



Low Intensity Conflicts and Assassination in South Asia: Options for South Asia

Md Mostafizur Rahman

Army IT Support Organization, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

khan.miraz@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

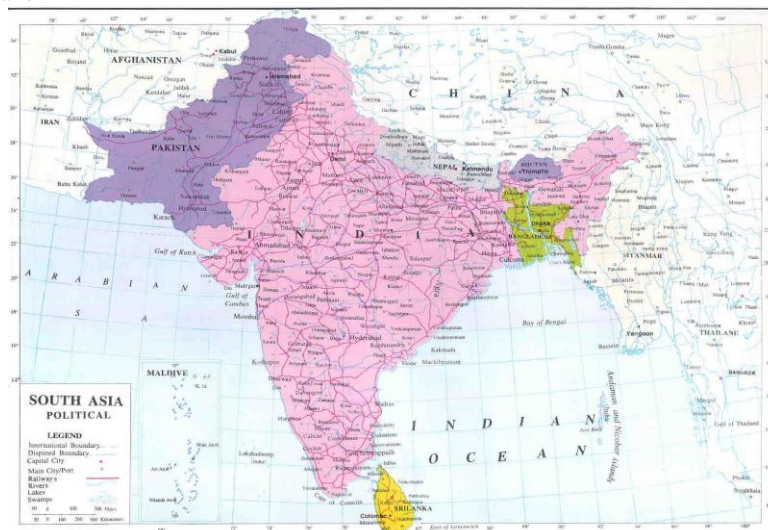
Although the Asia Pacific has been free of inter-state violence for thirty years, there are still a number of long-running, low-level internal conflicts in Southeast Asia, and some South Pacific states have recently faced instability. Inter-state tensions remain high, and altering power relations between the United States, China, and other Asian countries have the potential to exacerbate regional instability. A slew of transnational issues, including resource scarcity and climate change, are also adding to the uncertainty. Given the numerous constraints, the minimal engagement of international and regional organizations in conflict prevention in Southeast Asia and the South Pacific is surprising at first view. An examination of operational conflict prevention initiatives in Southeast Asia and the South Pacific reveals that, while international institutions, primarily the United Nations, and regional organizations play some conflict prevention responsibilities in the region, these are limited. The limits they face are rooted in the region's importance of sovereignty, but they also have historical, institutional, and political roots. As a result, regional crisis management has enlisted the help of a number of other actors, including states and non-governmental organizations, and multi-actor processes have gained importance.

KEYWORDS: Low, Intensity, Conflicts, assassination, terrorism, civil, Regions, World, constitutional.

1 Introduction

1.1 Low Intensity Conflicts (LIC) assassination is the scourge of modern times with its deadly consequences. Since 1945 there had been approximately 77 important conflicts; 30 following classical conventional wars and 47 insurrections, civil wars etc. The latter cost of nearly 20 millions lives which are more deadly than conventional wars. In recent times LIC and terrorism has become most unnatural, dehumanizing and politically destabilising phenomenon. It had been on the rise throughout nineties. Between 1990 and 1996, a total of 50,070 people were reported killed in terrorist attacks against civilians within the countries of operations and international terrorist attacks around the world. There is a growing propensity towards violence during terrorist strikes.

1. Scourge of Low Intensity Conflicts and acts of terrorism did not spare South Asia; rather it has engulfed the region itself. South Asia (Map-1) remains one of the most volatile



Map -1 : Political Map of South Asia

Regions in the world. It faces growing civil strife, ethnic conflicts, religious tension and trans border terrorism that affect all countries in the region. Since the probabilities of large scale conventional wars are diminished due to proliferation of nuclear weapons; non-traditional, irregular and low intensity wars have now become the prevalent form of inter-state conflicts. In the last decade, there has been an alarming increase in political turbulence and deterioration of law and order situation in Sri Lanka, Pakistan, India and Nepal that have had serious ramifications for peace and security in the region.

2 Definitions

2.1 Low Intensity Conflicts. LIC prevailed since ages and it surfaced into prominence with the surge of independent struggle from colonialism since the end of World War II. LIC is also phrased by many as Insurgency and Counter Insurgency. LIC is defined as “a limited politico-military struggle to achieve political, social, economic and/or psychological objectives

2.2 Insurgency and Counter Insurgency. Insurgency is defined as “an organized movement aimed at the overthrow of a constitutional government through use of subversion and armed conflict”. Counter Insurgency is defined as “those military, paramilitary, political economic and psychological and civic action taken to defeat insurgency”.

2.3 Terrorism. Terrorism, as one of the widely discussed issue in recent times, remains most debated as regards to its understanding. The Oxford Dictionary defines terrorism as “use of violence, intimidation, to achieve ends.” Chinese proverb defines terrorism as, “kill one, frighten ten thousand”. The most widely accepted definition enunciated by Yonah Alexander is “the use of violence against random civilian targets.

3 The Characteristics of Insurgency Radicalism

3.1 Insurgency and Terrorism has proven to be a low cost, low-risk, potentially high yield method of struggles for all kinds of groups and regimes. On the contrary, Counter Insurgency is a high cost, high risk and potentially low yield method, specially the military means. Carlos Merighela in his mini manual of 'Urban Guerrilla' stated that the characteristic objectives of terrorists include:

- (a) Massive and immediate publicity as a result of an outrage.
- (b) Series of atrocities.
- (c) To inspire followers and sympathizers to further acts of terrorism or insurrection.
- (d) To provoke the authorities into a repressive over-reaction which the terrorist can exploit to their political advantage.
- (e) As a means of extortion to force the authorities into making concessions, such as the release of imprisoned terrorists or the payment of ransom.
- (f) To sow inter-communal hatred and conflict.
- (g) To destroy public confidence in government and security agencies, and
- (h) To coerce or intimidate communities and activists into obeying the terrorist leadership.⁷

4 Changing Face of Conflicts and Assassination

4.1 Today's terrorist threats emerge primarily from state sponsorship and non-state actors with few ties to the governments. Gilmore Commission defined State terrorism as the "active involvement of a foreign government in training, arming and providing other logistical and intelligence assistance as well as sanctuary to an otherwise autonomous terrorist group for the purpose of carrying out violent acts on behalf of that government against its enemies." State terrorism relates to the act of state sponsoring terrorist groups against another country. State terrorism also implies to a State who unleash a reign of terror either in an occupied land e.g. Israel in occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip of Palestine, and Yugoslavia's forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1990s.

4.2 Non state actors like Al-Qaida, Aum Shinrikyo of Japan, FARC in Columbia, etc, are acting more on their own and are resorting to car bombs, suicide bombings (prominent is the 9/11 attack in US) and attacking civilian diplomatic buildings. They have their own funding networks through private business, independent wealth, charities, narco-trafficking and local financial support. In many states where the governments are weak in providing basic public services, these groups create parallel public service institutions. They usually exploit volatile areas, such as Chechnya, Afghanistan and Columbia where local conflicts help terrorist/militant recruitment.

5 Shape and Nature of Conflicts and Terrorism in South Asia

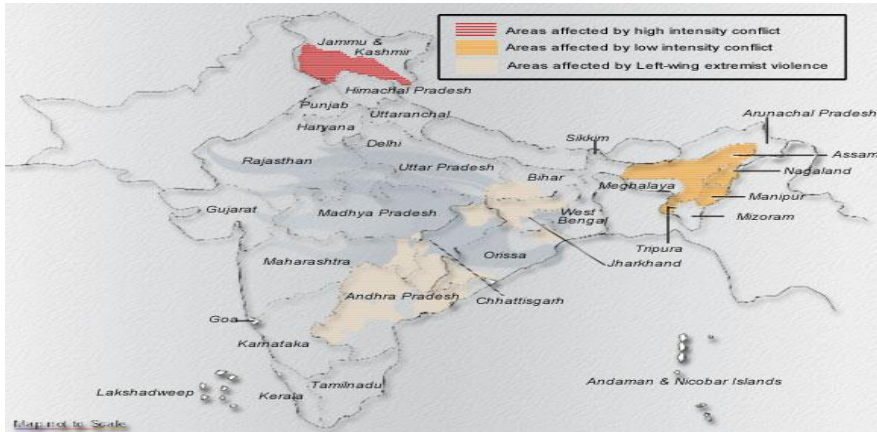
5.1 Internal security problems in South Asia and their ramifications for regional stability have been influenced by a host of international and internal factors. The reasons for internal conflicts are usually peculiar to each country but violence and terrorism follow a similar pattern in the region. Religious and ethnic extremism and search for religious and ethnic co-relation has created conditions for long drawn internecine conflicts in most of the countries in the region. Many of these countries are facing serious threats of political and factional violence, terrorism and economic upheavals.

5.2 The resolution of conflicts in South Asia is complicated because of historical antagonism between various communities and ethnic groups including its legacy of colonial

past. Prolonged India-Pakistan stand off, India’s number of internal conflicts, conflict in Sri Lanka and turbulence in Nepal has created an atmosphere of political, social and economic uncertainty in the region particularly in the disturbed areas. In the International field, the destabilization of Cold War and the haphazard emergence of a variety of conflicting international strategic interference, the acquisition of nuclear weapons by both India and Pakistan have all exacerbated regional tensions. Country wise standing on the subject is discussed in the subsequent paragraphs.

6 India

6.1 Security problems associated with various insurgencies have persisted in India since its independence in 1947. For India (Map-3), militancy, in Jammu and Kashmir (J & K), insurgency and ethnic violence in the NE states, left wing extremist (Naxalite) movement in Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Chattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Orissa and violence perpetrated by the private armies of Bihar are problems that continue to fester. Another serious dimension is the large-scale induction of lethal and sophisticated weapons, narcotic and fake currencies across the border.



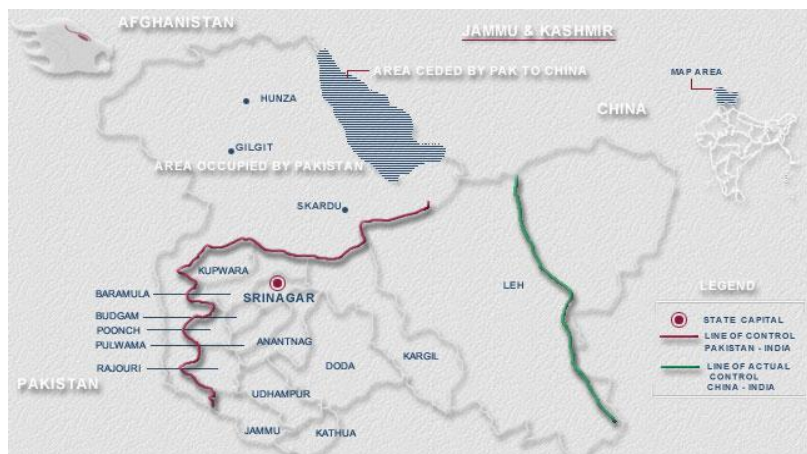
Map-2 : Conflict areas in India

6.2 There have also been a number of internal disturbances that rocked the country several times, e.g., Punjab crisis in 1985-93 and sectarian violence causing serious riots between majority Hindus and minority groups. Regrettably, two Prime Ministers of India i.e., Mrs. Indira Gandhi and Mr.

6.3 To curb terrorism, India enacted The Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA) in March 2002 replacing Terrorism and Disruptive (Prevention) Act (TADA) which was in force up to 1995.¹¹ This act, so far has proscribed 32 groups as terrorist organizations. India is also working with a number of countries and international organizations in their joint effort to reduce terrorism.

7 Jammu (J) & Kashmir (K)

7.1 J & K remains the most serious internal security threat challenge in India. The onuses of this issue has resulted into four confrontations between India and Pakistan and the recent (2002) military build up and stand off across Indo-Pak border. In the broader perspective of the regional strategy and stability, this five decades old conflict, in fact, is hemorrhaging whole of South Asia. The issue of Kashmir dates back to the partition era. Pakistan argues that the Muslim population of Kashmir being absolute majority preferred to join Pakistan under the 'Partition Theory' as against the wish of Hindu Raja which resulted into the confrontation between India and Pakistan in 1948. It caused the division of J & K between these two countries with Line of Control (LOC) in between (Map 3).



Map-3 : Line of Control in Jammu & Kashmir

7.3 Global attention was significantly focused on the State consequent to the military buildup along the borders of India and Pakistan which took place by the end of December 2001. This build up commenced after terrorists attack on Indian Parliament in 13 December 2001. Taking the advantage of US 'War on Terrorism', India successfully mobilised international opinion against Pakistan on cross border infiltration.

8 Assam

8.1 Assam experience moderately intense insurgency with as many as 34 militant outfits.¹³ However, United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) and National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB) are most active and deadliest amongst those. ULFA was established on 7 April 1979 and operated within All Assam Student Union (AASU) - All Assam Gano Parishad (AAGSP) agitation against illegal immigrants. While the secession from India was the declared goal, these organisations adopted the popular anti-foreigner plank. On 28 March 1980, the State was declared as a disturbed area and Army was deployed in the state to restore the law and order.

8.2 The Bodos, a major tribe of plainsmen felt neglected and exploited by Assamese, are demanding better social, political and economic conditions since independence. The All Bodo Student Union (ABSU), formed in 1967 pioneered their cause. Bodo Security Force was established in 1989, and later renamed as NDFB. NDFB resorted to the use of force in order to secure an 'independent Bodo nation' north of River Brahmaputra. NDFB carried out a large proportion of violent activities including killings, extortion, explosions, arson and attacks on police stations.

9 Tripura

9.1 Tripura was a princely state that acceded to the Indian Union on 15 October 1949. It became Union Territory on 01 November 1956 and a full-fledged State on 21 January 1972. The indigenous people of Tripura comprise of 19 tribes and 'Kok Borok' is the lingua franca of the tribal people. The genesis of the insurgency in Tripura is linked to the influx of Bengali refugees from the then East Pakistan following the Partition in 1947.

9.2 With the perception of protecting their rights, some tribes formed a political front called Tripura Upajati Jubo Samity (TUJS) in June 1967. They demanded an Autonomous District Council, adoption of Kok Borok as the official language and restoration of tribal lands allotted to non-tribal. By 1970, some elements name Tripura Sena, took up arms to secure their demand. Subsequently in December 1978, Tripura National Volunteers (TNV) was formed to fight for an independent tribal state. To pacify tribal feelings, the state government passed the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council Act in 1979, which was strongly opposed, by a section of a Bengali population.

10 Nagaland

10.1 Among all the ethnic groups and tribes living in the northeast, the Nagas were the first to revolt against the Indian Government i.e., on 14 August 1947, under the aegis of the Naga National Council (NNC). In 1950, NNC publicly resolved to establish a sovereign Naga state (during the Partition, Nagaland was a district of Assam). In 1951, the council through a referendum claimed for 99 percent people's support for Nagas independence and boycotted election in 1952, beginning a violent secessionist movement. In 1956, NNC covertly formed Naga Federal Government (NFG) and a Naga Federal Army (NFA). In this backdrop, Army was called in for CIO.

10.2 Nagaland was accorded statehood on 01 Dec 1963. Thereafter, the Centre initiated a series of dialogues with the insurgents but failed. In 1972, NNC, NFG and NFA were banned. Following a massive CIO by the SF, a section of insurgents groups signed Shillong Accord with the Centre on 11 November 1975, whereupon they accepted the Indian Constitution and agreed to discontinue militant struggle.

11 Manipur

11.1 There are about 30 different tribes and ethnic groups in Manipur who are plagued by internecine conflicts. Manipur was fully merged with the Indian Union on 15 October 1949 and became a State in 1972. Meities, a major ethnic group of Hindu religion, consists of more than 50 percent of the state population. They strongly resented the special privileges enjoyed by the scheduled tribes in the State and felt that their Hindu identification brought them no benefits.

11.2 Meitei insurgents stepped up their activities during 1979-81. In September 1980, the entire Imphal Valley was declared as the disturbed area. The intensive CIO caused a number of setbacks to the militant groups and to their activities. However, by the end of 80s, they resurfaced and formed a political wing called Revolutionary People's Front (RPF). Meitei insurgent groups, seeking a pan-Mongoloid identity, asserted their force against the Mayangs (outsider Muslims).

12 Mizoram

12.1 Bru National Liberation Front (BNLF) had been demanding a separate Autonomous District Council for Bru tribal in the north western belt of the state since 1997. The government opened negotiations on the issue of repatriation of Bru Tribal from Tripura, but these proved abortive because of difference over the modalities of the negotiation process. However, in recent years, the state largely remained free from militant violence.

13 Meghalaya

13.1 Meghalaya is grappled with political uncertainties and problems posed by the two militant outfits, the Hyniewtrep National Liberation Council (HNLC) and the Achik National Volunteer Council (ANVC). Due to proximity of this State with Assam and other insurgency infested States of the Northeast, it is an area which is prone to insurgent activities and a State of nascent insurgency prevails.

14 Arunachal Pradesh

14.1 Arunachal Pradesh witnessed the spill over effect of insurgencies from the neighbouring states, particularly Nagaland, Assam and Manipur. The Tirap and Changlang districts of the State are turning into a safe haven for these insurgents. Insurgent groups such as ULFA, NSCN-K and Bodo outfits are reportedly using Arunachal Pradesh territory to locate their hideouts and for the subversive activities.

15 Punjab

15.1 The secessionist movement for Khalistan dates back to 1978 but was defeated by the Indian SF in 1993 which took away 21,469 lives. The Operation 'Blue Star' followed by 'Operation Woodrose' by Indian Army stroked a severe blow to the heightened movement. Assassination of the Mrs. Indira Gandhi (1984) by her bodyguard of Sikh origin is a fallout tragedy.

16 Left Wing Extremists Groups

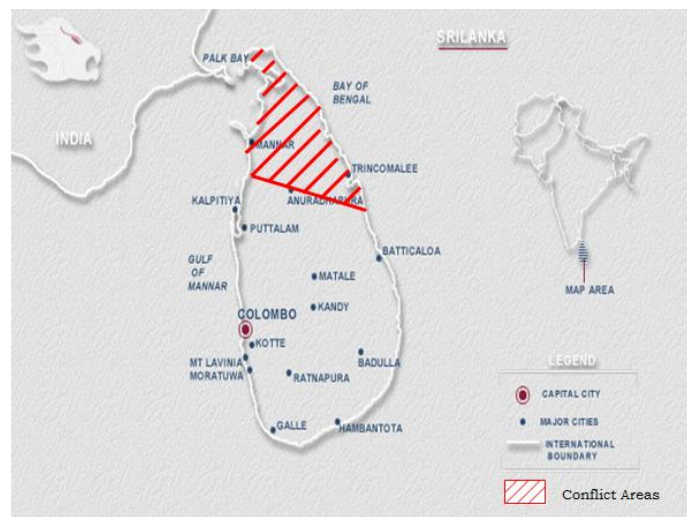
16.1 Left wing extremists groups, the Naxalites, continued to perpetrate violence in their strongholds in Bihar and Andhra Pradesh as well as sustained their activities in Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Orissa. Various Naxalites outfits joined hands to float the First United Army of the Naxalites, the Peoples Guerilla Army (PGA), early in December 2000.

17 Religious Extremists Groups

17.1 Religious fanatics/extremists of both Hindu and Muslim origin confront each other with communal mistrust and vengeance. The proscribed Students Islamic Movements of India (SIMI) and the Deendar Anjuman are reportedly involved in several subversive activities and also in promoting extremism. The diehard members of Rastriya Sevak Sangstha (RSS) and Visha Hindu Parishad (VHP) or Shiv Sena are of a big concern to the secular framework of India.

18 Sri Lanka

18.1 A number of Tamil militant organisations have come into existence in Sri Lanka (Map-4) over the years. Some of them have withered away while the other has come over ground to join the democratic mainstream consequent to a renunciation of military means. The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) is currently the only active and the deadliest militant organisation. At their formation, all these groups vowed to achieve a separate Tamil Eelam (state) with north and north east of the country through military means.



Map-4: Sri Lanka showing conflicts area

18.2 LTTE was founded in 1976 and began its armed conflict with the Sri Lanka Government in 1983. They rely on a guerilla strategy that includes the use of terrorist tactics. The Tigers have integrated a battlefield strategy with a terrorist program that also target personnel in the conflict area and senior politician and military leaders across the country. The Tigers are most notorious for their cadre of suicide bombers, the Black Tigers.

18.3 Though Tigers control most of the northern and eastern coastal areas of Sri Lanka but have conducted operations through out the islands. Stationed in the Northern Sri Lanka, LTTE leader, Velupillai Prabhakaran, has established an excellent network of checkpoints and informants to keep track of any outsiders who enter the group's area of control. The LTTE is estimated to have 8,000 to 10,000 armed combatants in Sri Lanka, with a core of trained fighters of approximately 3000 to 6000.

18.4 However, the peace process received a fresh impetus after 05 December 2001 election, which brought the United National Party (UNP)-led United National Front (UNF) to power with Ranil Wickremasinghe as the Prime Minister. The LTTE leader and the current Prime Minister signed the Norwegian brokered MOU on the Permanent Cessation of Hostilities on 22 February 2002. Teams comprising representatives from Scandinavian countries, the Sri Lankan Government and the LTTE will monitor the implementation of 22 February Truce. In September 2002, these parties have started a peace negotiation.

19 Pakistan

19.1 "Sectarian terrorism has been going on for years. Every one of us is fed up of it. It is becoming unbearable. Our peace loving people are keen to get rid of the Klashnikovs and weapon culture." – General Pervez Musharaf, President of Pakistan commented in his address to the Nation on 12 January 2002. Historically, Pakistan (Map-5) is prone to easy and abundant supply of weapons with conflicts of ethnicity and regionalism.

19.2 The entire ethnic conflicts have two dimensions; one is between Mohajirs (refugees from India during Partition in 1947 less those from Indian Punjab) and Sindhis, Pathans and Punjabis and the sectarian violence between the Sunni and Shia militant groups. The roots of Mohajir related ethnic conflict is primarily concentrated in Karachi and in other urban regions of Sindh. Mohajir's dominance in Pakistan politics after the Partition gradually eroded by the Punjabi bureaucratic-military clique and the federal power gradually transferred to Punjab.



Map-5: Map of Pakistan

19.3 The sectarian conflict within Pakistan began in 1980s, when a group of Deobandi militants formed the Anjuman Sipae Sahaba (ASS) to wage a war against Shia landlords of the Jhangs. The organization was later renamed as Sipah-e-Shahaba of Pakistan (SSP). In 1993, Shias formed the Sipah-e-Muhammed to counter the threat from Sunni militant groups. The extremist groups within SSP formed Lashker-e-Jhanvi (LeJ), whose leadership is entirely made up of people who fought in Afghanistan. Significant proportions of those killed in this sectarian violence are the students of madrassas.

20 Nepal

20.1 The genesis of the insurgency in Nepal (Map-6) lies in the transformation of the Himalayan Kingdom into a constitutional monarchy as well as the age old repression based on the caste system. Bahuns and Khatriyas, constituting 30 percent population is the ruling regime owing over 90 percent government top positions. In 1990, centuries of oligarchy gave way to limited democracy. Making Nepal a Republic better governance and assertive Nepali identity are few of the goals of the radical left wing insurgency in Nepal.

20.2 The Maoists have indulged in a series of militant activities ranging from abduction to looting banks and engaging police and army in violent and long drawn encounters. They follow a unique tactics of attacking en-mass to pockets of SF ensuring success. In the last seven years, approximately 5000 people were killed in this insurgency related violence. It is suspected that Maoist guerrillas may have established more than fraternal links with MCC



Map-6: Map of Nepal

that operates in the Indian states of Bihar and PWG that is active in five adjoining Indian districts. After a number of failed dialogues, Maoist insurgents re-launched coordinated countrywide strikes on the night of 23 Nov 2001. Government declared countrywide emergency and their armed forces counter offensive is bringing some successes. Recently a political dialogue has been initiated with Maoist leaders with no tangible progress yet.

21 Bhutan

21.1 The issue of democratization of the polity as demanded by the Nepali immigrants and the issue of terrorist outfits active in India which have set up bases in Bhutan (Map-7) appears to be the major features of the mountain Kingdoms internal security scenario. The first issue relates to the conflict of identity and power sharing. There are two broad categories of 1.9 million people of Bhutan; the original inhabitants termed as Drukpas (of the north) and the Lhotshampas (of the south) who are immigrants of Nepal origin. Of the three original ethnic groups - Ngalongs, Sarchops and khengs - the Ngalongs dominates the state structure. According to 1981 census, Bhutanese of Nepali origin constituted 53 percent the Sarchops comprised 30 percent and the Ngalong, the ruling class 17 percent. Bhutan National Assembly enacted the Nationality Law in 1958 that, as a one-time measure, granted citizenship to Nepalese immigrants. However, between 1961 and 1981, Nepalese immigration to Bhutan increased rapidly in search of employment.

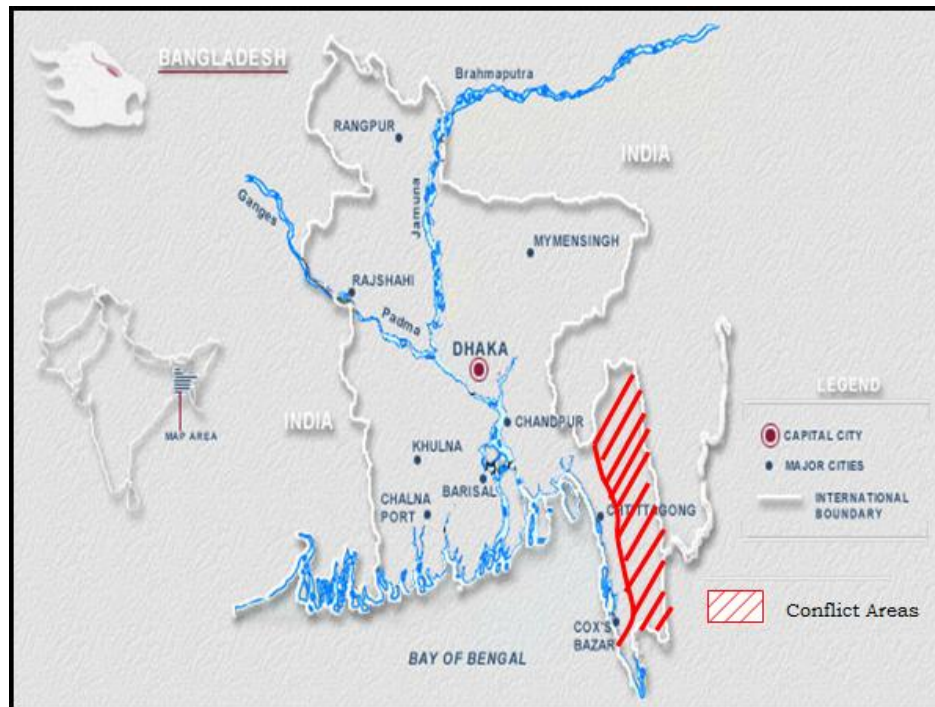


Map-7: Map of Bhutan

21.2 The Indian terrorists' outfits, ULFA, KLO and NDFB are operating from the forests of Bhutan that run contiguous to Indian Territory since 1992. These insurgent groups are carrying out ambush on roads that passes through Indian Territory on their way from one part of Bhutan to the other. Government has formulated four pronged strategy on these insurgents; peaceful negotiation, cutting off logistics, punishing collaborators and lastly military actions.

22 Bangladesh

22.1 Bangladesh (Map-8) since 1998, largely remained peaceful and free from insurgency related violence. It had an insurgency for more than two decades in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT). It all began in 1976, when a section of dominant tribal group, Chakma, under the



Map-8: Map of Bangladesh

banner of Parbattya Chattagram Janasanghati Samity (PCJSS), led by Mr. M N Larma took up arms in the cause of their self determination. They took refuge in the adjoining state of Tripura and Mizoram of India. After some initial setbacks, Bangladesh Government very carefully launched three-pronged measures i.e. military, socio-economic and political, which ultimately brought about a successful conclusion of the episode in December 1997.

22.1 SF have been able to contain insurgency at its lowest ebb and created a congenial environment for the socio-economic and political development and political negotiations. Government invested a lot of money and effort for the socio economic development of the area. Simultaneously, political dialogues with the insurgents group started from 1985 at various levels. In the meanwhile, insurgents orchestrated an exodus of almost 60,000 tribals from the hills to India as refugees.

23 Options for South Asia

23.1 South Asia is perhaps is passing through a period of transition in its fight against insurgency and terrorism. This Region is today driven by more armed conflicts than any other region in the world. Every one of the seven states of this region, except the Maldives, is facing challenge from armed militants' group's miscreants and suffered a great loss particularly in the field of economic development. In the wake of general awareness and anti-terrorists feelings worldwide, countries of South Asia can exploit this opportunity to resolve its co-related issues either independently or collectively.

23.2 Addressing the Core Issues: "There is a desperate need to study and understand the deep rooted causes that divide groups of people who inhabit the same land and form one nation. The causes of these conflicts and the form they take, whether it is terrorism or otherwise must be studied and understood in a scientific and objective manner...Peace is more than a simple absence of war. All uprisings revolve around a cause, greater or smaller, which is exploited by the militants. Nations have to address to the core issues of the problem that sprout insurgency and terrorism. The core issues lies in injustices and poverty. Injustice is centered around the political spectrum and poverty in the economic order.

24 Shredding of the Political Gimmicks and Change of Mindsets

24.1 It has always been felt that there is a deep under current of politico-strategic dissonance in South Asia, which limits the scope of regional cooperation and understanding. The shadow of Partition, which left a number of issues unresolved between the nations, still looms large in the region. Some of these have been transformed into militancy resulting terrorism. The bi-lateral relations between some of these nations are characterised by mistrust and suspicion. Some even nurtured each others burden which compounded the issues.

24.2 All member nations have to come out of these political gimmicks with adjustable mindsets. Leaders in particular and people in general have to shake off the psyche of mistrust and suspicion and accept the reality that the member nations of this region is destined to live side by side and their common goal is to alleviate poverty and to ensure the economic development. Prime Minister of India Mr. Atal Bihari Bajpayee commented in the Agra Summit between India and Pakistan on September 2001 that "mindsets will have to be altered and historical baggage will have to be jettisoned."²² President of Sri Lanka Chandrika Kumaratunga commented, "We must first revolutionize the minds and hearts of our Governments, the leaders of the society and the masses.

25 Cooperation and Common Stands/Policies

25.1 Appreciating the ills of the terrorism, all nations of the region, at the very outset has to denounce the act of terrorism. It is to be noted that, after 9/11 attack on US, all countries in South Asia have strongly supported the coalition efforts against terrorism. The challenge is now to turn that support into concrete actions which can significantly defeat the terrorists within and from the region. Regional Convention on Suppression of Terrorism (RCST) which came into force from 22 August 1988 under SAARC are to be reinforced and SAARC Terrorists Offences Monitoring Desk (STOMD) to be activated. Notably, India's cooperation has had helped to resolve the CHT issue of Bangladesh.

26 Democratic and Preventive Diplomacy

26.1 An efficient democratic Government will attempt to remain sensitive to the needs of all sectors of the society and take effective action to remedy widely perceived injustices before they fester into full-blown rebellion. Most of the militant outbursts in the region are the resultant effect of ethnic dissonance. In cases of long standing and potentially bitter and violent ethnic conflicts within liberal democratic states, imaginative policies designed to give fuller recognition and rights to a minority population can be the most effective way of preventing or greatly diminishing polarisation and armed conflicts in South Asia.

27 Conclusion

27.1 In most of the cases, the roots of insurgency / terrorism lie in injustice and poverty. The case of insurgency in parts of South Asia could be an example of the rise of terrorism due to the failure of the existing political and economic order. The rationale or the logic that insurgents and terrorist groups are using is to be understood and knowing their mindset would help to fight them effectively. South Asia is the home of four great religions. Their enabling spirituality should lift the region beyond petty, man made differences

27.2 The stability in South Asia and the success and failure of initiative for the resolution of existing conflicts will, in the 21st Century, depend on the exploration of new ideas. Ideologies and strategies that provide concrete and effective alternative to violence as a means to political end. These alternatives will have to appeal, equally to the establishment and to the alienated groupings that currently believe that violence is the only method to secure some relief within the prevailing system.

27.3 International community and nations of South Asia must not lose sight of democratic responses on the following:

- (a) Finding the root cause of terrorism and addressing the core issue of discontent.
- (b) Drastic measures against terrorists vis-à-vis human rights i.e., avoidance of heavy handed over response.
- (c) Finding the lasting solution rather than reactive responses.

28 Recommendations

28.1 In the light of the above discussions, following steps are recommended to counter terrorism and conflict management in South Asia:

- (a) Economic Development: To focus maximum effort on the economic development and social engineering of the people and the Region this will automatically address many core issues and grievances.
- (b) Implementation of RCST: Appropriate revision and stringent implementation of RCST of SAARC and activation of STOMD. Intensification of political dialogues, either bilaterally or multilaterally to resolve the on going conflicts with the positive mindsets.
- (c) Regional Conflict and Crisis Management Centre: Formation of this Centre (may be as an organ of SAARC Secretariat) may serve as a forum for research, discussions, conferences, etc., to generate options for problem solving.
- (d) People to People Contact: Peoples to peoples contact within the Region to be enhanced. To this effect, all barriers of visits, exchange programme, trade and commerce (especially for the nations with weaker economy) to be lifted as earliest as possible.

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