

# Comprehensive action plan is must to tackle Naxalism and terrorism

With government grappling for answers to tackle the dual menace of Naxalism and terrorism security experts speaking to **NIBEDITA SEN** suggest that strengthening of internal social security by improving the governance system and a comprehensive internal security plan as an appendage of external security to tackle with the enemy outside and within the country.

According to the South Asia Terrorism Portal, since terrorism in Punjab touch its peak in 1987-88 till May 21, 2017, India has lost 44243 persons in terrorist attacks in India, of which 14761 are civilians, 6299 security force personnel and 23183 militants. If this was not enough, the Left wing Maoist or Naxal -violence has taken over 12,000 lives in nine Left-wing extremism-hit states in the past 20 years.

"Externally sponsored terrorism from Pakistan is affecting particularly Jammu and Kashmir. Not only are the terrorists sent across the borders of J&K but also are sponsoring home-grown terrorists in rest of India. The sponsored terrorism exists in peninsular India also," former Chief of Army Staff, General Shankar Roy Chowdhury told GT.

It is a job of the police and intelligent force of the country to gather good intelligence and eliminate the terrorists, which is now proving to be a difficult task.

"Our system of gathering intelligence is very weak. The police will have to infiltrate the terrorist organisations and then take action. There is also polit-



Indian soldiers seen in an anti-terrorist operation in Kashmir Valley. P71

ical backing to the terrorists in various parts of the country. This should end," Gen Roy Chowdhury said.

According to former commander of

the Srinagar-based 15 Corps, Lt Gen (Retd) Sayed Ata Hasnain, the Maoist movement essentially remains a social problem which has festered to become a major security issue in the heart of India.

"For successfully dealing with Naxalism, one has to address the social security domain. The State must ensure that the people in rural areas are not deprived of their resources from the state," Lt Gen Hasnain said.

Lt Col (retd) M K Gupta Ray said that

"The police will have to infiltrate the terrorist organisations and then take action."



- GEN (RETD) SHANKAR ROY CHOWDHURY

Independence brought much expecta-



tion to the people of India oppressed for centuries. But in a short while that euphoria vanished due to poor politics, poor administration.

"There has been no relief to massive economic and social burden borne by hapless poor Indians across the country.

And this condition provided ideal ground to proliferate terrorism. There has been no visible effort to bring all Indians from all nooks and corner together," he said.

According to the 1971 Indo-Pak war veteran, Indian terrorism has two distinct facets - internal and external.

"Internal terrorism was mostly generated within the country due to economic reason, corrupt politics and administration.

This covered the period from early sixties up to end of eighties. Externally abetted terrorism revolves around cross-border terrorism, fanned by religious fundamentalism within India," he said. First of its kind first time Naxalism manifested with Naxalbari move-

ment in West Bengal.

It was an uprising of tribal peasants who picked up weapons to defend their rights. Though it was brutally eliminated at the point of origin, the violent movement has spread the seed over a large part of India, specially UP, Bihar, MP, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Karnataka etc. Ethnic reason has taken its toll in eastern India but reasons it started arose out of isolation and economic backwardness

"Deployment of security forces is no permanent solution. Security forces may be asked to contain the physical violence but ultimate solution lies in the hand of civil administration by providing fair play ground," the war veteran said.

Anti-terrorism expert Colonel (Retd)

Col Kushwaha said.

According to him, we need proper counter tool and tactics to "PILE" terrorism. PILE stands for Prevent, Isolate, Limit or Localise and Execute terrorists before they can act.

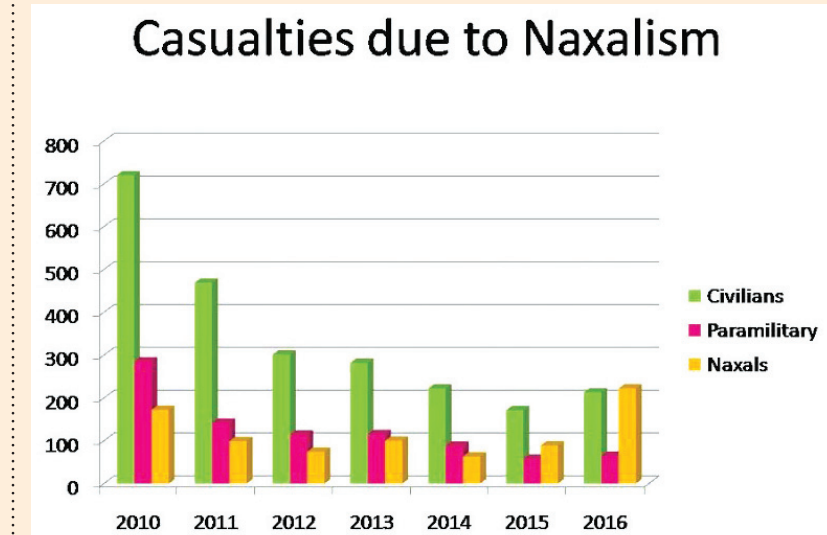
"Cross border terrorism and Naxalite issue are integral part of internal security problem. They are though emanating from inside because of any reason, but actively supported by Pakistan and China.

There is a need for comprehensive COZA-2017 (Combat Zone Act), redefining 'enemy' and internal security," he

said. He also called for specialised forces to tackle internal security along with a National Counter-Insurgency Grid to deal with present and future problems.



- COL (RETD) RAJINDER KUSHWAHA



Rajinder Singh Kushwaha said that terrorism is to scare and immobilise mental faculties of an intended target through extreme violence, whether physical, implied, intended or demonstrable so as to enforce an inability to oppose the perpetrator.

"It is thus aimed at undermining legitimacy of state authority. You see, modern terrorism is a tool as part of a sub-conventional conflict between nations, resorted to by them because of changing form of war, actuated by WMDs (Weapons of Mass Destruction). It is a "tool" and not the end by itself," Col Kushwaha said.

According to him, we need proper counter tool and tactics to "PILE" terrorism. PILE stands for Prevent, Isolate, Limit or Localise and Execute terrorists before they can act.

"Cross border terrorism and Naxalite issue are integral part of internal security problem. They are though emanating from inside because of any reason, but actively supported by Pakistan and China.

There is a need for comprehensive COZA-2017 (Combat Zone Act), redefining 'enemy' and internal security," he

Ultimate solution lies in the hands of civil administration by providing fair play ground."



- LT COL (RETD) M K GUPTA RAY

He also called for specialised forces to tackle internal security along with a National Counter-Insurgency Grid to deal with present and future problems.

"In short, India needs a comprehensive internal security plan as an appendage of external security. The dealing authority must be Ministry of Defence or a National Security Ministry. All resources, such as Central Reserve Police Force, Central Industrial Security Force, Rashtriya Rifles, Railway Protection Force along with all intelligence organisations must be clubbed under it," he said.

He also called for specialised forces to tackle internal security along with a National Counter-Insurgency Grid to deal with present and future problems.

"In short, India needs a comprehensive internal security plan as an appendage of external security. The dealing authority must be Ministry of Defence or a National Security Ministry. All resources, such as Central Reserve Police Force, Central Industrial Security Force, Rashtriya Rifles, Railway Protection Force along with all intelligence organisations must be clubbed under it," he said.

## India's strategic culture is weak: Gen V P Malik

Q1. Starting with the North East, followed by Punjab then Kashmir - terrorism in India has come a long way. How do you analyse terrorism problem in India in the past, present and the future?

Ans: This is right. Terrorism continues to ebb and flow in India, particularly in border States and under-developed areas of the hinterland. Some of the causes have been problems of national assimilation and integration, particularly of border areas in the North (J & K) and North East, and tribal areas of the hinterland: communal polarization and gradual spread of radical Islam. Terrorism induced from outside the country.

Porous borders with Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka

which enable illegal migration, smuggling of arms and drugs. We also have the issue of under development of tribal areas within India; weak governance and nexus between crime, insurgency and politics; poor intelligence and its coordination. Inability to pursue intelligence leads vigorously and books the terrorists to a logical conclusion.

There is also the deep-rooted constitutional problem of the law and order being a state subject. The state governments devote little attention to the issue and refuse to recognize the linkages between basic policing and internal security. There is inadequate coordination between state and central law enforcing agencies.

Q2. The country has witnessed as-

sassinations of a prime minister, former prime minister and chief ministers. Numerous civilians and soldiers have been martyred. Yet we don't seem to be able to put a lid on terror. Why?

Ans: Due to erosion of police and military deterrence, we have not been able to check foreign agencies/terrorist groups from creating anti India nodules and carrying out terror acts. We need to build credible force-deterrence and strong political will, particularly against Pakistan and others working against national interests.

We need a comprehensive Centre-State strategy to deal with different

insurgent groups and communal terrorism.

The strategy should include broad based domains of national and states' policies including accelerated economic development and social justice, security and media policies.

It should address dedicated and effective governance through good administration, prompt and fair judiciary and law and order machinery that inspires public confidence. Most importantly, we need political consensus on counter terror policies.

Q3. Along with cross border terror, we also see simultaneous rise



Our strategic planners - politicians and bureaucrats have little understanding of military operations."

of Naxalism. Do we have a flawed national security policy which has failed to plan and execute country's security?

Ans: Naxalism has more to do with under development of certain areas and exploitation of tribal. This situation has been exploited by ultra left wing organizations and activists with some support from outside.

It requires a two-part strategy - de-

velopment and good governance in the Naxal affected areas and more efficient counter insurgency operations. Leadership and training of our armed police forces needs much improvement for the latter missions.

Q4. Is terrorism/state sponsored terror acts replacing conventional warfare? If yes, how security forces should look at/ respond to this kind of a situation?

Ans: We have to look at conflict situations differently. The trend indicated by you forms hybrid warfare, which under the present strategic environment is more likely than high level conventional wars.

It requires a detailed review of our security organizations and synergy

amongst civil and military security forces. Unfortunately, our planners do not understand these new trends.

We continue to plan and function in silos, each department on its own, with little synergy.

Q5. Soon after going nuclear, India has seen a heightened cross border terrorism and brutalities against Indian soldiers by Pakistan. Has becoming nuclear power made India more cautious and emboldened Pakistan?

Ans: Nuclear weapons tend to cap escalation of conventional armed conflicts. But that situation often leads to greater limited and low level conflicts, including hybrid and proxy wars.

Pakistan, being a quasi-military state,

takes more initiatives and risks in its security policies and planning against India. It exploits terrorist organizations like the LET, JEM, UJC to take lead in cross border terrorism and supports them in these missions. India's strategic culture is weak. Our strategic planners-politicians and bureaucrats have little understanding of military operations. They control military budgets tightly and tend to be cautious in the nuclearized security environment. There is also a civil-military divide in our security planning and functioning.

Q6. With the increased threat perceptions from China and Pakistan together, do you think our current status of armed forces and security policy is robust enough to tackle this

dual threat? If no, then what are the short term and long term measures you will suggest for augmenting country's security?

Ans: It is not. We lack modernization of forces; their organizations and equipment for a two front war scenario. There are large scale deficiencies in weapons, equipment, and ammunition that need to be made up.

Our infrastructure along Northern border is poor. It is a major handicap in the deployment and manoeuvrability of our armed forces. These problems will take a long time to be set right, even if we start paying greater attention to our security issues and spend more money. Till then, we need to avoid a two front war scenario; politically and diplomatically.