

Innovations

National Security in the Face of Terror: A Comparative Study of Domestic and International Threats in India

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Abstract:

A significant risk to India's national security is the threat of terrorism. The research presented here compares and contrasts internal and international terrorism in India, looking at trends, tactics, and ramifications for the security of the nation. The paper begins by etymology and contextualization of domestic and international terrorism, as well as its implications for India's security, are presented at the outset of the essay. The parallels and distinctions between indigenous terrorist organizations like the Naxalites and global terrorist groups like Lashkar-e-Taiba and ISIS are then discussed. The objective of this essay is to evaluate these groups' aims, motives for being, techniques for operation, as well as their impact on India's national security. In order to give a thorough study of the character and scope of the terrorist threat in India, it covers a number of case studies, including the Naxalite insurgency and the 2008 Mumbai attacks. The report also covers the counterterrorism measures put in place by the Indian government to deal with threats from both internal and foreign sources. It assesses the success of these steps and sheds insight on the difficulties encountered in India's fight against terrorism. In summary, this academic paper offers a thorough examination of domestic as well as international terrorism in India, accentuating the major developments, tactics, and consequences for the country's security. It provides useful insights for stakeholders and policymakers in creating successful strategies to fight terrorism and advance regional and global stability.

Keywords: Terrorism, Domestic terrorism, International terrorism, National security

1. Research Questions:

How can India effectively confront and cope with the difficulties brought on by the overlapping regional and globally terrorist threats, especially in the areas where both dangers simultaneously Overlap?

What are the main causes of the proliferation and growth of extremist organizations in India, and how can the government devise targeted policies and initiatives to stop their radicalization and recruitment?

2. Literature review:

Despite the fact that terrorism is not a recent phenomenon, there is still no complete agreement on how to define it (Krueger, 2008, pp. 14–15). This is due to the subjective nature of the phenomenon (Cronin, 2009, p. 6; Hoffman, 2006, p. 23), as well as the concept's ongoing evolution over time in response to significant historical events, socio-political movements, and technological advancements. Just as efforts to define terrorism have been a contentious endeavor among politicians, the concept of terrorism has produced various arguments within the academic community (Weiss, 2002; Schmid, 2005). Although the concept of terrorism has been a topic of dispute since the 1960s and 1970s (Roberts, 2015), the present discussions center on what actually qualifies as terrorism and a terrorist attack (Lentini, 2008).

In their attempts to define the parameters that would separate terrorism from other forms of state and non-state violence, academics and policymakers are at a standstill. While some scholars contend that it is crucial to establish universal guidelines for identifying and classifying terrorist activities, others contend that these norms should be flexible depending upon the context, setting, motives, and country-specific laws (Weiss, 2002). The third argument adopts a middle ground stance between these divergent points of view and claims that when we see a terrorist activity, we will know exactly what it is (Greenstock, 2001, as quoted in Weiss, 2002). This implies that our understanding or definition of terrorism should be based on what we consider and perceive to be a terrorist attack.

Parallels and distinctions between Domestic and International Terrorist Groups:

Indian-based and international terrorist organizations may be roughly divided into two kinds. The internal problems of indigenous groups, like the Naxalites, such as poverty, injustice, and land conflicts, are what motivate them most. On the other hand, international terrorist organizations like ISIS and Lashkar-e-Taiba frequently have religious or ideological bases.

These groups have several things in common while having various goals. The most notable of these is that they resort to violence in order to further their political objectives. For instance, the Naxalites have committed a sizable number of assaults against Indian security personnel and civilians, while Lashkar-e-Taiba and ISIS have carried out attacks in India and other countries to further their own objectives.

There are significant divergences among these groups as well, nevertheless. For instance, indigenous organizations like the Naxalites may have concerns that are more restricted and concentrated in a single area or community. They frequently feature an organizational framework that is more hierarchical and has separate spheres of authority. While operating independently of one another, international terrorist organizations like Lashkar-e-Taiba and ISIS frequently have a more fragmented organizational makeup. The ideals propelling these groups' actions is another noteworthy distinction. While international terrorist organizations are frequently motivated by religious or ideological motives, the Naxalites are propelled by a Marxist-Leninist ideology that calls for a revolution against the Indian state. For instance, Lashkar-e-Taiba wants to create an Islamic caliphate in South Asia, but ISIS wants to spread a certain interpretation of Islam and create a global caliphate.

Developing successful counterterrorism policies requires an understanding of the similarities and distinctions between domestic and international terrorist organizations. Indigenous group counterterrorism initiatives must address the underlying issues that inspire their violence. This entails tackling issues like poverty, inequality, and land disputes as well as giving affected individuals access to economic opportunities and assistance. Global terrorist organizations must be the target of counterterrorism initiatives that concentrate on eliminating their networks, cutting off their funding, and thwarting their operations. In conclusion, while there are certain parallels between domestic and international terrorist organizations, there are also important distinctions that should be considered while creating counterterrorism policies. For India and the rest of the globe to effectively tackle terrorism, it is crucial to comprehend these complexities.

A. Aims, Motives and Techniques employed by Domestic as well as International Terrorists:

Naxalities:

The Naxalites, commonly referred to as Maoists, are a radical left-wing organization that was founded in the late 1960s. The destruction of the Indian government and the establishment of a communist state are their main goals.

According to the Naxalites, India has a severely defective social and economic system that is characterized by widespread poverty, inequality, and corruption. They hold that the capitalist class and the government are to blame for the current state of affairs, and that the only way to resolve them is through a bloody revolution that would establish a new society based on Marxist ideals. The Naxalites employ a three-pronged strategy to attain the desired outcome.

First, they want to create a "liberated zone" in regions of the nation where they have a sizable following. These areas are meant to act as a base of operations from which they may assault government institutions and forces.

Second, they want to enlist the rural poor in a "protracted people's war" against the authorities. They think they can mobilize a large-scale movement to undermine the power of the government and compel it to make concessions.

Third, they hope to create an organization that is powerful, disciplined, and devoted to their ideology and can carry on their struggle for years to come. To keep their members devoted to the cause, the Naxalites lay a great emphasis on political education and indoctrination, especially among their cadres. The Naxalites' overall goal of creating a communist state in India.

Motives of Naxalites:

The philosophy of the Naxalites and their conviction that India's social and economic system is extremely flawed are integral to their objectives. The Naxalites contend that the country's pervasive poverty, inequality, and corruption are the fault of the capitalist class and the Indian government, and that the only way to resolve these problems is through an armed uprising that will create a new society based on Marxist ideals.

The Naxalites' ambition for an Indian communist state, which they think will correct the social and economic system's underlying problems, drives their actions. They consider their acts to be a part of a bigger movement to improve the world and view themselves as participants in the larger global battle for social justice and liberty.

Techniques employed by Naxalites:

- A. **Guerrilla warfare:** The Naxalites assault security personnel and government facilities using ambushes, raids, and hit-and-run operations. They take advantage of the mountainous terrain and thick forests in their strongholds.
- B. **Recruitment:** The Naxalites seek out members of society who are marginalized and destitute, such as tribals, Dalits, and landless farmers. By pledging to stand up for their rights and to supply them with needs like food, housing, and healthcare, they appeal to these populations.
- C. **Propaganda:** The Naxalites employ propaganda to disseminate their beliefs and garner support. To spread their message, they make use of flyers, posters, and social media. They also frequently host public gatherings and demonstrations to gather support.
- D. **Extortion:** To finance their operations, the Naxalites demand money from nearby companies, contractors, and affluent landowners. Additionally, they tax illicit mining and logging operations in their strongholds and impose levies on native communities.

- E. **Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs):**The Naxalites have a long tradition of using IEDs to launch assaults on government establishments and security personnel. To create these explosive devices, they frequently employ pressure cookers, pipes, and other locally accessible items.
- F. **Assassinations:** The Naxalites have attacked police officers, government employees, and political figures. To spread fear, they frequently carry out these killings in public areas.

LET and ISIS:

International terrorist organizations like Lashkar-e-Taiba (LET) and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) have targeted India. Establishing an Islamic caliphate in South Asia and unifying all Muslims in the area under its control is the primary goal of LET. The gang aims to do this by toppling the Indian government and inciting fear and anarchy throughout the nation through violence. India's security personnel, especially those in Kashmir, are the main target of LET. Establishing a worldwide Islamic state or caliphate under its own interpretation of Sharia law is ISIS's major goal. The group aims to do this by instilling panic and fear throughout the world via acts of violence. As part of an overall strategy to broaden its influence in South Asia, ISIS has targeted India.

Motives of LET and ISIS:

The core motive of the LET is to free Kashmir from Indian rule in order to establish a Pan-Islamic caliphate in the area. Regarding the disputed region of Jammu and Kashmir, LET and India have been at odds for a very long time. The organization wants to liberate the local Muslims from Indian control because they feel that the Indian government is persecuting them. On the other side, ISIS aspires to impose its version of Islamic law in order to build a global Islamic caliphate. They consider their version of Islam to be the sole accurate one and that all Muslims should band together under this flag. Their ultimate objective is the overthrow of current regimes and the establishment of a new Islamic state. ISIS has conducted multiple terrorist acts throughout the world and has been active in the Middle East. They are well renowned for their violent methods of intimidation and subjugation of their adversaries, including as beheadings and other acts of brutality.

Methods:

ISIS and Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) have both orchestrated their terrorist attacks in a number of ways. LeT has carried out assaults using gunshots, grenades, IEDs, suicide bombs, and other means. The gang is also notorious for carrying out strikes on Indian soil via sleeper cells. They have also been known to attack individuals, government employees, and military sites.

ISIS, on the other hand, has carried out assaults utilizing shooters, stabbers, and suicide bombers as well as vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices (VBIEDs). Social media has also been utilized by them to find new recruits and incite attacks all across the world. In addition to targeting government officials and religious minorities, the terrorist group also targets civilians. Propaganda has also been utilized by both parties to propagate their message and attract new recruits. LeT has a history of using Jamaat-ud-Dawa, its charitable arm, to influence individuals in Pakistan and India. ISIS has recruited new recruits from all across the world and inspired assaults through their internet propaganda. In general, these organizations have employed a mix of violent and nonviolent techniques to further their objectives and promote their ideologies.

B. Impact On India's security by these groups:

These terrorist organizations have significantly impacted India's security. In places where they are in control, the Naxalites have carried out multiple attacks against security personnel, elected officials, and common citizens. This has made it challenging for the government to carry out development work in certain regions and has instilled a sense of fear and insecurity among the local populace. As a result of the Naxalites' dominance over some areas, "liberated zones" have been established where the state's influence is almost nonexistent.

In a similar vein, many terrorist strikes in India have also been committed by ISIS and Lashkar-e-Taiba. The 2008 Mumbai attacks, which claimed the lives of over 160 people and injured hundreds more, were carried out by Lashkar-e-Taiba. ISIS has also taken credit for a number of assaults in India, including the one in 2018 that killed four police officers at a police station in Jammu and Kashmir. Beyond the casualties and property damage, these assaults have a significant impact. Additionally, they have a profound psychological effect, instilling dread and insecurity among the populace. As was seen in the aftermath of the Mumbai attacks, when there were allegations of violence against Muslims, these incidents can also lead to intercommunal tensions.

Additionally, by attempting to undermine India's democratic institutions and destabilize the nation, these terrorist organizations endanger the security of that nation. While Lashkar-e-Taiba and ISIS aim to disseminate their radical beliefs and build an Islamic caliphate, the Naxalites aim to remove the Indian state and install a communist society.

Overall, these terrorist organizations have a considerable negative influence on India's security and present a danger to its stability and democratic institutions. The government must take decisive action to combat these organizations and stop additional assaults.

C. Case studies:

Naxalite insurgency:

A left-wing extremist movement called the Naxalite insurgency first appeared in India in the late 1960s. The town of Naxalbari in West Bengal, where the movement began, bears its name. The Naxalites want to topple the Indian government via armed conflict and are motivated by Mao Zedong's philosophy. Their claimed objective is to create a communist state in India, where they predominantly work in rural regions. Numerous violent crimes have been committed by the Naxalites, including assaults on citizens, police, and government workers. To finance their activities, they have also engaged in extortion and abduction for ransom. In order to address the underlying social and economic concerns driving the movement, the Indian government has reacted to the insurgency with a combination of military action and development programs.

Mumbai 2008 attacks:

The 2008 Mumbai attacks were a string of planned terrorist assaults that happened in Mumbai, India, between November 26 and November 29, 2008. Several prominent buildings in the city, including opulent hotels, a hospital, a train station, and a Jewish center, were the targets of the assailants.

Ten highly armed Pakistani terrorists connected to the terrorist organization Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) carried out the attacks. By utilizing weapons and explosives to start their attacks after arriving by water in Mumbai, the militants killed 164 people and injured nearly 300 others.

In the end, Indian security forces stormed the two hotels where the terrorists had taken hostages after the attacks, which had lasted for over three days. Mohammad Ajmal Amir Kasab, the tenth assailant, was apprehended alive while nine of the militants were slain during the operation. The Mumbai assaults, which were among the worst in Indian history, brought attention to the nation's susceptibility to terrorist strikes. India and Pakistan's relationship was strained as a result of the tragedy, with India blaming Pakistan of harbouring and assisting the LeT terrorists who carried out the assaults.

3. Measures and Policy effectiveness:

In order to lessen the impact of terrorism in India, the government has put in place a number of measures and policy directives. A few of these are:

- 1) **Cybersecurity:** As terrorist organizations employ cybercrime to finance their activities and carry out attacks, the nexus between cybercrime and terrorism is getting more and more interwoven. It is crucial to comprehend this link and create countermeasures. Terrorist-sponsored cyberattacks against vital infrastructure, including electricity grids, water treatment facilities, and banking networks, have increased in recent years. It is essential to have robust safeguards against attacks like these because of the potential impact they might have on national security.
- 2) **Intelligence gathering and coordination:** Indian intelligence organizations collaborate to compile information on potential threats and pass it along to law enforcement organizations. A number of terrorists have been apprehended as a consequence of this collaboration, which has helped stop several terrorist attacks.
- 3) **Strengthening Laws:** India has passed strict legislation like the National Investigation Agency (NIA) respond and the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA), allowing law enforcement to respond quickly against terrorist activity. These regulations have been successful in reducing terrorist activity.
- 4) **Security Measures:** India has tightened security at critical sites, transit hubs, and public spaces. Security force deployment and CCTV camera installation have proven beneficial in deterring attacks and giving proof in the event of an assault.
- 5) **Combating Terror Financing:** By identifying and obstructing the sources of money for terrorist groups, India has made steps to combat terror financing. This has successfully curtailed the flow of funding to terrorist organizations and hindered their operations.

Effectiveness of these Steps taken:

Strengthening Laws: giving law enforcement authorities additional authority to take action against terrorists, these laws have been successful in reducing terrorist activity. Concerns have been voiced, nevertheless, regarding the abuse of these laws to silence dissent and punish the innocent. As a result, it's important to make sure that these rules are only applied in accordance with their intended intent.

The National Investigation Agency, the Intelligence Bureau, and other intelligence organizations in India collaborate to obtain information and provide it to law enforcement organizations. As a result, countless terrorist plans have been thwarted and some terrorists have been captured. This has made it possible to respond quickly to future threats. Terrorist attacks have, on the other hand, occasionally resulted from intelligence failures, as in the case of the 2008 Mumbai attacks. To avoid such mistakes in the future, information collecting and coordination must always be improved. Terrorist attacks have, on the other hand, occasionally resulted from security failures, like in the case of the 2019 Pulwama incident. In order to avoid such mistakes in the future, security measures must be regularly reviewed and improved. By identifying and obstructing the sources of money for terrorist organizations, India has taken action to tackle terrorism financing. This has successfully curtailed the flow of funding to terrorist organizations and hindered their operations. India's efforts to stop the financing of terrorism have also been acknowledged by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

However, given that terrorist groups continue to devise means of evading discovery, India still has to strengthen its capacity to trace and ban sources of finance for terrorism. International collaboration hasn't always been successful, as seen by the 26/11 Mumbai attacks, where Pakistan refused to assist India in its investigation and prosecution of the attack's perpetrators. To avoid such errors in the future, international collaboration must be strengthened.

In conclusion, India's anti-terrorism policies have been successful in deterring terrorist attacks and preserving public safety. To guarantee that they continue to be successful in the face of developing threats from terrorist organizations, these measures must be reviewed and improved on a regular basis.

4. Conclusion:

In conclusion, both domestic and global, terrorism continues to pose a serious danger to India's national security. While the Lashkar-e-Taiba, ISIS, and the Naxalite insurgency all have distinct objectives, motivations, and methods, they all constitute a danger to India's security. In order to counter the threat of terrorism, the government has undertaken a number of policy initiatives and taken action, including passing anti-terrorist legislation, boosting information collecting and sharing, and upgrading security measures. However, terrorism continues to be a problem that needs ongoing attention from both the government and civil society. In the end, to successfully battle the danger of terrorism in India, a comprehensive strategy that takes into account resolving the roots of terrorism from the ground up, encouraging inclusive development, and boosting international collaboration is required.

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