadu for Tamils.⁵⁵” The Tamils who want independence from Hindian rule compare British rule in the past to Hindian rule now. The Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) political party originally had the objective of seeking a separate nation for the Tamils. However, following the passage of a law in 1962 banning any party or individual seeking secession from India from contesting elections, the DMK dropped that objective. The secessionist groups active in Tamil Nadu include: the Tamil Nadu Liberation Army (TNLA), a militant wing of the Tamil Nadu Liberation Front (TNLF); and the Tamil Nadu Retrieval Troops (TNRT). Both the TNLA and the TNRT are linked to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

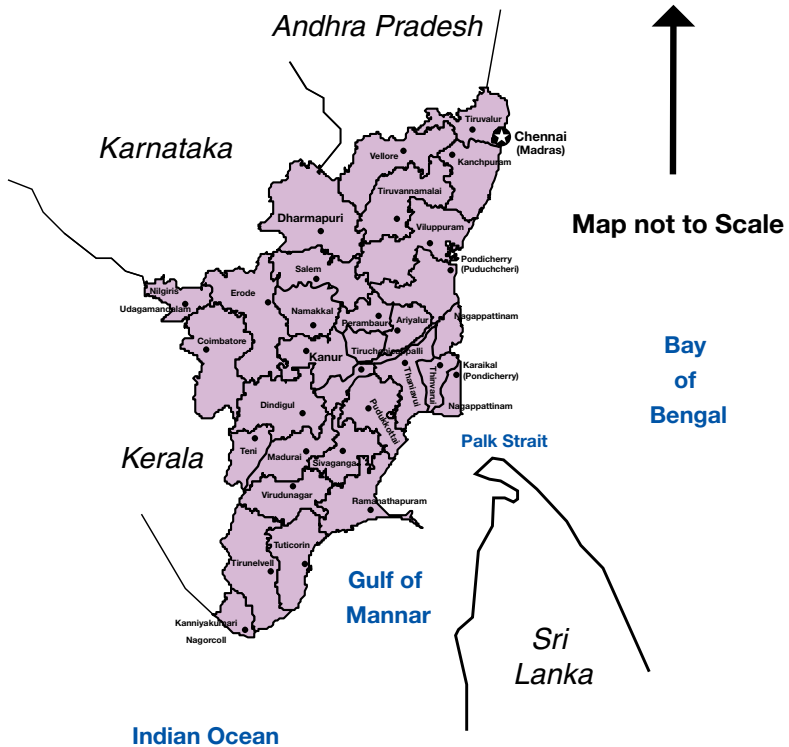
There are some Muslim fundamentalist groups in operation in South India: the Deendar Anjuman in Karnataka and the Al-Umma in Tamil Nadu have been responsible for many terrorist acts in recent years (e.g., the series of explosions in various places of worship in Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Goa between May and July 2000, and serial blasts in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, on February 14, 1998).

Present Situation in Tamil Nadu

Mulakkan Veerappan was a forest brigand and sandalwood smuggler of Gopinatham. He was shot and killed by the Tamil Nadu Special Task Force on October 18, 2004. Various militant groups who were supported by Veerappan have threatened bomb blasts.⁵⁶ Tamil groups, the TNLA and the TNRT, linked to Sri Lanka’s LTTE, first contacted Veerappan after the LLTE assassinated former Prime Minister of India Rajiv Gandhi in 1991. A Special Task Force officer told *India Abroad News Service* (IANS) in Sathyamangalam, the Special Task Force headquarters about 450 km from Chennai, Tamil Nadu: “Groups like TNLA, Tamil National Retrieval Force and many Maoist groups had established contact with Veerappan in

the mid-1990s.” With India cracking down on pro-LTTE groups, the groups fled into the forests, and some found shelter with Veerappan. They also taught Veerappan’s gang how to use sophisticated guns, make bombs, and use radio and wireless systems. The TNRT was a front for the LTTE in Tamil Nadu.⁵⁷ The TNLA was a naxalite organization with links to the People’s War Group. Leaders of both were on the run, and they found the jungle, in the company of Veerappan, a safe hideout. While kidnapping for ransom was the brigand’s only motive, the links with the TNRT and the TNLA provided him with an ideological camouflage. The Al-Umma came into prominence with the serial blasts in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, in February 1998 and communal riots in late 1997; they are not currently active except for a few stray incidents.

Districts of Tamilnadu



Select Terrorist Groups

Tamil Nadu Liberation Army (TNLA)

The Tamil Nadu Liberation Army (TNLA) has close ties with the LTTE. The LTTE used the TNLA to infiltrate into India after it was banned for assassinating former Prime Minister of India Rajiv Gandhi in 1991. The TNLA was also closely associated with Veerappan. Veerappan and the TNLA fought together against the state of Karnataka, the former to avenge the death of his brother and the latter in the interest of the Tamils—for the release of the waters of the river Cauvery to Tamil Nadu and the protection of Tamils in Karnataka. The TNLA had come into prominence when, with its help, Veerappan abducted Kannada (language spoken in Karanataka) film actor Dr. Rajkumar in July 2000. The TNLA believes that independence of Tamil Nadu from Indian rule is essential for the well-being of the people of Tamil Nadu and that armed struggle is necessary to achieve independence.

Major Incidents of the TNLA⁵⁸

- January 29, 1986: The TNLA carried out an explosion on the Kudamurthy Bridge in Thanjavur district on the eve of the prime minister's visit to that area.
- October, 1995: The TNLA bombed the television towers at Dharmapuri.
- April, 1999: The TNLA bombed the television towers at Tuticorin.
- February 14, 2001: Security forces arrested TNLA chief Maran in the Siruvani forest area of Tamil Nadu on charges of planning the abduction of the Kannada film actor Dr. Rajkumar.
- July 2, 2002: Union Government proscribed the TNLA for its involvement in terrorist activities.

Tamil National Retrieval Troops (TNRT)

The Tamil Retrieval Troops also has the objective of having an independent homeland for the Tamils in India. The founder of

the TNRT, P. Ravichandran, was sentenced to life in prison for his involvement in the assassination of former Prime Minister of India Rajiv Gandhi. The TNRT has close ties with the LTTE as well as the TNLA. And, like the TNLA, the TNRT came into prominence for helping Veerappan kidnap Kannada film actor Rajkumar in 2000.

Major Incidents of the TNRT⁵⁹

- July 30, 2000: Forest brigand Veerappan and his associates abducted Kannada film actor Rajkumar and proposed, among other demands, an exchange: the release of TNRT members Manikandan, Sathya, and Muthukumar from prisons in Tamil Nadu. The exchange was denied.
- July 2, 2002: The TNRT was proscribed under the Prevention of Terrorist Act (POTA), 2002, for its involvement in terrorist activities.

Al-Umma

Al-Umma, a Muslim fundamentalist organization, was formed around 1987, but became active in Tamil Nadu only after the demolition of the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh, on December 6, 1992. Al-Umma is an Arabic word for “These people.” Tamil Nadu general secretary of Al-Umma, Mohammed Ansari, in an interview with A. Ganesh Nadar said,⁶⁰ “Our main aim is to oppose the Sangh Parivar, the RSS (Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, a Hindu nationalist movement).” Al-Umma came into focus after the serial blasts in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, where it has a stronghold.

According to sources in the Intelligence Bureau of the Indian government, it was suspected that the explosives used in the bombings and those recovered in subsequent police raids were brought in through Nepal with the assistance of ISI cells active in that country.⁶¹ According to Praveen Swami in the article “A Web of Terror:” “Al-Umma’s alleged links with the ISI are far from clear, and there is little evidence of such links.” However, Intelligence Bureau officials say that “those who fabricated the complex electronic timing devices used in Coimbatore are thought to have been trained by the Pakistani intelligence agency in Nepal.” The objective of the blasts, according to the officials, was to open a southern front to deepen communal divisions throughout India and provoke violence during the elections.

Major Incident of the Al-Umma

- February 14, 1998: Forty-six people — 35 men, 10 women and one child — were killed and over 200 injured in 13 bomb attacks in 11 places, all of them within a 12-km radius in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu. The explosives used were gelatin sticks activated by timer devices. They were concealed in cars, motorcycles, bicycles, the sideboxes of two-wheelers, denim and rexine bags, and, in one case, a cart loaded with pineapples. Several bombs that failed to detonate were defused by the bomb disposal squads of the Army, the National Security Guards and the Tamil Nadu Commando School.

Present Situation in Karnataka

On February 6, 2005, the police shot and killed two left wing extremists (Naxalites) of the Communist Party of India-Maoist (CPI-Maoist) in Karnataka.⁶² The Naxalite movement is becoming active in Karnataka and will be discussed later in the monograph. The only other terrorist group in the state, the Deendar Anjuman, has been banned by the Indian government which believes the group has ties to Pakistan's ISI.

Select Terrorist Group

Deendar Anjuman

The Deendar Anjuman came into focus in 2000 when it engineered 13 bomb explosions in nine churches, a temple and a mosque in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Goa from May to July 2000. Its present religious head, Zia-ul-Hassan, based in Mardan in Pakistan, developed contacts with the ISI and organized the blasts in India.⁶³ Apparently, he had plans to create communal tension in the country and antagonize the international Christian community against India.

Although it originated in Karnataka, the present headquarters of the Deendar Anjuman is in Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh. This ostensibly Islamic fundamentalist organization, founded by Hazrat Moulana Deendar Channabasaveshwara Siddiqui, sprung from Hindu roots dating to 1924.⁶⁴ Channabasaveshwara, according to the Veerashaiva (Lingayat) Saints, was the redeemer of mankind and the

Kalki Avatar of Vishnu, whose “second coming” the saints had been anticipating for the past 800 years.



Retrieved February 20, 2006, from <http://www.totalkanada.com>

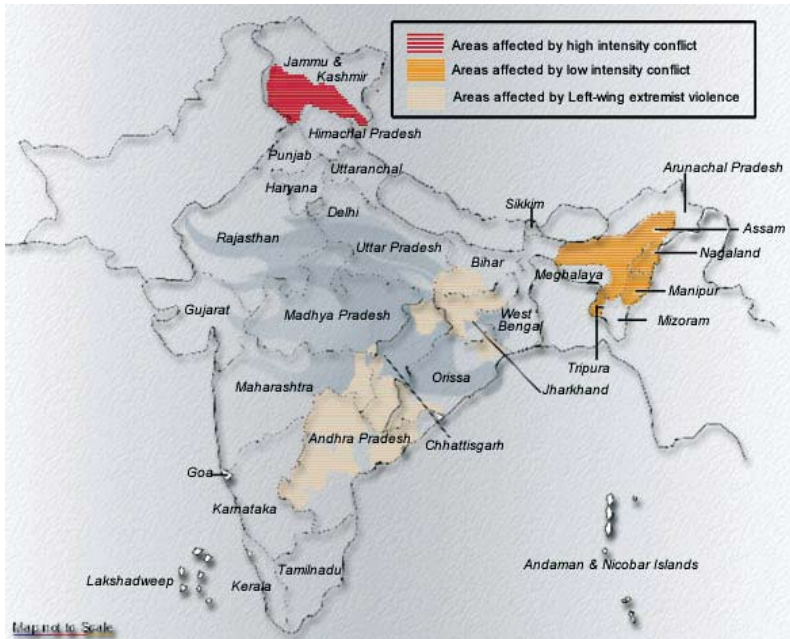
Major Incident of the Deendar Anjuman⁶⁵

- May – July, 2000: Thirteen bomb explosions at various places of worship across the states of Andhra Pradesh, Goa and Karnataka.

Chapter Four

Maoist Violence in India

Map of conflict-ridden areas in India



Retrieved February 15, 2005, from <http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/india/index.html>

Overview

Maoist or Naxalite violence is a matter of serious concern in large parts of India. While Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, and Chhattisgarh are the worst affected areas, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal are partially affected.⁶⁶ Naxalite violence is now extending to Karnataka as well. The threat is spread across the Compact Revolutionary Zone, created by the Maoists in Nepal and the Naxalites in India, which stretches from the

Nepal border through Bihar and the Dandakaranya region located in the southern tip of Orissa to Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.⁶⁷

The Naxalites are left-wing extremist groups conducting a violent struggle on behalf of landless laborers and tribal people against landlords, moneylenders, the police, and the government. Naxalism was born in West Bengal's Naxalbari village in 1967 with an armed revolt backed by Comrade Charu Majumdar. The rebellion was crushed, but the saga of terror and violence has continued despite severe crackdowns on the group over many decades.

Their objective is to fight against the oppression and exploitation of the peasants and create a classless society. For this the Naxalites have acquired lethal firepower and guerilla war expertise. They are well organized and armed with the latest weapons. They blow up landmines with precision, conduct killing raids, run parallel governments in remote areas, and, romanticizing a Robin Hood image, conduct a people's court, extort money from landlords, and distribute the booty among the poor.⁶⁸ In 2003, there were 1,671 Naxalite attacks, in which 95 security personnel and 422 civilians were killed. In the same period, 250 extremists were also killed.

Country-wide fatalities in left-wing extremist violence, 2000-2002⁶⁹

State	2000	2001	2002
Andhra Pradesh	113	180	96
Bihar	170	111	117
Chhattisgarh	48	37	55
Jharkhand	193	200	157
Madhya Pradesh	4	2	3
Maharashtra	11	7	29
Orissa	3	11	11
Uttar Pradesh	4	12	6
West Bengal	2	4	7
Other States	2	-	1
Total	550	564	482

Source: India, Ministry of Home Affairs, Annual Report, 2002-2003, New Delhi, 2003, p. 86.

According to the Indian government's home ministry, the ISI is using the People's War Group and the Maoist Communist Centre networks for drug trafficking. In exchange, the two groups get modern arms and guerrilla training.⁷⁰ According to a vernacular Telugu

(language spoken in Andhra Pradesh) media report, on November 17, 2003, the People's War Group (PWG) Naxalites sought to procure frontline weapons from Pakistan's ISI.⁷¹ The PWG allegedly established links with the ISI through the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA). The PWG is, however, unwilling to admit to its links with the ISI as it might lead to an erosion of its support base among the people.

Media reports of September 1998 stated that a Lashkar-e-Toiba terrorist, Azam Ghouri (a native of Hanmajipet village, Warangal district, Andhra Pradesh) who was once a member of the PWG, met with his former colleagues and discussed the "supply of arms and explosives to the PWG." A special report in the May 9, 2003, *Hindustan Times* (New Delhi), "Caste War and Red Terror" reported that the Indian government was "alarmed" at the links the PWG and the MCC had established with the ISI as well as with the Nepalese insurgents.

The PWG and the Bihar-based Maoist Communist Center (MCC), together with 10 other fraternal organizations from South Asia, formed the Coordination Committee of Maoist Parties and Organizations of South Asia (CCOMPOSA) in July 2001. The objective of this Maoist front is to share experiences and help spread the Maoist campaign of violent revolution to various parts of the South Asian region.

On January 25, 2002, the central committee of the Maoists decided to oppose and campaign against the proscription of the PWG and the MCC, under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA), by the Indian government.⁷² Besides the CCOMPOSA, the Indian Naxalites and the Maoist insurgents of Nepal formed the India-Nepal Joint Regional Committee in 2002 to coordinate activities in the border areas. An Indian Naxalite leader belonging to Bihar is alleged to be on the central committee of the Maoist insurgents of Nepal. Reports from Nepal indicate that a detained Maoist insurgent admitted on the state-run television on November 17, 2003, that the Maoist insurgents received training in handling weapons and explosives from the People's War Group Naxalites of India.

Select Terrorist Groups

People's War Group

The PWG's ideology is based on the Chinese leader Mao Tse Tung's theory of organized peasant insurrection. It rejects parliamentary democracy and believes in capturing political power through

prolonged armed struggle based on guerrilla warfare. The final objective is to install a “people’s government” through “people’s war.” Muppala Lakshman Rao, alias Ganapathi, is the General Secretary of the PWG. The fighting force of the group is organized as the People’s Guerrilla Army (PGA). The group is active in parts of Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, Jharkhand, West Bengal, and Bihar. Its operations now extend to other parts of north and south India.

The PWG allegedly has links with left-wing extremist groups in other parts of the world such as the Liberation Army of Peru and the Kurdistan Workers Party.⁷³ The PWG has been trying to internationalize its appeal. The group attended an international seminar organized by the Workers Party of Belgium in May 1995, along with 60 other organizations from 40 countries. The group is believed to have links with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) of Sri Lanka as well as the ISI of Pakistan. The PWG maintains active links with other Maoist groups in South Asia through the CCOMPOSA.

Allegedly, the PWG is dealing in AK assault rifles as well as SLRs (Self-loading Rifles).⁷⁴ Media reports from Andhra Pradesh indicated in May 2003 that the PWG was attempting to manufacture a rocket propelled grenade. The nexus between the PWG and the ISI is likely to result in an increased flow of small and sophisticated arms into India. The PWG which has, thus far, fielded ordinary explosives might, eventually, procure far more lethal explosive material like the RDX (Rapid Detonation Explosive).

According to the Institute for the Study of Violent Groups’ database, extortion remains the main source of funding for the group, the targets being contractors, businessmen, professionals, and government officials.

Major Incidents of the PWG⁷⁵

- October 1998: The Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) (Party Unity), CPI-ML-PU merged with the People’s War Group. After the merger, the new party was named the CPI(ML) (People’s War).
- November 27, 2002: Andhra Pradesh police arrested two Naxalites and seized approximately 1,000 gelatin sticks and 1,200 detonators during a vehicle inspection drive conducted

in response to the bandh (general strike) call given by the PWG.

- March 23, 2003: Condemning the U.S. attack on Iraq, Naxalites of the PWG blasted a storage facility belonging to the multinational Pepsi soft drink company, on the outskirts of Anantpur, Andhra Pradesh. They also destroyed cold drink shops at Kondamallepally, Nalgonda district, and at many other places.
- May 28, 2003: PWG Naxalites set a telephone exchange office ablaze at Rayavaram village, Cuddapah district in Andhra Pradesh.
- October 1, 2003: Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, N. Chandrababu Naidu, escaped a PWG assassination attempt with a minor collar bone wound when a powerful landmine ripped through his motorcade on a forest road between Tirupati and Tirumala in Chittoor district. Five persons, including the State's Information Technology Minister B. Gopalakrishna Reddy, were injured.
- October 3, 2003: PWG claimed responsibility for the October 1 attack on Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu.
- April 29, 2004: The United States added PWG and Maoist Communist Centre to its Terrorist Exclusion List.

Maoist Communist Centre (MCC)

Like the PWG, the Maoist Communist Centre (MCC) aims to establish a “people’s government” through a “people’s war” and traces its ideology to Chinese Communist leader Mao Tse Tung’s theories. The MCC is active in parts of Bihar, Orissa, and Jharkhand.

The MCC has close ties with Maoist insurgents in Nepal and is also part of the Coordination Committee of Maoist Parties and Organizations (CCOMPOSA). According to the South Asia Terrorism Portal,⁷⁶ MCC has acquired the technology for manufacturing and implanting landmines from the PWG; the PWG itself was trained by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) of Sri Lanka.

Major Incidents of the MCC

- February 12, 1992: The MCC massacred 37 members of the land-owning upper caste Bhumihar community at Bara village, Gaya district in Bihar.
- March 18, 1999: The MCC massacred over 34 upper caste Bhumihars in Senari village, Jehanabad, in Bihar.
- February 12, 2000: The MCC killed 22 persons including 19 police personnel in a landmine blast in Palamu, Jharkhand, during the first phase of State Legislative Elections.
- April 14, 2001: Fourteen persons were massacred by the MCC at Belpu village, Hazaribagh district in Jharkhand. Those killed belonged to the Gram Suraksha Dal (Village Protection Force), which the villagers had formed three years previous to guard against MCC attacks.
- October 31, 2001: The MCC killed 13 police personnel at Topchanchi near Dhanbad in Jharkhand.
- December 5, 2001: The Union government banned the MCC under the Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance.
- July 26, 2003: Naxalites of the MCC used dynamite to blow up the newly constructed building of the Govardhanana Police Station on the Indo-Nepal border in Bihar's West Champaran district.
- September 8, 2003: Eleven police personnel and a civilian were killed in a landmine blast triggered by a joint operation of the PWG and the MCC in the dense forests of Kaimur range in the Rohtas district of Bihar.
- April 7, 2004: Twenty-six police personnel were killed during a landmine blast triggered by the MCC at Saranda forests in the Chaibasa area of Jharkhand.
- April 29, 2004: The United States added the MCC and the PWG to its Terrorist Exclusion List.

Ranvir Sena

The Ranvir Sena came into existence to counter and eliminate the Naxalite influence in Bihar. However, the organization also kills soft targets like women and children and attacks villages of lower castes and weaker sections of the area.⁷⁷ It is a private army of upper caste landowners in Bihar and is the most well-organized of all such private armies. Members are paid a salary and their lives are insured. The Ranvir Sena is said to be dominated by politicians from various parties, including the Congress, the Janata Dal, and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

One such politician, Dr. C.P. Thakur who allegedly supports the Ranvir Sena, denied his links to the group in an interview in the *Hindustan Times* in June 2003,⁷⁸ saying the accusation was politically motivated. Having followed the caste violence closely in Bihar, Dr. Thakur observed that underdevelopment was responsible for nurturing such groups in the state. Dr. Thakur said that the central government had to play a greater role to “counter this endemic war. Center has to intervene effectively and should not take a plea that law and order is a state subject.”

Major Incidents of the Ranvir Sena⁷⁹

- July 11, 1996: The Ranvir Sena massacred 22 persons at Bathani-tola, Bhojpur district.
- December 1, 1997: The Ranvir Sena massacred 63 persons at Lakshmanpur-Bathe village, Jehanabad district.
- January 25, 1999: Twenty-three persons belonging to dalit and backward caste communities were massacred by the Ranvir Sena in Shankarbigha village, Jehanabad district, central Bihar.
- April 21, 1999: The Ranvir Sena massacred 12 persons at Sendani village, Gaya district.
- June 16, 2000: The Ranvir Sena massacred 35 persons at Miapur village, Aurangabad district.

- September 23, 2002: Five left-wing extremists—Naxalites—of the PWG were killed, allegedly by activists of the Ranvir Sena, in Majidpur village, Jehanabad district.
- October 24-25, 2002: An estimated six persons, including a woman, were killed in a clash between activists of the Ranvir Sena and Communist Party of India—Marxist-Leninist [CPI-ML] (Liberation) in Kurmuri village, under Sikarhata police station-limits, Bhojpur district.
- November 17, 2003: The Ranvir Sena threatened the United Liberation Front of Asom with dire consequences if it instigated violence against Biharis residing in Assam.

Terrorism and Violence Caused by Hindu Fundamentalist Groups

Overview

The Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh (RSS) is the ideological parent of most Hindu religious revivalist groups in India. These sub-groups include the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP), the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Bajrang Dal. Together called the Sangh Parivar (Sangh family), they all have the unifying theme of hatred of Islam and all other foreign religions. Their agenda is to pursue “Hindutva,” literally “Hinduness,” which means Hindu as a unifying identity transcending caste, regional and sectarian differences within the Hindu society.

The term was coined by freedom fighter and later Hindu Maha Sabha President V.D. Savarkar; it was the title of his book *Hindutva*, written in prison and clandestinely published in 1924.⁸⁰ Inspired by the doctrines of the Italian liberal nationalist Giuseppe Mazzini, he tried to give a nationalist content to the concept of Hinduness. Dr. Keshav Rao Baliram Hegdegar, the founder of the RSS, propounded the idea that national unity would only come about if it were declared that all non-Hindus in India, such as Muslims and Christians, were not a part of the nation.⁸¹ “Increasing intolerance among the Hindu fundamentalist organizations, which pose a grave threat to democracy, is an indication of the rise of fascist forces in India,” said M. Mohanty, professor of politics at the University of Delhi, India.⁸²

The Shiv Sena, an ally of the Sangh Parivar, also has Hindutva as its objective. The group was founded on June 19, 1966, in Mumbai, India by Balasaheb, Thackeray, a renowned cartoonist at that time. Although Hindutva is its objective, it is strongly associated with the Maratha identity. The Shiv Sena is against the introduction of any foreign cultural practices or the adulteration of the Hindu image. As

such, it opposes Valentine's Day celebrations every year, and in 1999 attacked cinema halls in Mumbai that were showing the film, "Fire," a movie based on a lesbian relationship. "Fire" had all the elements for outraging the conservative Hindu and was an ideal target for the Shiv Sena. The Shiv Sena's stronghold is Mumbai.

While pursuing their Hindutva objective, both the RSS and the Shiv Sena have turned violent over the years. They are responsible for the demolition of the Babri Masjid (a 16th century mosque) in 1992 in Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh. These groups have, more often than not, been behind the communal riots and resulting carnage that are frequent occurrences in India. The most horrific instance in recent years was the communal violence in Godhra, Gujarat, which began when a rail coach, carrying 58 Hindu pilgrims, was set on fire on February 27, 2002, allegedly by a Muslim mob. The finding of the committee set up to investigate the fire reported that it was a case of accidental fire. Nevertheless, the cycle of violence that this incident set in motion lasted for about six months throughout the state of Gujarat. More than 1,000 people were killed and many more rendered homeless. The violence stopped on September 24, 2002, when Muslim terrorists entered the Hindu Swaminarayan shrine of Akshardham in Gandhinagar.

Fundamentalist Group

Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh (RSS)

The Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh (RSS) came into existence in Maharashtra, India, on September 27, 1925, the Hindu holy day of Vijaya Dashami (the day when Lord Rama, the God King triumphed over Ravana, the Demon King). The RSS is the umbrella group encompassing the other groups of the Sangh Parivar. Hindu Maha Sabha leader and RSS ideologue Veer Vinayak Damodar Savarkar once said: "If we Hindus grow stronger, in time Moslem friends... will have to play the part of German Jews."⁸³ These Fascist feelings were once harbored by the Sangh Parivar. However, the group stopped espousing these sentiments once it entered politics.

In 1951, the Jana Sangh was formed as the political wing of the RSS; it later came to be called the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). On August 28, 1964, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) was created as the religious wing of the RSS to "consolidate and strengthen Hindu society." The Bajrang Dal, the youth wing of the VHP was organized on October 1, 1984, in Uttar Pradesh. The group was initially formed

to counter Sikh militancy, but later included Muslims and Christians as its targets.

In the 1990s, the RSS, VHP, and BJP forged the strong Hindu revivalist Rama platform that espoused the idea of the “historic” birthplace of Lord Rama in Ayodhya in Uttar Pradesh. Their contention was that the mosque, known as Babri Masjid (after the Islamic ruler Babar) was built upon the ruins of a Hindu temple that had supposedly been demolished by Muslim invaders. This temple, the Sangh says, was built to mark the holy birthplace of Rama, the God King. The Sangh contends that a temple with pillars had indeed been there since the eleventh century. The Rama movement of 1990-92 culminated in the demolition of the mosque on December 6, 1992, by RSS and Shiv Sena social workers, and consequent massive communal riots that claimed thousands of lives all over India, especially in North India and Mumbai. There were repercussions in neighboring Pakistan and Bangladesh, where reactionary Muslim fanatics destroyed Hindu temples, lives and property.

There have been reports that the RSS has received funds from the United States and other countries to carry on the violence in India. According to an article, “The Foreign Hand,” written by Naunidhi Kaur in the December 7-20, 2002, issue of the *Frontline*, an Indian magazine, “Affiliates of the Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh (RSS) have been receiving millions of dollars from corporates [sic] in the United States to instigate communal violence and propagate the Hindutva ideology in Gujarat and other parts of the country.”⁸⁴ According to the article, this was exposed by the Campaign to Stop Funding Hate (SFH), a group of professionals, students, workers, artists, and intellectuals.

The SFH has identified the India Development and Relief Fund (IDRF), a Maryland-based charity organization established in 1989, as the key fund-raiser for the Sangh Parivar in the United States. According to the SFH findings, the IDRF, which was set up to provide funds for “relief and development work,” has been funding RSS-initiated projects throughout India. In 2000, approximately \$1.7 million was channeled to Sangh Parivar organizations such as the Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram (VKA), which has been linked with anti-minority violence. Between 1994 and 2000, the IDRF disbursed close to \$4 million to Sangh Parivar organizations throughout India.

In his article “RSS-The Sangh: What is it, and what is it not?” Partha Banerjee wrote:

“Other than contributing to election funds of the BJP...immigrant Sangh sympathizers pay their ‘Guru-Dakshina’ (charity for the Guru, in this case the RSS saffron flag) at various branches of the Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh (HSS), the overseas version of the RSS. Money is also reportedly pumped in and out by other organizations such as the Overseas Friends of BJP (OFBJP), VHP of America, and the Hindu Student Council (HSC) of America.”⁸⁵

According to the same article, the Sangh is now targeting traditionally conservative but apolitical Hindu temples in the United States and Europe in order to mobilize second-generation Indian-American youth by organizing VHP-sponsored Hindu summer camps and various religious conventions of the HSC. “Under the guise of cultural education, a whole generation is being indoctrinated to be blind separatists and bigots. Many Indian immigrants, ignorant of the relationship of the VHP and the HSC with the BJP and the RSS, are being used to further the fascist-like sociopolitical agenda of the Sangh Parivar,” writes Banerjee.

Major Incidents of the RSS

- December 6, 1992: The Babri Masjid at Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh, was demolished by RSS “kar sewaks” or social workers.
- January 23, 1999: Australian missionary, Graham Stewart Staines, 58, and his two minor sons were burned to death in the Keonjhar district of Orissa by Bajrang Dal activists. Staines was sleeping in his jeep with his two sons, nine-year-old Philip and seven-year-old Timothy, when the vehicle was set ablaze.
- February 27-September 24, 2002: Communal riots in Godhra, Gujarat, left more than 1,000 dead and even more homeless.

Conclusion

Some of the Indian states along the border want either to secede and form independent countries or to join neighboring countries with which they share a common culture, religion, or language. These states, therefore, make alliances with groups in those neighboring countries. Insurgency in the border-states also springs from a perceived neglect by the central government. This is especially true in the northeast. This phenomenon is carried a step further with smaller ethnic groups demanding autonomous territories due to neglect by their respective state governments. Some of the smaller groups work under umbrella groups. Most of the groups are linked to one another and receive support and training from the bigger and older groups. The Naga people's movement is one of the oldest secessionist movements in the country and by far the most genuine.

The 1980s and 1990s saw a mushrooming of terrorist groups as people became more educated and more aware of their oppression or deprivation. They began asserting their identities and wanting to break free from a country or state that paid no attention to them. When the central government fulfilled some of the demands of these groups, it only led to more such demands and the emergence of still smaller groups. This is particularly seen in the northeast and the north. The new group, Jaish-e-Mohammad in Kashmir, is a result of such action by the central government. The group was created by the terrorist Maulana Masood Azhar after he was released as a result of the hijacking of IC 814 in December 1999.

The groups in the north are funded by the ISI of Pakistan. The ISI has now permeated into the northeastern groups and, reportedly, the People's War Group is establishing contacts with the ISI although they have denied it. The Muslim fundamentalist group in south India, Al-Umma, a reaction to the Hindutva movement, is also suspected of having ties with the ISI. The root cause of the emergence of ISI-funded groups is the Kashmir issue which, years after the Partition and Independence of Pakistan and India, still has not been settled between the two countries. Insurgency and organized crime are closely interrelated. Proceeds of crimes are used to fund terrorism. Most of

the groups are involved in drug trafficking. The narcotic-insurgency nexus can be seen most prominently in Manipur.

Insurgency in Punjab and the Hindutva movement are both politically motivated. While Punjab was crushed by force, Hindutva continued to flourish with the BJP-led central government. In both cases, there appears to be no genuine grievance worth addressing. Punjab has always been a prosperous state and had no reason to start an insurgency if it were not for the politics of then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi; she later quelled the revolt. How justified is the Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh in demanding a Hindu nationhood in a secular country is yet to be seen. The Shiv Sena, the other Hindutva group, is linked to the underworld of organized crime.

The groups in the south are primarily against “Hindianization” of India, a language to which they cannot relate. They are linked to groups in Sri Lanka with whom they share a common culture and language. The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) was banned in India after the assassination of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1991, but it is active in Sri Lanka. The Tamil groups are interconnected and receive support from the LTTE.

A large number of terrorist groups in India will cease to exist once the Kashmir issue is resolved. The ISI funds a large number of these groups in order to gain control of Kashmir. If the matter is settled, there will be no reason for the existence of these terrorist groups in India.

In the northeast, the oldest rebellion is that of the Nagas, and it must be addressed. Naga leaders are currently in talks with the central government and a positive outcome is anticipated. Yet giving up the territories claimed by the Nagas as Nagalim is not a feasible solution. Nagalim also includes parts of Myanmar (former Burma). If the Indian government yields, Myanmar might also have to take similar steps. Moreover, the other groups demanding secession will begin to have hope and fight harder. The concept of India will soon be distorted.

The other groups in the northeast are mostly a result of neglect by the central and state governments. One way to address this issue would be to make the northeast economically prosperous. Corruption of politicians is a major barrier to the economic prosperity of the region, and this situation has to be remedied. The issue in the south can also be addressed by similar means.

Although most of the problems throughout India can be resolved in similar ways, the issues specific to each region need to be handled separately.

Appendix A

Political Map of India



Retrieved, February 20, 2006, from <http://web.aces.uiuc.edu>.

Appendix B

List of Extremist Groups in India⁸⁶

(Total number of groups: 51)

NORTH INDIA

Jammu & Kashmir

1. Jammu & Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF)
2. All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC)
3. Hizb-ul-Mujahideen (HM)
5. Harkat-ul-Ansar (HuA, now known as Harkat-ul-Mujahideen)
6. Laskar-e-Toiba (LeT)
7. Jaish-e-Mohammad Mujahideen E-Tanzeem (Army of the Prophet, Mohammed) (JeM)
8. Harkat-ul Mujahideen (HuM, previously known as Harkat-ul-Ansar)
9. Al Badr
10. Al Umar Mujahideen

Punjab

1. Babbar Khalsa International (BKI)
2. Khalistan Zindabad Force (KZF)
3. International Sikh Youth Federation (ISYF)
4. Khalistan Commando Force (KCF)

NORTHEAST INDIA

Assam

1. United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA)
2. National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB)

3. United People's Democratic Solidarity (UPDS). (The Karbi National Volunteers [KNV] and the Karbi People's Front [KPF] merged to form UPDS in March 1999. In 2002, the UPDS split into two factions. One faction was interested in talks with the Union government; the other was against talks. The UPDS [anti-talks] rechristened itself as the Karbi Longri North Cachar Hills Liberation Front [KLNLF]; its armed wing was named Karbi Longri North Cachar Hills Resistance Force [KNPR]. The pro-talks faction continues as UPDS.)
4. Bodo Liberation Tiger Force (BLTF)

Manipur

1. United National Liberation Front (UNLF)
2. People's Liberation Army (PLA)
3. People's Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak (PREPAK)
4. Manipur People's Liberation Front (MPLF). The UNLF, PLA and PREPAK now operate as a unified organization, MPLF.
5. Hmar People's Convention (HPC)

Meghalaya

1. Hynniewtrep National Liberation Council (HNLC)
2. Achik National Volunteer Council (ANVC)
3. People's Liberation Front of Meghalaya (PLF-M)
4. Hajong United Liberation Army (HULA)

Mizoram

1. Bru National Liberation Front
2. Hmar People's Convention-Democracy (HPC-D)

Nagaland

1. National Socialist Council of Nagalim (Isak-Muivah) (NSCN [IM])
2. National Socialist Council of Nagalim (Khaplang) (NSCN [K])
3. Naga National Council (Adino) (NNC [Adino])

Tripura

1. National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT)
2. All Tripura Tiger Force (ATTF)

3. Tripura Liberation Organization Front (TLOF)
4. United Bengali Liberation Front (UBLF)

EAST INDIA

Bihar

1. Ranvir Sena

West Bengal

1. Gorkha National Liberation Front (GNLF)
2. Asif Reza Commando Force (along the Indo-Bangladesh border)
3. Maoist Communist Centre (MCC)

SOUTH INDIA

Karnataka

1. Deendar Anjuman

Tamil Nadu

1. Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE)
2. Al-Umma
3. Tamil National Retrieval Troops (TNRT)
4. Tamil Nadu Liberation Army (TNLA)
5. Tamil Nadu Liberation Front (TNLF)

GROUPS ACTIVE IN MORE THAN ONE STATE

1. Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) Hindu fundamentalist organization
2. Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) Hindu fundamentalist organization operating under the RSS, Uttar Pradesh
3. Bajrang Dal (Uttar Pradesh, created by Vishwa Hindu Parishad as its youth wing) Hindu fundamentalist organization
4. People's War Group (Naxalites) Active in parts of Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, Jharkhand, West Bengal, and Bihar. The group has been making attempts to establish and expand its presence in several other states such as Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and Karnataka in Southern India, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab, and Rajasthan in Northern India.
5. Shiv Sena (Maharashtra-based)

6. People's Guerrilla Army (military wing of PWG) (Bihar, Andhra Pradesh)

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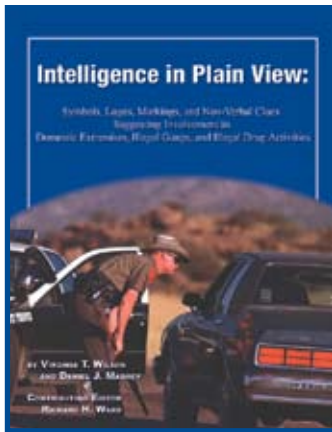
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