



Terrorism in India

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Table of Contents

Chapter 1 - Terrorism in India

Chapter 2 - Major Terrorist Incidents in India

Chapter 3 - Sikh Extremism

Chapter 4 - Naxalite

Chapter 5 - Insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir

Chapter 1

Terrorism in India

Terrorism in India is primarily attributable to religious communities and Naxalite radical movements.

The regions with long term terrorist activities today are Jammu and Kashmir, Mumbai, Central India (Naxalism) and Seven Sister States (independence and autonomy movements). As of 2006, at least 232 of the country's 608 districts were afflicted, at differing intensities, by various insurgent and terrorist movements. In August 2008, National Security Advisor M K Narayanan has said that there are as many as 800 terrorist cells operating in the country.

Chronology of major incidents

Western India

Maharashtra

Mumbai has been the most preferred target for most terrorist organizations, primarily the separatist forces from Pakistan. Over the past few years a series of attacks including explosions in local trains in July 2006, to the most recent and unprecedented attacks of 26 November 2008, where two of the prime hotels, a landmark train station and a Jewish Chabad house, in south Mumbai, were attacked and sieged.

Terrorist attacks in Mumbai include:

- 12 March 1993 - Series of 13 bombs go off killing 257
- 6 December 2002 - Bomb goes off in a bus in Ghatkopar killing 2
- 27 January 2003 - Bomb goes off on a bicycle in Vile Parle killing 1
- 14 March 2003 - Bomb goes off in a train in Mulund killing 10
- 28 July 2003 - Bomb goes off in a bus in Ghatkopar killing 4
- 25 August 2003 - Two Bombs go off in cars near the Gateway of India and Zaveri Bazaar killing 50
- 11 July 2006 - Series of seven bombs go off in trains killing 209
- 26 November 2008 to 29 November 2008 - Coordinated series of attacks killing at least 172.

On 13 February 2010, a bomb explosion at the German Bakery in Pune killed fourteen people, and injured at least 60 more.

Jammu and Kashmir

Armed insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir killed tens of thousands till date.

Northern and Northwestern India

Bihar

Existence of certain insurgent groups like the *CPI-ML*, *Peoples war* and *MCC*, is a major concern as they frequently attack local policemen and politicians.

Poor governance and the law and order system in Bihar have helped increase the menace caused by the militias.

The State has witnessed many massacres by these groups.

The main victims of the violence by these groups are helpless people (including women, old and children) who are killed in massacres. The state police is ill equipped to take on the AK-47, AK-56 of the militants with their vintage 303 rifles. The militants have used landmines to kill ambush police parties as well.

The root cause of the militant activities in the state is huge disparity among different caste groups. After Independence, land reforms were supposed to be implemented, thereby giving the low caste and the poor a share in the lands which was till then held mostly by high caste people.

However, due to caste based divisive politics in the state land reforms were never implemented properly. This led to growing sense of alienation among the low caste.

Communist groups like CPI-ML, MCC and People's War took advantage of this and instigated the low caste people to take up arms against establishment which was seen as a tool in the hands of rich. They started taking up lands of rich by force killing the high caste people.

The high caste people resorted to use of force by forming their own army *Ranvir Sena* to take on the naxalites. The State witnessed a bloody period in which the groups tried to prove their supremacy by mass killings. The Police remained a mute witness to these killings as it lacked the means to take any action.

However now the Ranvir Sena has significantly weakened with the arrest of its top brass. The other groups are still active.

There have been arrests in various parts of the country, particularly those made by the Delhi and Mumbai police in the recent past, indicating that extremist/terrorist outfits have been spreading their networks in this State. There is a strong suspicion that Bihar is also being used as a transit point by the small-arms, fake currency and drug dealers entering from Nepal and terrorists reportedly infiltrating through Nepal and Bangladesh.

However, in recent years these attacks by various caste groups have come down with better government being practised.

Punjab

The Sikhs form a majority in the Indian state of Punjab. During the 1970s, a section of Sikh leaders cited various political, social and cultural issues to allege that the Sikhs were being cornered and ignored in Indian Society, and Sikhism was being absorbed into the Hindu fold. This gradually led to an armed movement in the Punjab, led by some key figures demanding a separate state for Sikhs.

The insurgency intensified during 1980s when the movement turned violent and the name Khalistan resurfaced and sought independence from the Indian Union. Led by Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale who, though not in favor in the creation of Khalistan but also was not against it, began using militancy to stress the movement's demands. Soon things turned extreme with India alleging that neighboring Pakistan supported these militants, who, by 1983-84, had begun to enjoy widespread support among Sikhs.

In 1984, Operation Blue Star was conducted by the Indian government to stem out the movement. It involved an assault on the Golden Temple complex, which Sant Bhindranwale had fortified in preparation of an army assault. Indira Gandhi, India's then prime minister, ordered the military to storm the temple, who eventually had to use tanks.

After a seventy-four-hour firefight, the army successfully took control of the temple. In doing so, it damaged some portions of the Akal Takht, the Sikh Reference Library and some damaged to the Golden Temple itself. According to Indian government sources, eighty-three army personnel were killed and 249 injured. Militant casualties were 493 killed and eighty-six injured.

During same year, the assassination of Indira Gandhi by two Sikh bodyguards, believed to be driven by the Golden Temple affair, resulted in widespread anti-Sikh riots, especially in New Delhi. Following Operation Black Thunder in 1988, Punjab Police, first under Julio Ribeiro and then under KPS Gill, together with the Indian Army eventually succeeded in pushing the movement underground.

In 1985, Sikh terrorists bombed an Air India flight from Canada to India, killing all 329 people on board Air India Flight 182. It is the worst terrorist act in Canada's history.

The ending of Sikh militancy and the desire for a Khalistan catalyzed when the then-Prime Minister of Pakistan, Benazir Bhutto handed all intelligence material concerning

Punjab militancy to the Indian government, as a goodwill gesture. The Indian government used that intelligence to put an end to those who were behind attacks in India and militancy.

The ending of overt Sikh militancy in 1993 led to a period of relative calm, punctuated by militant acts (*i.e.* the assassination of Punjab CM, Beant Singh in 1995) attributed to half a dozen or so operating Sikh militant organisations. These organisations include Babbar Khalsa International, Khalistan Commando Force, Khalistan Liberation Force and Khalistan Zindabad Force.

New Delhi

Three explosions went off in the Indian capital of New Delhi on 29 October 2005 which killed more than 60 people and injured at least 200 others. The high number of casualties made the bombings the deadliest attack in India of 2005. It was followed by 5 bomb blasts on 13 September 2008.

Delhi security summit

The Delhi summit on security took place on 14 February 2007 with the foreign ministers of China, India, and Russia meeting in Hyderabad House, Delhi, India to discuss terrorism, drug trafficking, reform of the United Nations, and the security situations in Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, and North Korea.

Attack on Indian parliament

Terrorists on 13 December 2001 attacked the Parliament of India resulting in a 45-minute gun battle in which 9 policemen and parliament staffer were killed. All the five terrorists were also killed by the security forces and were identified as Pakistani nationals. The attack took place around 11:40 am (IST), minutes after both Houses of Parliament had adjourned for the day.

The suspected terrorists dressed in commando fatigues entered Parliament in a car through the VIP gate of the building. Displaying Parliament and Home Ministry security stickers, the vehicle entered the Parliament premises.

The terrorists set off massive blasts and used AK-47 rifles, explosives and grenades for the attack. Senior Ministers and over 200 Members of Parliament were inside the Central Hall of Parliament when the attack took place. Security personnel sealed the entire premises which saved many lives.

Uttar Pradesh

Ayodhya crisis

The long simmering Ayodhya crisis finally culminated in a terrorist attack on the site of the 16th century Babri Masjid -Demolished Ancient Masjid in Ayodhya on 5 July 2005. Following the two-hour gunfight between Lashkar-e-Toiba terrorists based in Pakistan and Indian police, in which six terrorists were killed, opposition parties called for a nationwide strike with the country's leaders condemning the attack, believed to have been masterminded by Dawood Ibrahim.

Varanasi blasts

A series of blasts occurred across the Hindu holy city of Varanasi on 7 March 2006. Fifteen people are reported to have been killed and as many as 101 others were injured. No-one has accepted responsibility for the attacks, but it is speculated that the bombings were carried out in retaliation of the arrest of a Lashkar-e-Toiba agent in Varanasi earlier in February 2006.

On 5 April 2006 the Indian police arrested six Islamic militants, including a cleric who helped plan bomb blasts. The cleric is believed to be a commander of a banned Bangladeshi Islamic militant group, Harkatul Jihad-al Islami and is linked to the Inter-Services Intelligence, the Pakistani spy agency.

Nagaland

The first and perhaps the most significant insurgency was in Nagaland from the early 1950s until it was finally quelled in the early 1980s through a mixture of repression and co-optation. The *National Socialist Council of Nagaland-Isak-Muivah* (NSCN-IM), demands an independent Nagaland and has carried out several attacks on Indian military installations in the region. According to government officials, 599 civilians, 235 security forces and 862 terrorists have lost their lives between 1992 and 2000.

On 14 June 2001, a cease-fire agreement was signed between the government of India and the NSCN-IM which had received widespread approval and support in Nagaland. Terrorist outfits such as the Naga National Council-Federal (NNC-F) and the National Council of Nagaland-Khaplang (NSCN-K) also welcomed the development.

Certain neighbouring states, especially Manipur, raised serious concerns over the cease-fire. They feared that NSCN would continue insurgent activities in its state and demanded New Delhi scrap the ceasefire deal and renew military action. Despite the cease-fire the NSCN has continued its insurgency.

Assam

After Nagaland, Assam is the most volatile state in the region. Beginning 1979, the indigenous people of Assam demanded that the illegal immigrants who had emigrated from Bangladesh to Assam be detected and deported. The movement led by All Assam Students Union began non-violently with satyagraha, boycotts, picketing and courting arrests.

Those protesting frequently came under police action. In 1983 an election was conducted which was opposed by the movement leaders. The election led to widespread violence. The movement finally ended after the movement leaders signed an agreement (called Assam Accord) with the central government in 15 August 1985.

Under the provisions of this accord, anyone who entered the state illegally between January 1966 and March 1971 were allowed to remain but were disenfranchised for ten years, while those who entered after 1971 faced expulsion. A November 1985 amendment to the Indian citizenship law allows non citizens who entered Assam between 1961 and 1971 to have all the rights of citizenship except the right to vote for a period of ten years.

New Delhi also gave special administration autonomy to the Bodos in the state. However, the Bodos demanded for a separate Bodoland which led to a clash between the Bengalis, the Bodos and the Indian military resulting in hundreds of deaths.

There are several organizations which advocate the independence of Assam. The most prominent of which is the ULFA (United Liberation Front of Assam). Formed in 1971, the ULFA has two main goals, the independence of Assam and the establishment of a socialist government.

The ULFA has carried out several terrorist attacks in the region targeting the Indian Military and non-combatants. The group assassinates political opponents, attacks police and other security forces, blasts railroad tracks, and attacks other infrastructure facilities. The ULFA is believed to have strong links with *Nationalist Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN)*, Maoists and the Naxalites.

It is also believed that they carry out most of their operations from the Kingdom of Bhutan. Because of ULFA's increased visibility, the Indian government outlawed the group in 1986 and declared Assam a troubled area. Under pressure from New Delhi, Bhutan carried a massive operation to drive out the ULFA militants from its territory.

Backed by the Indian Army, Thimphu was successful in killing more than a thousand terrorists and extraditing many more to India while sustaining only 120 casualties. The Indian military undertook several successful operations aimed at countering future ULFA terrorist attacks, but the ULFA continues to be active in the region. In 2004, the ULFA targeted a public school in Assam killing 19 children and 5 adults.

Assam remains the only state in the northeast where terrorism is still a major issue. The Indian Military was successful in dismantling terrorist outfits in other areas, but have been criticized by human rights groups for allegedly using harsh methods when dealing with terrorists.

On 18 September 2005, a soldier was killed in Jiribam, Manipur, near the Manipur-Assam border by members of the ULFA.

Tripura

Tripura witnessed a surge in terrorist activities in the 1990s. New Delhi blamed Bangladesh for providing a safe haven to the insurgents operating from its territory. The area under control of the *Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council* was increased after a tripartite agreement between New Delhi, the state government of Tripura, and the Council. The government has since been brought the movement under control though certain rebellious factions still linger.

Manipur

In Manipur, militants formed an organization known as the *People's Liberation Army*. Their main goal was to unite the Meitei tribes of Burma and establish an independent state of Manipur. However, the movement was thought to have been suppressed after a fierce clash with Indian security forces in the mid 1990s.

On 18 September 2005, six separatist rebels were killed in fighting between Zomi Revolutionary Army and Zomi Revolutionary Front in the Churachandpur District.

On 20 September 2005, 14 Indian soldiers were ambushed and killed by 20 rebels from the Kanglei Yawol Kanna Lup (KYKL) terrorist organization, armed with AK-56 rifles, in the village of Nariang, 22 miles southwest of Manipur's capital Imphal. "Unidentified rebels using automatic weapons ambushed a road patrol of the army's Gorkha Rifles killing eight on the spot," said a spokesman for the Indian government.

Mizoram

The *Mizo National Front* fought for over 2 decades with the Indian Military in an effort to gain independence. As in neighbouring states the insurgency was quelled by force.

South India

Karnataka

Karnataka is considerably less affected by terrorism in spite of having many places of historical importance and the IT hub of India, Bengaluru. However, recently Naxal activity has been increasing in the Western Ghats. Also, a few attacks have occurred,

major ones including an attack on IISc on 28 December 2005 and serial blasts in Bengaluru on 26 July 2008.

Andhra Pradesh

Andhra Pradesh is one of the few southern states affected by terrorism, although of a far different kind and on a much smaller scale. The terrorism in Andhra Pradesh stems from the *People's War Group* or PWG, popularly known as Naxalites.

The 'PWG, has been operating in India for over two decades with most of its operations in the Telangana region in Andhra Pradesh. The group is also active in Orissa and Bihar. Unlike the Kashmiri insurgents and ULFA, PWG is a Maoist terrorist organisation and communism is one of its primary goals.

Having failed to capture popular support in the elections, they resorted to violence as a means to voice their opinions. The group targets Indian Police, multinational companies and other influential institutions in the name of the communism. PWG has also targeted senior government officials, including the attempted assassination of former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu.

It reportedly has a strength of 800 to 1,000 well armed militants and is believed to have close links with the Maoists in Nepal and the LTTE of Sri Lanka. According to the Indian government, on an average, more than 60 civilians, 60 naxal rebels and a dozen policemen are killed every year because of PWG led insurgency. Also one of the major terrorist attack is 25 August 2007 Hyderabad Bombing.

Tamil Nadu

Tamil Nadu had LTTE *Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam* militants operating in state Tamil Nadu up until the assassination of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. LTTE had given many speeches in state Tamil Nadu led by Velupillai Prabhakaran, Tamilselvan and other Eelam members. Tamil Tigers, now a banned organisation, have been receiving many donations and support from India in the past. The Tamil Nadu Liberation Army, a militant Tamil movement in India that have ties to LTTE.

Tamil Nadu also faced terrorist attacks orchestrated by Muslim fundamentalists. For more information refer, 1998 Coimbatore bombings.

Chapter 2

Major Terrorist Incidents in India

1. 1993 Bombay bombings

1993 Bombay bombings

Location	Bombay, Maharashtra, India
Date	12 March 1993 13:30–15:40 (UTC+ 5.5)
Target	Hotels, office buildings, banks, etc.
Attack type	13 car bombs (RDX) containing shrapnel.
Death(s)	257
Injured	713
Belligerent(s)	Underworld Muslim criminal groups (D-Company)

The **1993 Bombay bombings** were a series of 13 bomb explosions that took place in Bombay (now Mumbai), Maharashtra, India on 12 March 1993. The coordinated attacks were the most destructive bomb explosions in Indian history. The single-day attacks resulted in up to 250 civilian fatalities and 700 injuries.

The attacks were coordinated by Dawood Ibrahim, don of the Bombay-based international organized crime syndicate named D-Company, which had also operated as a terrorist organization.

Ibrahim is believed to have ordered and helped organize the bombings in Bombay, through one of his subordinates, Tiger Memon. The bombings are also believed to have been financially assisted by the expatriate Indian smugglers, Hajji Ahmed, Hajji Umar and Taufiq Jaliawala, as well as the Pakistani smugglers, Aslam Bhatti and Dawood Jatt. The Indian authorities have also alleged the involvement of the Pakistani intelligence agency, Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) in the blasts.

It is believed that the attacks were carried out in retaliation for the enormous Muslim casualties and widespread damage to the Muslim owned businesses and properties which occurred during the Hindu-Muslim riots in Bombay on December 1992 and January 1993, in the fall-out of the demolition of the Babri Mosque.

Prelude

Background

In December 1992 and January 1993, there was widespread rioting in Mumbai following the 6 December destruction of the Babri Mosque in Ayodhya by extreme Hindu groups. Although there was no loss of life in the incident at the Babri Mosque, a series of riots soon erupted throughout the nation, most notably in Bombay. After five years following the December-January riots, the Srikrishna Commission Report stated that nine hundred individuals lost their lives and over two thousand were injured, most of them Muslim, in the riots.

Confession of Gul Mohammed

Three days before the bombings took place on 9 March 1993, a small time hood from the Behrampada slum in North east Bombay named Gul Noor Mohammad Sheikh a.k.a "*Gullu*" was detained at the Nav Pada police station. A participant in the communal riots that had rocked Bombay the previous year, Gullu was also one of the 19 men handpicked by the gold smuggler and chief mastermind, Tiger Memon and sent to Pakistan via Dubai on 19 February 1993, for training of the use of arms and bomb making.

Upon completion of his training, Gullu returned to Bombay via Dubai on 4 March 1993, only to find that in his absence the police had picked up his brothers to get him to surrender. In a vain attempt to secure his brothers' release, Gullu surrendered to the police. He confessed to his role in the riots, his training in Pakistan, and a conspiracy underway to bomb major locations around the city, including the Bombay Stock Exchange, Sahar International Airport and the Shiv Sena Bhavan. However, his conspiracy claim was dismissed by the police as "mere bluff".

The arrest of Gul Mohammed spurred Tiger Memon to advance the date of the blasts which were to coincide with the Shiv Jayanti celebrations in April 1993 to 12 March to pre-empt any police action.

The bombings

At 1:30 p.m. a powerful car bomb exploded in the basement of the Bombay Stock Exchange building. The 28-story office building housing the exchange was severely damaged, and many nearby office buildings also suffered some damage. About 50 were killed by this explosion. About 30 minutes later, another car bomb exploded elsewhere in

the city, and from 1:30 p.m. to 3:40 p.m. a total of 13 bombs exploded throughout Bombay. Most of the bombs were car bombs, but some were in scooters.

Three hotels, the Hotel Sea Rock, Hotel Juhu Centaur, and Hotel Airport Centaur, were targeted by suitcase bombs left in rooms booked by the perpetrators. Banks, the regional passport office, hotels, the Air India Building, and a major shopping complex were also hit. Bombs exploded at Zaveri Bazaar, area opposite of Century Bazaar, Katha Bazaar, Shiv Sena Bhawan, and Plaza Theatre. A jeep-bomb at the Century Bazaar exploded early, thwarting another attack. Grenades were also thrown at Sahar International Airport and at Fishermen's Colony, apparently targeting Hindus at the latter. A double decker bus was very badly damaged in one of the explosions and that single incident accounted for the greatest loss of life – perhaps up to ninety people were killed.

Locations attacked include

- Fisherman's Colony in Mahim causeway
- Zaveri Bazaar
- Plaza Cinema
- Century Bazaar
- Katha Bazaar
- Hotel Sea Rock
- Sahar Airport
- Air India Building
- Hotel Juhu Centaur
- Plaza Theatre near Shiv Sena HQ
- Lucky Petrol near Shiv Sena HQ
- Worli
- Bombay Stock Exchange Building
- Hotel Centaur, Santa Cruz
- Area opposite of Century Bazaar
- Passport Office

Aftermath

The official number of dead was 257 with 1,400 others injured (some news sources say 317 people died; this is due to a bomb which killed 60 in Calcutta on 17 March). Several days later, unexploded car bombs were discovered at a railway station. Terrorist groups based in Pakistan were suspected to be responsible for these bombings, and evidence uncovered pointed to the involvement of underworld don Dawood Ibrahim.

On 25 August 2003, two large and destructive bombs left in taxis exploded in south Mumbai – the Gateway of India and Zaveri Bazaar in the busy Kalbadevi area – killing 52 people, again entirely Hindus and wounding more than a hundred others. Two Pakistan based militant groups, Jaish-e-Mohammed and Lashkar-e-Toiba, were found to be responsible for the attacks. Along with the July 2006 train bombings in Mumbai, these attacks are believed to be in retaliation for the 2002 Gujarat riots in which more than a