Counter Revolutionary Conflict Management : The Emerging Paradigm

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"Bombs and pistols do not make revolution____. The sword of revolution is sharpened on the whetting stone of ideas."

Shahid Bhagat Singh's Statement before Lahore High Court

In the modern world, security challenges are all encompassing. These have a geographic dimension encircling the globe and a socio-political facet affecting all strands of human society. Conventional and nuclear wars have lost favour with humanizing of warfare while terrorism and insurgency are some of the multi dimensional threats of today, aptly denoted as asymmetric security challenges. The causatory factors of modern threats are complex, interwoven by a web of issues but the primary one for developing states as India is ineffectual governance denoted by poor State services. A variety of internal and the ubiquitous external factor exploit these debilities to create conditions, which need to be addressed by military or para military means as new skills in mass violence and urban strife are rendering the World increasingly unsafe. However, the legacy of resolution of revolutionary conflicts has offered a body of knowledge, which is a century old. Supplemented by technologies of the information age, we can develop new paradigms of response, without compromising on combat effectiveness of Armed Forces.

AIM AND SCOPE

The aim of this paper is to review current counter revolutionary conflict management with a view to evolve a viable paradigm of resolution with minimal military invasiveness. The paper is in five parts as given below:-

Part I - Nature of Emerging Threats and Challenges.

Part II - Review of National Policy.

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Part III - Synergy in Conflict Management.

Part IV - Exploiting Information - Dimesion of the Future.

Part V - Operational Strategies For Efficiency.

I

NATURE OF EMERGING THREATS AND CHALLENGES

Human Dimensions of Modern Revolutions. Modern revolutionaries are men seized with a sense of injustice, who espouse atypical aims such as independence in Kashmir or the terrorist intensions of the Al Qaeda. Violence is the preferred weapon of change typified by propaganda of deed.[1] They justify killing civilians for accepting the status quo. Revolutionary leadership is autocratic and imposes its will on followers while retaining flexibility in dealing with the government. The basic strategy of modern revolutionaries is to undermine state authority leading to anarchy thereby providing an opportunity to re-order power.

The Global Dimension. An essence of contemporary threats is their complexity, with limited certitudes such as demise of the nation state, emergence of individualism coagulated by modern communications, providing the deviant ideologue a medium to spread his message. The contrarian ideology of the age is jihadism and terrorism, its violent manifestation which has affected a wide swathe of nations, the United States, Russia, Ireland, India and Indonesia. A web of violence and information warfare is the emerging paradigm of militants the World over. Their organizations remain loosely networked, chameleon like adopting various *nom de guerre* when banned by the World community. The explosive bomb in its varied forms, improvised, car or suicide is the favoured choice of the new warrior from Baghdad to Bali which is slowly gravitating towards more intense means including weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Easy financing, social and political disharmony is facilitating terror globally as well as locally.

The Regional Facet. In the regional sphere, loosely governed states on India's periphery, Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Myanmar are military, monarchical, pseudo democracies surviving on self perpetuating profligacy of the governing elites, neglecting grass roots social, political and economic development. In the South, Sri

Lanka's hyphenated ethnic narcissism has created mutually incompatible Tamil and Sinhala elites, unwilling to compromise for public good. The expanding nature of threats is denoted by the recent incident in Bangladesh where 459 explosive blasts were triggered by, "dynamitards" in 63 of the 64 districts concurrently on 18 August 2005.[2] The state has in some cases become a sponsor (ISI in Pakistan), sympathizer (Bangladesh) or a mute spectator (Myanmar) of terror. Relative economic differential between India and its periphery and receding landmass in Bangladesh due to global warming implies continued population pressure particularly in the country's most vulnerable states of the North East. Cross border networking of organizations such as the United Jehad Council (UJC) in Muzaffarabad and Hurriyat Conference in Srinagar is a common phenomenon. India is thus being said to be surrounded by a, "ring of fire".

National Spectrum of Threats. At the national level, three basic trends; jihadism, separatism and radical left are evident. Separatism has two trends, in Kashmir it is fuelled by a misplaced notion of Islamic affinity with Pakistan, the other in the North Eastern states is based on ethnic discontinuity. The economic inequities threat is affecting the Indian heartland extending from Northern Bihar to Andhra Pradesh in what is being called as the Red Corridor due to the ideology of the left espoused by these elements. At the local level, threats tend to manifest based on a variety of factors, the main one being symbolism.

The overlapping nature of global, regional and national threats is evident from the joint training camps of Nepal's Maoists and Indian Naxals in West Champaran District of North Bihar traced by the Seema Suraksha Bal during June-July 2005.[3] The cellular structure of Al Qaeda at the international level has already replicated itself in Kashmir, the North East as well as the Naxalite Red Corridor. ISI on the other hand spearheads the jihadi threat across the span of the region from Afghanistan-Pakistan-Kashmir to the North East.

Support Infra structure of Insurgencies. The support infra structure for insurgencies entails a number of inter related activities, the prime one being financing. Funding is varied. Producing pornographic digital video discs (DVDs) is the latest trend discovered in Tripura.[4] Crime is the breeding ground of terrorists

and the line between criminals and terrorists is increasingly blurred. Gun and explosive running, human trafficking, money laundering and drugs are other major sources of income generation and support activities.

Distinctive Characteristics of Indian Insurgencies. Indian insurgencies are unique and go beyond the well established, "Lawrence of Arabia" model. India's militants are well entrenched stakeholders within the democratic (sic) system. Their violent outpourings are frustrations resulting from inequities of Indian governance. Militants have public sympathy due to their ability to deliver justice through, *Jan adalats* or provide aid as seen during the epidemic in Vishakhapatnam in May-June 2005 when Naxalites of the People's War Group (PWG) conducted effective relief.[5] In some cases, terrorism and militancy have evolved as business and employment enterprises. This is particularly true of states where extensive extracting and lumbering is carried out, as in Chattisgarh, Jharkhand or Manipur. Brutality and extortion is a two way process in the Indian system, police as well as terrorist.[6] Lack of millenarian goals as that of Al Qaeda is the only silver lining. Thus the revolutionary trends observed in the country are symptoms of economic and social transformation due to a web of inequities creating a vicious cycle of creative destruction as shown in Figure 1 below.
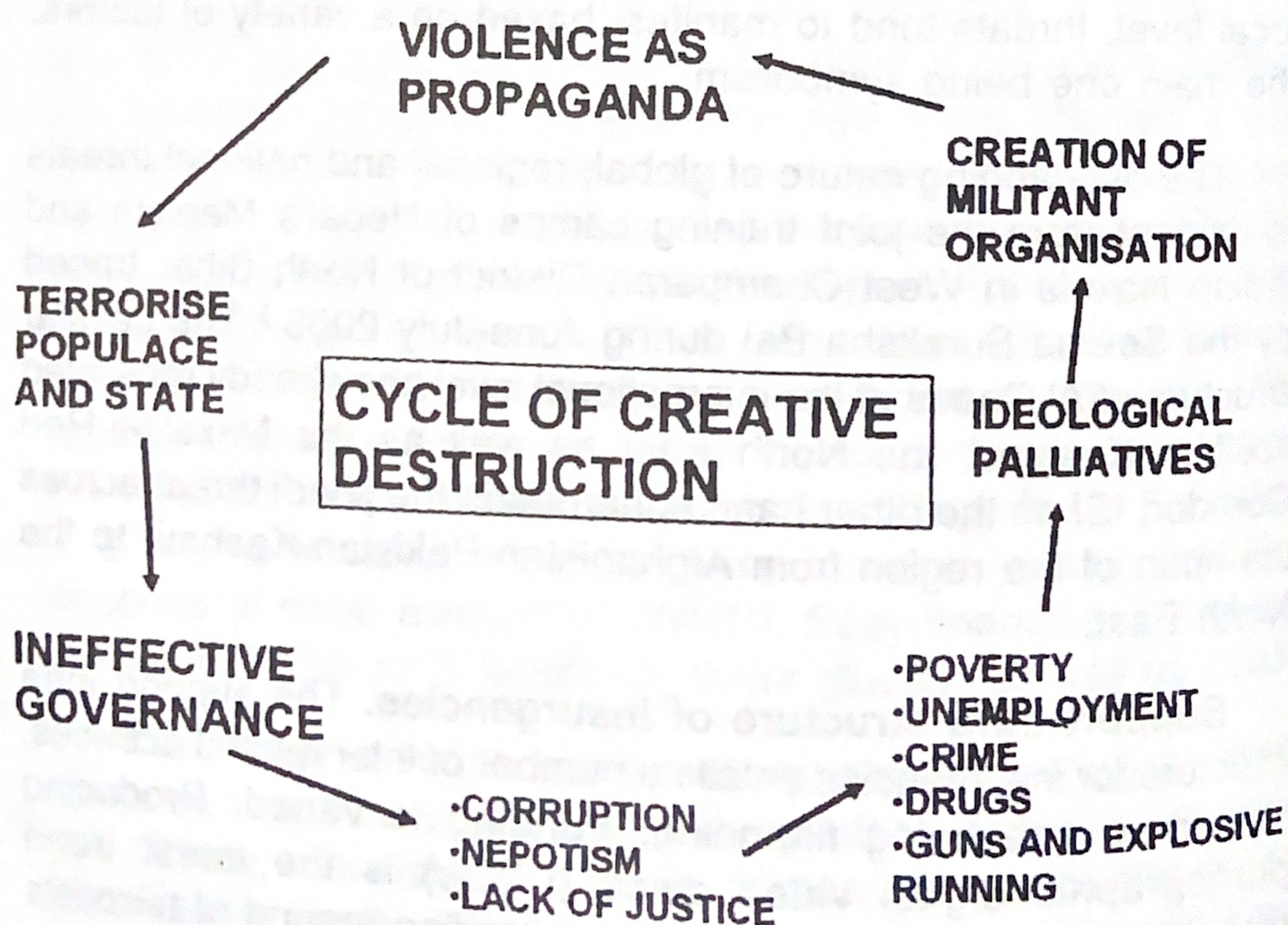

Figure 1

The strength of armed militants in India is not overtly alarming. In Andhra Pradesh, at present there are approximately 1200 - 1500 militants.[7] In Kashmir, authentic reports state that the number of insurgents has been brought down from about 3000 a couple of years back to 1500 today.[8] The United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) is estimated to have the same strength. Over the years, however, insurgent organizations have developed a need for self survival leading to regurgitating issues for continued existence. The recent drive for a Naga homeland by Naga *Hoho*, enjoying the benefits of over three years of cease fire is a salient example of this escalatory ladder of issues adopted by revolutionaries.[9]

A broad categorization of nature of threats and outline pathways for solutions is tabulated as per Figure 2.

STRUCTURE OF THREATS	IDEOLOGY	SUPPORT STRUCTURES	MANIFESTATIONS
Global	Jihadism	Information Infrastructure	Guns, explosives graduating to weapons of mass destruction
Regional	Separatism	Fundamentalist polity and education	Sabotage at public places
National	Economic Empowerment	Crime, drugs, gun and people running Money laundering, counter fiet currency and other economic offences	Sabotage of government installations Supporting activities as kidnapping, extortion
Solutions			
Global, regional and national alliances to address threats in an integrated manner	Political, economic, social and information management for integration of deviants with state ideology of equity, justice and freedom.	Improve deliverance of - governance, judicial, police, financial and so on.	Controls-Guns, explosives, weapons of mass destruction. Improve the judicial and police system for effective law and order

Figure 2

II

REVIEWING NATIONAL POLICY

Identifying Policy Challenges. The aim of internal security management is to lower the influence of violence and restore state power and authority. The Minister of State for Home had outlined the integrated policy for tackling Maoists in India as follows:-

(a) Modernise state police forces and augment their strength.

(b) Deploy Central Para Military Forces specially trained and equipped for anti-Maoists operations in affected areas.

(c) Integrated development of under developed areas to remove socio-cultural alienation.

(d) Formation of Local Resistance Groups which have proved successful in Bastar region of Chattisgarh.[10]

The Central government is also providing extensive financial assistance to states through Security Related Expenditure (SRE) directly to districts affected by violence. Andhra Pradesh alone has been given Rs 8.1 Crore under the SRE and Rs 79.73 Crore under Police Modernisation Scheme for 2004-05 which was supplemented by a further Rs 80 Crore. Under the Backward District Initiative Rs 360 Crore has also been allotted to develop physical and social infra structure.[11]

Terrorism and insurgency is an idea and not a physical quantity.[12] Repression, expulsions and restrictions on free speech are no solutions for ending terrorism as per the *Economist* study based on a comparison between the anarchist terror of the late 19th Century and jihadism of the present.[13] Thus a holistic policy for conflict resolution to include an independent and functional judiciary, free parliament, public/parliamentary control over the Armed Forces and secret service, independent media, a free and fair election mechanism and opportunities for economic enterprise needs to be evolved.[14] National policy also needs to integrate diplomacy and development assistance abroad, downstream governance to bridge the development divide, develop strategies for border and immigration control, combat terrorism and counter proliferation of WMD destruction, particularly bio-terrorism and chemical terrorism.[15]

Policy Initiatives

Political Lead - The Starting Block. Alleviation of grievances can be achieved only through the political process which needs to be rejuvenated in affected states and districts. Experience of overcoming naxalism in West Bengal and Kerala, the original naxalite affected states in the 1970s denotes that socio economic empowerment of the oppressed undertaken through a political process resulted in overcoming the menace.[16]

Functional Democracy. The concept of democracy includes respect for rights to income and property, effective institutions for resolution of conflicts and synergizing divisive societies, employment generation, reducing sense of indignity and development of civil society. In India, democracy has been sadly restricted to elections. Debasing main stream politics has also led to mafia control of elections in areas which are affected by Naxalism thereby, rendering these into a sham of numbers achieved through a politician-criminal-bureaucratic nexus. Broad basing democracy would thus be one of the prime initiatives to ensure down streaming power to the people.

Effective Governance. At the national level, effective governance should achieve trickle down effect, be it in maintenance of law and order, delivering aid or justice. Monitoring public expenditure is an essential facet of governance. Increased public funding is no guarantee for results. India spends 4.1 per cent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on education with a literacy level of 65 per cent while China, Thailand and Sri Lanka spend 3 per cent of GDP but have literacy rates over 90 per cent.[17] A model of governance exploiting information technology initiatives such as, *lok vani* adopted by some states or the *e choupal* model of India Tobacco Company would provide succour to the needy at the grass roots, eliminating basic grievances.

Global War on Terror. India is an important constituent of the global effort to restore order in failed states under the United Nations aegis. Out of the 59 United Nations peace keeping missions launched so far, India has been a part of 41.[18] At the regional level, an effective mix of Gujaral and Indira Doctrine, which entails a firm yet empathetic dealing with neighbours is highlighted.[19] In line with

this, the government's recent initiative in Afghanistan of providing US $50 million for capacity building, training the police and provision of non lethal equipment and vehicles need to be followed up with other neighbours, be it Nepal or Bangladesh.[20] The Spanish premier has perhaps put the spirit of cooperation by like minded nations most aptly as creating an, "alliance of civilizations".[21]

Legal and Legislative Issues

The need for just and fair legal provisions in disturbed states can be highlighted by recent outrage in Manipur over the Armed Forces Special Power Act (AFSPA) and withdrawal of the Illegal Migrants (Determination) by Tribunals Act in Assam.[22] Since modern threats are multi-spectral such as economic, information and so on, there is a need to empower the state to combat these through a single act. The US has evolved an all encompassing legislation in the form of the Patriots Act 2002, the purpose of which is, "to deter and punish terrorist's acts in the US and around the World, to enhance law enforcement investigatory tools and for other purposes."[23] This provides for, "enhanced domestic security against terrorism, intense surveillance procedures, protection against money laundering, bank secrecy, immigration provision, strengthening criminal laws against terrorism, removing obstacles for investigating terrorism, providing for victims of terrorism and so on."[24]

Our own experience in having a variety of acts for different areas and regions suggests that an all inclusive act as the Patriot Act may be seen as less discriminatory and has been recommended by commissions as the Reddy Review Committee tasked to review the most controversial AFSPA. The Committee has recommended that its provisions should be included in the Unlawful Activities (Prevention Act) to be made applicable to all states uniformly.

Legal provisions to improve transparency in governance are also essential. The Right to Information Act has been introduced, other legislative measures as the step by Jammu and Kashmir Government of creating an Accountability Commission under the *Ehtisaab* (Accountability) Bill to reduce corruption and improve accountability are recommended.[25] A whistle blowers policy could also be initiated at the national level. The time frame for introduction of legislations also needs to be reduced.

Financial and Identity Controls

Surveillance of money laundering, black money generation, corruption, drugs and crime money are essential facets of denying financial support to militants. Legislation to reduce multiplicity and duplicity of existing provisions which has led to diffusion, under a centralized finance control act is recommended.

National Identity cards are a necessity at least for those living on the borders to begin with while a large many may already be within the purview of identity mapping through measures such as credit cards and mobile connections, which could be exploited for immigration and money control.

Improving Policing - the First Line of Defence

Policing is the first line of defence. Improving policing needs policy review, some suggestions are as follows:-

(a) Update the antiquated Indian Police Act 1861.

(b) Free police from executive control in emergency situations such as 1984 riots in Delhi or the Gujarat riots with accountability with the Director General of Police.

(c) Improve standards of recruiting.

(d) Improving police image, discipline, turn out, human approach are issues within the domain of the Superintendent of Police and should brook no political alibis.

(e) Outsource non core police jobs.[26]

III

SYNERGY IN CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

The Problems of Synergy. The problems of synergy in Indian internal security management are challenging. Since law and order is a concurrent subject, central and state governments have overlapping responsibilities. At the Centre, internal security management is a dual domain responsibility between Ministry of Home and Defence. The varied types of security forces, infantry units, Rashtriya Rifles, Assam Rifles, Border Security Force, Central Industrial Security Force, Seema Suraksha Bal and Indo-Tibetan Border Police Force with different organisations, competencies and cultures defy harmonisation.

Synergy - The Models

Some of the models for creating synergy are discussed as follows:-

(a) The US Department of Homeland Security is the most recent example of synergistic policy. It was created post-11 September 2001 and integrates 22 agencies and 180,000 government employees thus unifying a large number of federal functions under one agency. This was evolved after a comprehensive strategy for homeland security was developed focusing on six key areas - intelligence and warning, border and transportation security, domestic counter terrorism, protection of critical infra structure, defence against catastrophic threats and emergency response and preparedness.[27]

(b) France has achieved synergy without major re organization but by having judiciary, anti terrorism police and intelligence agents operating in tandem. Thus France's top terrorism expert is Jean Louis Bruguiere, a judge.[28]

(c) Technology can also facilitate synergy by networking forces, seamlessly integrated on a common situational awareness platform under one canopy.

Ministry of Internal Security - Apex Level Organization

Setting up a Ministry of Internal Security Management is a necessity for coordination in the contemporary threat envelope. The model of Department of Homeland Security could be adopted with variations suiting Indian conditions. The broad tasks for this ministry will be as follows:-

(a) Management and control of forces employed for internal security.

(b) Border management.

(c) Protection of critical infrastructure and counter proliferation.

(d) Legislative measures related to internal security.

(e) Disaster management.

This would enable district administration to interact directly with Ministry for Internal Security Management with the state administration having a veto in case of emergencies, thereby

speeding up the process of addressing emergent law and order situations.

Integrated Counter Insurgency (CI) Grid

At the operational level an all inclusive, integrated CI grid is an essential facet of synergy. Integrated grid has been highly successful in Punjab breaking the back of the militancy in the 1990s, reports indicate that a similar grid based primarily on police deployment has been successful in Tripura.[29] An integrated CI grid will comprise of the following:-

(a) An intelligence grid linking human as well as electronic intelligence networks.

(b) A defensive arrangement comprising of central police organization forces and armed police with para military forces employed for high threat targets.

(c) An offensive grid primarily of army and special forces units.

(d) A network of village defence committees in rural and neighbourhood watch committees in urban areas.

(e) An information and civil affairs grid delivering governance through civil and political affairs and perception management.

IV

EXPLOITING INFORMATION - THE DIMENSION OF THE FUTURE

Intelligence, Information and Political Affairs

The control and elimination of militancy at low cost can be based on a combination of excellent intelligence work, effective political action and acceptance of controls by people.[30] In the information age, perception management is an essential tool with multi faceted technological and knowledge aids to bring about change in attitudes and beliefs. Thus in Palestine, leaders as Mohammad Abbas were persuaded that suicide bombings and rocket attacks on Israeli civilians did not further the Palestinian aim, which led to lower levels of violence.

Perception Management Themes

Perception management includes actions and not mere words, to win the battle of ideas and make the more rationale jihadists realize that terrorism and violence seldom achieve desired ends.[31]

It also includes exploiting non violent strains in militant organization as the Hamas which have a network of social services, to veer it to the political mainstream, despite a parallel trail of bloodshed.[32] A myth and reality paradigm of perception management themes evolved for Kashmir can demonstrate the effectiveness of this strategy as denoted in Figure 3 below.

MYTH	REALITY
Kashmir is controlled from Delhi	1. Special constitutional provision exist granting a differential status to Kashmir. 2. Kashmir has been exclusively ruled by Kashmiris except for short periods when terrorism had made governance impossible
Islamic identity has been compromised with Kashmir remaining in the Indian Union.	India's core ideology of secularism is based on Kashmiriyat.
One lakh people have sacrificed their lives for freedom in Kashmir	Total casualties are about 40,000 with 15,000 civilians mostly killed by terrorists.[33]
Kashmir is bled by Indian profligacy	Kashmir is bled by Kashmiri profligacy as the opulent mansions adorning Srinagar - Baramulla bye pass will prove.

Figure 3

Leveraging Influence of the Media

Modern terrorist organizations are highly information sensitive and target violence to influence opinion, lower public and forces morale and elevate terrorist spirit. For instance in Fallujah in Iraq, a car bomb was aimed at a convoy of female marine soldiers.[34] Correspondingly, the approach of the government towards information management is typically, "officialese". A media centre should be established as a credible source of information and should be effectively geared for incident management. Government agencies should speak in complimentary voices based on facts and not second guessing. Political leaders should avoid falling prey to the favourite journalist ploy of creating controversies and contribute to positive control of the media space.

V

OPERATIONAL STRATEGIES IN CI

Models of Employment. The aim of operational strategies in CI for the Armed Forces would be to ensure that multi dimensional

capabilities are retained at all times. To attain this we have essentially been following different models as follows:-

(a) Reskill, reorientate and employ existing units such as infantry battalions.

(b) The Rashtriya Rifles model of specially organized forces for combating insurgencies by milking regular units.

(c) Specially trained counter terrorist units as National Security Guard.

Recommended Model. An emerging integrated model is the Three Block Force proposed by ex US General, Charles C Krulak who states, *"In one moment in time, our service members will be feeding and clothing displaced refugees-providing humanitarian assistance. In the next moment, they will be holding two warring tribes apart conducting peacekeeping operations. Finally, they will be fighting a highly lethal mid-intensity battle. All on the same day, all within three city blocks. It will be what we call the three block war."*[35] Based on the Rashtriya Rifles, this model could be introduced, which while retaining CI proficiency would add a 60 battalion increment to army's conventional capability.

Leveraging Air Power in CI

Traditionally we have restricted air power to logistics support in CI operations. As the Chief of Air Staff stated recently, "We have been providing logistics support to the forces (in CI) - no such instructions (on air cover to Territorial Army personnel) have been given so far"[36] Israeli employment of air power for precision targeting in Gaza succeeded in preventing infiltration, enforcing curfews and liquidating terrorist cells by a combination of accurate intelligence, improved command and control, seam less target coordination and upgrading fuses and timing devices.[37] This it is claimed reduced the ratio of terrorists to innocents killed from 1:1 to 12:1.[38] While restrictions of terrain in the Indian scenario may be inhibitory, the concept can be exploited in situations such as destruction of terrorist hide outs in high altitude as during *Operation Sarp Vinash* or stand off attacks on terrorist hide outs across the border.

Exploiting Naval and Air Force Expertise

CI battles are no longer, "boots on the ground" actions but involve sophisticated electronic, information and soft target operations which can also be undertaken by units of the Indian Navy and Air Force. Exploiting these in the integrated CI grid for value addition would release specialist Army units for continued honing of skills for conventional operations.

Border Fencing

Border fencing is a prime requirement across the Western as well as Eastern borders the porosity of which has been effectively exploited by a vast swathe of anti national and anti social forces. Its effectiveness has already been proved in Punjab earlier and now in Kashmir.

People Friendly Operations - Strategy of Differentiation

The Chief of Army Staff has identified people friendly operation as the prime strategy for combating militancy. The militant hierarchy generally comprises the hard core, technical experts as explosive specialists, the middle core, new entrants, under ground and over ground sympathizers. These operate amongst the general populace whose involvement could vary from indifference to active sympathy. People friendly operations imply tackling each stratum in the hierarchy differently so that the last tier is not alienated while the top tier is systematically eliminated by focused operations. To ensure that human rights are not violated, legitimacy of each operation needs to be established before launch and the authority to open fire designated. There is a need for a security forces ombudsman as the Independent Police Complaints Commission of the United Kingdom which has the authority to dissect internal police inquiries, carry out investigations and recommend criminal prosecutions. The recent killing of Jean Charles de Menezes in London was investigated by this Commission which follows the Northern Ireland model and is widely accepted in the troubled province.[39]

Launching operations leveraging on information is another essential facet. Information can be provided by a variety of sources, agents, bugs, thermal surveillance of targets and unarmed aerial vehicles. Collaborative networks should be established exploiting

communication technologies so that a common picture is available at all levels, battalion, brigade, division and above.

Conclusion

Modern threats are irregular, popularly synonymed as, "asymmetric". While violence is an intrinsic part of militant strategies, state power has to employ varied means to tackle threats which are proving all pervasive particularly for developing nations as India, caught in a vortex of sub anarchical regimes on its periphery as well as pockets within. Armed forces when called upon to combat militancies need to employ dynamic rather than violence centric means to address them while simultaneously retaining the power for conventional engagement. This may appear a tall order but is feasible if holistic measures are undertaken as outlined in the paper and revolutions addressed through systemic rather than purely kill-kill strategies.

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