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Terrorism & Armed Violence in India

An Analysis of Events in 2008



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TERRORISM & ARMED VIOLENCE IN INDIA

AN ANALYSIS OF EVENTS IN 2008

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An Overview

This report provides a review of all forms of armed conflict¹ in India for the year 2008 including separatist movements, left-wing extremism, and religious fundamentalism. In this text, the word 'militants' refers to groups operating in Jammu and Kashmir and, to a large extent, in the Northeast, while the word 'extremists' refers to groups in the Naxal-affected areas.

India has been declared as the second worst-affected country by terrorist violence after Iraq as per the US State Department's Annual Report 2007. This

was borne out by the high terrorism-related casualties in 2008 with over 1000 civilian deaths. While militancy in Jammu and Kashmir recorded a significant decline, armed violence in the Northeast (particularly Manipur) remained high followed closely by left-wing extremism. A spate of terrorist attacks in several Indian cities further compounded the security challenges facing India. In reviewing each of these armed conflicts, the report seeks to identify the main trends noted in 2008 and assess their impact on the nature and trajectory of the conflict.

Table 1
Terrorism-related Violence in India, 2008

	Civilians	Security Force	Militants/Extremists	Total
Northeast	404	40	610	1054
Naxalite Violence	210	214	214	638
Jammu and Kashmir	69	90	382	541
Rest of India	336	28	14	378
Total	1019	372	1220	2611

Source: "Insurgency-related Fatalities," India: Data Sheets, South Asia Terrorism Portal, Institute of Conflict Management

I THE NORTHEAST

The Northeast accounted for highest percentage of violence during the year at 40.36 (Table 1). Armed violence and terrorism continues to dominate the various insurgencies of the Northeast with Manipur emerging as the most violent state followed by Assam and Nagaland (Table 2).

While no particularly new terror tactic was visible in any of the states, a further

intensification of the already-in-use terror tactics resulted in an increase in violence that severely disrupted normal life in most states.

ASSAM

In Assam, terrorism in 2008 was marked by increased violence perpetrated by smaller groups in the southern hilly districts even

while the main insurgent group, United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA), continued to further weaken as the year progressed.

Profile of Violence

As per the data given below (Table 4), terrorism-related violence recorded a climb

down from last year albeit remaining high as compared to previous years. Casualties among civilians were much higher than that among security forces and militants, indicating the deepening of ethnic tensions in the state.

Table 2
Terrorism-related Fatalities in the Northeast, 2008

	Security Forces	Civilians	Militants/ Extremists	Total
Assam	16	224	133	373
Manipur	13	131	348	492
Nagaland	2	42	101	145
Tripura	4	7	16	27
Meghalaya	1	0	11	12
Total	36	404	609	1049

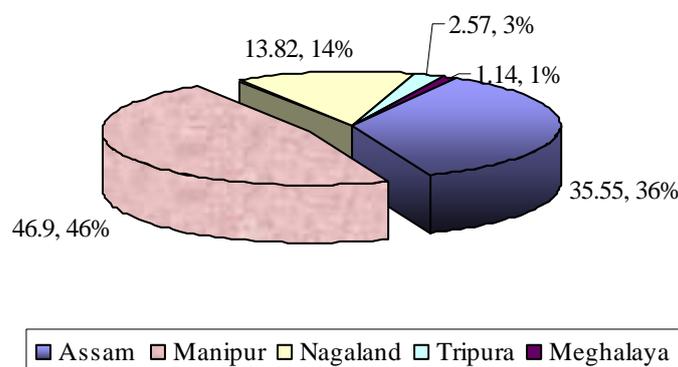
Source: "Insurgency-related killings," Data Sheets, South Asia Terrorism Portal, Institute of Conflict Management

Among the numerous militant groups indulging in violence in Assam, the most active during the year were the Karbi Longri NC Hills Liberation Front (KLNLF), the Jewel Garlosa faction of Dima Halam

Daogah (DHD-G) and National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB) whereas the ULFA carried out a number of minor low-intensity attacks through the year.

Table 3

Percentage of Terrorism-related Fatalities, 2008



Strategies and Tactics

Attack on Infrastructure: Security personnel and employees of development projects

and construction companies, particularly those associated with the East-West

railway corridor and gauge conversion projects in the North Cachar Hills district, came under heavy attack by the DHD (G), commonly known as Black Widow (BW) militants. Their daring attacks include indiscriminate firing on a special passenger train traveling between Migrantisa and Haflong, the district headquarter of the NC Hills carrying 22 railway engineering staff and 10 Railway Protection Special Force

(RPSF) personnel. By attacking road and railway construction, this group that reportedly has only over 200 cadres seems to be using violent methods to clearly lay down its own control over the NC hills in pursuance of its objective of establishing a separate state of Dimaraji for the Dimasa tribe. With alleged backing of the NSCN-IM, the effectiveness of the outfit cannot be taken lightly.

Table 4
Terrorism-related Fatalities, Assam 2004-2008

Source	Civilians		Security Force		Militants/Extremists	
	MHA	SATP	MHA	SATP	MHA	SATP
2004	194	194	17	24	104	136
2005	173	149	07	10	74	83
2006	164	96	32	35	46	43
2007	287	269	27	19	122	149
2008 (31.08.08)	118 (31.08.08)	224	10 (31.08.08)	16	81 (31.08.08)	133

Source: “Insurgency-related killings,” Data Sheets: Assam, South Asia Terrorism Portal, Institute of Conflict Management; Report: Status Paper on Internal Security Situation as on 01/09/08, Internal Security Division, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, p.13

Attack on Civilians: Two kinds of attack on civilians were prevalent in Assam: general and targeted. The general attack on civilians was carried out mainly through bomb blasts in public places including market places, passenger trains and public parks. Most of the blasts were low intensity, causing minor damages and inflicting injuries rather than casualties and are suspected to have been carried out by ULFA and the KLNLF. However, the state also suffered from its worst terror incident on 30 October with thirteen coordinated blasts that rocked different parts of the state, killing as many as 84 people. While a new group by the name of Islamic Security Force of Indian Mujahideen (ISF-IM) claimed responsibility for the blasts, investigations are still on; the police are not ruling out the possibility of the involvement of Bangladesh-based terrorist group

Harkat-ul-Jihad-e-Islam (HuJI-B) based on the discovery of RDX used in the blasts.

Targeted killing of civilians was carried out mainly through attacks on Hindi-speaking people that began in 2007 with a series of attacks on migrant workers. The attacks were carried out mostly in the Karbi Anglong district by the KLNLF claiming to represent the interests if the Karbi people. However, the attacks remained few and spaced out mainly because of counterinsurgency operations that resulted in the surrender of as many as 34 KLNLF cadres thereby posing a question mark on the strength of the outfit.

Rift in ULFA

In a significant development, a section of ULFA’s 28 battalion (Alpha and Charlie companies) declared a unilateral ceasefire

on 24 June with the objective of entering into negotiations with the government to address their grievances. This created a rift between the walk-away 'moderate' faction and the outfit's central leadership that continues to reject negotiating with the government based on deep distrust of the latter's sincerity. Despite the large scale surrendering of ULFA cadres in the past two years, this is the first time that its central leadership has been openly challenged. With the weakening of two out of four companies of the outfit's most dreaded battalion, the outfit remained largely subdued in the following months. In the coming days, the possibility of a factional conflict between the two factions cannot be ruled out.

Implication

In Assam, the use of terrorism by smaller militant outfits has further complicated the security dynamics in the state even as the weakening of ULFA is being seen as a positive sign. This confirms two significant facts, that the weakening of the ULFA has neither destroyed wholly the terror infrastructure in the state nor has it dissipated the aspiration among the Assamese for greater autonomy. On the contrary, the emergence of militant groups on ethnic grounds is being seen as providing a fertile ground for radical jihadi outfits sponsored by Bangladesh and Pakistan.ⁱⁱ

MANIPUR

Profile of Violence

Violence spiraled in the state in 2008 with a 20 percent increase in terrorism-related casualties (Table 5). Notably, the casualties among militants were much higher than those among security forces and civilians. Violence and terrorism in the state were marked by encounters with the security forces and factional strife between various militant groups that together accounted for the high casualty among militants; extortion, abductions, bomb explosions, killing of non-locals and surrendered

militants (although very few) were collectively responsible for perpetrating a state of fear.

The main militant groups active through the year were the valley-based groups including the People's Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak (PREPAK), Military Council faction of the Kangleipak Communist Party Military Council (KCP), United National Liberation Front (UNLF), People's Liberation Army (PLA) and the Kanglei Yawol Kanna Lup (KYKL), whereas the hill-based Kuki groups are currently under the ceasefire agreement signed with the central government in August 2005.

Strategies and Tactics

Attack on Security Forces: Casualties among security forces recorded a decline of 67.5 percent as per provisional data recorded by the South Asia Terrorism Portal (see table below). This directly follows a decline in the number of ambushes laid on security forces this year as compared to past years, indicating a strategic decision on part of militant groups to not attack security forces. Moreover, the few incidents of attacks carried out were against the paramilitary forces instead of the state police.

Attack on Political Authorities: Low intensity attacks were carried out against political authorities including Members of Legislative Assembly (MLA) and panchayat leaders. Attacks on the residences of Congress MLA Bijoy Koijam in Imphal West district and MLA K Meghachandra at Wangkhem are few such examples.

Bomb Explosions: Bomb Explosions in Manipur increased from 31 in 2007 to at least 60 in 2008 as per provisional data of the South Asia Terrorism Portal. Of these, 60 percent were unspecified while the PREPAK and the KCP-Military Council claimed responsibility for seven blasts each. Majority of these blasts took place in public areas including high security areas like the rear headquarters of 20 Assam Rifles and the Manipur Police commando complex (bomb blast on 21 October killing

18 persons) and the Manipur Assembly Complex (8 March 2008).

Table 5
Terrorism-related Fatalities in Manipur, 2008

Source	Civilians		Security Force		Militants/Extremists	
	MHA	SATP	MHA	SATP	MHA	SATP
2004	88	50	36	41	134	127
2005	158	138	50	50	202	143
2006	96	107	28	37	187	141
2007	130	150	39	40	219	218
2008	96 (31.08.08)	131	12 (31.08.08)	13	206 (31.08.08)	348

Source: "Insurgency-related Killings," Data Sheets: Manipur, South Asia Terrorism Portal, Institute of Conflict Management; Report: Status Paper on Internal Security Situation as on 01/09/08, Internal Security Division, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, p.15

Militant Decrees: The most common method used by militant groups to exercise their power remained the issue of decrees. While the KYKL reiterated its decree on 31 January 2008 of using Meetei Mayek language on signboards of shops, offices and institutions in the four valley districts of Imphal West, Imphal East, Bishnupur and Thoubal, the PLA 'banned' the export of rice or paddy outside Manipur with effect from 12 December 2008, to discourage the cultivation of cash crops,ⁱⁱⁱ and the UNLF imposed a ban on petty non-local traders and artisans settling in or penetrating local villages in August 2008.

Extortion and Abductions: Extortion of money remains the dominant revenue source for most militant groups of Manipur. Places of worship, educational institutions, human rights organizations, hospitals and commercial establishments continue to suffer from extortion demands. As a result, many educational institutions like the Jawahar Navodaya School at Umathel in the Thoubal district (in July) and two government colleges in Imphal (in September) and hospitals were forced to shut down. Between January and July

2008, at least four schools were forced to close down. Cases of abductions were also high in the state with the Imphal Free Press recording as many as 45 in the first six-and-a-half months itself. Abduction cases were highest among the engineers particularly those working in government departments, although a majority of them were either released unharmed or rescued.

Recruitment of Children: According to the Manipur state government, a new trend emerging in the state is the recruitment and training of children by militant outfits, particularly the PREPAK. As many as 30 children were found missing, believed to have been abducted from across the state by militant groups of which 22 were abducted between June and July 2008. As a measure to prevent child abduction, the Manipur state government, at the behest of the national security forces operating in the state, issued a direction in August 2008, requiring children to be accompanied by their parents when they are in a public place. While the absence of even a single complaint by parents of missing children reflects the fear among the people against militants, security analysts point out that this

step would cost the militants a great deal and could indeed become the turning point for the insurgency for this has already incited the people to revolt against the militants.^{iv} The question whether this is a sign of desperation by the militant group or of further consolidation still remains?

Implications

Among states in the Northeast, Manipur emerged as the most violent with incidents of violence taking place almost on a daily basis. Despite the heavy presence of security forces and a high police-population ratio, activities of militant groups have further intensified and spread to all nine districts of the state. A common thread running through the use of various tactics is attacks against representatives of the central government, be it paramilitary forces or employees of central government schemes in a bid to oppose their authority in the state and assert their autonomy. In addition, the crackdown by the state also intensified the turf war between the militant

groups in an attempt to retain their areas of influence. The coming days are likely to witness an intensification of this trajectory as security forces continue their hunt for militants.

NAGALAND

As per the data given below (Table 6), civilian and militant fatalities have increased dramatically over the past few years whereas that among the security forces has remained more or less constant. This can be largely attributed to the intensification of the internecine clashes between Naga insurgent groups with the formation of the Nationalist Socialist Council of Nagaland-Unification (NSCN-U) in November 2007 in addition to the traditional groups, the NSCN-Isak-Muivah (NSCN-IM) and the NSCN-Khaplang (NSCN-K). The NSCN-U mostly targeted the IM cadres, tilting the balance of the turf war in favour of the K faction with whom it is believed to have certain strategic ties.

Table 6
Terrorist-related Fatalities in Nagaland, 2008

Source	Civilians		Security Force		Militants	
	MHA	SATP	MHA	SATP	MHA	SATP
2004	42	35	0	1	55	22
2005	28	9	1	0	70	31
2006	29	10	2	1	116	81
2007	44	20	1	0	109	88
2008	61	42	3	2	111	101
	(31.08.08)		(31.08.08)		(31.08.08)	

Source: "Insurgency-related Killings," Data Sheets: Nagaland, South Asia Terrorism Portal, Institute of Conflict Management; Report: Status Paper on Internal Security Situation as on 01/09/08, Internal Security Division, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, p.17

Through the year, the NSCN-U displayed tremendous firepower by carrying out a number of lethal attacks against IM cadres, provoking an equally lethal response from the NSCN-IM. Violence between the two

groups was marked by encounters, clashes, abductions and killings. In particular, a number of military cadres of the two groups were targeted by the other. The months of May to July witnessed the highest

killings primarily because of the decision of the government to establish designated camps of the NSCN-U and NSCN-K (Khehoi village) in close proximity to the existing camp of the NSCN-IM (Camp Hebron) around the town of Dimapur.^v This explains why Dimapur remained the hotbed of internecine clashes, although the desire to control areas around Dimapur also stems from the commercial viability and prospects of the town that provides control over the flow of goods to other parts of the state.

With regards to civilian casualties, most of them were caught in cross fire between the warring factions. However, the NSCN-U faction attributed a part of the casualties to the targeting of the Tangkhul community that forms the backbone of the NSCN-IM.

The state also witnessed a number of abductions through the year. Apart from cadres of different factions, a number of traders, businessmen, and youth also became victims of abductions partly as part of the struggle against non-locals and partly for ransom purposes. According to one estimate, the state witnessed 35 cases of abduction and kidnapping and 65 cases of extortions till November 2008 as against 19 and 59 cases respectively in the previous year.^{vi} This resulted in a number of non-Naga entrepreneurs fleeing from Dimapur.

Operational Capabilities of Militant Groups in the Northeast

Arms smuggling and drug trafficking across the borders of Myanmar, Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan continues to fuel various insurgencies raging in the Northeast. A number of arms cartels operate in Guwahati city offering services to a number of rebel armies in the region. Highly sophisticated weapons are now finding their way into the region. The ULFA has reportedly smuggled Programmable Time Explosive Devices through a private transport operator (*Thaindian News*, 23 July 2008). The BW militants on the other hand are reportedly buying sophisticated

weapons from the Chiang Mai arms bazaar of Thailand bordering Myanmar and are found to use rocket launchers of Chinese make in their attacks (*The Telegraph*, 26 February 2008). Drug trafficking is another source of financing for insurgent groups. According to the annual report of the International Narcotics Control Bureau, there are increased signs of trafficking in amphetamine-type stimulants and their precursor chemicals throughout South Asia. The same report points out that on an average, about 2,000 kg of opium derived from illicitly cultivated poppy and 1000 kg of heroin are seized annually in India, although it remains unclear just how much is of Indian origin

II LEFT WING EXTREMISM

As per intelligence reports prepared by the MHA, ultra-Left groups having faith in Maoist ideologies have spread their activities to as many as 22 out of 28 states in the country, including states that were earlier not known to have any Naxal links like Delhi, Punjab, Uttarakhand and Gujarat.

Profile of Violence

In the year 2008, violence associated with the Naxal conflict recorded a decline by 0.53 percent (Table 7). The casualty among civilians and security forces remained more or less at par, indicating the influence of Maoists. Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand recorded the maximum violence.

According to the above mentioned MHA report, as many as 39 Left-wing extremist groups are currently operating in the country with a combined membership of more than a lakh. The CPI (Maoist) alone accounts for more than 90 percent of violent incidents. The People's Guerilla Army, now transformed into the PLA, is the armed wing of the CPI (Maoist) responsible for waging a war against the Indian state. Subsequent to the formation of the CPI-Maoist in 2004, two zonal committees of the outfit have been responsible for

activities in Orissa: the AOBZC and the Jharkhand-Bihar-Orissa Special Zonal Committee (JBOBSZC). These two function

in close co-ordination with the CPI-Maoist Central Committee and the Dandakaranya Special Zonal Committee.

Table 7
Left-wing Insurgency related casualties, 2008

Source	Civilians		Security Force		Naxals	
	MHA (31.08.08)	SATP	MHA (31.08.08)	SATP	MHA (31.08.08)	SATP
Andhra Pradesh	32	28	1	1	24	37
Bihar	32	35	16	21	9	15
Chhattisgarh	95	35	49	67	45	66
Jharkhand	109	74	31	39	43	50
Karnataka	-	3	-	1	-	3
Maharashtra	12	2	1	5	8	7
Orissa	17	24	72	76	6	32
Tamil Nadu	-	0	-	0	-	1
Uttar Pradesh	-	0	-	0	-	2
West Bengal	-	19	-	4	-	1
Total		210		214		214

Source: "Fatalities in Left-wing Extremism," Maoist Insurgency: Data Sheets, South Asia Terrorism Portal, Institute of Conflict Management; Report: Status Paper on Internal Security Situation as on 01/09/08, Internal Security Division, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, pp.27-32

Strategies and Tactics

The year 2008 witnessed a further consolidation of the program enunciated during the 9 Party Congress held in early 2007. In the Congress, held after 36 years, the party resolved to "advance the people's war throughout the country, further strengthen the people's army, deepen the mass base of the party and wage a broad-based militant mass movement against the neo-liberal policies of globalization, liberalization, privatization pursued by the reactionary ruling classes under the dictates of imperialism." To achieve this objective, the party put into force the following strategies:

Attack on Security Forces

Security Forces, in particular the state police and Special Operation Group (SOG) personnel continued to be effectively targeted. As per provisional statistics, the casualty among the security forces in 2008 (207 as on 08.12.08) was only slightly less than in 2007 (218) although it remains quite high as compared to 2006 (128) and 2005 (150) (see table below).

Significantly, attacks on security forces went up dramatically in Orissa by approximately 35 percent and in Jharkhand by 16 percent (Table 8). The Maoists carried out three major attacks in Orissa, mainly in the Naxal-affected

Malkangiri but also in the coastal Nayagarh district, against the Special Operations Groups and police personnel trained in guerilla warfare. In Malkangiri alone, as many as 55 police personnel, including 37 Greyhound commandos were killed this year. Attacks in Orissa went up partly in retaliation against the intensification of the anti-Maoist operations

and increasing deployment of Greyhound personnel but also significantly because of the slow consolidation of the Maoists in the border districts of Orissa namely Malkangiri. As reported by the Naxal Management Division, year 2007 witnessed 25 percent rise in Maoist activities in the worst hit Malkangiri district.

Table 8
Attack on Security Forces, 2005-08

	2008	2007	2006	2005
Andhra Pradesh	1	4	7	21
Chhattisgarh	67	182	55	48
Bihar	21	21	5	29
Jharkhand	39	6	47	27
Orissa	76	2	4	1
Maharashtra	5	2	3	17
Karnataka	1	1	0	6
West Bengal	4	0	7	1
Total	214	218	128	150

Source: "Fatalities in Left-wing Extremism: 2005-2008," Maoist Insurgency: Data Sheets, South Asia Terrorism Portal, Institute of Conflict Management

The Maoists continued to effectively use the method of swarming attacks to target security forces, be it in Bihar, Orissa, Jharkhand or Chhattisgarh, apart from ambush and gunfire during encounters. Landmine blasts too have become a frequent method of attacking security forces. In a massive seizure, the Jharkhand police recovered 80 landmines from a 1.5-2 km stretch in Bokaro district in April. In Orissa, the use of anti-landmine vehicles by the SOG proved to be ineffective in preventing the landmine blast on 16 July that killed 17 personnel. Apart from this, the Malkangiri attack in Orissa displayed for the first time the capability of Maoists in marine warfare with the successful attack on a team of Greyhound personnel traveling in a boat.

It has been noticed that there is a high tendency of security forces being attacked

while on their return from a combing operation. Meticulous planning and execution of these attacks gives the impression that rebel group have prior information force movements and operations. After any major ambush, Maoists issued warnings to the government against taking repressive action against the people and threatened to step up attacks on the police. Notably, the Balimela attack of 29 June in Orissa that pushed the state into intensifying its combing operations was followed by a landmine attack in Malkangiri district in Orissa that killed 15 police personnel. This reflects the aim of the Maoists to reinforce their success in counter-offensive operations against security forces instead of maintaining a status quo. Another objective of attacking police stations and police patrol teams is to get hold of their weaponry. Many attacks were accompanied by incidents of looting arms

and ammunition, most daring being the Nayagarh attack in Orissa. The railway guards in particular are targeted frequently for this purpose.

Attack on Civilians

As per provisional data, Orissa witnessed approximately 6 percent increase in attacks on civilians whereas Chhattisgarh

recorded 21 percent decrease in civilian casualties (Table 9). In a bid to further consolidate their position, the Maoists continued to target civilians perceived to be ‘exploiters’ and ‘state agents’ including suspected police informers, traders, local political leaders and government officials. Such attacks tend to be the most brutal ones, intended to deter people from any resistance to Maoist authority.

**Table 9
Civilian Casualty, 2005-08**

	2008	2007	2006	2005
Andhra Pradesh	28	24	18	132
Chhattisgarh	35	95	189	52
Bihar	35	23	16	25
Jharkhand	74	69	18	49
Orissa	24	13	3	13
Maharashtra	2	9	13	2
Karnataka	3	1	0	2
West Bengal	19	6	9	5
Uttar Pradesh	0	0	0	1
Total	210	240	266	281

Source: “Fatalities in Left-wing Extremism: 2005-2008,” Maoist Insurgency: Data Sheets, South Asia Terrorism Portal, Institute of Conflict Management

Apart from killings, extortion demands and threats constitute another method of terrorizing people, particularly local contractors and businessmen. This problem is particularly acute in Jharkhand where contractors are reportedly paying as much as 30 percent of the total estimated value of their job as levy. As per police statements, the Maoists set a target of earning Rs 1,125 crore in 2008, a 25 percent increase from 2007 where they collected Rs 1000 crores. Notably, apart from Bihar, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh, others states contributing to their fund raising include Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Maharashtra.

An unprecedented development in 2008 was the attack carried out against VHP leader Swami Lakshmanananda and four

disciples in an ashram at Jalespata in the Kandhamal district of Orissa in protest against forceful conversions of tribals and Christians to Hinduism. The state committee of the Maoists in Orissa claimed responsibility for the assassination, accusing the Swami of fuelling communal violence and persecution of religious minorities in the district. Another Hindu seer Puri Sankaracharya Jagadaguru Swami Nischalananda Saraswati in Puri received warnings against perpetration of communal violence. While spearheading the grievances of the minorities, the Maoists have so far stayed away from religious practices and communal violence. It remains to be seen, however, whether this reflects a strategic decision on part of the Maoists to protect the interests of religious minorities or just a one-off case.

Attack on Infrastructure

In a bid to disrupt public life and undermine the writ of the state administration, the Maoists continued to target public infrastructure including railway tracks, construction companies, telecommunication and power transmission centers. In many such attacks, a large group of Maoists raided the project sites and threatened workers to stop their work. As per one estimate, 2008 witnessed the largest number of attacks on communication towers.^{vii} While Bihar and Jharkhand witnessed the highest number of attacks on railways, Chhattisgarh witnessed some daring attacks on communication towers. In Khammam district of Andhra Pradesh, Maoists reportedly imposed a ban on the use of mobile phones and used coercive methods to take away mobile phones in the Bhadrachalam division. The Maoists also used their trademark method of strikes and bandhs to disrupt life. However, these remained localized this year as opposed to the economic blockades imposed by the Maoists across various states in the past two years.

Operational Capabilities

The main source of funding for the Maoists remains abductions, extortions and looting. The arms and ammunition used by Maoists, as evident through a number of seizures, range from RDX cable wires, gelatine sticks, detonators, country-made weapons, INSAS rifles, AK-47s, SLR and improvised explosive devices. As per reports, the maximum yield in terms of ammunition and explosives seized has been from Bihar and Jharkhand followed by Chhattisgarh. According to MHA reports, the CRPF seized over 6000 kg of explosives in Bihar and 893 kg in Jharkhand till October 2008. Notably, the force also recovered codex wire in Jharkhand for the first time, a lethal explosive that can cause a blast of upto 720 meters and has so far only been used by armed forces in wars (*The Telegraph*, 16 October 2008). A large number of explosives seized have been found to be from Andhra Pradesh Explosives at

Nalgonda in Andhra Pradesh and Haryana Explosives. In addition, looting of explosives from large mining companies particularly in south Chhattisgarh is another prominent source for the Maoists.

Another source of funding for Maoists allegedly comes from poppy cultivation reported from the Ghagra area of Gumla district in Jharkhand and in parts of Gumla, Kishanganj and Purnia districts in Bihar. Police sources claim that opium fields are being obscured on the sides by maize fields. The Naxals are also believed to be patronizing hemp cultivation to fund their activities. This has been reported from Debagarh district in Orissa.

Implication

The extensive use of violence in 2008, mostly targeted but at times wanton, reflected the intent and capability of the Maoists to consolidate their armed struggle against the Indian state. Their extensive extortion networks, military arsenal and constant recruitment indicate their preparation for a protracted armed struggle. Violence has steadfastly increased since the formation of the CPI (Maoist) party in 2004 and spread from Chhattisgarh to Jharkhand-Bihar to Orissa and now to Maharashtra. With the security forces intensifying their counter-Naxal operations, the coming years are likely to witness intense violence, reducing in turn the space for political negotiation and reconciliation. The state of armed struggle is going to dissipate any middle ground in the process, dividing the whole nation into Maoists versus the state.

III JAMMU & KASHMIR

Profile of Violence

In 2008, terrorist violence in Jammu and Kashmir remained at its lowest since the peak of militancy in early 90s (Table 10).

The ultimate manifestation of the continuing trend of terrorist violence was the state

elections conducted over the last two months that not only witnessed very low violence but also a high voter turn-out. According to police estimates, as many as 43 militants were arrested during the seven-phase elections. This indicates that the security forces have been able to reinforce their success against militancy in the state. Responding to the gains of the security forces, leaders of several militant groups operating in Jammu and Kashmir met in the Rawalpindi city of Pakistan and

vowed to continue their jihad. The meeting, organised by the Pakistan-based Al-Badr Mujahideen at a mosque in Rawalpindi, was addressed by UJC and Hizbul-Mujahideen (HM) chief Syed Salahuddin, Al-Badr chief Bakht Zameen Khan and leaders of the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), Hizbi Islami-Kashmir and other jihadi groups. "The continuation of the jihad in Kashmir is linked with the survival of Pakistan," Salahuddin told the 500-strong gathering.

Table 10
Terrorism-related Casualties, 2008

Source	Civilians		Security Force		Militants	
	MHA	SATP	MHA	SATP	MHA	SATP
2004	707	534	281	325	976	951
2005	557	521	189	218	917	1000
2006	389	349	151	168	591	599
2007	158	164	110	121	472	492
2008 (31.08.08)	72	69	58	90	223	382
			(31.08.08)		(31.08.08)	

Source: "Annual Fatalities in Terrorist Violence," Jammu and Kashmir: Data Sheets, South Asia Terrorism Portal, Institute of Conflict Management; Report: Status Paper on Internal Security Situation as on 01/09/08, Internal Security Division, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, p. 3

The police estimates of the number of active militants in Jammu and Kashmir at the end of 2008 stands at 800 including about 300 foreigners. The strength and capacity of the Hizbul-Mujahideen is believed to be steadily declining mainly as a result of the successful decimation by the Jammu and Kashmir police. Since the beginning of the year itself, it was believed that the group was short on both leadership and cadre (*The Hindu*, 31 March 2008). The group was believed to have only three commanders of significance in its north Kashmir division with less than three dozens of men under their command; two commanders in their south-Kashmir stronghold; and no leadership in its central division. Meanwhile, the LeT remains the active group in the valley. Evidently, most

infiltration bids as well as encounters with security forces took place with members of LeT.

Strategies and Tactics

Attack on Security Forces

While the number of casualties among the security forces reduced, the percentage share in total casualties went up by one percent. Explosions through the use of Improvised Explosive Device (IED) and ambush attacks remained the dominant method of attack against security forces. The number of explosions through IEDs reduced to 43 in 2008 as compared to 108 in 2007. The most deadly attack took place on the army convoy on the Srinagar-Baramulla highway on 19 July killing 10

army men and injuring over 23. Ambush attacks against the security forces reduced considerably with only four major attacks noted in the state resulting in the death of a total of 12 personnel. Casualties therefore mainly occurred in encounters and gun battles with militants.

Attack on Civilians

After a gap of two years, migrant laborers in Kashmir yet again came under attack by the militants. A grenade attack on a bus carrying migrant laborers on a stand in Batamaloo in Srinagar killed five persons and injured over 25 others on 24 July 2008. Last such attack on non-Kashmiri workers was in June 2006 when nine Nepali laborers were shot dead by unidentified gunmen in Kulgam district of Kashmir. Calls against migrant workers have become frequent in Kashmir since 2004, and most calls have typically been followed by acts of violence, albeit not on a large and continuous scale. The Islamists, represented by Islamists like Hilal Ahmad War led People's Political Party and Jamaat Ahl-e-Hadis-affiliated religious leader Maqbool Akhrani and endorsed by groups like HM and JeM, arraign the migrant community of spreading social evils among the Muslims and hold the Indian state responsible for deliberately altering the demographic character of the region. The attacks have, however, tended to be more reactionary than tactical. For instance, while in 2007, the rape-murder of Langate schoolgirl Tabinda Gani met with acts of violence against the migrant community, this year the calls came in light of the agitation against land transfer to the Shri Amarnath Yatra Board.

Infiltration

2008 witnessed an increase in infiltration bids by militants even while a number of them were successfully foiled by the security forces. According to the Defense Minister A K Antony, the number of infiltrators reduced to 243 during April to September 2008 as against 419 infiltrators during the same period last

year. July onwards witnessed a steep increase in infiltration bids across the line of control in light of the scheduled state elections. Rajouri, Poonch and Kupwara districts remained the main routes for infiltration. However, the use of new infiltration routes along the International Border (190km long) such as the successful infiltration of militants in Samba sector (45 kms from Jammu) and the bordering Udhampur district as opposed to the traditional routes along the dense forests of Baramulla and Kupwara have further compounded the threat of jihad in J&K. The militants are also found to be using new sophisticated weapons including fence cutters, imported gloves and insulated sleeves along with high-tech mobile instruments with GSM, satellite and GPS facilities to strengthen their communication network. At the same time, the 12-foot high barbed wire fence along the LOC proves to be ineffective during winter as it gets damaged during snowfall, leaving a space open for infiltration during its repair.

Peaceful Elections

The state elections, spread over two months and seven phases, remained largely peaceful. While in the 2002 elections, 48 office bearers and political leaders including a Minister were killed during campaigning, no such killings were recorded in this year's polls, although seven civilians and six security force personnel were killed during the electioneering process. While Kashmir-centric groups like Lashkar have openly expressed their commitment to the struggle against Indian oppression in Kashmir, their absence during the state elections needs to be seen in light of the improved security arrangements in the state as well as the casualties suffered by Lashkar in recent months rather than a change in the intent of militant groups. Militant threat against the elections was in fact building up in the run-up to the elections as evident from the increase in infiltration bids since May – first week of October witnessed five infiltration bids, each successfully foiled – and the recovery of large quantities of explosives but

consistent vigilance by the security forces successfully averted any major incident. Reports claim that as many as 46 militants were killed by the security forces during the election period. However, security forces are not ruling out the prospect of a resurgence of Lashkar activities in the state, particularly following their alleged involvement in the 26 November Mumbai terror attacks.

Operational Capabilities

Despite the fall in violence levels in the state, there is sufficient evidence indicating the continued existence of terrorist infrastructure across the state. Large amounts of seizures took place in the build up to the election in the state. Doda district alone saw the recovery of at least 30 kg of RDX, 5 kg of explosives along with arms and ammunition in the run up to the election. Rajouri is another district from where large quantities have been recovered. Four kilos of IED's were recovered in Rajouri district just before the district went to polls. Another growing trend visible in the state is the printing of Fake Indian Currency Note (FICN) in the valley itself. While FICN have been the dominant source of funding of militancy in the state, most of these have so far been printed in Pakistan cities including Karachi, Lahore, Quetta and Peshawar. In the first instance of its kind, the police busted a printing press in Pampore area in Anantnag on 20 December and arrested three operators for printing FICN. (*Indian Express*, 20 December). Intelligence agencies suspect that due to a crunch of hard currency and depletion of FICN from Pakistan and Nepal, operatives have set up operations in the valley itself. Police officials are reportedly pursuing at least two more suspected cases of FICN printing in the valley.

Implications

Seen purely in terms of the ability of militant groups to wage an armed struggle against the Indian state, militancy in Jammu and Kashmir exhibited further signs of

weakening in 2008, evident in the fall of violent attacks carried out against the state. This has been partly explained as a result of the strengthening of the counter insurgency grid in the state and partly due to the deepening of political process within the state coupled with geo-political developments in the region, mainly domestic pressures within Pakistan, the prime supporter of militancy in the state. However, with further deterioration of the security situation in the region, particularly in Pakistan, and the spread of terror networks and activities across the country, positive developments within Kashmir vis-à-vis militancy need to be taken with a pinch of salt. With international pressure mounting on Pakistan to rein in the terror infrastructure within, the possibility of militant groups emerging as a force by themselves, and indeed lying low currently primarily to rebuild their resources must be seriously considered. Continuing evidence of terror infrastructure within the region further suggests that the groups are likely to adopt new tactics and strategies in the coming days.

IV URBAN VIOLENCE

Profile of Violence

In the past two years, Indian cities have emerged as the hub of terror blasts resulting in the death of at least 372 civilians (see Annexure 1).

Urban terrorism in India has become synonymous with a group that calls itself Indian Mujahideen that has claimed responsibility for at least three blasts this year: Jaipur, Ahmedabad and New Delhi. According to police reports, Indian Mujahideen is not an organized group but a network of three sets of groups united by a common cause and active in different parts of the country – volunteers of SIMI mainly from Gujarat, an ideologically motivated group of men from UP with possible links to HuJI and a jihadist-linked crime cartel based in Mumbai (*The Hindu*, 2

October 2008). SIMI volunteers essentially include young men from Gujarat drawn to jihad out of personal experience of the communal pogrom of 2002. The group from UP mainly from Azamgarh consisted of a group of educated youth drawn to jihad under the influence of Sadiq Sheikh – allegedly the key operator and co-founder of the group and Atif Amin – the suspected mastermind of the Delhi blasts who was killed in an encounter with Delhi police. Another alleged co-founder of the group, Riyaz Bhatkal and his associates are believed to be in charge of supplying resources to the group. Bhatkal is supposed to have deep links with crime cartels based in Mumbai.

Strategy and Objective

In claiming responsibility for the blasts, the group has clearly laid out its objectives which can be categorized as short term and long term objectives. The short-term objectives are reactionary in nature and seek retribution for injustices meted out to the Muslim minority in India ranging from Gujarat pogrom 2002 to the Amarnath land transfer dispute in Kashmir to the alleged discriminatory attitude of the state police including the Anti Terrorism Squads. Instead of targeting specific leaders and officials involved in the above issues directly, the group seeks to undermine the will and capability of the Indian state to administer effectively by creating an environment of panic and fear among the people in a bid to expose the inherent weaknesses and faultlines of the Indian state. The long term objective is therefore linked with those of the other jihadist groups functioning in the region including LeT, HM and JeM i.e. to “stop the heart of India from beating” and establish an Islamic Caliphate in the region.

Tactics and Methods

Urban terrorism has manifested itself mainly through bomb blasts in public places across the main cities of India. The places selected have been busy thoroughfares, either known for their symbolic value such

as the Johari Bazaar in Jaipur that attracts large number of foreigners, or simply places that draw large hordes of people at any given time. Instead of targeting any particular community, the target has always been the common man of India. Another tactic used by the group is the use of low intensity explosives such as ammonium nitrate instead of the previously used RDX, partly because of its ready availability but also because its use is very difficult to regulate given its requirement for agricultural purposes. A result of the heavy use of this explosive has been the maintenance of an average casualty between 40-60 people. The use of media extensively to attack the Indian state is another new tactic employed by this brand of terrorism in India. The tenor of the messages sent to media organizations suggests that the group seeks to present the Indian state as essentially confrontationist against Islam and thereby prepare the ground for jihad. This is akin to the strategy of al Qaeda that used media extensively, particularly in the Arab world, by way of broadcasting videotapes of training camps, speeches of its leaders and debates within the outfit to sharpen the confrontation between the Islamic identity and the western world.

Operational Capability

The frequent blasts in India have exposed the existence of a local criminal network working alongside the masterminds of the terror blasts. Tracing the criminal activities of the blasts in 2008 reveals the following trends: the use of porous borders, use of local explosives and use of local small time criminals. Investigations into the blasts have revealed that the main source of funding for terror activities remains the hawala network and FICN. While a large part of the money is said to be coming from the Middle East countries and Pakistan through established international banks that have local branches in India, it has also been found that a number of small businessmen, textile merchants, timber mill owners, cinema houses and realtors based in central India also run small units along the

Indo-Nepal border serving as a transit for the terror funds. Even the main source of the FICN is cross-border smuggling through Nepal, Bangladesh and Pakistan. Significantly, aside from individual counterfeiters, a recent seizure of over \$369,000 worth of fake notes from the State Bank of India branch in Domariaganj, a small town in the north Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, has raised the specter of a collision between banks and counterfeiters (*Asia Times*, 26 August 2008).

The theft of explosives manufactured in India is another crime that has heightened security concerns owing to its linkage with terror activities. For instance, detonators used in the Bangalore blasts were found to be from Andhra Pradesh Explosives Limited (APEL) whereas those used in the Ahmedabad and Surat blasts were found to be from both APEL and Rajasthan Explosives and Chemicals Limited. Unlike weapons like AK-47, the transportation of these explosives is far easier owing to their small size and is perhaps why most terror outfits have shifted to the use of such explosives. Apart from the use of locally made explosives, cross-border smuggling of arms continues to fund terror activities in India. The Border Security Force of India guarding India's borders with Pakistan, Myanmar, Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh continue to seize large quantities of arms and ammunition. In addition, the Mumbai attacks have exposed the vulnerability of coastal regions like Gujarat to smuggling of heavy weapons and explosives like RDX.

A visible trend in the organized crime-terror nexus has been the reliance on local small time criminals in the recent blasts as opposed to use of big criminals. The use of stolen cars and bicycles in the blasts have brought to the fore the involvement of petty criminals in abetting the terrorist attacks in India. All four cars used in the Ahmedabad blast were found to have been stolen from Navi Mumbai. The main accused for car theft, Afzal Usmani who has nine cases against him including one under the Maharashtra Control of

Organized Crime ACT (MCOCA) is known for his links with terror outfits like LeT, JeM and HuJI. Intelligence officials opine that the local criminals are assigned individual roles by the 'gamemakers' and carry out the contract without knowing the entire game plan.

IV CONCLUSIONS

The use of terrorism by insurgencies poses a unique dilemma for militant/insurgent groups: while the use of terror tactics becomes important for the groups to convey their resolve, an excessive reliance on it runs the risk of alienating local populace that forms the backbone of any insurgency. 2008 reflected the precarious nature of this balance in most conflicts. While the extensive use of violence and terror tactics by the Naxalite revolution further deteriorated the security environment of the affected areas and deepened the fear factor among people at large, this in itself might eventually pose a question mark on the legitimacy of the armed revolution. In Assam, the use of terror tactics by various militant groups deepened the ethnic faultlines running through the state, weakening in turn the support base of the main group, ULFA. While this must not be taken to mean dissipation of the genuine grievances of the people of Assam and their aspiration for greater autonomy, it does suggest the limitations of armed violence in achieving a political goal. The same applies for the state of Jammu and Kashmir that witnessed the lowest-ever levels of violence since the outbreak of militancy in the state. The most worrying development of last year was the spread of urban terrorism in India, as much for its spatial spread as for its tactical efficiency. Moreover, the absence of a defined group with an identifiable base area makes it harder for the state to address the challenge.

Notwithstanding the varying levels of violence in the country, it is becoming amply clear that India is home to an extensive terror network combined with

drug, crime and arms cartels. An effective strategy to deal with the operational and criminal aspects of terrorism would require constant modernization of police forces, enhanced human intelligence on the ground, greater coordination both among

the states and between the center and states, but above all, a national all-party resolve to rise above party politics and address the challenge squarely in a cohesive manner.

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ⁱ The defining features of armed conflict, as drawn from the definition of Non-International Armed Conflict provided by the Additional Protocol (II) to the Geneva Conventions, 1977, include 'armed conflict... taking place within the territory of a Nation-State (since India is not a party to the AP II, the word 'High Contracting Party' has been replaced by Nation-State) between its armed forces and dissident armed forces or other organized groups which, under responsible command, exercise such control over a part of its territory as to enable them to carry out sustained and concerted military operations...'

ⁱⁱ Mirza Zulfiqur Rahman, "Insurgencies, Splits, Terror," Article 2772, 6 January 2009, Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies

ⁱⁱⁱ "Manipur – caught between the devil and the deep blue sea," Asian Legal Resource Center, 17 February 2008, available at <http://www.ahrchk.net/statements/mainfile.php/2009statements/1887/?print=yes>

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^v Namrata Goswami, "A Way out of Naga Factional Violence," IDSA Strategic Comments, 23 July 2008

^{vi} "Nagaland 2008 crime rate decreases," *The Morung Express*, available at http://www.morungexpress.com/frontpage/nagaland_2008_crime_rate_decreases.html

^{vii} P V Ramana, "Maoists Attack on Infrastructure," *IDSA Strategic Comments*, 20 February 2009

Annexure 1: Terrorist Attacks across Indian Cities, 2008

Date	Place	Target Area	Casualty	Group
1-Jan	Rampur, UP	CRPF	8	
13-May	Jaipur, Rajasthan	market areas	63	Indian Mujahideen
25-Jul	Bangalore, Karnataka	7 serial blasts	1	Abhinav Bharat, SIMI (suspected)
26-Jul	Ahmedabad, Gujarat	16 serial blasts	45	Indian Mujahideen
13-Sep	New Delhi	5 serial blasts	25	Indian Mujahideen
27 Sep	New Delhi	Market area	3	
30-Oct	Assam	16 serial blasts	61	Islamic Security Force of Indian Mujahideen (ISF-IM)
26-Nov	Mumbai, Maharashtra	10 terror attacks	173	Lashkar-e-Taiba (suspected)