

*Fifth Annual Conference*  
**Armed Conflicts in  
South Asia**

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**Armed Conflicts in South Asia 2011**

**INSTITUTE OF PEACE & CONFLICT STUDIES**

**Conference Report**

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## **Introduction**

### **D. Suba Chandran**

The primary focus of the Annual Conferences on Armed Conflicts in South Asia have so far been on the conflicts in Afghanistan, FATA and Pakistan, Jammu and Kashmir, the Northeast and Central India primarily the Naxal conflict, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bangladesh. Major trends in the previous year and efforts for conflict management used to be the focus of Annual Conference till last year. From this year, along with the mapping of annual conflict, we are also trying to find out whether there is a pattern in terms of what is happening in the last four or five years and also mapping that pattern taking into the future trying to find out whether there are early warnings in social conflicts.

### **Tomislav Delinic**

KAS has been a partner of IPCS since 2006. Involvement of policy recommendations besides academic discussions has made this partnership special. We are thankful for the involvement of honourable Home Secretary who will be a part of the discussion.

### **P. R. Chari**

We hope to give this a project a regional flavour in the years to come. We started with an ambition that in South Asia we would try and bring out an Annual focusing on the Armed Conflicts. Our models were two-fold, one was the Strategic Survey which is being brought out by the International Institute of International Studies, and second was the Stockholm International Peace and Research Institute Annual which are 30-40 years. Our ambition was to emulate these two renowned annuals, focusing on South Asia. In 2011, we hope to focus on the transformative changes that have occurred in the Armed Conflicts in South Asia. This year's focus is on the change in the nature and the pattern of violence in South Asia. We have also tried to study the transformations in the peace processes.

## **Discussion**

As long as land tensions exist, can conflicts be prevented? Youth bulge could become biggest assets and could also become biggest source of social tension as they are empowered by technology and disempowered otherwise. There is a need to take steps to remedy that as well. Governance is the basic issue, there is no deliverance. The major reason of conflict is socio economic deprivation. How much is governance impacting on these conflicts?

## **Inaugural Session**

### **Dhirendra Singh**

The south Asian Panorama is one of the most volatile conflict ridden areas of the globe.

In south Asia, the possibility of inter-state conflict is of course there but the probability is going down. However, the intra-state conflict has shown upward trends. Agitation features are taking place which might become sources of great menace for society and the country and ultimately for the region.

### **Keynote Address: G. K. Pillai**

Two quotations would form the basis of this presentation: Elizabeth Wordsworth: "If all the good people were clever, and all clever people were good, the world would be nicer than ever we thought that it possibly could"

Eric Ambler: "The important thing to know about an assassination or an attempted assassination is not who fired the shot but who paid for the bullet"

Let us look at the armed conflict in South Asia, particularly in India. India is one of the largest players in South Asia. The model of India as such would have its resonance across the rest of South Asia. If India fails, it will have its equally adverse reaction all across south Asia.

Today, India is facing one of the most challenging phases. Simultaneous revolutions like social, economic, communication, political revolution etcetera are taking place in India. We are learning how to manage conflict. We cannot eliminate conflict, at least in the next few decades. We manage conflicts.

One core issue is of weak governance. And the core reason behind this is the shortage of administrative staffs. To cite an example, in Terap and Changlang districts in Arunachal Pradesh, each of these districts has 200 policemen including everybody from SP to the constable. With 200 policemen for 4000 KMs, one can not expect any semblance of law and order and governance. There are many other such examples in terms of numbers.

The real tragedy in the last 50 years has been the real focus on trying to get about good administration or to improve governance has been in one sense marginalized. We have not gone into the real key issue.

The other problem is that of lack of training. The problem of training is a major issue across the board, in all institutions at all level. Capacity building is going to be the key for our success in future. If one does not get a training of three to six months training in once in ten years, he/she becomes obsolete.

This is the crux of the issue that we are facing in terms of the administration. Things need to be done to improve not only in terms of numbers but also in terms of capacity building.

Issue in terms of capacity for conflict resolution is a specialized area and one needs experience and specialization to handle it. The capacity in this area is also very limited.

Coming to the second part of the quotation "Who pays for the bullet?" The institute should pay attention to this aspect as well, because it is very critical. Because if we do not look at this aspect, there would be a lot of state and non state actors who will ensure that conflicts continue.

So long as we have the huge small arms industry which is flourishing all over the world, we will find that our problem of trying to control, curb, resolve armed conflict becomes that much more difficult. Arms manufacturers are a significant factor; they are not the only factor.

The significant factor is to identify the stake holders in any particular issue. If we are able to figure out who are interested in maintaining the status quo and if we do not take into account a programme or action to neutralize these stakeholders, all our efforts will go in vain, because these elements will continue to frustrate every attempt to resolve the issue.

That is why the key role of what I put it as the issue is of who fired the bullet is so important as not just the person who is producing the bullet but also the person who also gave the order to purchase.

### **Session -I**

#### **Prof. Amitabh Mattoo**

Almost everyone who watches J&K is apprehensive of what is going to happen this summer. The government of India and the state government are trying almost every strategy in the book to prevent a repetition of last summer. Have we been able to craft a structure of incentives so that those who have been interested in a repetition of last summer are no longer in a position to create such a repetition?

#### **Dr. Ashok Bhan**

The focus is on the transformation and early signs. The period 2002-08 in J&K can be termed as 'Shifting from terrorism to a phase of subversion'. 2001 was the peak violence year. Inci-

dents of violence have remained same, not gone down in 2009 and 2010. Cross border infiltration has been reducing continuously from 1998. It has become stabilized from 2005 onwards. There was a sudden increase in 2009 and 2010. Hartal calls given by separatists were receding since 2001. It again went up during Azad's rule. There were 132 calls of hartals last year.

These three indices indicate the trend which is coming, more infiltration the violence flattening and rise in hartal calls.

In 1989-1993 it was mass mobilization, terror through indigenous actors and we moved on to a stage from terrorism in 1993-2001, then subversion and then mass mobilization. Where are we heading? I am trying to compare 2008-10 period with 1989-1993 period, when terrorism started in Jammu and Kashmir. Conditions conducive for Pakistan to exploit at that time and now, indigenous actors like JKLF, Hizbul Mujahideen at that time and now again indigenous actors are available to Pakistan so deniability is available to Pakistan that things are being done by Kashmiri people and not by them. That time we had ascendancy of JeI because the voice of separatists had been choked, again we have Hurriyat at this time. Civilian deaths in large numbers during initial years of militancy and maintenance of law and order, and again for the last two years we have had unfortunate civilian casualties. We have to be cautious that violence in 2009 and 2010 is not going down, there is a rise in infiltration, there are terrorist pockets in Jammu and Kashmir, there are terrorists on the launching pads and a mix of terrorism and civil strife is very difficult to handle.

For the present the people have to be on our side if the vicious cycle has to be broken. We must engage various constituencies. We must try and see if we can bring the separatists around and address the regional aspirations and a very well considered view on shrinking scope of the disturbed area act will be very important. We must not allow the situation to enter into another terror phase.

#### **Dr. Kavita Suri**

*Presented by Radhavinod Raju*

One significant trend was that public and political rallies went down considerably.

Increase in infiltration though protest violence came down. One change in pattern took place was that infiltration took place even during snow. Large number of ceasefire violations



by the Pakistani Army to facilitate infiltration especially in Jammu Sector a clear indication that the Pak Army has not changed its stance whatever the view of its civilian government at the Centre.

Another important trend is the decline in the recruitment of local youth by militants. Hundreds of Kashmiris thronged for recruitment to the Army and the Police.

In 2010, there were widespread protests against Armed Forces Special Powers Act. Political parties across the board requesting government of India to withdraw the Act. No consensus has emerged on AFSPA due to the Army's obduracy.

Confidence building measures should be taken up with Pakistan. Demilitarization should become visible and there should be a phased withdrawal of AFSPA at least in major towns of Srinagar, Baramulla, Anantnag and Kupwara. The J&K police should be allowed to lead the law and order front. Cross bus and train should be made more meaningful by easing travel facilities for ordinary citizens. The problems of rehabilitation of youth need to be expedited.

## **SESSION II**

**Chair: Prof. P R Chari**

**Afghanistan in 2010: Dr. Shanthie D'Souza**

*Presented by Md. Jawaid Akhtar*

The year 2010 witnessed three major trends in Afghanistan. The first and foremost is the rising violence and civilian casualties which had alarmed the international community to rethink their strategy and assessment. As usually civilians remain worst sufferers of the conflict. According to the UN Annual Report 2777 civilians were killed in 2010 which is 15 per cent rise over 2009. This is also the highest annual death toll since the Taliban were ousted in late 2001.

The other significant trend emerged in 2010 is the nature or mode of warfare. Taliban used Improvised Explosives Devices (IEDs) made up of fertilizers which were hardly sensed by any metal detectors. Available data indicates that in 2010, Afghan insurgents planted 14,661 IEDs, a 62 per cent increase over 2009 and more than three times in 2008. And so far 268 US troops were killed; more than 3000 were injured by the IED, which is an increase of 178 per cent over 2009.

Third, Narcotics Trade has flourished as high as ever in 2010 and continues to remain a major source of funding for the Taliban insurgency which makes an estimation of \$100-200 million annually by taxing opium poppy production and trafficking.

What are the future trends in Afghanistan as the US prepares to leave the country by 2014? First, violence in Afghanistan would likely to spiral in 2011. Second, Afghanistan completely bereft of US presence will never be a reality so complete transfer of authority to the Afghans is impossible. Lastly, Taliban-led insurgency is bound to grow in intensity as gradual cut in troop levels compels the US-led forces to switch from counter-insurgency to counter-terrorism.

**FATA in 2010: Dr. D Suba Chandran**

Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) bordering Afghanistan in the north-west part of Pakistan has become a haven for the Tehrik-i-Taliban (TTP) often referred as Pakistani Taliban. In 2010 TTP has unleashed brutal attack on Tribal leaders and Jirgas in the region dominated by Pashtun-



wali. The kidnapping and subsequently killing and executing of ISI officers Khwaja Khalid, Col. Imam and Col. Sultan Tarir show that the ISI has lost its hold over TTP although it claims that FATA is under its control. Whose writ in the FATA? This is a big question. The pro-state leaders and tribal elders from FATA have been using Lashkars and Jirgas against TTP leaders which infuriated TTP leaders. The expansion of Haqqani network to FATA which is believed to be manipulated by ISI is another significant development in the region. The other important trend was the continuing US drone attacks in this region which doubled last year. Is the March 2011 attack, a game changer? A complete divide between the TTP and the Afghan Taliban, in terms of objectives, targets and strategies was palpable. On the strategic aspect, there are few questions need to be answered, they are related to "Reverse Strategic Depth"?

- Will east of the Indus become Taliban's Strategic Depth?
- Will FATA and the KP become the base for Taliban's eastward and southward push?
- Will TTP become Taliban's surrogates in Pakistan?

Against this backdrop, one could envision three possible scenarios.

**Scenario 1:** Pakistan ignore Taliban's ingress, west of the Indus

**Scenario 2:** The Empire Strikes back

**Scenario 3:** Taliban and its franchisees gain an upper hand, beyond FATA and KP in Pakistan

## **Discussion**

What are the possibilities of Haqqani network reaching Pakistani nuclear assets? How the Americans are sensitive about TTP? What would happen to Afghanistan after US withdrawal in 2014 and how prepared India is to face the worst scenario?

## **SESSION III**

**Chair: Mr Ved Marwah**

Naxalim is not only a major internal threat to India's National Security but also to our long cherished political values such as pluralism and democracy. The fact that Naxal movements in recent years have been spreading across urban areas is depressing and needs critical attention.

## Naxal Conflict in 2010: Dr. Rajat Kujur

CPI (Maoist) in 2010: A year of Resurgence or Desperation? As one looks back in to 2010 one cannot help wondering what a happening year it was for the CPI (Maoist). This year witnessed high number of violent incidents which claimed many lives including security forces, civilians and Naxals. While many believe that the Maoist backlash is a result of their increased strength there are others who attribute this as an attempt in desperation. This desperation was result of intense government Green Hunt operations in the "Liberated Zones" in order to gain control and access.

### Major Trends

First, growing militarization in terms of lethality of weapons and accuracy in achieving the attack is increasingly becoming an inseparable character of the LWE in India. Events in 2010 suggest that the CPI (Maoist) have achieved mastery over the use of both IEDs as well as gunfire. Second, growing urbanization too emerged as another dominant trend of the Maoist Movement in 2010. As part of Maoist design of urbanization Kolkata is first emerging as the epicenter. Another tactical shift noticed in Maoist strategy during 2010 is their ability to reach out to the Islamist militant organization from North East. There are reports in the sections of media that the Pakistan based LeT and the CPI (M) have now established a sort of cordial relationship. Third, Media management at its best was another trend that was noticed in the subsequent events of 2010. LWE occupied maximum space in both print and electronic media. Lastly, growing intellectual support base for Maoist in the last few years.

Naxalism certainly is a political issue and hence a long term solution of this problem must be political. So it is necessary to involve the people's representatives at the ground level which will have several positive impacts on the whole issue of conflict management.

### Is the Naxal Conflict Spreading?

#### PG Rajamohan: Expansion of Maoist Movement in South India

In Tamil Nadu, after the Charu Majumdar's visit to Okenakal in Dharmapuri district in 1969, the Naxals have started their 'annihilation' against the landlords and money lenders. According to the police sources, the Naxal disturbances felt in Dharmapuri, Krishnagiri, Vellore, Thiruvallur, Theni,

Madurai & Dindugul. Around 22 frontal organizations and small section of sympathisers are operating in TN raising the cause of Naxals in different names.

In Karnataka, Naxals have failed to establish in 1980's and recently started operating from Chikmangalure, Udupi, Dakshinannada and Shimoga. Around 20 frontal organizations and 80 to 100 sympathisers are active in this region. There were 15 Naxals, 8 SF Personnel and 6 Civilians have died between 2005-11,

In Kerala, after the Pulpally-Thalsery incident in 1968, there were no major incident and the Naxal movement is entirely controlled by the police during 1970s.

The Naxal movement has failed to impress the people for following reasons:

- i) Regional parties like, DMK, ADMK and Dalit movements took prominence in development.
- ii) Government's progressive policies and socio-political reforms garnered the support of common public.
- iii) Efficient Police Intelligence network and strong repressive measures curtailed their expansion.

Now, the Maoists have been trying to capitalize the widening gap between the poor and rich, rural-urban divide, Human rights, environmental issues and industrial development through their frontal organizations. Funds raised through extortions, donations, increasing coordination between the Maoists of other states and population migration are all helping factors for expanding their activities.

Although, there is no immediate major threat from the Maoists in these states, the Government needs to have clear policies on industrialization, labour welfare and utilization of funds for developmental projects. Reduction of unemployment and poverty through effective policies will wean away the recruitment base for the Maoists.

### The Naxal Octopus: Spread of Naxalism in North India

#### Medha Chaturvedi, Research Officer, IPCS

States of Punjab, Haryana, Uttarakhand and Jammu and Kashmir are vulnerable to this threat right now. While J&K is still grappling with radical fundamentalism, there are 17 front organizations under a conglomerate in rural areas in Malwa region of Punjab and about 30 in Haryana which are propagating leftist ideology and mobilizing mass protests involving Dalits (which constitute about 33 % of relative population in Punjab), students, farmers and unorganized labourers.

The Naxal movement may not reach a guerrilla warfare stage in these two states due to absence of a hilly or forested terrain, there is evidence to suggest that these states are being cultivated as a safe hideout and planning centre. Uttarakhand and hilly reaches of Himachal Pradesh, on the other hand, are at a risk of facing active combat in future.

Early warning signs include arrest of members of top Naxal leadership from affected states. Also, in Punjab, there have been stealthy efforts to revive the Khalistan movement, being attempted by mobilizing an uprising through leftist organizations. Lack of industries in Punjab and over-reliance on agro-economies in both the states has led to unemployment and cyclical unemployment. Deterioration of land quality due to seepage of underground water as a result of floods in Ghaggar River and Poppy cultivation has added to the problem.

Punjab chief minister, PS Badal had, last year, asked the Cen-





tre to release Rs120 crore as special packages for maintenance of law and order under a growing Leftist threat. Following this, Punjab police has set up a Naxal cell.

#### **Recommendations:**

- A graded system of aim to not only affected, but also vulnerable and periphery states is required.
- Anticipatory capacity building (unofficially referred to as Julio Rebeiro model in Punjab Police)
- Welfare scheme implementation and inclusive development schemes are needed.
- Engaging youth and providing adequate employment opportunities
- Reducing stress on agro-economy and setting up of industry to support ancillary industries
- Strengthening local governance and administration

#### **Early Warnings of Fundamentalist Violence in South India**

##### **Mr Radha Vinoth Raju, former NIA director**

Religious Fundamentalism is a rare phenomenon in South India because of the emergence of Dravidian parties in Tamil Nadu and Communism in Kerala after Independence. However, break up in Dravidian parties in late 1970s in Tamil Nadu scattered the vote bank and since then these parties using communal elements for their electoral gains. Similarly, fractured politics in Kerala also made the political parties to use of communal elements for electoral gain. These factors gave enough space to communal elements to grow.

Interrogation of a SIMI member from Kerala revealed that these groups strongly believe and also propagate that Muslims have no faith in the Indian system because Muslims get no justice. So Islam has to spread in India and we will take orders only from Mullah Omar, he is our Amir. ISI has successfully set up many sleeper cells in South India and particularly in Kerala for its Jihad operations.

Hindu fundamentalism is now a new phenomenon especially after Gujarat communal riots. Shri Ram Sene attack on pub in Mangalore and threatening of Valentine's day celebrations in Bangalore in 2009 is kind of moral and cultural policing.

The important and sensitive cases have not been handled professionally so far by the investigation agencies so far. Also,

governance deficit has hit the poor and underprivileged most, especially the minority. Signals of conflict as mentioned above should be picked up early and acted upon and we have to improve governance, and to be fair in all investigations; uphold the rule of law each time and always

#### **Discussion:**

*Is there a connection between Dawood and the Naxals?*

Dawood Ibrahim is a terror-monger and terror-facilitator rather than a terrorist himself. His role is that of mobilizing resources and arranging for logistical support to any terrorist outfit which seeks its support. In this scenario, Islamic fundamentalists and Naxals, both have connected to Dawood Ibrahim.

#### **Conflict Transformation and Early Warnings in Nepal.**

##### **Mr. Nishchal N. Pandey**

The conflict transformation and peace can be bought through dialogues and discussions. Nepal has been successful in accommodating the demands of the rebels and inholding the elections to the Constituent Assembly.

Nepal is now struggling with its political instability, issues of security sector governance, which political system to adopt and federalism are some of the most thorny. There are three major issues that need to be addressed immediately. Nepal faces the threat of a constitutionallogjam after 28 May if the new Constitution is not drafted. There will be immense pressure from the public if repeated extension is given to the Assembly. The major question that arises here is what is likely to happen if the Constituent Assembly is dissolved? What will be the role of army if the situations deteriorate? Even if the constitution is hastily drafted, will it be a democratic constitution?

#### **Discussion**

What is the role of India in helping Nepal in rehabilitation? India's negative or no role will ultimately lead a negative impact in Nepal's internal factors. What is the package of reintegration process demanded by security forces and the Maoists? Are these models converging? With great degree of reintegration and rehabilitation, what are the long term consequences? What is the end game of the Terai parties, is it a major force? For Nepal what matters now is a strong and active leadership. On one hand whereas the civil society played a major role in the transition, Nepal is still struggling with its corruption, power shortage, drinking water problems, and inability to draft the constitution which needs immediate at-

tention.

### **Conflict Transformation and Early Warnings in Sri Lanka.**

**Dr. N. Manoharan**

The violent phase in Sri Lanka although have ended, it still remains a question whether Sri Lanka is ready for a conflict transformation or not. The Government has been doing their best since the termination of war in May 2009. But the root cause and grievances have not been removed. Dr. Manoharan discusses four D's, as both conflict transformation measures and measures for preventing the revival of the LTTE. First, Demilitarization; Second, Development; Third, Democratization and Fourth, Devolution. The major focus should be in breaking the LTTE network and preventing its influence among the Tamil diasporas' in Europe and America and the government should focus more on development issues and not ethnic issues.

The relief phase should be followed by rehabilitation, reintegration and resettlements. Government should emphasize on infrastructural development and provide livelihood opportunities in the conflict areas.

#### **Discussion**

The seeds of the conflict remain and the major challenge for Sri Lanka is preventing any revival or return of violence. The current president has not given much emphasis on the human rights issue in his agenda regardless the push from the western communities. Sri Lanka has denied any aids or funds from the western community, as they have human rights in their objective to provide those funds. Asian countries are dominant in this; China is the largest donor country to Sri Lanka. What has been done to the rights of the Muslim population in central areas of Sri Lanka? The two minorities, Tamils and Muslims in Sri Lanka had the neck to survivability and their condition is far better than their past.

### **India's Northeast in 2010**

**Mr. Mirza Zulfiqur Rahman**

The year 2010 saw a considerable and marked improvement in the overall conflict scenario in Northeast India, with substantial gains for the counter-insurgency efforts and a number of surrenders across insurgent groups. However the dynamics of conflicts varies in different states and therefore it is important to address the issues of each state by understanding these

dynamics.

The government actors must be ready to think innovatively to unlock the solutions for a sustainable peace. The civil society actors in the region must be harnessed to create a platform where purposive dialogue can happen. There appears to be a premium by the government actors on conflict rather than peace hence there should be a concerted effort to build platforms of dialogues which is transparent and peaceful communities should be heard, without them being pushed to insurgency. The spread of corruption and linkages between politicians, government officials and insurgents in this region must be addressed with utmost urgency.

### **Conflict Transformation and Early Warnings in the Northeast.**

**Mr. Wasbir Hussain**

*Presented by Ruhee Neog*

Mr. Hussain has discussed seven likely scenarios' that is going to continue in the counter-insurgency process in this region. First, Continuation of peace talks with the insurgent outfits which are on a ceasefire; Second, More insurgent groups declaring ceasefire; Third, Growth in the number of factions of a same insurgent group; Fourth, Even anti-talk factions of insurgent outfits entering into talks with the government, Fifth, Anti-talk factions of insurgent outfits carrying out subversive activities in areas where they are strong, Sixth, Emergence of new insurgent groups in the region; Seventh, Emergence of criminal gangs in the region.

It is only through good governance and development initiatives peace can be sustained in the region. He has broadly discussed developmental and operational initiatives that must be taken in the process of building peace in the region.

#### **Discussion**

The failure of the negotiations has been due to the lack of governance and leadership. The improper distribution of money, political pressure, delay in decision making and unbalanced development has hindered the peace process and development in this region. Therefore it is important to emphasize on the proper use of the institutions such as the Ministry of Donor, and the Northeast Council. Development and security should go together and a strong public opinion is needed. The institutional mechanism is in law but not practiced, hence a better forum for state to solve their problems too is needed. Distribution of funds should be collectively decided with direction and guidelines. Transparency and openness in govern-





ance is too needed.

There has been exchange of ideas and development of relationship between the central government and the state. All the major armed groups are in various stages of involvement with the governments in terms of peace-talks. The government on part of the constitution has delivered and the nation-building continues, but until and unless the communities learn to respect each other rights and privileges, it will be difficult to

move ahead. The civil society and the youth needs to take proactive and a greater role in mediation. In terms of development much greater emphasis should be laid upon the devolution of power to decide the policies with an annual review and conflict transformation through simulations and dissimulations and with regular intervention.



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