

**Internal Security Challenges - Gravity, Manifestations and Responses\***

**Shri Prakash Singh, IPS (Retd)\*\***

**Introduction**

The internal security situation of the country presents a dismal scenario. Terrorists are spreading their tentacles all over the country. J&K continues to be on the boil with Pakistan pushing infiltrators from across the border and refusing to dismantle its infrastructure of terrorism. Northeast is also in a state of turmoil, though there have been some encouraging developments lately. The Naxalite influence is spreading in ever widening circles to different parts of the country.

**Internal Security - A New Threat Every Decade**

If one were to take a panoramic view of the internal security situation as it has evolved since the dawn of Independence, we find that every decade saw a major problem being added to our internal security kitty. The fifties saw the Northeast going up in flames. Phizo raised the banner of revolt in Nagaland in 1954 and, in due course, the sparks flew to Mizoram, Manipur and Tripura. The sixties saw the beginnings of the Naxalbari movement starting from a small village at the tri-junction of India, Nepal and what was then East Pakistan, the movement has today spread over twenty states of the Union. The seventies saw turbulence in Assam with the formation of the United Liberation Front of Assam seeking to liberate Assam from the Indian “colonial regime” through armed struggle. The eighties witnessed one of the most lethal terrorist movements in Punjab aided and abetted by Pakistan. The nineties saw the beginning of insurgency in Kashmir, though the seeds of trouble were there in the wake of Partition. The current decade has been marked by the onslaught of international terrorism in the hinterland; what was so far confined to Jammu & Kashmir has gradually become a pan-India phenomenon.

**Lack of Strategic Vision**

The question arises, why is it that the problems instead of getting resolved, are getting multiplied? There are, basically, three reasons for the deteriorating internal security scenario. Firstly, the country has not shown adequate strategic vision. As Clausewitz said, “Wars are lost or won by their strategists, even before they are begun”. When there is no long term strategy, the outcome cannot be good for the country. Our leaders are obsessed with the present and, at the utmost, with the next elections. Secondly, national security is unfortunately not being given high priority in the country. More often than not, it takes the back seat as against politically expedient considerations. Thirdly, the law enforcement apparatus in the country is fragile and is just not geared to meet the kind of challenges we are being confronted with. We have a colonial police with a feudal mindset and the entire criminal justice system is almost on the verge of collapse.

**International Terrorism**

International terrorism poses the greatest challenge to the security and stability of the country. It was until recently confined to the state of Jammu & Kashmir but has gradually spread across the length and breadth of the country. These terrorists are opposed to the very idea of India; they want to destroy its icons and its symbols. They have been repeatedly causing explosions in Delhi because it is the political capital of India; they have been repeatedly attacking Mumbai because it is the commercial hub of the country; they have been perpetrating incidents of violence in places like Ayodhya and Varanasi because these are the holiest places of the Hindus; they have been active in Bangalore because it is the IT hub of the country. In other words, they want to destroy India politically, economically and culturally. This mindset is best illustrated in the speeches of Hafiz Mohammed Saeed, the chief of Lashkar-e-Taiba. Speaking in Lahore on November 3, 1999, he said:

*“The jihad is not about Kashmir only .... About 15 years ago, people might have found it ridiculous if someone had told them about the disintegration of the USSR. Today, I announce the break-up of India, Insha-Allah. We will not rest until the whole (of) India is dissolved into Pakistan.”*

On another occasion, speaking at the Al Qudsia Mosque in Lahore on February 5, 2007, Saeed said:

*“Jihad in Kashmir will end when all the Hindus will be destroyed in India.... Jihad has been ordained by Allah. It is not an order of a general that can be started one day and stopped the other day.”*

Nasr Javed, a trainer of Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) suicide attackers, delivering a speech after the evening prayers at the Quba Mosque in Islamabad on February 5, 2008 said, “Jihad will spread from Kashmir to other parts of India” and that “the Muslims will be ruling India again”.

Terrorist modules are active in several urban conglomerations. The security forces and intelligence agencies of the country are quite capable of handling the terrorist threat, but they are hamstrung by government policies. We have no comprehensive anti-terror law even though the country has been facing different shades of terrorism for the last nearly fifty years. Other countries like the USA and the UK, which faced the brunt of terrorism during the last decade only, have stringent laws to deal with the menace. It is a great pity that the government is shy of tackling terror as terror and that it prefers to deal with terror as “unlawful activity” only. It is also unfortunate that we have not been able to codify our anti-terror policy. Countries like the USA have very clearly stated that they shall not compromise with terrorism but we are chary of making any such bold enunciation. Successive governments have preferred to deal with terrorist situations in an ad hoc manner depending upon their own perceptions.

The year 2008 was particularly bad; there were a series of incidents across the country, which were climaxed by a devastating terrorist onslaught in Mumbai on 26/11. The Mumbai attack was orchestrated by the ISI of Pakistan

operating through the LeT.

<b>Terrorist Incidents in 2008</b>				
(2008)Date	Place	Attacks	Casualties	Terror Group
Jan 1	Rampur	CRPF Group Centre attacked	8 dead	LeT
May 13	Jaipur	8 serial blasts	80 dead	Indian Mujahideen(IM)
July 25	Bangalore	8 low intensity blasts	1 dead	IM
July 25	Ahmedabad	17 blasts in 10 areas	53 dead	IM
Sep 13	Delhi	5 blasts in 3 areas	26 dead	IM
Sep 29	Malegaon	1 bomb blast	6 dead	Abhinav Bharat
Oct 30	Guwahati	9 blasts in 4 areas	84 dead	ULFA/HUJI
Nov 26-29	Mumbai	Multiple terrorist attacks	186 dead	LeT

India's tough response to the 26/11 attacks in Mumbai, even though at the diplomatic level only, and the international pressure on Pakistan ensured that there was no terrorist incident in the country for the next 14 months. The lull was interrupted by a bomb blast in Pune on February 13, 2010 in which 17 persons were killed. There was another blast in Varanasi on December 7, 2010 in which two persons lost their lives.

During 2011, there have been three terrorist incidents so far. Two of these were in the Delhi High Court, one on May 25 and the other on September 7. In the latter incident, 13 people lost their lives. Another major incident was in Mumbai on July 13, when there were explosions in Zaveri Bazar, Dadar and in the Opera House in which 26 people were killed and 123 sustained injuries. This was actually the third attack at Zaveri Bazar which is the country's largest bullion market; it was also the 13th terrorist attack in Mumbai since 1993.

It is thus clear that the country remains highly vulnerable to terrorist attacks essentially because of the half-hearted approach of the government to tackling it and the inherent weakness of the law enforcement apparatus. In fact, India is considered one of the worst affected countries by terrorism and political violence in terms of the number of incidents and casualties. The recent incidents have exposed the chinks in our armour.

The Government of India (GOI) had, in the wake of 26/11, taken a number of steps to strengthen its anti-terror capabilities. National Security Guard (NSG) hubs were set-up at Hyderabad, Kolkata, Mumbai and Chennai. Twenty counter-insurgency and anti-terrorism schools are being raised. The state governments were advised to augment their police manpower. Coastal security is being beefed up. Multi-agency centre for collection and collation of intelligence was activated. A National Investigation Agency (NIA) was raised. However, we have still a long way to go. The counter-terrorism apparatus needs a lot more strengthening.

There are, meanwhile, disturbing indications of Pak Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) putting pressure on militant groups of Punjab like the Babbar Khalsa International (BKI), Khalistan Zindabad Force (KZF), Khalistan Tiger Force (KTF), International Sikh Youth Federation (ISYF) and their collaborators in European and North American countries to revive militancy in the Punjab. According to data compiled by the Institute for Conflict Management, a total of 134 terrorists were arrested in Punjab over the past decade (2001-2011). Over five kilograms of explosives and detonators were recovered from a car parked outside the cantonment railway station in Ambala on October 12, 2011. It is learnt that the explosive-laden car was headed for Delhi for a terror strike during the Diwali celebrations. Both the BKI and the KTF are said to be recruiting 'hit men' to perpetrate incidents in Punjab. Cyberspace has meanwhile emerged as a fertile source of recruitment for Khalistani activists. There are over 40 websites and 200 groups on facebook dedicated to keeping the movement for an independent Sikh homeland alive.

Economic terrorism is yet another dimension of international terrorism that the country has to contend with. Pakistan has been flooding the country with counterfeit currency with a view to subverting the economy of the country. It is estimated that at least 10 to 20 per cent of the total currency in circulation (approx Rs 6,10,000 crores) is counterfeit. A recent report prepared by the Research and Analysis Wing, Intelligence Bureau and the Department of Revenue Intelligence shows that the infusion of Fake Indian Currency (FICN) into India to destabilise the economy and fund terror activities was being supported by Pakistan's High Commission in Dhaka and Kathmandu through the Inter Services Intelligence (ISI). The crime syndicate of Dawood Ibrahim is also used for the purpose.

## **Jammu & Kashmir**

The GOI has been committing blunders in Jammu & Kashmir from the very beginning. Some of the major blunders were

as follows:-

- (a) Referring the matter to UN when the Indian Army was in the process of flushing out the invaders.
- (b) Nehru's uncalled for assurance that the wishes of the people of the State would be ascertained.
- (c) Bartering away the territorial gains of 1965 War at Tashkent.
- (d) Indira Gandhi could have dictated settlement of the Kashmir question in 1972 following the liberation of Bangladesh.
- (e) Release of militants in exchange for Rubaiya Sayeed by VP Singh on Dec 13, 1989.
- (f) Not crossing the Line of Control (LC) while clearing the aggression from Kargil.
- (g) Handing over three militants (Masood Azhar, Omar Sheikh, Mushtaq Zargar) at Kandahar on Dec 31, 1999.

There have been some positive developments in the recent past in the form of people to people contacts and opening up of trade. Elections to the State Assembly were held peacefully in 2008. However, on the negative side, there is no progress on the substantive issues and Pakistan has not dismantled its infrastructure of terrorism across the border.

The GOI's policy has broadly followed the following pattern:-

- (a) Confidence building measures with Pakistan with emphasis on promoting and facilitating people-to-people contacts on both sides of the LC.
- (b) Promoting all round economic development of the State.
- (c) Encouraging dialogue with and among different segments of population in the State.
- (d) Relief and rehabilitation of persons affected by militancy/terrorism - related violence.
- (e) Coordinated operations against the terrorist outfits with minimal collateral damage to civilian life and property and protecting human rights.
- (f) Allowing people to exercise their democratic rights - holding elections periodically.

The policy has, on the whole, worked well and the level of violence has been sharply coming down, as the following figures show:

<b>Casualties in J&amp;K</b>				
<b>Year</b>	<b>Civilians</b>	<b>Security Forces</b>	<b>Terrorists</b>	<b>Total</b>
2008	69	90	382	541
2009	55	78	242	375
2010	36	69	270	375

Source : SATP Portal

The security forces have been able to inflict heavy damage on the terrorists' capabilities. Among the 270 terrorist killed during 2010, at least 31 were self-styled commanders.

The State witnessed a period of youth unrest in 2010. Inept handling of the situation led to heavy casualties (112). The GOI thereafter sent an all party delegation to assuage the feelings of anger and resentment in the Valley. An 8-point plan for J&K was approved. In pursuance of this plan, Rs 100 crore was released as grants for schools and colleges and to improve the infrastructure in the State. The Centre also authorised payment of Rs 5 lakhs to the families of each of the deceased in the civil disturbances. This was followed by the appointment of Dilip Padgaonkar, Radha Kumar and MM Ansari as interlocutors to talk to the different sections of people. The interlocutors submitted their report on October 12, 2011 recommending regional autonomy, devolution of powers, economic development, and bringing the state into the national mainstream.

The year 2011 has seen a significant decline in militancy in J&K. There is, however, no room for complacency. Pakistan continues to stoke the fires of insurgency through its non-state actors. According to an estimate, about 2500 terrorists are believed to be waiting in some 42 training camps across the border to infiltrate into India. The LeT, Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) and Harkat-ul-Mujahideen (HuM) appear to be gearing up for a fresh offensive in the state of Jammu & Kashmir. The GOC 15 Corps on October 12, 2011 said that the strength of militants across the LC is at an all time high and that there are about 600 militants concentrated opposite the Shamsabari Range and Uri.

## **Northeast**

Northeast has been convulsed with separatist and secessionist movements of different hues. These movements could broadly be attributed to:-

- (a) A feeling of neglect by the Central Government
- (b) False propaganda by leaders of the area.
- (c) Alienation of tribals.
- (d) Changes in the demographic pattern caused by the influx of people from across the borders.
- (e) Availability of sanctuaries in Myanmar and Bangladesh.
- (f) Assistance to rebel groups by countries inimical to India.

Nagaland has been the epicentre of armed insurrection in north-eastern India. The sparks later flew to Mizoram, Manipur and Tripura. Assam also witnessed upheaval due to the large scale influx of foreigners into the State.

The GOI policy, broadly speaking, has been to :-

- (a) Assure the tribals that their rights on land would be protected and that their social customs and cultural traditions would not be interfered with.
- (b) Take counter-insurgency measures, wherever unavoidable.
- (c) Implement schemes for the economic development of areas even if these are witnessing insurgency.
- (d) Engage the separatist/secessionist groups in political dialogue.
- (e) Enter into suspension of operations agreements with the insurgent groups.
- (f) Meet their legitimate aspirations by granting them autonomy or even statehood.
- (g) Have understanding with neighbouring countries (Bhutan, Myanmar) so that the insurgents do not get any shelter there.

Nagaland has been having suspension of operations since 1997. About 60 rounds of peace talks have been held, though there is no agreement on the substantive issues yet. The NSCN (IM) has taken full advantage of the cease-fire period and violated the terms of agreement with impunity to augment its strength and build its finances.

Manipur has about 15 militant groups operating in the Valley and the Hill districts. These groups have, however, lost their political moorings and their sole effort now is to have an area of influence whence they could extort money and claim some kind of authority. The Minister of State for Home Affairs (M Ramachandran), however, told the Lok Sabha on August 9, 2011 that the insurgent outfit of Manipur were trying to form a United Front. These outfits include Revolutionary People's Front/People's Liberation Army (RPF/PLA), United National Liberation Front (UNLF), Kanglei Yawol Kanna Luip (KYKL), People's Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak (PREPAK), Noyon faction of Kangleipak Community Party (KCP-Noyon), Progressive faction of PREPAK, and United People's Party of Kangleipak (UPPK).

In Assam, the sharpness of ULFA has been blunted, thanks to Bangladesh's cooperative attitude. Besides, the leaders of the insurgent outfit have shown willingness to negotiate with the GOI and have abandoned their insistence on recognition of 'sovereignty' as pre-condition for talks. On February 14, 2011, Arabinda Rajkhowa, Chairman of ULFA, accompanied by his Vice Chairman, Pradeep Gogoi and 'foreign secretary' Shashadhar Choudhury called on the Prime Minister in Delhi, signifying that the ice had been broken. Another round of talks was held between Arabinda Rajkhowa and the Home Secretary, GOI on October 25, 2011 at which ULFAs 12 point charter of demands were discussed. Paresh Baruah, commander of the armed wing of ULFA is, however, opposed to any talks with the GOI until the "core issues" of sovereignty and independence of Assam are also discussed. Baruah has about 150 armed cadres with him along the China-Myanmar border.

A disturbing development in the Northeast is China's renewed interest in the region and culpable involvement with the insurgent outfits. The China North Industries Corporation (NORINCO), a state owned weapon manufacturing company, has emerged as the largest supplier of arms to the underground of the Northeast through Myanmar and Bangladesh. It has office in Bangkok and operates through a network of agents spread over Southeast Asia. The charge sheet filed by the National Investigating Agency (NIA) against Anthony Shimray, chief arms procurer of the Issac-Muivah faction of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN-IM), specifically mentions NORINCO, and states that the NSCN-IM rebels had allegedly paid \$ 100,000 to NORINCO to buy 10,000 assault rifles, pistols, rocket propelled grenades and ammunition. Shashadhar Choudhury, ULFA's 'foreign secretary', after coming overground, stated that "the Chinese sold ULFA weapons but indirectly". He also disclosed that Pakistan's ISI had trained the ULFA armed cadres. The Chinese are also reported to have asked the UNLF leaders from Manipur about the location of India's nuclear tipped Agni missiles in the Northeast and details of the deployment of Indian Army in the region. GK Pillai, former Home Secretary, GOI, is on record, having said that "there is a lot of smuggling by Chinese arms agents who come to India mainly through Myanmar and Bangkok". Recently, on December 7, 2011, the minister of state for Home Affairs said in the Rajya Sabha that the insurgent groups in the Northeast were getting arms through "smugglers" from China's Yunnan province, Myanmar and South-East Asian countries. The Chinese strategy seems to be "to keep the Northeast on the boil and simultaneously profit from arms sales".

### **Maoist Insurgency**

The Naxal problem has been described as the biggest internal security threat to the country. The Home Minister admitted that various groups subscribing to the Maoist ideology have pockets of influence in 20 states across the country, and that over 2,000 police station areas in 223 districts in these states were partially or substantially affected

by the menace.

The year 2010 recorded the highest number of killings by the Maoists, as the following figures show:

Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Incidents	1509	1565	1591	2258	2212
Civilians Killed	521	460	490	591	718
Security Forces Killed	157	236	231	317	258

Source: MHA

The salient features of the movement today are as follows :-

- (a) Spread over a large geographical area.
- (b) Increase in potential for violence.
- (c) Unification of Peoples War (PW) and Maoist Centre of India (MCCI).
- (d) Plan to have a Red Corridor.
- (e) Nexus with other extremist groups.

**Geographical Spread.** The movement which started from a small village in 1967 has spread over a vast swathe of the country during the last over 40 years. Thirteen states of the country are particularly affected. These are: Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Kerala, Karnataka, Haryana and Tamilnadu.

**Potential for Violence.** The Naxals' potential for violence has increased substantially with their acquisition of sophisticated weapons and expertise in the use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs). The Naxals are said to be in possession of at least 8,000 regular weapons including AK 47 rifles and SLRs. The armed wing of the Naxals is about 10,000 strong.

**Unification.** The movement got a tremendous boost when its two major components, the PW and MCCI, merged on March 21, 2004. The unified party is called the Communist Party of India (Maoist). The merger, apart from augmenting the support base of the party, gave it the character of a pan-India revolutionary movement.

**Red Corridor.** The Maoists plan to have a Compact Revolutionary Zone stretching from the Indo-Nepal border to the Dandakaranya Region in the south - from Pashupatinath in Nepal to Tirupati in Tamilnadu.

**Nexus.** The Maoists' nexus with the other extremist organisations has added to the complexity of the problem. The PW cadres received training in the handling of weapons and IEDs from ex-LTTE members. Besides, they have *entente cordiale* with the NSCN (IM). Some batches of Naxals received arms training from the ULFA. Besides, the Communist Party of India (Maoist) has fraternal relations with the Communist Party of Nepal. According to a recent report, the ISI is also trying to reach out to the Maoists.

Chhattisgarh is the worst Maoist-affected state in the country today. The state government launched an *Operation Green Hunt* to dislodge Maoists from their areas of influence, but the Maoists have been inflicting heavy casualties. They killed 75 CRPF personnel in one single incident in Dantewada district on April 6, 2010. Jharkhand is the second most affected state. Naxalism has flourished in the state essentially because of corruption at the highest level. Bihar is in bad shape because the political leadership is unwilling to confront the problem head-on. In Orissa, a lackadaisical administration has enabled the Maoists spread their wings. In Maharashtra, Gadchiroli district is badly affected. In West Bengal, the Marxist government blew hot and cold in tackling the Maoists. Mamta Bannerji was hoping to have a peace dialogue with the Maoists, but she appears to be getting disillusioned. On September 26, 2011, she sent a stern warning to the Maoists that they could not remain janus-faced and continue their killing spree while complaining about the state's human rights violations and police excesses. The liquidation of Koteswar Rao alias Kishenji on November 14, 2011 in an encounter in West Midnapur district would appear to have ruptured the earlier bonhomie.

The socio-economic dimensions of the problem are recognised and handsome grants have been released by the Planning Commission for the development of the affected areas from time to time. An Integrated Action Plan (IAP) for 60 selected tribal and backward districts including 48 in the LWE affected areas was approved on November 25, 2010. The districts covered under IAP have been provided a block grant of Rs 25 crore in 2010-11 and Rs 30 crore per district to be provided during 2011-12. A Committee headed by the District Collector and comprising the Superintendent of Police and the District Forest Officer will be responsible for implementation of the scheme. The scheme should have proposals for public infrastructure and services such as school buildings, Anganwadi centres, primary health centres, drinking water supply, village roads, electric lights and public places, etc. The instructions are that these schemes should show results in the short term. The unfortunate experience so far has been that the benefits of these schemes are not reaching the poorest segments of population due to rampant corruption. As the Rural Development minister, Jairam Ramesh recently said, "We are combating not just a destructive ideology, but are also confronted with the wages of our own insensitivity and neglect".

## Illegal Migrations

One of the biggest problems facing India and having a direct bearing on the country's economy and security is that of the continuing illegal migration of Bangladeshis into India. The factors which have been encouraging the influx from Bangladesh side are:-

- (a) Steep rise in population with increasing pressure on land and mounting unemployment.
- (b) Recurrent natural disasters like floods and cyclones, uprooting large segments of humanity.
- (c) Better economic opportunities in India.
- (d) Religious persecution of Hindus and discrimination of tribals.
- (e) Islamic interests encouraging expansion of territory.
- (f) Organised immigration by touts and anti-social elements, and
- (g) Porous and easily negotiable international borders.

The bulk of the Bangladeshi immigrants are in the states of Assam, West Bengal, Bihar, Delhi and the North-eastern states. The Task Force on Border Management, which was headed by Madhav Godbole and submitted its report in August 2000, contained the following indictment of the political establishment:-

*"There is an all round failure in India to come to grips with the problem of illegal immigration. Facts are well known, opinions are firmed up, and operating system is in position. But the tragedy is that despite this, nothing substantial happens due to catharsis of arriving at a decision in this regard due to sharp division of interest among the political class."*

The Task Force estimated the total number of Bangladeshi immigrants in India to be 1.5 crore. Considering that ten years have elapsed since then, the figure must have reached at least 2 crore.

The Supreme Court of India, in a landmark judgment (July 2005), while repealing the notorious Illegal Migrants (Determination by Tribunal) IMDT Act, observed that "there can be no manner of doubt that the State of Assam is facing 'external aggression and internal disturbance' on account of large scale illegal migration of Bangladeshi nationals" and directed the Union of India "to take all measures for protection of the State of Assam from such external aggression and internal disturbance as enjoined in Article 355 of the Constitution".

A parliamentary panel expressed the view (April 2008) that "the large presence of illegal Bangladeshi immigrants poses a grave threat to the internal security and it should be viewed strongly". The GOI unfortunately continues to drag its feet in the matter and has not initiated any definite measures to throw out the illegal migrants.

## Other Threats

There are threats to internal security from certain other factors also. These include:-

- (a) Regional aspirations.
- (b) Inter-state disputes.
- (c) River water sharing issues.
- (d) Communal problems.
- (e) Caste tensions.
- (f) Demand for reservations, etc.

These factors, from time to time, also pose a formidable challenge. Thus, the demand for a separate state of Telengana led to normal life being disrupted in several areas of Andhra Pradesh for 42 days during September-October, 2011. Schools were closed, buses did not ply in the districts of Telengana and the government services were thrown out of gear. Inter-state disputes also throw up problems. There is a boundary dispute between Assam and Nagaland. The lifelines to Manipur, NH-2 and NH-37, are choked by the Nagas whenever the latter have a grievance, real or perceived, and this results in great hardship to the Manipuris.

There are river water disputes over the sharing of Cauvery and Krishna rivers. These were referred to Tribunals in 1990 and 2004 respectively. The Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal (CWDT) passed orders in April 1992, December 1995 and February 2007. The party States have, however, filed SLPs in the Supreme Court against the decision of the Tribunal and the matter is sub judice. These disputes involve the states of Kerala, Karnataka, Tamilnadu and the Union Territory of Puducherry. The Krishna Water Disputes Tribunal (KWDT) passed orders in June 2006 and has framed twenty-nine issues for adjudication. The dispute between the states of Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka remains pending. There are inter-state disputes over the sharing of Godavari and Narmada rivers also. These disputes occasionally lead to local agitations.

Communal confrontations take place now and then. There were riots in several parts of the country following the demolition of the disputed shrine in Ayodhya on December 6, 1992. Gujarat witnessed riots in different parts of the state following the Godhra incident in which pilgrims were burnt alive in a railway coach. According to Home Ministry figures, between 2001 and 2009 there were 6,541 communal clashes in the country in which 2,234 persons were killed.

Caste tensions between higher and lower castes, in certain areas create serious problems for the district administration. Demand for reservations manifests in the form of ugly agitations. The Gujjars of Rajasthan held the state to ransom, blocking the important Delhi-Jaipur highway.

## Conclusion

The country needs an internal security doctrine urgently. It should be based on components mentioned in the succeeding paragraphs.

**Political.** Assessing whether the challenge is secessionist, separatist or regional? Reasons for the same to be analysed. If the demands are genuine, whether any Constitutional Amendment is called for? A secessionist movement, as a matter of principle, will have to be put down with a heavy hand. The country must have a clear policy and stringent laws to deal with such elements. Separatist elements would also have to be dealt with firmly. Regional aspirations would require a comparatively softer approach. Ethnic demands should get a sympathetic response.

**Socio-economic.** Finding out if the challenge is due to genuine socio-economic grievances of the people? Are they suffering from acute poverty, unemployment or displacement? In such cases, the socio-economic grievances will have to be addressed by planned development, ensuring that there are no regional disparities and the fruits of development are equitably shared by all sections of society. Besides, the spirit of nationalism will have to be fostered and de-radicalisation programmes undertaken.

**Administrative.** Determining, whether the administrative machinery been dysfunctional in certain areas? Has the administration reached out to people in the remotest areas? If not, governance will have to be improved. Criminal Justice System of the country must be revamped, and the resources and the capabilities of the law enforcement machinery given necessary upgradation and augmentation. The administration and the police must be insulated from extraneous influences. Corruption must be contained for the simple reason that corruption and development cannot go side by side.

**Military.** The internal and the external dimensions of the challenges have got meshed and they impinge on each other. The country's Armed Forces, the Paramilitary Forces and the Coast Guard should, therefore, be maintained at the highest levels of efficiency. The GOI should, however, be careful to use the appropriate forces for a specific threat.

**Intelligence.** The intelligence agencies must coordinate internally as well as with the agencies of friendly countries. It should have both defensive and offensive capabilities: defensive to forewarn and, wherever possible, neutralise the impending threats; and offensive to weaken such assets of the hostile country as are used for trans-border operations.

It is a great pity that our response to various challenges has generally been feeble. We have a strong military and our economic strength has been growing steadily. Yet, we have been dealing with multifarious problems confronting the country in a manner which exposes us to the charge of being a 'soft' state. A country-specific report prepared by the Counter Terrorism Committee of the United Nations revealed gaping holes in India's preparedness to tackle terrorism. The report called for adoption of comprehensive counter-terrorism legislation to overcome the menace and highlighted the need to plug the finances of terrorist groups. This must be done. India has all the resources and the trappings of an emerging great power and we should be able to deal with the threats to internal security more effectively.

\*Text of the talk delivered by **Shri Prakash Singh, IPS (Retd)** at USI on 07 Dec 2011 with **Lieutenant General SK Sinha, PVSM (Retd)**, Former VCOAS, and Former Governor of Assam and Jammu & Kashmir in the Chair.

\*\* **Shri Prakash Singh, IPS (Retd)** is a former Director General of the Border Security Force. He was DGP Uttar Pradesh and DGP Assam also. The writer is a recipient of Padmashri. He writes regularly on issues related to National Security.

*Journal of the United Service Institution of India*, Vol. CXLI, No. 586, October-December 2011.