

TERRORISM : THE ILLEGAL ARMS AND THE DRUG CONNECTIONS

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Except in case of the much talked about ‘**state terrorism**’ wherein the weapons in possession of the State machinery can be used against the outlaws and dissenters, all other forms of terrorism which, to my understanding, must include insurgency and secessionism. Illegal arms are always a concomitant factor. The narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances as yet another adjunct to terrorism, often described as ‘**narco terrorism**’, is relatively a recent phenomenon and its direct role as a resource or weapon for terrorism has of late become a subject matter of intense discussions. Terrorism has been described variedly in different contexts, sometimes as ‘**the weapon of the weak against the strong**’ or as ‘**the proxy or surrogate war of the weak state**’. Ordinarily, it may consist of acts which are now almost universally accepted as criminal in nature, involving violence or threat of violence, caused or executed by organised groups or individuals with deliberate intention to create a climate of extreme fear in order to disrupt Govt., to cause panic amongst people or to stamp out political opposition. Victims in a terrorist situation are mostly unrelated to the terrorist acts but they are chosen since they are soft targets, mostly for the sake of publicity and to be used for bargaining.

Although, the much maligned **TADA (Terrorist and Disruptive (Prevention) Act, 1987, amended 1989)** stands repealed, for the sake of our understanding of the subject, I prefer to fall back on the definition given under section 3(1) and section 4(1) of this Act which also describe the scope of the terms ‘**terrorist**’ and ‘**disruptive**’ acts. Herein, **the terrorist act** must have (i) the intent to overawe the Govt. established by law or to strike terror in the people or to alienate section(s) of people or to adversely affect their harmony, (ii) use of bombs, dynamite or other explosive or inflammable substances or firearms, lethal weapons, poisonous or obnoxious gases, chemicals and other substances (biological or otherwise) of hazardous nature, (iii) to cause or likely to cause death or injury, loss, damage or destruction to property, disruption of essential supplies or services to the community, (iv) detention of person(s), threat to kill or injure, to compel the Govt. or any person(s) to abstain or commit any such act. Similarly, the ‘**disruptive activities**’ will consist of (i) any act or by speech or through media, directly or indirectly, questioning or disrupting or intending to disrupt the sovereignty and territorial integrity of India, (ii) to support or promote secession from India, (iii) abet, advocate, advise or facilitate commission of any such activity. Along with the disruptive activities, ‘**subversion and sabotage**’ are yet another pronounced feature which may be used as weapons in the form of violent crimes, may be killing one or destroying installations to threaten thousands and to breed a sense of insecurity and intimidation for the Govt. and the community.

Weapons, as **instruments of terrorism** as described above, have, in some form, always been used by the terrorist. Whether by the peasants and workers against the capitalists, by freedom fighters or as instruments of real or pseudo ideological, ethnic or national warfares. Even 900 years ago, the ‘**Arab Society of Assassins**’, led by Hassan Ibn Sabaha (origins – Hashassins) or the **Jacobies** during the French Revolution who unleashed a reign of terror with guillotine in the name of liberty and republic. In the recent times, in the West, the **Irish Republican Army** or the German terrorists group **Baader Meinhof** whose mobike riding assassins spread bullets with their sub-machineguns. Whether it is **Japanese Red Army** on the left or the **Anand Margis** or Sikh terrorists on the right wings or the national separatists like the **Palestinians** or **Sri Lankans** or the ethnic groups of **North-Eastern**

India or elsewhere, weapons to cause violence happen to be the main instruments of terrorism. Gresham's law of terrorism – **'those who spill the most blood will make the biggest headlines'** – can be realised maximum through more and more lethal weapons.

The State monopoly of organised violence (1) against citizens has been broken long ago and the use of sophisticated weapons by the terrorist groups is becoming more and more common. (2) The recent example of the Pak ISI coming into possession of nearly 3 million high-calibre Kalashnikov besides Stinger missiles, huge quantities of RDX from the US surplus of weapons supplied to Pakistan for Afghanistan which is now available for terrorists in the **South-Asia post-Afghan war situation**. Generally, in this region there has been a tremendous upgradation in the quality of **lethal weapons and communication system**. Use of mobile and satellite telephones, fax and internet, besides the availability of public telephone booths, commercialisation of cryptography (science of coding and decoding), particularly in the face of the outmoded communication laws, these new resources have been added to the terrorists' arsenal. **Weapons of mass destruction (WMD)**(3) have also been placed at their disposal and many scientists at large and available have also come handy. The use of Sarin gas by **Aum Shinrikyo** of Japan is indicative of **chemical warfare** and the pronounced justification of such methods besides narco funding by the powerful. In this background, the rise of the tribal 'warlord' **Osama Bin Laden**, is a matter of grave concern.

An analysis of the **casualties of civilians, security forces, and the recovery of arms and ammunition** in various terrorists and insurgency affected areas will give a clear picture. Comparatively speaking, between 1988 till September 1999, in **Nagaland**, 266 security forces police were killed as against 592 civilians and 290 arms were recovered. In **Manipur**, security forces killed were 645 as against 217 civilians and arms recovered were 977. The number of incidents of killings and also the recoveries of weapons in this region had a spurt between 1992 and 1997 and there has been a fall in 1998. In **Assam**, between 1989-1998, 543 security forces and 2689 civilians were killed and the number of arms recovered were 3510. Similarly, in **Tripura**, the number of security forces killed was 208 as against 1283 civilians and arms recovered were 889. The figures in the States of **Meghalaya** and **Mizoram** have been negligible.

In **Punjab**, previously, during the **Operation Blue Star** in 1984 alone, the Army had recovered 41 LMGs, 57 stenguns, 377 .303 rifles, 83 7.62 SLRs besides hundreds of other weapons including anti-tank missiles and mines.(4) The sikh terrorism abated towards early 90's, and the peak in the recoveries of weapons and counter-terrorist operations was during **1987 to 1992**. During this period, between 300 to 800 AK series weapons, 15 to 80 MG series and 20 to 55 carbines besides 200 to 300 guns in addition to rocket launchers and grenades and sizeable ammunition were recovered almost every year. During the past 10 years or so, the **national figures** indicate seizure of over 1500 rocket launchers, over 22,000 AK series and carbines, over 8,000 pistols and revolvers, over 4,000 rockets, nearly 44,000 grenades besides huge quantities of explosive including RDX etc. have been recovered in the counter-terrorist operations. These sizeable recoveries, a major part of which can be traced to **Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka** etc. give an indication of the dimensions of the problem.

Historically, in the **Indian context**, starting from early 80's the activities of **foreign terrorist groups** and the use of firearms and explosives has been proliferating in alarming proportions for about 20 years now. On June 4, 1982, as a fall out of the PLO war in Lenaban, **Mustafa Al Marzook, First**

Secretary of Kuwait, was shot dead in Delhi and Ebrahim Jawad, UAE Counsel General, was shot at on August 26, 1982, but he survived same as the **Jordanian Ambassador** in Delhi **Mohd. Ali Khormo** who sustained multiple bullet injuries from an automatic weapon in Delhi on October 25, 1983. However, **P.L. Norris, British Deputy High Commissioner**, was assassinated on 27th November, 1984, in Bombay. Most of these terrorist acts were suspected to be committed by the Black June Organisation of **Abu Nidal group**, anti-Arafat faction of PLO. About the same time, Air France office in Scindia House, Iraqi Airways office in Ansal Bhawan in New Delhi became **targets of explosion and a rocket attack** was made on the US Embassy in New Delhi on **February 11, 1983**. Some pro-Iranian Afghans owing allegiance to Hizb-i-Islami were suspected.

Much before the **LTTE** became a major factor in Indian politico terrorist scene, they exploded a bomb at **Madras Airport in August 1984** killing 32 persons and causing extensive damage. It is then history, how, subsequently, following IPKF operations in Srilanka, a series of incidents took place in India – **EPRLF Chief K. Padmanabha's** killing with grenades and lethal arms, in Madras in 1990 followed by the most diabolical and meticulously planned suicide bombing of **Rajiv Gandhi and others at Sriperumbudur** in 1991. Besides the above mentioned instances of foreign terrorist groups operating directly in India using their fire and explosive power, the foreign hand was always suspected in Indian insurgency and separatists movements mainly through the supply of weapons, explosives, training and providing a safe haven.

In early 80's, the terrorism in India was not in that virulent form but there were many instances which should have caused timely concern. In the North-Eastern insurgency, **Assam Peoples' Liberation Army (APLA)** having contacts with **PLA of Manipur** and **NHCL of Nagaland** besides **United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA)** which were formed in 1981, became active. The heavy use of weapons and the training in Burma was disclosed following Gauhati bank robbery case in May 1985. The **Tribal National Volunteers (TNV)** which pledged support to secessionist movement of Mizos, Nagas, Khalistan and Kashmiris became very active and caused over 110 deaths by 1985. Similarly, the **Naga insurgency**, which dates back to early 50's continued to be violent same as **Mizo National Front (MNF)** and the Meitei extremists – **PLA and PREPAK**, all of whom were always in the process of acquiring more and more fire and explosive power. In **Jammu & Kashmir (JKLF)**, the use of illegal arms in the **plane hijacking in 1971** and 1976 with the support of Al-Fateh, in the kidnapping and murder of the Indian **Diplomat Mhatre** were all evident.

Besides the above mentioned secessionist groups in operation, the **Anand Margis**, avowed to establish universalism and their own world order, were suspected for extremist activities in 70's at New Zealand, Canada, London, Manila, Bangkok and Sydney besides being directly responsible for the **assassination of the Railway Minister Mr. L.N. Mishra** and an attempt on the life of **Chief Justice of India Mr. A.N. Ray in 1975** and the conspiracy to cause physical harm to Mrs. Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister. They had acquired fire and explosive power in considerable manner and, much later, the attempted acquisition of huge arms and ammunition in the so-called **Purulia arms dropping case**, their involvement was found to be far more serious. Similarly, following Anandpur Sahib Resolution in 1973 and **demand of Khalistan by the Sikh terrorists**, numerous cases of innocent killings, VIP assassinations, sabotage of railways, looting of banks and explosions at public places besides hijacking of aircrafts were noticed. The Sikh terrorists made extensive use of sophisticated arms and ammunition including LMGs, SLRs, stenguns, rifles, HE 36 handgrenades and, as is well known, a sizeable quantity of all this and much more was recovered following the

Operation Blue Star in 1983. The international ramifications of Sikh terrorism decidedly added to its fire and explosive power.

In the present day Indian context and the problems of insurgency, terrorism and extremism we have to think in terms of the situations that prevail in **Jammu & Kashmir**, the dormant **Punjab**, the **North-Eastern Region** and the States affected by the left extremism, i.e, **CPML and PWG** in **Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra**. However, the most ominous developments have taken place in the **Muslim fundamental militancy** after the **demolition of Babri Masjid on December 6, 1992**. It is essential to understand the situation that prevails now and the incidents that have taken place in **past 2 years** which are also indicative of use of firearms and explosives with some references of narco terrorism here and there. In Jammu & Kashmir sector, 2261 killings took place in 1998 as against 2372 in 1997 which included civil casualties of 877 and 840 respectively. The security forces lost 239 lives in 1997 and 230 in 1998. The trends have been more or less similar during 1999.

Still more serious trends constitute the **trans-border infiltration** and **Mujahideen (freedom fighters) mercenaries** who have operated from Pakistan and Afghanistan. What happened on our side on the **Line of Control(LoC)** during the Kargil war and the level of preparation wherein the intruders fought a pitched battle with the Indian forces is something which speaks volumes about the preparedness of the intruders. They used sophisticated weaponry and communication systems and they engaged our security forces causing serious casualties. **Taliban** (so-called seekers of religious values and education) factor, emanating from the children of 'Jihad' against Soviet intrusion in 80's, indoctrinated in the Madarssas of Pakistan turned into ruthless force, finally captured power in Afghanistan. This **Mujahideen-Taliban combine** resulted in intense weaponisation of Afghanistan through American and Pakistan support and their covert operations have been carried out in Kashmir and elsewhere using Chinese long range rockets, American and Italian anti-tank weapons and missiles, British Limpet mines. With heavy shelling by Pakistani forces in Kargil and the intruder mercenaries of Lashkar-e-Toiba and Harkat-ul-Mujahideen besides brutal killings, beheading, blowing of bodies with dynamites have been the hallmarks of such action in Kashmir and elsewhere. (3)

Throughout the **North-Eastern region**, the situation remained very grim on account of the activities of insurgent and extremist groups who also received weapons, training and support from their **trans-border bases**. In **Assam**, 118 killings took place in 1997 and 139 in 1998 on account of ULFA violence. The number of killings on account BODO militancy was higher being 216 in 1997 and 458 in 1998. The number of militant violence and killings has declined in Assam subsequently. Similarly, in **Manipur**, 628 persons were killed in 1997 and 251 in 1998. Due to ethnic factors the Meitei and Naga casualties operate apart, the Accord signed between **Kuki and Zomi** in 1998 resulted in settling these for some time.

Although, there has been some decline last year in the level of violence and the use of weapons in Nagaland, Tripura and Meghalaya, the situation remained explosive enough to cause serious concern. In Nagaland, sophisticated arms were acquired from the foreign market and the infamous **Cox Bazar in Bangladesh** remained very much in the news. There is a definite **pattern of procurement of arms and ammunition** in this entire region and **safe passages** have been created through Bangladesh and, at times, through Mizoram and Myanmar. This entire region being lax and

disturbed as it is, security forces have found it extremely difficult to combat insurgency in these States. The **left extremism** has been extending its area of operation and acquiring more and more weapons particularly through **attacks on police stations and police posts in Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Andhra Pradesh** and **looting service arms**. They have been using explosive devices and land mines in a big way and causing serious casualties amongst the security forces. In Madhya Pradesh alone at least 234 deaths took place in 1997 and 205 in 1998 which included sizeable losses amongst extremists on account of encounters and amongst the police officers. The level of extremist preparedness has been such that several police stations and police parties were blown off through the land mines and armed attacks and arms looted. In Bihar, 31 policemen were killed in encounters in 1997 and the total deaths were 325. Of late, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra got very badly affected resulting in 59 deaths in the former and 13 deaths in the latter during 1998. Some casualties have taken place in **Orissa** as well. All these incidents and killings have been on account of use of firearms or explosives.

The most disturbing feature in recent times has been the **Muslim militancy** in several States and the support they received from the **Mumbai mafia**, the prominent smugglers Tiger Memon and Mohd.Dosa, and the external control through Dawood Ibrahim operating from Dubai and Pakistan. The **Bombay bomb blasts** on 12th March, 1993, left around 260 persons dead and, subsequently, the most serious Pak ISI led design was unearthed. Immediately after the demolition of **Babri Masjid on December 6, 1992**, huge quantities of RDX, arms and ammunition were brought to India, the first consignment landing on **9th January, 1993, on Gujarat coast** and Pakistan took this grand opportunity to start a proxy war on the crest of Muslim backlash. Besides whatever happened ultimately in Jammu & Kashmir, in addition to the explosions of Bombay in March 1993, there were at least **26 blasts in Delhi, Haryana and U.P.** The range and intensity of their action could be seen from the fact that **17 blasts took place in Tamilnadu in 1998**. Lashkar-e-Toiba operators had collected weapons and explosives in huge quantities in Rajasthan as it appears from recovery of 100 kgs. of RDX, revolvers, handgrenades, wireless etc. which were made. In the past 7 years, the quantity of arms and explosives which was brought to India with the support of Pakistan operators within the country is mind-boggling. This is perhaps the most serious threat to national security.

A **case study of Delhi** would be worthwhile since in 80's when the terrorism started in India along with lethal weapons, Delhi remained a crucial theatre for terrorists' design and activities. Almost all conceivable terrorist groups in India operated in this city and adopted all possible methods including **assassinations of VVIPs and VIPs, sabotage, explosions in public congregations**, such as, cinema houses, bus stands, public transports, railway stations, **bank robberies, hijacking** etc. Besides the above mentioned incidents of international terrorism in 1983, previously on **25th April, 1980, Baba Gurcharan Dass** had been attacked with handgrenade, telescopic gun etc. Subsequently, in **1983** at least a **dozen cases of explosions** took place in different parts of the city and some noted AISSF activists were identified and arrested. Delhi became almost an extension of Punjab and the demands of Khalistan could be heard along with explosions and shootouts. Daring **bank and jewellery shop dacoities** using automatic weapons took place in which **Billoo Babla and Harjinder Singh Jinda gangs** operated. Meanwhile, on 28th of March, 1984, **Mr.H.S.Manchanda, President, DGPC** (Delhi Gurudward Prabandhak Committee), was shot dead by Virsa Singh Valtoha gang who were ultimately arrested.

Starting from the demands made through Anandpur Sahib Resolution, hardening of stances and the growth of terrorism in 80's, the emergence of **Jarnail Singh Bhindrawale** resulted in the massive stock-pile of **arms and ammunition in the Golden Temple**. Delhi remained affected throughout by these developments. There was indeed a continuity in the **chain of events** connecting **Operation Blue Star** and its direct repercussions in Delhi followed by the **assassination of Mrs.Indira Gandhi** in October 1984 and its sequel 1984-riots against sikh causing nearly 3,000 deaths, and then, finally, the **transistor bomb blast cases** of 10th/11th May, 1985. The conspiracy behind the transistor bomb blast cases in which **110 explosive** devices containing Picric acid with routine explosive mixture in transistor cabinet cases were manufactured in a house in Patel Nagar and exploded in several States including Delhi, U.P., Haryana and Jammu, was joined by most of the leading sikh extremist groups. Fortuitously, this case and the entire conspiracy was unearthed within a few days, all conspirators and over 50 prepatrators were arrested and 65 hand grenades in making besides weapons were recovered. The explosion left about 80 persons dead and 127 injured. Perhaps, in terms of lethality, coordination and the impact, transistor bomb blast cases of 1985 could be compared only with the **Bombay bomb blasts of 1993**. Both these serial bomb blasts which shook the country emanated from the series of events culminating in Operation Blue Star, 1984 riots, Babri mosque demolition, communal riots in Bombay, hurting grievously the sikh and Muslim psyche respectively.

Besides the **assassination of Mrs.Indira Gandhi**, in October 1984, in Delhi several assassinations took place including that of the popular MP **Mr.Lalit Maken** and his wife **Mrs.Geetanjali Maken** on 31st July, 1985, and that of **Mr.Arjun Das, Councillor**, on 4th August, 1985. In both the cases, as revealed subsequently, a German mauser pistol and .32 bore revolver were used by then the most notorious terrorist gang led by **Harjinder Singh Jinda**. Jinda who had started his career as a small time drug-pedlar on Punjab border became a 'hero' and the leader of a gang which initially committed series of bank dacoities, finally led the most prominent terrorist gang during those times. The said mauser pistol, once patronised by Bhindrawale himself, considered to be a '**lucky weapon**' since it had been used in the killings of Prof.V.N.Tiwari and Mr.Ramesh Chander in Chandigarh and Punjab, formed part of Jinda's arsenal in the killing of the former **Army Chief Genl.A.S.Vaidya** who was assassinated at Pune.

When Jinda's gang was neutralised, his Delhi errand boy and gun-runner **Surjit Singh Penta**, a sprinter with criminal record in the local police station, became most active terrorist in Delhi and during the subsequent years, indulged in mass killings through shootouts in Delhi, the Greater Kailash birthday party and Chitranjan Park killings. He created an unprecedented sensation with his daring killing spree and powerful automatic weapons and, finally, he shifted to Golden Temple where he consumed cyanide to commit suicide at the time of his surrender in Operation Black Thunder.

During this entire **period, i.e., upto 1992-93** when Punjab terrorism was contained by Punjab Police led by Mr.K.P.S.Gill, use of different types of AK-47, Assault rifles, AK-56, IEDs with plastic explosives and finally RDX having more sophisticated formulae were experienced in Delhi as well. In the aftermath of Babri demolition and multiple internal and external factors, from 1993 onwards, Delhi remained further more one of the most active centres for terrorist designs and activities, the pronounced feature being Kashmir inspired Muslim fundamentalism. **Till 1992**, explosive material was gun-powder Gelatin and 27 sikh militants were arrested as against 21 Kashmiris, **but 1993 onwards**, the complexion of explosive material devices and changed the number of Muslim

fundamentalists being arrested dramatically increased. Over 73 kgs. of RDX and remote controlled devices besides sizeable weapons were recovered in 1993 and more than 185 kgs. of explosive material besides AK-47, AK-56 rifles were recovered in 1994 and the number of Muslim fundamentalists arrested was 48 as against 5 sikh militants. This consistency remained during the succeeding years and more lethal weapons, explosive material and devices were recovered and series of minor and major bomb blast incidents took place every year, i.e., 24 in 1995, 51 in 1996, 40 in 1997 and 22 in 1998. Fortunately, in Delhi as elsewhere, the incidents have come down during 1999 following major recoveries including 71 kgs. of explosive material, 57 pistols, 12 revolvers besides sizeable cash in 1998 and 72 kgs. of RDX, 11 hand grenades etc. in 1999 and tracking the ISI inspired modules in Delhi.

Although, time and again, the example of **Harjinder Singh Jinda**, the dreaded terrorist who started as a drug pedlar on Punjab border, is cited to establish the close **nexus between the drug trafficking and terrorism in India**, there are not many such instances to substantiate this theory. Fortunately, though India perhaps occupies the most **vulnerable location on the global drug map** being in the midst of the Golden Triangle, the Golden Crescent and the 1500 kms. porous Nepal border, it goes to the credit of the drug enforcement agencies and the activists to have forestalled the intents of narco terrorism that obtains in countries like Pakistan and Afghanistan, Myanmar and Thailand and in the Latin American Silver Triangle of Columbia, Peru and Chile. However, on our **borders of North-East, Punjab, Kashmir, Tamilnadu coast of Sri Lanka and Nepal**, the diversion of opium to clandestine laboratories and utilisation of drug money for various types of crimes, has definitely created some serious problems and many times the terrorist and insurgent groups have taken full advantage of the situation.

It is now evident that the **Taliban Mujahideen ISI intruders in Kashmir** have brought in their narco resources which have been used in **Kashmir** operations. On the **Tamil coast**, Vedaranyam being just 40 kms. of shallow water from Point Pedro in Jaffna, the flow of drugs and arms has been going on and **LTTE related narco terrorism** has also been manifesting in several incidents in India. In the **North-East**, the drug situation is quite grim with a large number of drug addicts and the border being porous with a **strong narco terrorists overtones** in the areas from where the insurgents get support. However, all this is not comparable to the impact of Columbian drug cartels, the involvement of Shan United Army and communist groups in Burma or, for that matter, now the free use of Balkan route following the collapse of communist regime or the control of drug lord with the direct support of the ISI militia on the Afghan-Pakistan border. **Pakistan** is considered to be a major **shareholder in the \$400 billion drug industry** with its strong **links with the arms smuggling and terrorist groups**. It is further believed that the ISI drug operators may have financed their **nuclear programme** besides their **operations in Kashmir** through organisations, such as, Harkat-ul-Ansar and Jihad-ul-Kashmiri.

On the **Indo-Pak border**, many instances of **narco terrorist links** have been found in which arms were recovered from the drug traffickers. In 1984-85, **Lal Singh alias Manjit Singh**, a dreaded terrorist arrested by Bombay police, disclosed about his links with Akbar, a notorious drug trafficker operating on Indo-Nepal border who smuggled huge quantity of drugs from Pakistan. Similarly, in January 1995, 24 kgs. of heroin was seized from the **self-styled Lt.Genl.Gurvinder Singh @ Kala** followed by another seizure of 49 kgs. along with AK-47 rifles, revolvers, pistols and grenades on the same border. Similar seizures were made by BSF in Bikaner district on Rajasthan border with 4 kgs. of heroin, 25 kgs. of hashish and 3 AK-47 rifles besides other ammunition in 1995. **In July 1997**, BSF

and Punjab Police apprehended two intruders near Ferozpur and made seizures of **26 kgs. of heroin** along with **AK-47** rifles, magazines, **20 kgs. of RDX, wireless sets, detonators**. Seizures of 48 kgs. of heroin, pistols and cartridges were also made from **Pakistani intruders in August 1997** near Amritsar by the custom authorities and in February 1998, **3 kgs. of heroin along with AK series rifles** were made by BSF and J&K Police near Kupwara. Such minor and major joint arms and narcotic seizures have continued in different parts of the country including at **Delhi, Mumbai, Gujarat, UP and Calcutta** till recently.

The **regional and national figures** obtained from the **Narcotics Control Bureau** for the **past 15 years** indicate a particular pattern. For instance, the seizure of heroin and hashish, the two drugs in great demand, the high water mark has been years 1985-1988. There was a plateau or declining trend in the last part of 80's and during first part of 90's. The seizures have started increasing again. For instance, the heroin seizure was 761 kgs. in 1985, 2621 kgs. in 1986, 2747 kgs. in 1987 and 2941 kgs. in 1988. Recently, the seizures of heroin have increased, i.e., 1275 kgs. 1996, 1332 kgs. in 1997 which dipped to 665 in 1998 and again increased to 825 kgs. in 1999. Although, there are not many cases of narco-terrorist nexus, perhaps in the light of increasing prevalence of drugs now, there is a need to maintain a watch on the **narco-terrorist front** and particularly **on North-Eastern and Indo-Sri Lankan borders**. In the North-East, the insurgent groups of **ULFA, NTCL, ATTF, NLFT** have often been found indulging in drug trade to support their activities.

The **new drug trafficking routes** along Indo-Mynmar border at Morey adjoining Imphal, **Naklak in Nagaland, Champhai, Ngarchip and Lungbung in Mizoram** have to be kept under close watch. The sea route from Golden Triangle to Mynmar is also becoming a conduit for arms and narcotics. The recent **Tri-services 'operation Leach'** in February 1998 strongly indicated smuggling of arms consignments through the sea route and the seizure of 50 kgs. of **heroin along with guns and ammunition from 2 Thai trawlers** near Andaman Islands is considered an ominous development.

Similarly, the **Indo-Srilankan drug trafficking** in the Southern States of **Tamilnadu, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Karnataka and Pondicherry** sea-coasts is evident albeit seizures are not in big quantities. The Narcotic Control Bureau confiscated some heroin from the house of such Tutikorin Raja in November 1986 and drugs in smaller quantities were also found with the Tamil Tigers militants and their sympathisers. It is believed that a sizeable part of narcotics found in US and Western countries are now being routed through the LTTE network. **In Delhi** itself, the seizure of nearly 22 kgs. of heroin in June 1999 from the farm house of **Ms. Hemlata** and her husband **Kanwal Manku** operating under the cover of a Menthol company with the support of **Sri Lankan drug traffickers**, namely, Sriram, Nelson Anthony and also the Mumbai underworld trafficker **Ashwin Naik**, could be cited as an example on the subject. It deserves some contemplation whether this **deadly, trio** the **LTTE**, the local **smugglers** and the **Mumbai underworld**, who have been found in possession of drugs and weapons besides INMAR satellite telephone and who, allegedly, supplied sophisticated arms in lieu of drugs, should be named **a narco-terrorist group or just a conduit to fund LTTE**.

In this era of nuclear warfare, 'the small, thin-boned uniformed **Asian Guerillas**' operating in various global theatres of conflict, such as, Vietnam and Afghanistan have secured major successes against super powers. The terrorists have received open support from USA in Afghanistan, Angola, Mozambique, Nicaragua and other places and nearer on our Pakistan borders. In the situations of

domestic terrorism and insurgency as well, terrorist groups have achieved some success against our security forces through **‘Pakistan Mujahideens’** who have fought a **proxy war** with us. These groups, though armed to the teeth do not fight through conventional methods and they have the **option to strike at will**.

The terrorists have several advantages, which are not available to the State machinery. They can always choose their **soft targets**, calculating the measure of impact on the public mind. It may be impossible for the **governmental** or the **private security** agencies to protect such targets.

Driven by **ideological, ethnic, religious, nationalist or pseudo nationalist motivations**, the security forces operating in the Govt. machinery are no match to these determined groups. The Srilankan security forces have never been able to defeat the LTTE cadres since they are prepared to die for their cause. Even in India, during a short period of **SIT investigation in Rajiv Gandhi assassination case**, 35 cadres took cyanides and committed suicide not to escape arrest but just to deny access to information about the organisation. Such instances abound in most of the organisations. Today, the greatest challenge and perhaps the most powerful weapon in our terrorist arsenal happens to be the **human bomb** who may defeat all precautions. Dhanu, a Tamil Tigress(LTTE), who killed Mr.Rajiv Gandhi in Sriperumbudur is an interesting study in psycho analysis.

Since they defy the most elaborate security measures, this trend of **suicide bombers** has picked up in India and other countries. The conventional ethics not being an inhibiting factor, the terrorist groups are **free to procure weapons and resources from any country and through any means** including a **barter with the drugs**. Although, intelligence agencies like ISI do not blink an eye in promoting and prepatrating serious crimes and it is said that **‘there are friendly States but no friendly intelligence services’**, the State Govts. have their own **limitations of domestic and international laws**.

Whether it is through procurement of sophisticated weapons or their high-tech communication system or otherwise, terrorist operations are essentially **clandestine in nature**. More innocuous and ordinary they are, like the **LTTE operators in Tamilnadu**, who succeeded due to their ethnic affinity and sympathisers in India, more problems they create for the State security agencies. They can merge with the local population, like the **guerillas in villages and inaccessible places** – in safe havens.

From the **historical study** of various terrorist outfits, their designs and activities we have found that they have mostly thrived and achieved their goals on account of the **carelessness and inadequate response** on the part of the governmental machinery – political, administrative and security. Small incidents left unattended have created major problems and, similarly, when the police and security forces have allowed **innocuous arms and illegalities** to prevail the terrorist groups have developed their arsenals in no time and caused devastations. Time tested adage **‘eternal vigilance is the price of freedom’** applies more in respect of the governments concerned and security forces. The absence of **political will** to tackle the problem as it comes has mostly prevented the security forces to act in a determined way. One of the examples that comes readily in mind is of **Sant Bhindrawale**, wanted in several most sensational cases in early 80’s, who went around surrounded by hundreds of his companions flaunting their arms openly with impunity in Punjab and Delhi.

In 1990-91 when Punjab terrorism was at its peak and the LTTE had developed its deep tentacles in Tamilnadu and elsewhere, the author had the opportunity to work as OSD to the Minister of State for Home. This was also the time when the insurgency in North-East and minority militancy had started showing up. Given the political will, a strong need was felt to tackle the Punjab problem through initiating the democratic process. It was felt at that time that there was **dearth of accurate data and absence of a think tank** to deliberate in these issues of paramount national importance. Unless we have a proper strategy to work out the **short term and long term solutions** and not only handle the issues on ad hoc basis, the problems of such dimensions cannot be appropriately attended to.

As referred to in the introductory paragraphs, **TADA 1987 (Terrorist and Disruptive (Prevention) Act)** took a very comprehensive view of the problem and laid down the legal infrastructure and provisions to tackle the same. The police and the security forces have found it extremely difficult to operate without such an extraordinary law to tackle the situations which are indeed extraordinary in character. Similarly, the **Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1986**, is also a comprehensive and progressive legislation with certain provisions to identify and freeze the properties acquired from the drug money, but this law also does not have the requisite provision to trace, investigate and contain the laundered drug money which may ultimately also go into international arms deals. Thus, the existing laws are inadequate and, at some stage, they are required to be either reinforced or amended with requisite provisions.

As of now, apart from the **local police** and the other **security services**, including the Defence and para-military organisations, several other agencies, such as, the **CBI, NCB, DRI, Enforcement Directorate besides the Intelligence Agencies** are involved in the task of combating terrorism with particular reference to illegal arms and drugs. There is certain mechanism to coordinate their activities as well but there is an urgent need to create a high-powered apex body with overriding authority to tackle this national problem. Following the recent report submitted by **Mr.K.Subramaniam on Kargil**, some suggestions have been made to reconstitute the **National Security Council** and to give it some kind of autonomy. Strengthening this Council could be a step in the right direction. Since, ultimately, the Govt. response to such a problem may not find a solution except through the community it serves, at the national and regional levels there is always need to dove-tail the **community aspirations and dictate** in this exercise.

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