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NATIONAL WORKSHOP ON INTERNAL SECURITY

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SEMINAR REPORT

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It is my pleasure to deliver the keynote address at the 4th *National Internal Security Workshop* being organised by CLAWS. I am happy to note that the event has become an annual feature on the CLAWS calendar and an opportunity to discuss and debate contemporary challenges that impact the Internal Security of the nation.

National Security today in this age of globalisation and proliferation of technology cannot be seen in isolation; neither can any State be insulated from the impact of global events. The international security landscape has been marked by events in recent times that have profoundly impacted our understanding of the security challenges of the future. While the traditional hotspots have remained alive and active, it is the unprecedented success achieved by radical militias in their efforts to redraw the map of nation states on theocratic ideology that has altered conventional perceptions on security.

With unresolved borders, inimical neighbourhood with a legacy of confrontation and strong ethnic and cultural linkages, India's internal security has been intricately linked to its external threats and challenges. As a nation with regional and global aspirations, India looks for a stable internal environment which is conducive for synergising and optimising the resources of the State for all round development. Undoubtedly, if we could improve our overall levels of peace, the dividend that would flow from this would substantially improve the nation's economic growth and prosperity. The answer therefore to securing internal stability lies as much in harnessing and consolidating our internal security mechanism as it does in acquiring capabilities to effectively thwart and deter external challenges.

Until recently, we used to take a compartmentalised view of national security. Each threat to national security was fitted neatly into one compartment. Our threats such as communal fault lines, terrorism, Maoism, drug peddling, financial offences etc were bundled together under the label of "threats to internal security". Over a period

of time, there has been indeed an increasing awareness of the urgency of a coherent strategic response. A case in point has been that upon immediately assuming office, the Honourable Home Minister issued directions for the preparation of a holistic road map on key internal security issues, including Left Wing Extremism, J&K and North Eastern Region, in a time bound manner, after obtaining inputs from various stakeholders. The encouraging part of our latest evolution, as stakeholders has been that now we are more conscious of taking a holistic view of threats to national security, covering in its ambit – internal security.

Conflicts, these days, around the globe are seeing a mix of conventional and unconventional warfare. Non state actors are seen colluding with regular armies to wage wars against their perceived enemies. A current example towards this is the case of Ukraine. Also, non conventional elements and militias are seen in combat with conventional forces, like what has happened in the war between ISIS and the Iraqi army recently and prevalent conflict situation in Syria. In the times to come, this nature of hybrid warfare is likely to acquire a phenomenal colour and we need to be conscious towards the same and gear up accordingly.

We as a nation have been involved in CI/CT campaigns for last several decades, yet unfortunately have not been able to build up a knowledge bank which could steer our field commanders. Although each service and organisation has developed its own mechanism of lessons learnt, there is little cross-pollination between different organs of the State. Awareness of the full range of options is vital for development of any sound policy. We have exceptional experience in defeating terrorism in states like Punjab, Tripura, Andhra Pradesh and Mizoram to name a few while our performance in J&K and the North East has been highly commendable. Events like this workshop at CLAWS today offer an opportunity to share and learn from our common challenges.

Let me get down to some crunch issues. Experience tells us that in our ongoing fight against insurgents and terrorists, it is not the major operations that bring us success. It is a high rate of contact in minor operations, based on sound intelligence that saves the day. Success in these operations rides on a responsive intelligence network. Regular success in operations leads to greater confidence in the population- the undisputed Centre of Gravity, resulting in better intelligence and more results. The battlefield out there hinges on the competence of small unit commanders. The role of policy and Generalship is to materially and psychologically empower the first responders and this develops comprehensive capabilities. Centralism in any form shall detract from an efficient response.

Also we need to redefine and revisit our parameters for success. For example, number of militants killed or surrendered cannot be permanent yardstick for achievement. Tactical short term gains should not lead to strategic losses in present volatile setup- resulting in immense loss of hard earned reputation.

In an age dominated by information, the challenges of dealing with misinformation campaign has increased manifold. Social media is being aggressively employed by insurgent groups and external agencies for recruitment, operational planning, execution and propaganda. We are witness to increasing instances of such misinformation campaigns that spread like wildfire. This virtually unregulated media has immense potential and can work either ways. Hence, while dealing with the internal security situation, a closer surveillance of virtual space is essential.

Perception management in disturbed areas need to be planned at the national level. As policy planners and executioners we will have to evolve perception management mechanisms which will most often be employed in conjunction with the physical elements (active or deterrent) of national power to form a more synergistic whole.

In the end I would like to remind the audience that at the core of all our national policies is preserving and protecting our National Interests. I am told that a talk on 'Defining National Interests' has been very thoughtfully scheduled as part of Valedictory session of the workshop. With a range of eminent speakers and domain specialists scheduled to participate in this workshop over the next two days, I am sure our discussions and discourse on various contemporary challenges affecting Internal Security will be able to generate fresh ideas and improve our understanding on the subject. This initiative will also help us understand the capabilities and challenges of each organisation. I wish the workshop all the success. Jai Hind.

SESSION ONE: JAMMU & KASHMIR

Remarks by the Chair

J&K stands at threshold of transition to peace and normalcy today, due to synergised efforts on part of security agencies and the civil administration. The past three years have been indicative of a transition towards peaceful stability in the face of some very fierce resistance of Pakistan abetted and aided proxies.

If we were to critically annotate and analyse the past three years in J&K we could state that 2011 was the year of turnaround, 2012 the year of stabilization and 2013 was to be the year of consolidation on the gains made, but it did not happen. What emerged out in 2013 was a last desperate attempt to revive the Pakistan initiated proxy war. Every spectrum of the ongoing proxy war was on display and energised to bring it back on track. The repeated ruthless attempts to infiltrate the LC were made largely unsuccessful, thanks to the very effective counter infiltration strategy in place. There was a spike in terrorist initiatives, largely in the valley sector, directed on easy soft targets and also towards the army which exposed their desperation in the face of improving situation in the state. In addition, the year also saw communal tensions being fanned to exploit fault-lines and keep the pot boiling. Peace, that prevails today, is however fragile, and it may be too soon to say that the ability of fundamental groups to initiate violence when desired has been curbed completely.

The period, 2013-14 is crucial to this ongoing proxy war. To recapitulate some events that happened prior to and during 2013-14, I shall briefly touch upon happenings in Pakistan, which saw two major milestones in 2013. Firstly, the change of government with Nawaz Sharif at the helm and secondly, the transition of military power to General Raheel Sharif. Optimism was widespread and we hoped peace had a chance. But that optimism was short lived and despite overt peace gestures by the new government nothing on the ground suggested any change in the strategy to abet the proxy war.

Internally, Pakistan remains unstable with its struggling economy, violence in Baluchistan that is spiralling out of control, talibanisation and fundamentalist influence in the FATA and NWFP threatening to spread throughout the country, especially after the withdrawal of the ISAF from Afghanistan. Pakistan's relations with the US are at an all time low. The sense of isolation is almost complete with their best friend China too looking the other way with the Chinese Premier postponing his much awaited trip to Pakistan. Democratic fault lines have emerged within the polity with Imran Khan along with cleric Tahir Ul Qadri taking the elected government to ransom. This internal instability is not only bad for Pakistan but also does not augur well for the neighbourhood.

2013-14 was important on many counts and may yet prove to be the watershed year for J&K. With both Parliamentary and Assembly elections due in 2014; instability, fear and divided polity are crucial to derail and negate the democratic process. I am firmly of the belief that a peaceful electoral process along with an approximate 40-50 vote percentage, almost near the national average, will strike a death nail to this proxy war, since it could well be interpreted as people's verdict against separatism. Coupled with this election is the likely affect from the fallout of the drawdown of the ISAF from Afghanistan.

For terrorist and their handlers in Pakistan, 2014-15 is extremely crucial. We may therefore expect desperation, frustration transcending into border infiltration attempts abetted by the Pakistan army. Terrorist inspired incidents to include those against the security forces & civil administration are going to remain relevant, polarization of the Awam along communal fault lines and an increase in political activism, as run up to the assembly elections can be expected.

The security forces relied on 2013 to be the year of consolidation and 2014 to give a final blow to this proxy war. Therefore a relentless, intelligent and synergised plan with a five pronged strategy ought to emerge, comprising:

- Synergy between Army, Police, CRPF, Intelligence agencies and the Civil Administration.
- A potent, dynamic, flexible and affective counter infiltration strategy to ensure zero infiltration.
- A people friendly, surgical and intelligence based clean counter terrorist operation with very restricted rules of engagement to be enforced such that there are no human right violations and no collateral damage.
- A well conceived and coordinated counter terrorism policy focusing on the leadership.
- Build on the people friendly image of the army to reach out to the Awam.

Recently, we witnessed the worst floods ever seen in the region. In spite of no political directions and / or requisitions, the army has reached out to the people. This purely helpful endeavour towards the needs of the people, in past, had had a very good response, although not expressed too explicitly.

We are now looking for is the assembly elections and it is time for the political leadership to take on a 'pragmatic vision' that can actually take the state over the hump.

Impact of Regional Development on the Security Matrix of J&K

In times ahead, we are going to see emergence of many different kinds of terrorism and threats, to counter which, we will need very different kinds of instruments. We sometimes tend to think of Kashmir as a strange conflict that only pits India against Pakistan and with something to do with the ISI; fundamentally apolitical in nature. Various shades of jihadi upsurge have old roots in Kashmir. In the 1920s which was a period of great social ferment and social change in what we today know as Jammu and Kashmir, all sorts of criss-crossing currents came from the planes of the Punjab. There was the birth of Ahl al-Hadith, a neoconservative religious movement asking people to give up their traditional form of Islam in the Kashmir valley and adopt a new kind of Salafist Islam. The Jamaat-e-Islami which is very powerful political formation today entered the valley at this time.

I shall try to bring out, in my talk that what we see in Kashmir is not just a battle between the state and a covert service or between two nation states, but a battle of political ideas.

The present landscape of J&K clearly points out the foremost fact that jihadist have failed. The Jihad that started in 90s has decisively ended. It is true that you still have terrorism in J&K today but if you look at it in per capita terms, the state records less fire arm fatalities than Delhi and Haryana per capita. Violence in Kashmir has been on a steady decline since 2002. Any other country I believe at this point would have declared victory for its security forces and gone home. It's surprising that we have not done so, as yet.

Notwithstanding the above, it is the regional environment that becomes crucial, especially developments in Pakistan. The Pakistan army is an ideologically divided army. The jihadi infiltration of the Pakistan armed forces has been much written about recently. The said infiltration has happened because the Pakistan army is divided on as to what its ideological role should be. The Green Book published by the Army carries articles on how the Pakistan Army is for the greater glory of Islam. It is not a professional army devoted only to guarding the frontiers of a nation state but an army with an ideological project, protecting an ideological state called Pakistan. But the question is - whose Jihad is legitimate and whose isn't. This creates an epistemological disjuncture that goes very deep in the Pakistan Army which is, that mid level officers who grew up after Zia's changes in the Pakistan school curriculum don't understand as to why they are fighting the people who say exactly the same things they have been taught? So you have a state, a polity and a military system that is ideologically divided on what it is doing and hence, will be unable to restore peace in the near future, simply because it is unsure of what that objective called peace actually is and what kind of state Pakistan should be.

I shall touch upon its manifestation for us. One of the fears is that after 2014 with the US drawdown in Afghanistan, we will see Taliban from the areas west of Indus coming to fight in Kashmir in large numbers. This is an unlikely scenario as the

jihadis in Pakistan's North West are fighting for a much larger prize, i.e. state power in Pakistan itself. Once that battle is decisively won, we may face a threat but we will face a number of proximate threats in the meanwhile. One of which we are already seeing, i.e. the Pakistan Army give space to what we call 'good jihadis'. This is a calibrated move by the Pakistan army to compete and win over the jihadi recruitment bases in Punjab's country side into the hands of good and controllable jihadi groups rather than sending them off across to fight alongside the 'bad jihadis' who have taken on the task of fighting the state. As long as the Pakistan army believes that a crisis with India may erupt, it is likely to keep jihadi elements under some level of control by promoting and abetting these 'good jihadis'. Another disturbing factor is that jihadi groups in this region, who are fighting the Pakistan state, also want to win over this recruitment pool of young Islamists in the Punjab country side and in the NWFP.

Anti-Indiainism plays well in Pakistan because of the historical enmities. We have already seen Al Qaida declare that it is setting up a new South Asia chapter. This increases the prospects of terror strikes in Kashmir or elsewhere in India, although these will be more in the character of spectacular actions intended to get publicity.

Another area of concern is what ISIS has been available to achieve in the Middle East. ISIS alone amongst all Islamist movement has established rudiments of a nation state in parts of Syria and Iraq that it governs. It has defeated a regular military to do it; however the army that has been defeated was in no way a disciplined and potent force. This made it not so much of a military victory for ISIS, but an implosion. With the kind of publicity it was able to muster, on media including the social media, it has the potential to fire up the imagination of the younger generation within Kashmir. It will do so not through any political organization but through online motivation towards a romanticised notion of jihad.

In face of lack of job opportunities, attraction to become a jihadi is very high, with the perceived power and perks, it begets. This year 18-19 boys have volunteered to join Jihadi groups and much of the radicalization that had taken place has been over the internet. And nationally we have no infrastructure to monitor this. Our abilities to set up a western style monitoring system are limited. NETRA has failed because the decryption capability we had hoped to develop by now, but the same has not been developed.

In order to overcome these challenges, we tend to go for a conventional response – needing the army to be extra vigilant and protect from emerging threats. This would be exactly the wrong way to go. As earlier stated, what can be achieved militarily has been achieved. The Indian army has done what very few militaries can boast of. To degrade an insurgency to a level where even the insurgents know that this is now a zero sum game is a remarkable achievement indeed.

Key to our future victory would be to develop the capacities of the J&K Police so as to make it a genuine fighting force. The J&K Police is already a formidable provider of intelligence but it needs to become more competent in the business of actually fighting terrorist. The CRPF that was to evolve into a dedicated counter insurgency force has made very little progress on that front, owing to inadequacies of various kinds. It is in the Army's interest to push for these capacity developments to happen because otherwise the army will inevitably be dragged into an intensely political conflict with civic disturbances at the cutting edge; an undesirable state for the Indian Army.

We see the emergence of a new youth leadership that is hardcore fundamentalist and grew up under Mr Gilani's patronage. Much of this leadership is unmapped. It exists at the level of the *mohalla* basically in three urban core sectors: downtown Srinagar, old city Sopore, and old city Baramulla. These are centres that the political systems have bypassed for the last ten years.

The problems we are facing in Kashmir are not new. We will continue to be involved in the conflict because of the crisis Pakistan is in, today. The question is with respect to instruments that we use to deal with it. The instruments for inimical elements, in future are going to be cold blooded terrorism carried by small but well organized cells and political disruption intended to radicalise and spark confrontation with the state. The army perhaps is not the best instrument to deal with these. If we are to face the looming crisis we are going to need new instruments and new ways of waging this war.

Current Security Situation and Prognosis for the Future

Proxy war in J&K that was launched in the 90s has passed through various stages which were not definitive periods but were distinctive for certain important characteristics. Militancy in the 90s marked by the euphoria of Azadi was led by the local youth to be later replaced by the foreign terrorist. Around 1995-96 the pro Azadi movement transformed into a pro Pakistan proxy war. High profile suicide attacks became the order of the day during 1999 -2002. This was a time when there was an all time high violence level. After that the situation improved to be dented by series of mass protests between 2008- 2010. Since 2011 the situation is steadily improving. One can infer from the past pattern that any improvement in the security situation in the valley is always counter balanced by some new modus operandi to keep the flames of militancy going on.

Despite present stable situation, peace continues to be fragile and normalcy elusive. The situation can be summarized as overt peace with covert under currents. In other words one can say is that violence level is low but the sentiment of Azadi lives on, warranting political resolution.

As far as the situation on Line of Control (LC) is concerned, it is well under control, barring certain ceasefire violations which continue to see an upsurge for the last five years. While the LC is kept active with continuous infiltration attempts and the potent threat of the Border Action Teams, the International Boundary (IB) region, of late has been activated by spurt in ceasefire violations particularly in the R S Pura sector.

Within Pakistan the terrorist infrastructure is very much intact. ISI continues to coordinate the activities of the terrorists to include its training, funding and infiltration. It is only the effective and integrated counter infiltration grid that keeps a check on infiltration.

As far as the situation in the hinterland is concerned it is well under control. However, in spite of all the indicators for peace seeing an upsurge, the situation cannot be said to be normal. The domestic terrorist infrastructure and their abilities to manipulate the environment and sustain militancy still prevail. The separatists have the ability to vitiate the environment by organizing mass agitation, by employing the uneducated and the indoctrinated youth. Although they are fractured and divided, their anti-India ideology gives them adequate following.

The terrorists' ranks comprise in equal percentage of foreign as well as the local content. Northern Kashmir is basically dominated by foreign terrorists with LeT as the main organization, while in southern Kashmir, HM, the local terrorist group is active. The recruitment process into the HM is very much on, although the numbers are not very alarming. It is basically to give the terror infrastructure, an indigenous colour and greater acceptance amongst the population.

In any internal security conflict, the youth is the first affected. The Kashmiri youth is no different. In Kashmir, the spectrum of the youth can be categorised in two divisions: those born in the 80s and those in the 90s. The different set of circumstances of their upbringing has given rise to different perceptions which ranges from the absolute clerical and hardwired for Azadi to the modern and the moderates. Those born in the 80s grew up in an environment where the education system was paralysed, there were high violence levels underlined with a protracted period of uncertainty. While some were involved in perpetuating violence there were others who were subjected to perceived loss of identity and dignity at the hands of the security forces. The loss of almost 50,000 Kashmiris, in the ongoing secessionist movement and having not yet achieved anything, is a cause of frustration, which also acts as a source of motivation for this category. In contrast to this segment, there is another segment born in the 90s that saw a relatively peaceful and calm atmosphere and the revival of the education system. Aspirations of this category of youngsters is not very different from the youth in rest of the country. They believe the hollow slogans of Azadi are unachievable and will not do any good to the society or to themselves; they question the separatist leadership although their numbers are not substantial. For them, education employment and empowerment is the real Azadi. However for this lot, lack of employment opportunities turns their aspirations into grievances and frustrations- making them easy fodder for exploitation by the inimical elements.

The society as on today stands deeply radicalised. In past 25 years Kashmir has been transformed into a fundamentalist society. The number of Mosques and Madrasas has increased manifolds. Also, the society is witness to the facade of Pakistan. They compare the economic development of Pakistan with India's and have changed their stance from being pro-Pakistan to anti-Pakistan. But regrettably this anti-Pakistan stance had not transformed into pro-India sentiment and the paranoia towards India continues. A reassuring fact, even a hardliner like Gilani has changed his stance of merger with Pakistan to that of independence as part of his overall ideology. What has come as surprise is the response to the Israel offensive in Gaza including its coverage in the local print media and the social media. No other Islamic country witnessed such frequency of protests as were witnessed in Srinagar. Such trends indicate to deepening radicalisation and ISI's role.

The numbers of violent incidents have reduced considerably over a period time but the terrorists still have the capability to execute sensational attacks on isolated attachments of the CRPF and other soft targets. The scale and intensity so far, has been relatively low but these have been geographically spread, not only in the north & south Kashmir, but also in Jammu region. It is the synergy of the various security agencies that is keeping the terrorist incidents to very low levels. Surgical operations, without collateral damage speaks for the success of the Army.

As far as the future is concerned, there is going to be an unlikely change in intent, with pot likely to be kept boiling as the nexus of the terrorist, separatist and ISI have the wherewithal to exploit the simmering discontent and calibrate both the violent and the non violent domain. The base for initiating and maintaining the terror campaign will continue to be the PoK and under no circumstances is Pakistan likely to close the terror factories irrespective of their internal situation.

The spurt of ceasefire violations in the IB sector is basically a tactical shift to keep the entire J&K border to include LC as well as IB, active. Efforts to strengthen the domestic infrastructure in terms of local recruitment and in terms of forming smaller terrorist modules are likely to continue. As elections get closer the violence may pick up and the protest dynamics will be activated from time to time, to manipulate the environment.

The cognitive domain is gradually and steadily acquiring centre stage. With proliferation of social media, the security forces are likely to be subjected to intense propaganda. With a large number of unsettled land cases the security forces are likely to come into pressure to forgo some of their justifiable requirements; a case in point has been the recent fanned up case of Tosha Maidan Field Firing Range. Exploitation of the cognitive domain through a well laid out strategy with distributed responsibility to various front organisations may see an upsurge. Article 370 has an immense potential to become an emotive issue for valley wide protests.

Wahabism has become a reality; the terror network will continue to use the Islam card where the moderates are likely to be overwhelmed by the fundamentalist. The expanding ideology and the indoctrination of Wahabism pose a very potent threat. Deliberate efforts are being made to convert the Kashmir issue from a political one to religious problems.

Politically, the separatist fear that given the trend in Jammu region, BJP could play a bigger role in days ahead. The possible loss of power and cancelled talks with Pakistan by the government may become a unifying factor for the Hurriyat, who are under tremendous pressure from the United Jihad Council across the line of control to take a unified stance against India.

The likely slow pace of the rehabilitation process following the recent floods, which is but normal given the enormity of the task, is likely to be exploited by inimical elements to create an unhealthy socio-political environment. A whiff of the same surfaced during the rescue efforts undertaken by the Indian Army. Law and order problems cannot be ruled out since all sorts of mechanisms will be at play and it may adversely impact the security situation. Internally, the abovementioned aspects will have an impact on the army and other forces towards the conduct of Counter Terrorist operations.

In conclusion, the security situation is well under control and it is time to consolidate the gains made; the consolidation phase of 2013 should continue with greater

momentum. We will do well by not giving any triggers to the other side to exploit the environment. The stability needs to be supplemented with certain political initiatives. We must not forget, the end result of any insurgency is conflict resolution. Economic development is beneficial but the ultimate result is political resolution. The separatist too look for an honourable exit strategy.

Conflict Resolution: Need for a Holistic Approach

At the outset, three facts with respect to the state of J&K are worthy of mention. Firstly, although this conflict has its origins in 1947, yet even before that there were certain elements within the princely state of J&K that were pro Pakistan, as early as in the 1930s, when the idea of Pakistan came into being. We must thus accept this reality that this idea has existed and will continue to exist in the decades to come. The best we can do is make such elements as small and ineffective as possible, as was done till the 70s.

Secondly, the geographical area that is under the control of J&K state as it exists as of now is just 46% of the area that comprised the princely J&K; 37% is with Pakistan and 17% is with China.

Thirdly, New Delhi right from the beginning only seems to be concerned with the population of the valley and has not been bothered about the population of the Jammu and the Ladakh regions.

The Indian government accepted the UN brokered ceasefire in August 1948. The military situation in J&K at that time was as follows

- Pakistan army was pushed back from all Kashmiri speaking areas of the valley and we did not venture beyond that.
- During that time Rajouri had not been liberated and Poonch town had not been connected.
- East of Zojila, including Kargil right upto the doorsteps of Leh were under the control of Pakistan.

Another point to be remembered is the attitude towards the Indian Armed Forces in 1947 and 1965 was entirely pro-Indian and pro Indian armed forces. The situation started turning after 1971, there was steady deterioration and the Kashmiri alienation acquired critical mass after 1984 when Dr. Farooq Abdullah's legitimately elected government was dismissed. Rigged 1987 election gave further impetus to this feeling of alienation leading to the explosion in 1989-90, when full blown militancy erupted in the valley. The 1998 nuclear tests followed by Kargil, added new dimensions to a conflict that was already raging. Importance that Pakistan gives to Kashmir is evident by the same being referred to as its 'jugular vein'.

Many observers feel and rightly so, that the viable solution to this conflict would be to accept, notwithstanding the parliament resolution on this subject, the LC with minor modification as the IB. Anything else would be highly impractical.

So far, it is India that has made all the efforts to resolve the problem. The impression that we have given to the international community is that it is India that is keener than Pakistan to settle this issue; implying we have something to give; nobody asks as to what Pakistan has to offer.

A holistic approach to resolving this conflict has two dimensions: the external and internal dimensions. On the external dimension India has to deal with Pakistan and its army and keep its head as low as possible. On the internal side, it must address the issues that agitate the people of the valley. This is an area that we have faulted in as we failed to understand the psyche of the people.

Recommendations

External Factors

- Keep the pressure of security forces operations on.
- Do not reduce the number of security forces in the state, but certainly try to reduce the footprints.
- Formulate a National Policy on Kashmir that is endorsed by all political parties across the spectrum, irrespective of any party in the government, the same needs to be followed.
- Have a defined bottom line and spell out unambiguously that crossing that line would be unacceptable; a case in point has been calling off the talks after Hurriyat leaders met the Pakistani Ambassador.
- In the meantime continue strengthening other linkages with Pakistan. Be it trade, people to people contact etc.

Internal Factors

- Mainstreaming of the Kashmiri population is very essential. Connecting Kashmir by taking the train to the valley has been a tremendous step towards the same.
- Enhance opportunities for Kashmiri both for business and jobs outside the valley as well as insure that Indian corporate sector gets into the state.
- Provide good governance in J&K and ensure the rule of law ie prosecution of the law.
- Strengthen genuine democratic decentralisation
- Have autonomous district development councils in all the districts of the state fashioned on the pattern of Ladakh autonomous hill development project
- Reopening cases such as the Kunan Poshpora case as these unhealed wounds must be dealt with.

Discussion

Role of Army in Flood Relief. Civil Administration has been on a weak footing, right from the beginning and Army has contributed immensely in rescue and relief. We should be conscious of the limits of what we can do. Reconstruction work is going to be a mammoth task and this is a long struggle ahead. The Army should not be bragging about the help too much, so that its genuine efforts get nullified by untoward propaganda of inimical elements. Sometimes it's better to do things quietly and not talk about it too much.

- Connotations of 'Azadi'. The word 'Azadi' in the state is a sentiment and does not have a specific form. There is need for conceptual clarity about the problem in Jammu and Kashmir. There is a constituency in the valley from the 1930s that has been hardcore Islamist and very deeply believes ideologically that they do not want to be part of India. Despite any resolutions with Pakistan, this section will not be pacified. Kashmir has problems of economy, youth bulge, unemployment and politics but many of these by definition are not manageable. India has over 2.5 million people entering the job market every year and we are unable to create jobs for even one-fifth of them. In face of systemic lacunae, it is difficult to have a magic solution. The demand for Azadi is by only a miniscule section of the population. It means differently to different sets of people. There are people who are looking to be free from regular check-points as part of the security grid present in the state and freedom of movement within the state and the country. For a larger section, Azadi means freedom to carry employment as per their wishes and convenience.

- Investment Opportunities in Valley. The problem of corporate induction in the valley is purely a legal deal. Acquiring proprietary rights over land in J&K for non-state subject is not possible as per the current laws, however, for industrial and business purposes; there are enough positive provisions, since 1960s. The problem is capital and the insurance for that capital for which somebody has to step in to assure the investor. There are concerns over returns on the investment.

- Autonomous District Councils. The model adopted by J&K in the Leh and Kargil districts has shown to be workable. Since its implementation in 2003, the model has resulted in huge transformation for both the regions. People of Kargil attribute their success to the Hill Development Council. Extending the district councils to other areas in the valley will have great political benefits as people would become more aware and will start to compete for development of their region.

- Disengagement of Army. The time is not yet ripe for the same. During last winters, about 50 terrorists were killed in the hinterland; with winter season considered to be a lean period. About the other paramilitary forces, one has to build their ability to carry out independent operations. Bulk of the CRPF is presently involved in static and protective duties, largely along the Lines of Communication. It is the Rashtriya Rifles (RR) that is carrying out operations in remote and inaccessible areas. There is little scope to reduce the footprints in the hinterland barring very few areas. However, there is a scope for relocation of forces within the valley and the

same is being undertaken over a period of time to build up the conventional capability. We are following a model of static stability and tactical dynamism.

- National Policy on J&K. The existing national policy, though not spelt out formally, for the last sixty years, includes - propping up the leadership which may or may not be representing the population, keeping the leadership in the valley divided, ignoring leadership of Jammu and other regions, and pumping more and more money in name of development. In contrast, the same should be vis-à-vis the defence of the state and India's dealings with Pakistan. The internal dynamics will continue to change but the broader aspects have to be spelt out because the internal and external adversaries should know the bottom-line of the political community of the country. The national policy on J&K should be supported by all parties so that irrespective of change of government, there is no deviation from the basics. It has to be a policy of the Country and not of the Government.
- Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Time has come for such an idea. It should look into the grievances of the people of the state and their complaints vis-à-vis the political and executive class to include the armed forces. But determining what has gone wrong will be only of historical value in the reconciliatory process. The primary aim should be not to determine blame but to most effectively achieve reconciliation.
- Article 370. Article 370 of the Indian Constitution isn't an obstacle to the integration of J&K. The property and the state subject laws have nothing to do with Article 370. They predate the independence of India and were instituted by the Maharaja to keep the British and the Punjabi business interests out. There are laws provisioning industrial and business investments. The first obstacle is communal prejudice against the natives of the state. This leaves a large legacy of ill-will, which is a social problem very difficult to address at a policy level. There is a lot of business interest to invest in the state but people are afraid to put their money in due to the volatile law and order. Some sort of assurance is needed towards this. State property laws have nothing to do with Article 370 and the legality of Article 370 has not been determined. The judicial determination of the article, its parameters and to what extent the Constitutional Amendments under the Indian Constitution are applicable; has to be determined and the only forum capable of doing this is the Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court.

SESSION TWO: NORTH EASTERN REGION

Remarks by the Chair

The mainstream India is extremely ignorant on the NER, which includes our political and executive class. Most of the time, we indulge in lip service, in name of development. One cannot do anything for the people unless one has the love and passion for the region; and resultantly we indulge in superficiality, as far as upliftment of the NER is concerned.

The region is complex one, partly because the inhabitants who though are citizens of India are yet not integrated into the Indian mainstream thinking. The history of Assam or Manipur which goes back hundreds of years old is not taught in school text books and is hardly known to the rest of India. The rampant lack of knowledge of understanding the nuances of different groups, different tribes and the interplay of politics between various groups that takes place continues till date.

Over time the violence levels have come down due to several factors like - role of government, Bhutan's crackdown on insurgents along its borders, cooperation on part of Nepal and Myanmar, non-interference in the region by China etc. However, the issue of ethnicity has gone more intense with various ethnic groups demanding autonomy or a separate state. The real challenge in the coming years is going to be as how we deal with this issue and how we build relationships between communities in the region.

As far as our official setup is concerned, in contrast to a single window in form of JS (NE) earlier, we have several players in the fray – Ministry of DoNER, North Eastern Council, Secretary Border Management etc. It is imperative for these agencies to function in a synchronised manner, for a desirable end result.

Also, the integration of the region into the mainstream is still an unfinished agenda. The same has to be done through constructive nation building, which of course is an ongoing process. The constitution of India has the basic framework and its sixth schedule has all the provisions on how tribes of the North East are to be treated. However, subsequently it had all been left to the letter of the law and to the state level organizations to fend for themselves.

Politics over the Issue of Ethnicity

We need to define ethnicity. In ethnic matters especially relating to the North East, the question of race and racism, discrimination and exclusion as do processes of inclusion as the gauge for one another. In a region that's as complex as the North East and a country that is multiple times more complex as India which has more than 4600 communities according to the Survey of India and 700 plus languages, each of us can be described as the other in view of 2nd, 3rd or 4th person.

I will quote a Swiss scholar and linguist George Von Brim "As a species we have always been obsessed as to how we look, and in what ways we appear to be similar or different from one another. The ancient Hindu caste system and the upper tribe system of South Africa were just two of many systems based on our perception of caste, tribe and race. Even before the Portuguese first made landfall in Japan in 1542, Europeans were struggling to grips with the human nature". He further talks about how a German scholar in the 19th century created the phrase Mongoloid. He never set foot out of Germany, he was researching on a few Mongols and said there is this group of Mongoloids and they are very violent. This whole thing about ethnicity is very mixed up. He says the very idea of racism is not there, we are all one family separated by six degrees. Von Brim from his 30 year research says that the Eastern Himalayas from Dhavalagiri to Liangshan and especially the region comprising Bhutan, Nepal, Sikkim, South Eastern Tibet and North Eastern India furnish the cradle for the ethno genesis origins of all East Asian language families.

This brings me to an issue we keep hearing all the time – The main stream. Where is this main stream? Separatists are asked to join the main stream by the politicians. Students are asked to join main stream. The main stream in both is different. There is a nation state that exists. Each individual has many identities which move in and out of each other. Many others do not face problems but some do. So accepting a larger identity if not embracing it takes time. This is the core of my argument and what I am saying is there is a need to appreciate, understand and accept that as long as we have diversity in the country we will have diverse voices and perceptions clamouring for attention. That is why government is there to distribute, manage initiate and develop, apart from many other roles. But a group with a like Manipur or Assam sees itself as the main stream what happens to the other smaller groups? That is why people in the North East feel the rest of India is pressurizing them and perhaps we behave the same way with smaller groups in the region.

According to the People's Linguistic Survey of India the state of Assam has 50 language groups belonging to different ethnic groups, 50% plus Assamese speakers and 30% plus Bengali speakers. Those familiar with the road from Guwahati and Goalpara there is a point called Paikang where three communities live there, the Garos, the Bodos and the Rabhas. Each of them is contesting the territory and the resources. Neither belongs to the major ethnic group which makes up 80% of the state's population. But they happen to be in majority in two districts along the same

highway and often this has exploded into conflict. Last year there were attacks by Garo groups on Muslim seculars in neighbouring villages in Assam. Each group has suffered violence at the hands of the other and has suffered displacement and has been pushed out of their lands and homes. It is doubtful if there was ever a time when these groups coexisted in harmony because people are constantly moving in the region and out of it. Small groups of Bodos are to be found in Dhemaji district far from their core areas of Kokrajhar. They are to be found in Dibrugarh. We have Yadavs, milk producers from Mithila area in the islands of Dibrugarh and Jorhat and speak Hindi. There are Nepali herders on the edge of Arunachal Pradesh. Some of them have been transported there. Like the Santhals and Adivasis of Eastern and Central India as tea labor by the British and others moved on their own and they were not always settled in one place. So when new communities came in there were new settlements, languages, ethnicities and identities which positioned one group against another.

We are dealing with older disagreements transposed on to a modern state which is only about to be 70 years old and its federal units are even newer. The concept of borders and identities has changed with the coming of the British and the colonial determination to fix locations, map people and devise borders and exploit resources for commercial purposes. The map of NER has undergone an overwhelming change. Today's border challenges within India, within the North East, Assam-Nagaland, Assam-Arunachal, Assam-Meghalaya have posed peculiar challenges. Regarding the complicated case of the Nagaland border - in the giving away of what was seen as the original Naga homelands and forests in the Brahmaputra valley by the British, which began in 1852 when Naga district absorbed parts of the Naga hills. Later between 1898-1923, the rest of the areas with large tracts of forests in plains were also given, where Nagas lived, hunted and went on raiding expeditions. Here lies the root of the border problems. Today they are two states in a nation but they still have to deal with the old animosity and angers. Unless these geneses are kept in mind and conversations are struck at the village level with the Government of India, nothing is going to change. So it is necessary to think practically and include the people on the ground.

I am taking the issue of Bodoland. Everywhere in a conflict in the North East, there is land or identity rooted in that conflict. We all agree that sometimes the path held is paved with good intentions. So when the Bodoland Territorial Council was formed, no one thought it would become so dark and threatening. It's a recipe for disaster. It's a minority controlling a majority. Even if the Bodos are 30% which they are not, the development funds had to be distributed equally to all groups. Instead the money is going to only one particular community.

If DoNER speaks of economic development as a stabilizer it is not development; it is equitable, inclusive growth and distribution which has to fructify. Opportunities to get heard in times of social media have increased manifold. People get kicked to a point but ultimately they strike back with the ultimate weapon they have i.e. the vote.

We often hear of discrimination against the people from the North East here in Delhi but for Delhi all women face this. North East women face this because of their appearance. If you go to the North East the mainlanders are a minority. So if we have racial equality we must make sure those from the rest of India who go to the North East are also treated equally. We will find that across the country people are moving out of the region mainly because of the economy and security. In the last 10 years, 5, 00,000 families have moved to Delhi most students and other as workers. Others moved to other states. It's not just about safety. They seek better opportunities and as they engage the idea of India they may not embrace India but they are accepting it.

External Factors and their Impact on the Security Situation in NER

Historically, the NER was not a closed territory. It had very major relations with Burma and China (Yunnan province). If you go to any Naga household and talk to them, borders do not matter for them. Ethnicities on either side are often, similar. So that is the perspective which is actually the core. It can also play a role in facilitating regional connectivity.

Improving Connectivity is a possibility, through improving the institutional infrastructures. It is possible by having the consensus of the Northeast states themselves. It is true that the Central Government has made efforts. We have a Northeast Vision 2020 document released by the PM in 2011. The government knows what it needs to get done. The NER chapter in the document was generated after a lot of field work in the region. About 40,000 households were talked to. Different policy makers and academics went to the region and it is signed by all the Chief Ministers of the NER.

In New Delhi it is often wrongly portrayed that the people of the Northeast have a resistance to opening up. They have a desire to open up and projects such as the Asian Highway excite them. It was based on the old silk route and is not a new idea. People have always migrated. If you look at communities in Nagaland, Manipur and even Assam; many of them migrated from China (Yunan) and Thailand. The Ahom kingdom which ruled Assam for six hundred years came from Thailand. They came from Thailand and defeated the Dimas King. So it is important to understand the local narratives to understand the connect of people and communities of NER with regional external players.

NER is a strategic territory. It is important because it has the Mc Mohan Line, the India-China border i.e. one of the most disputed borders in the world. It is one of the only border areas between two major powers that have not been resolved. Also, it lies in vicinity of several countries, sharing borders with them.

Efforts to connect the region with neighbourhood, through Look East Policy (LEP) has been lacking consensus. It is because NER is so diverse. As brought out earlier, we get to see the amazing unity of ethnicities that is across borders. So for people, an idea like the LEP is very foreign because it is not that they have thought about connectivity now. They have been thinking about connectivity for hundreds of years. When it is projected as something that is coming from New Delhi as a kind of a propaganda strategy, there is resistance. One of the reasons why amazing emancipator ideas like the LEP have not worked is because there is a major challenge, rooted in the different ethnicities, pertaining to the challenge of conflict in the NER. Actualising the LEP is difficult today because we have not resolved many of the conflicts. When it comes to the LEP, a Naga may see it as a state response based on counter-insurgency. It is a fascinating connection that the local people make, based on their perceptions.

As far as the strategy of the armed groups is concerned, it has been a major impediment towards development. Most of these armed groups have no end in sight. It is a long term protracted conflict. There has been a continuous use of violence with no one's monopoly over the same. The one thing that armed forces bring to the table is their ability to effectively use violence to counter an adversary or to enforce law

and order. Imagine a region where no one has a monopoly of violence. Groups like NSCN-IM can come to my house and force my father to pay taxes which he does not want to pay. If he goes to the state and complains, he might get killed. So the situation is extremely dicey in these areas, for complete support towards conflict resolution, which does not have resonance.

For a lot of young people who come from the border areas in NER and are part of armed insurgent groups, their sole aim to stick to these groups is concerning livelihood issues. For these youngsters, it was only the respective leader that mattered. It was his leader who told him to join and so he joined. So there is a certain bonding. It is unfortunate, that nobody actually bothers to de-construct a young boy or girl's mind.

The land customs area or the immigration gate from India to Myanmar in Morey is in a pathetic condition. It cannot handle any kind of traffic. So when we are talking about the great opening up to Southeast Asia or Burma, the reality is dismal. In fact when I went there, the staff member in charge was completely clueless regarding what pass to give me etc. He asked me why I want to go to Burma etc. It is a tragic situation. When I tell him, I need money; he says the ATMs do not work. Neither do the phone connections. So it is absolutely essential that we go to the ground. When I went to the border areas on the Burmese side (Tamu), it was much cleaner, developed and organised. When you go further inside, you can see the difference between Burma and India in terms of infrastructure and roads in particular.

The other problem which gets in the way of over-arching structural policies may be inferred from the following example. In Nagaland, the NSCN-IM claims areas beyond Nagaland in the NER and even in Burma. The problem with that is if you are going to do that, you will provoke other groups to also take up arms. There is a fear that if the NSCN-IM is claiming this area, I will lose it.

Resurgence in Demand for Statehood / Autonomy by Various Players in NER

The issue of ethnicity in NER is extremely complex and is the root cause of majority of problems in the region, especially growing aspirations to secede. The general trend has been that initially demands of sovereignty by militant groups are raised and subsequently the same toned down to that for ethnic states and autonomy.

In the case of Assam there is been a demand for Bodoland. The main reasons are:-

- Fear of migrants appropriating land.
- Fear of becoming minority and loss of political power, which has been lost at the Parliament level, though retained the Territorial Council level. Prognosis in this regard during the next year elections is unpredictable, at the moment.
- Suspicion of wilful encouragement by the State to the migrants, particularly the Bengali migrants and even more so the Bangladeshi migrants.

Apart from Bodos, following voices are also being raised for a separate state.

- Karbis want a separate state.
- Dimashasthough having just about 2 lakh population want a separate state.
- Koch Rajbongshis want a state spanning over six districts of West Bengal and entire Bodo areas of Assam including Tezpur. As claimed, the demand is again based on a history that cannot be verified.
- A recent development is demand for Tiwa Land covering parts of Assam along Arunachal Border.

In case we create Bodoland, in lower Assam, north of Brahmaputra we have Kokrajhar, Bhaksa, Udalgudi and Chirag, that will comprise Bodoland.

In case of consideration of Kantapuris and Koch Rajbonshis demands, it coincides with claim by Bodos, and of course extending into Darang and Sonitpur.

Tiwa land, cuts Sonitpur across into Lakhimpur which will be a small island with a population of 2, 00,000 between Arunachal Pradesh and Assam.

If we have Karbis and Dimashas state, the connection of Assam and Southern Assam is gone.

In Meghalaya the Grand Council of CMs had written a letter citing the 1948-49 merger of Meghalaya in India and demanding a separate state for the Khasis. In an eventuality of the above cited claims, South Assam becomes another state.

In Nagaland, Eastern Naga Peoples Organisation Movement (ENPO) has been demanding a separate state. They claim lack of development, meagre share in employment and cornering of benefits by other major tribes leaving the Koniaks, Yunchigare, Sangtham and Kimlungam deprived them of all development activity, and as per another justification given, they have less than 2% representation in the government while having about 45% of the population. Recently they upped the ante and have demanded the inclusion of Tirang Changlang and Lumding in Arunachal be included to create a separate state of Eastern Nagaland.

In Manipur, the major demand is separation of Naga land from Manipur, irrespective of whether they merge in Nagaland or not. They do not want to live with the Maitis and Kukis. KNO and UPF are two groups of Kukis and Zomis and have been demanding a Kuki land and the other group wants a state within a state. UNLF, PLA want complete separation of the state to become independent. Hmars demand a Hmarland with areas from present Manipur, Assam and Mizoram.

In Mizoram there is a demand for a Maraland in South Mizoram combining the autonomous district councils of the Lialie and Mara tribes. It is a peaceful State but is affected by Hmar problem.

In Meghalaya there is a demand for Garoland and of late they have been notoriously active.

Following justifications are put forth to back the demands for secession

- Economic & Political marginalisation.
- Strong sense of perceived identity of Tibeto-Burmese origin or Tibeto-Chinese origin parts for Manipur, Nagaland and Mizoram.
- Arbitrary division of tribes in different States, in past, which could be a reason to an extent, but cannot be seen as the sole reason.
- Failure of Sixth Schedule Councils and favour to major ethnic groups therein, sidelining smaller tribes. Areas covered by the schedule were created first in Assam and subsequently covered whole of Meghalaya except Shillong municipal boundaries, parts of Tripura and three districts of Mizoram.
- States have always prevailed over the councils thereby making smaller ethnic groups losing faith. Councils have failed because of two reasons, that are
 - ✓ Partial to major ethnic groups.
 - ✓ Lacunae in the system wherein a person can be a member of the district council and also be a member of the legislative assembly. Thus he can, in the assembly gets things done for his community and leads to demands for separate state, like in Meghalaya.

The factors as observed over time after extensive interaction and analysis

- Hunger for political power & its perks. In case of Bodoland the apprehensions and claims are by and large genuine, unlike in other cases.
- The movements are no more ideology driven, but have become a means to push ulterior motives of dominant class and the leadership.
- There is definitely a communal overtone in several areas inhabited by Nagas & Kukis in Manipur and in entire Mizoram. This is primarily Christians v/s non-Christians. For example, the young Mizo association keep attacking the Brus who are the aboriginals of the area, and it has often been said that if they converted to Christianity they would be allowed to stay.
- Lack of clarity amongst secessionists is rampant, with no correlation between their demand and objective. Somebody has mobilised them to demand for separation and they have doing so.

- Insurgency has become highly criminalised to make fast buck, thereby developing into an industry, with criminal-insurgent-politician nexus promoting the same. Political resistance movement and insurgency has, over a period of time become an excuse for the underground groups for survival and easy money.
- Xenophobic character of bad elements which drive the movement is one of the prime reasons. This has made various groups, inward looking and un-accommodating.

Focused Development as Conflict Resolution Tool

North East no doubt is backward and underdeveloped vis-à-vis the other parts of the country. This aspect was well understood long back and to bring the region in parity with rest of the country all ministries were asked to allocate 10% of their budgets to the North East. Across the board, it was realised that approximately 10% of budgetary allocation remains unspent by various ministries, at end of the Fiscal year. Centre created a Non-Lapsable Central Pool of Resources (NLCPR), in 1997-98, for sub allocation to NE division of MHA. Thereafter in 2001 a separate department was created namely Department of North East Region (DONER), upgraded to Ministry for Development of NER in 2004. The Ministry is tasked with the objective to synergise the process of development in the region so as to enable this part of the country to have parity with other states.

Unlike others, the Ministry of DoNER is unique in the sense that it is not a single subject ministry. It covers all aspects related to development of NER and interacts with other ministries to pursue matters. This money is given to the state governments based on geographical distribution of projects and sector wise priority areas for development of various projects.

Under the NLCPR till date Rs. 10,000/- crores have been sanctioned for all the NE states, including Sikkim. There is another scheme under NLCPR called NLCPR-central, under which other than the states, ministries too can ask for funds.

Another important organisation under the supervision of DoNER is the North Eastern Council (NEC), created in 1971. An advisory body earlier, it was later given the mandate of planning and executing projects in the NER. NEC mainly looks after interstate or regional level projects to include those in transport & communication sectors, power sector and livelihood, amongst others.

Funds are also given by the Ministry of DoNER for special packages like Bodo Tribal Council (BTC) was allocated a package of Rs. 500 crores and special economic packages have been granted for Karbi Anglong Autonomous Tribal Council and Dimasas Autonomous Tribal Council.

Then there is a scheme of capacity building and technical assistance. It provides technical training to the youth. There is another World Bank scheme which is a livelihood project administered by DONER. DONER also has a scheme of advertising and publicity to showcase the North east region. It promotes tourism in the region. The region because of its peculiar agro-climatic conditions is particularly suited for organic farming. In the recent budget 2014-15 organic farming has been given 100 crore in the North East.

Essentially Ministry DONER is trying to fill in the gaps which are not covered by other ministries so that there is overall development in the region.

Discussion

- **Constitutional Provisions- Sixth Schedule.** Sixth Schedule was introduced in the constitution when the same was being framed. It has concentrated only on the areas covered by Assam. Two tribal councils were created for Assamese Ahomia dominance and the Sylheti tribe, which has already moved in - the North Kachar Hill District Council and Meghalaya District Council. Subsequently even Meghalaya separated and Karbis and Dimasas decided to stay with Assam, leading to creation of Karbi - Anglong District Council. When militancy was ending in Tripura the tribals were brought under Sixth schedule. Similarly in Mizoram the three councils are relatively of recent origin. Manipur was never in the picture. The state government through an act of parliament in 1973 had created six councils under the state law because the Sixth schedule is not extended in the state. After Bodo Council was created there was a debate if legislative powers should be given or not, since too many legislative powers in a small state, complicates the lives of common people. With changing dynamics, a de-novo look is warranted.
- **Creation of New States.** Too small states cannot be created since they are an impractical proposition. The newly created states will be unable to function, for lack of resources. Also, divisions based on ethnicity shall amount to disintegration, rather than integration.
- **Changing Dynamics of Naga Movement.** After 1993-94 pogrom of NSCN (IM) that was directed against Kukis, the Kukis due to their apprehensions invited Kukis from Myanmar to settle down in their lands. Owing to increased pressure of population, the Jhum cultivation cycle came down to 3 years from 12 years, adding to woes. Muivah, who is empowered to negotiate with the Government, has no unanimous support. There is a situation where all the Naga groups are putting pressure on Muivah to have a common agreement on agenda of negotiation with the Government. People are raising their voices against extortion and the movement is picking up. Across Nagaland people have stopped paying tax to underground, saying, 'one government, one tax'. This unprecedented development is indicative of the churning in the Naga society. As state, we ought to allow this change take its own course, since they are different from mainland societies.
- **External Factors.** To secure the North East, external factors cannot be ignored. After Operation 'All Clear' in 2003 in Bhutan it was believed that ULFA is over and violence will go down. But they rehabilitated to Bangladesh and then to Burma and to the China border. Another important factor to understand is China's connections to ethnic groups in Burma. They have a state policy of non-intervention in the affairs of others and in spite of the same, go on doing exactly the same.
- **Weak Local Administration.** In many of the cases, when disturbances crop up in the region, local administration has often been found wanting. With a

strong hand of state Government and good leadership, a potentially grave situation can be controlled effectively.

SESSION THREE - LEFT WING EXTREMISM

Remarks by the Chair

I shall begin with an assessment of the situation as it currently prevails in the LWE affected areas. There is an overall improvement in the situation in terms of drop in number of fatalities, as compared to the phase 1999 to 2011. The Central Committee of CPI (Maoist) also has been admitting to the 'setbacks'.

The approach of the State has been wanting in resolving the conflicts. The various measures and policies undertaken by the Government in order to mitigate the disturbed and situation and bring peace have not been effective for being superficial. Governmental attempts of enact Forest Act to alleviate the conditions of tribal population is a case in point; there were only five tribal groups that could be termed as 'forest dwelling' and hence such acts do not have a widespread relevance. Expectations from such measures to bring about resolution of conflict were farfetched. Misinterpretation of the issue at hand, by the state is an area of concern.

Maoists still believe that conditions for revolution like class wars, polarisation arising from capitalism etc still exist , as they existed in late 60s and early 70s- requiring a mere catalyst to make the situation eventually explode. Although the aforesaid is a misconception on part of Maoists, yet their capability to recruit remains as strong as it was earlier, primarily due to an absent state. They are now resorting to increased coercive measures for recruiting, as against political mobilisation – a scenario which will have a blowback on their designs and organisation, over a period of time. Despite defections, losses and visible degree of demoralization; the core leadership remains committed to its cause and their capability to strike at will remains intact.

I flag certain questions that remain crucial and need to be addressed on priority.

- ✓ Is the Maoists movement at a critical juncture with present phase of setbacks?
- ✓ What are the potentials for resurgence?
- ✓ What are the dynamics and drivers, vis-à-vis the movement? (failure of state being one of the obvious ones)
- ✓ Whether the state was a solution or part of the problem?

There exists a tremendous possibility of transformation through state policies, provided they are formulated, keeping the ground realities in mind, as against in the present form when they appear to be 'sweeping generalisations'. Lack of outreach of the state owing to deficient official setup has been the biggest challenge towards implementing Government policies. Implementation of existing programmes need to be focused upon, rather than inaugurating new ones till the time, wherewithal in terms of capacity is enhanced, to ensure implementation.

Understanding the Tribal Narrative

The US concept of measuring success in low intensity conflicts, in the 1960s, which was 'kill-ratio' & 'area under control'. Government of India continues to emphasise on the same. As a result, 'producing dead bodies' has come to be the hallmark of success in Low Intensity Conflicts, which has grave ramifications.

The idea of LWE as a 'law and order' problem is a spurious definition of the problem, whereas it is a challenge of 'dealing with the people who do not have a voice and are different from us'. Rather than being a Naxal or Maoist problem, this is an Adivasi problem. Maoists are only three decades old, whereas the Adivasis have been in revolt for two and a half centuries. The Adivasis have a long history of rebellious past in Central India, dating back to Mughal period. Labeling them as 'primitive' is also wrong, since they are people with history, though unrecorded, and therefore is not taught in schools. Displaced from their homes, alienated from their lands and deprived of their resources, the tribal people have often taken to armed revolt in the past.

The 2001 census classified 84.33 million persons as Scheduled Tribes, corresponding to 8.2% of the total population; however their share is very high among the vulnerable groups like poor, hungry and small and marginal farmers. The majority of the indigenous peoples live in an almost contiguous belt stretching from Gujarat in the west to the seven states in the north-east, with the highest concentration in the central region, where more than 50% of the tribal people live.

India's tribal people are among the poorest in the country, with poverty rate as high as 72% in some states. Most of India's indigenous peoples have been forest dwellers for centuries. A long process of turning forest areas into a source of revenue and timber, and exploitation of the mineral resources, has led to deforestation, loss of livelihood and displacement of peoples. Since tribal communities have been forced off most of the fertile plains they previously inhabited, the majority of tribal farmers now cultivate marginal land, using rather extensive methods. An FAO study indicates a declining role of agriculture in household food security which lasts for 2 to 6 months of the year for the majority of tribal farming households. In the past, most tribals were able to cover the shortfall with foods gathered from the forests, however, forest degradation and curtailed forest access has reduced the availability of natural foods, compelling these communities, to depend more on purchased foods to meet their minimum survival needs.

The present unrest in Adivasi homelands of India is due to two distinct reasons i.e. the economic factors and more importantly for their struggle for identity against the creeping Hinduisation or de-culturisation of Adivasi society. Adivasi society was built on a foundation of equality, which the cultural influence from outside seeks to destroy.

Tribal societies came under stress due to several other factors. Over the centuries the extension of commerce, military incursions on tribal land, and the resettling of outsiders, amidst tribal populations had an impact, as did ideological coercion or persuasion to attract key members of the tribe into "mainstream" Hindu society. This only led to many tribal communities becoming integrated into Hindu society as lower jatis (or castes). Quite clearly Hindu ways with their emphasis on stratification never

provided for any improvement in the status of the Adivasis. This and the failure of the government to provide even a modicum of development on the physical quality of life has left in its wake, room for newer kinds of proselytisation; Maoism is one of them. The other creeping encroachment is that of the Christian missionaries who promise an exit from the material drudgery of life.

The Fifth and Sixth Schedules under Article 244 of the Indian Constitution in 1950 provided for self-governance in specified tribal majority areas. In 1999 the Government of India even issued a draft National Policy on Tribals to address the developmental needs of tribal people. The draft policy is still a draft, which means there is no policy.

An International Labour Organisation (ILO) - funded report on India's indigenous population states that more than half the country's mineral wealth is obtained by violating the rights of tribals. In 1991, out of the 4,175 mines in the country, 3,500 were in tribal areas. Another estimate states that between 1950 and 1991 at least 2,600,000 people were displaced by mining projects of which only 25 per cent received any resettlement. Among those displaced 52 per cent belonged to the Scheduled Tribes. The rich get richer by selling mineral rights cheap and not giving back anything to the people, original owners of lands.

To summarise, the following factors attribute to spread of Maoism in India:-

- The continued isolation and exploitation of tribal's and their homelands.
- Failure to implement the Fifth and Sixth Schedules under Article 244 of the Indian Constitution.
- Failure of the development administration regime, which was centralized and corrupt.
- Failure to provide good government which is remote, colonial and oppressive.
- Social and cultural denigration of tribal people.
- Absence of local self government and any say in managing their affairs.
- Destruction of habitat and no share in the benefits.
- The role of outsiders - Hindu revivalists, Christian missionaries and Maoists. It has been a kind of conflict between the proselytisers.
- Rising expectations due to increasing awareness, though it is still not at a satisfactory level.
- Inability of the Indian elite to see it as anything more than a law and order problem.
- Reliance on force rather than reform of government.

There has been a realisation on part of the government that present pathetic state of tribal population has been due to a systemic failure in giving the tribals a stake in the modern economic processes that inexorably intrude into their living spaces. The systematic exploitation and social and economic abuse of our tribal communities can no longer be tolerated. The tribal peoples need to be integrated into the development processes.

Clearly the Government must be able to distinguish Adivasi aspirations from Maoist intentions. *The former needs to be nurtured while the later needs to be defeated.* But the problem is that this is beyond the capability of the public administration apparatus we have in place now. I have the following recommendations towards resolution of the conflict

- Implement the provisions of the Indian Constitution with regard to the Tribals.
- Create self-governing districts in tribal majority areas.
- Give tribal people ownership rights over community lands and designated forest areas.
- Create a new Civil Service for tribal areas.
- All royalties and income flowing from mineral and forest wealth should directly flow back to tribal areas.
- Compute the outflow of wealth so far and create a specific fund for tribal areas to build social and economic infrastructure.
- And the state must admit its mistake committed towards tribals.

Weaning Away Maoists' Support Base

At present there are two wars on in Central India and it is the war waged by the Maoists that needs to be defeated. The second war that is by the adivasis, is mainly due to the sense of hopelessness that they have acquired over a period of time owing to the governmental indifference. The resistance in central India has nothing to do with Maoism or for that matter any ideology. Adivasis had had a long history of rebellious past against any oppression, whereas Maoists have come into the scene over last few decades. These are two separate entities and have to be dealt in that manner.

I have grown up in Chhatisgarh and have seen the adivasis way of life from close quarters. The tribals, though economically backward, are people with rich history and culture – are proud of their identity. They have always been docile and peace loving. However their basic traits have seen transformation over the last 25 years due to the situation they find themselves in; arising out of state neglect. The basic tenet of an adivasi society is based on community living as against the mainstream India, which has an individualistic way of life - hence, they have to be understood and interpreted differently.

There is lack of cultural orientation on part of state agencies operating in tribal areas, language being the biggest impediment towards acceptance by adivasis. In the said context, the Maoists, who too are outsiders, have found ground primarily for- firstly they have learnt the language of the adivasis and secondly they live amongst them. 'Hindi' is treated as language of outsiders and oppressors, by the adivasis and alienates the state representatives at the outset. Non acceptance, in the beginning, further compounds the challenge of cultural orientation.

In Central India, it is the adivasis' war, merely taken over by non adivasi Maoists, for their ulterior motives; trying to coincide the means of these two distinct wars, to serve their purpose of overthrow of state. Continued absence of state from these areas has facilitated the Maoist intent, who have occupied the vacant space. The speaker brought out that the top Maoist leadership lived in their own world and were disconnected with the adivasis on ground. It is the middle leadership and the cadre on grounds that were face of the resistance and wield real power.

Amongst the adivasis, since last few years, there has been a change in perception taking place, wherein it is now believed by them that eventually, it would be the state that shall come for long term welfare of theirs – and not the Maoists. However, the only face of state that is seen by adivasis, in their homelands is that of the forest guard and local policeman, out to oppress and exploit. The adivasis consisting of rank and file of the resistance, need to be shown to the outside world, by the media. The same is not taking place since the corporate driven media that reports on the ground situation, merely concentrates on statistics, in terms of number of fatalities on either side. They are not interested in socio-economics of the adivasi society, who

live below poverty line and do not interest the media; as a result the situation has not been changing for better.

The crux of the problem was due to break in communication between these adivasis and the mainstream India. Bridging this divide holds the potential of weaning away the support base of Maoists. The solution lies in revolutionised communication technology – by interlinking cellular phones, internet and radio. Usage of mobile phones is quite widespread in the adivasi belt, inspite of the erratic or even absent electric supply. Adivasis do not mind walking several hours to reach a source of electricity to charge their mobile phones. Apart from their excellent skills of direction finding, they had acquired reasonable proficiency towards successfully hunting patches on ground to acquire mobile reception. Seeing potential of cellular telephony in the region, we embarked on the innovative idea of connecting the adivasis with the outside world through mobile phones interlinked with internet and radio, and thus 'democratising the media'.

Other than airing their grievances, on the communication link thus provided, these people could also be made aware of their rights, e.g several acts that the government has passed remain alien to them owing to their ignorance and being in 'Hindi'. Such steps already in execution under his CG-Net Swara (Central Gondwana Net Voice) has been empowering people by making them participate in communicating and reporting. This was the only way to counter corporate media, which was driven by ulterior motives and never use to air grievances of adivasi population – for being against their profit oriented motives.

By opening out to the world the adivasi support base of Maoists shall diminish. The positive potential of such measures have started showing with already dwindling support base for Maoists, wherein adivasis have come up for surrenders. Earlier, such surrenders used to be confined to non-adivasis leadership.

To conclude, I put forth that the war waged by adivasis in Central India has to be addressed by giving them a voice and thus empowering them. The democratic media, so created shall go a long way in weaning away Maoists support base.

Media as a Tool to Influence Attitudes in Conflict - Sh. Maroof Raza, Defence Analyst

Perceptions are extremely crucial in a conflict scenario and the same can be and need to be effectively influenced, even in face of a different reality – concerning national security. Also, perception was equally important while conveying message to an adversary. For example, vis-à-vis, China, we certainly get on a weak footing but we can manage perceptions better by conveying our ability to bring in punishment in the event of a conflict or a transgression by the Chinese would be disproportionate to the level of activity the Chinese may have to take on. In such cases, perceptionbuilding achieves the aim of being a deterrent.

In Low Intensity Conflicts, perception conveyed by the military, through media, could play a very favourable role in projecting good intentions of the military, vis-à-vis the actual use of force, thereby making the military, a force to reckon with. The same becomes further more crucial since the military is inducted during such conflicts as a last resort and expectations from it, run high, given the crumbling and difficult situation at hand. Basically, perceptions need to be shaped in a conflict situation, with an intent of winning heart and mind of the people.

Militaries in rest of the world, especially the developed ones, have embarked a special relation with media, unlike in our context. Towards this, as per the speaker, grooming of our officer class and a skeptic media policy is to be blamed. An information void left by our state apparatus is filled in by the media, in a manner they like, often sacrificing the contextual references. With gaps in information, emerging from ground, the unaware and clueless bureaucracy at the top compounds the complexities, while giving their version, as the official one.

‘Avoiding Media and Playing Safe’, attitude by the military does more harm than good. We must not forget the mindset of a reporter trying to shape up public opinion, which he attempts by bringing in certain negativity, lest he is marked as ‘embedded’, as also to boost TRP. Ours is the only country where challenging the state narrative is labelled as anti national and when media, in our free society, reports on those lines, they are seen the prism of suspicion.

Media should be made to understand the functioning of military by various formal and informal means. Also, deliberations need to be in place, while selecting officers to interact with media. The person selected should be lucid in expression and at ease while dealing with media. He should be able to ensure organisational interests as well as satiate the media expectations. Media should always be briefed to understand the backdrop and context of a situation, prior to they embark on reporting / coverage mission. No information should be held back and military should be prompt and forthcoming in disseminating information and followup, simultaneously. Any previous flaw needs to be covered by building up on new strategy that gives out positivity, despite shortcomings in notice.

As brought out by the previous speaker, that since media houses are owned by corporates, their reporting at times get skewed. He stressed on possibility of making the corporates divert a portion of their profits to promote exclusive coverage of people's problems in conflict areas like, Central India.

In a conflict zone, the print media holds larger sway due to its longer shelf life, vis-à-vis electronic media. Also, the cruciality of vernacular press and radio can not be undermined, owing to the widespread target audience and reach. Media has to be used to win hearts and minds of local population, in a conflict scenario; and not merely to portray a specific image of the military and the state.

Discussion – 'Q' & 'A' Session

- Local v/s National Media. There is objective coverage of stories in Maoist affected areas and good journalists do get inputs from the Maoists. There is a limitation in terms of national media perspective as compared to local media. The local media is ever-present on the ground and has connections to the other side of the story too when reporting objectively. There is the issue of the national senior editorial teams not giving importance to the stories by the local journalists due to the perception that all people in these areas are anti-nationalist. Most journalists go with the editorial line rather than standing up for the story. The story does come up but often doesn't get reported because the editorial line is different. The media would never print what the adivasis want due to their funding from big corporate houses. Journalism has become an art of 'not writing'. This is how things work in a "fashionable democracy". There is a need to create better communication platforms where the voices will come out. The Maoists, on the other hand are fairly effective in using the media. Any manifesto that the Maoists come out with gets state or national coverage. And they also get coverage from other organisations and institutions who feel their voices need to be heard. The tribals don't have effective organisation and coordination that can articulate their points of view. The local people are aware of the situation on the ground but not in an articulated marketable format and not brought to the media to be projected.
- Vested Interests Controlling Media. "Fashionable democracy" is a reference to the mainstream media that is run from the metropolitan cities and calls itself representative media. In political democracy, writing cannot be used as it would require exclusion of many people. Button-pushing and stamping is done to reach the last person. If the last person's voice is heard and equally respected by the media, then democracy is working. Technology should be used to achieve this. We have an aristocratic media in a democracy. 80% people don't even have 20% space while the remaining 20% people have all the space. The present communication system does not solve problems and it is controlled by small number of people who use it for their vested interests. For a better future, we need an independent media. People should have equal voice so they can help each other solve the problems.

- Role of the Army. The army understands that the Maoist movement is not critical right now and is only present in an advisory capacity, despite all the rumours that the army shall be deployed in Central India. The indices don't point to any deployment in near future unless the situation changes drastically. The Army should not be deployed. CAPF have the same infantry troops as the Army and the same equipment. The difference is in the leadership and the training which should be imparted to the forces. Their capacity needs to be build up in all respects – both tangibles and intangibles. The problem should be sorted by the politicians and the bureaucracy.
- Nation of Minorities. India has 1100 distinct groups of people, 16 major languages. India is not a monolithic country and there are no majorities. We're a nation of minorities. People have a right to live by their identity and their culture which should be respected and is the essence of democracy. But some people try to turn India into a mono-cultural country.
- Bogey of Revolution. Revolution is not going to happen in this country and Maoist thing is a bogie. There are less than 2000 Maoists left. If the local police system and the information network were working properly, these remaining numbers would be neutralised in no time. The State is not working. However, conditions that leftists vie for, are ripe for a revolution; there is so much inequality, corruption, degradation, loot, high income disparities. The GDP has grown from 648 billion in 2000 to almost 2 trillion in 2014 but agriculture has come down from 35% to 13%. In relative terms, some people are getting richer and richer while others are getting poorer and poorer. The important thing in the system is to get voices heard and the moment the voices are crushed, there shall be a rebellion in the country. A million mutinies are good for the society and should be supported and encouraged, but when the million mutinies become one mutiny then it spells trouble. There are four factors that must be available for a successful revolution. Leadership apart, there has to be a cause, a support base amongst the locals, the benefit of external support and the factor of terrain. The geography gives the insurgents an advantage and all these factors have to be addressed collectively.
- Weak Intent to Resolve Conflict. Another problem with the insurgency and other related problems is the case of blind leading blind. The political leadership is only concerned about their political agenda. The higher police hierarchy lacks motivation and drive, wants to get back to cushiony appointments interacting with the political leadership. The appointments to the CAPF are done by the bureaucracy which has no concept of the personnel and their problems. There is disconnect between the top hierarchy and the ground forces and the issue is unaddressed. As a result, policing on ground suffers. The officers from neither the paramilitary nor the police lead from the front like those in the army. There is a basic problem of training, leadership, orientation and selection of police officers.

SPECIAL ADDRESS

Defining National Interest

With 202 nation states on the roster of the United Nations, loss of bi-polarity due to the demise of the former Soviet Union, proliferation of nuclear technology and weaponisation of nuclear technology creating multi node nuclear weapon state actors, plus the complexities of globalization whose darker side is the evolution of international terrorism, has made study of security far more complex than what we have known or postulated even in the cold war period.

The armed forces as an organization will become even more significant for the nation states and be used to contain internal security problems apart from maintaining the integrity of the nation state from external aggression or project power beyond territorial limits. This requires the nation states to rationalize the purpose of their national power of which one component is the organization called the Armed Forces. Hence we observe that since 1630s, the role of national interest and defining of national interest becomes important to conduct the business of the present nation state militarily, socially, politically, economically and diplomatically.

My presentation will be in the following parts:

- History of the idea of National Interest.
- Conceptualizing National Interest.
- Defining National Interest.
- Formulation of National Interest.
- Utility of National Interest.

History of the Idea of National Interest

In 'the Idea of National Interest' (1934), Charles Beard traced the history of the concept of 'national interest' to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when modern nation-states began to crystallise.

Before the French Revolution the term 'nation' referred to a racial or linguistic group. Political authority was largely centralized, exclusively so in the domain of external relations; according to E.H. Carr, 'international relations were primarily relations between royal families'. The narrowness of this domestic conception was matched by a mercantilist policy in external affairs. Such a policy was intended to expand the power and wealth of the state, personified by the ruler and controlled by a small circle of governing elites. In the post-Renaissance period, wealth accumulation also occurred as a result of trade and colonial wars. In this period, mercantilism 'identified the interest of the nation with the interest of its rulers'.

The doctrine of *raison d'état* is a predecessor to 'national interest'. *Raison d'état* derives from Machiavelli's writings on statecraft and has its roots, according to Meinecke, in 'the personal power-drive of the rulers' and 'the need of the subject people, which allows itself to be governed because it receives compensations' in exchange. Machiavelli argued that the overriding imperative for the ruler was the survival of the state, threats to which had to be overcome by any means necessary. The prince 'must be prepared not to be virtuous, and must not flinch from being

blamed for vices which are necessary for safeguarding the state. He should not deviate from what is good, if that is possible, but he should know how to do evil, if that is necessary'.

Beginning in the 15th century, and with increasing momentum in the 17th and 18th centuries, secularism and political economy began to gain in prominence at the expense of theology. This displacement from a spiritual to a material concern was matched by a corresponding change in the meaning of the word 'interest', which 'shrank to an economic conception in writings and negotiations involving policy, statecraft and social affairs generally'.

Rousseau described the political expression of these common interests as the 'general will'. He suggested that there were times when the multiplicity of individual interests would be subordinated to a collective interest that was applied to all members. It is only this general will that 'can direct the powers of the State in such a way that the purpose for which it has been instituted, which is the good of all, will be achieved. For Rousseau, the common interests of societies constitute the basis of decision making and policy. These interests are cohesive glue that binds a society together and prevents it from fragmenting. The bond of society is what there is in common between these different interests, and if there were not some point in which all interests were identical, no society could exist.

The bond of society is that identity of interests which all feel who compose it. In the absence of such an identity no society would be possible. Now, it is solely on the basis of this common interest that society must be governed.

As popular forces gained greater access to civil and political rights, the aim of national policy began to be understood as the pursuit of the interests of all members of the nation. However, the underlying assumption – that these interests existed in distinction to the interests of other political communities – continued. Governments had come under serious pressure for better wages and working conditions in the late 19th century. The Russian Revolution meant that these demands had to be taken seriously early in the 20th century.

These economic interests, and the government policies that were designed to pursue them, would be asserted against the interests and policies of other governments. While this gave workers 'an intimate practical interest in the policy and power of the nation', it also necessitated 'the loyalty of the masses to a nation which had become the instrument of their collective interests and ambitions'. Public's stake in international relations increased after World War II.

Conceptualising National Interest

In modern political life, "national interest" has become a common term among politicians and political scientists. In nearly every discussion about changing foreign policy, national interests are treated as accepted facts to support scholars or politicians when they present opinions. But there is no accepted common standard or definition of the concept of national interest, so the understanding of the role or meaning of national interest is totally different from one user of the term to another. This makes it nearly impossible to reach a consensus when debating foreign policy. In practice, such superficial discussion is meaningless for policy making. A debate without a common definition of national interest can never achieve a meaningful

outcome. This type of debate does not help policymakers at all in judging which recommended policy serves national interests better.

In theory, such discussion is not scientific because it is not based on a common definition of the term or a common understanding of the concept. It is like a blind person touching part of an elephant and describing the animal based on the sense of touch only, but without any concept of what a whole elephant looks like.

It is necessary to establish common standards for defining national interests. Without common standards, it will be impossible to make the study of foreign policy scientific; it will also be difficult to have meaningful discussions on foreign policy. For instance, there are people who regard 16 liang (similar to ounces) as 1 jin (similar to pounds), others regard 10 liang as 1 jin, there are even people who regard 9 liang as 1 jin. If their count of liang are the same, they can never reach an agreement on the weight of any given object using the concept of jin. If their concepts of liang are different, they will not have the same outcome when weighing objects, in addition they may also confuse the concepts of heavy and light.

Confused Concepts of National Interest

Let me illustrate with China as an example. National interest does not have a class nature. In the Chinese language the concept of “national interest” has two meanings. One is national interest in the context of international politics, meaning the interests of a nation state in a global arena. The other is state interest or interests of state as the highest level in domestic politics, meaning governmental interest or a government that represents the peoples’ interest. Interests of state are more important than local interests, collective interests or individual interests. In 1954, Chairman Mao, at an extended meeting of the Chinese Communist Party Politburo, said “our policy toward farmers is not like the Soviet’s, but it is one that takes care of both the interest of farmers and the interests of the state.” The national interest that Mao Zedong was talking about is in the category of domestic politics. In 1989, when Deng Xiaoping met with the Thai prime minister, he said, “China wants to maintain its own national interest, sovereignty and territorial integrity. China also believes that a socialist country cannot violate other countries’ interests, sovereignty or territory.” The national interest that Deng Xiaoping was talking about here meant national interest in the context of international politics.

Because of the dual meaning of “national interest” in the Chinese language, some scholars have confused national interest with interest of state. They have therefore misunderstood the meaning of the concept of national interest in the context of international politics. Lenin said the state is an instrument of the ruling class in domestic politics and state organizations are its instruments. Because the ruling class controls the state, its interest and that of the ruling class coincide. A state's interest is often contrary to groups other than the ruling class; therefore national interests in terms of domestic politics do have a class nature. The national interest in international politics includes the interests of the whole nation state. And both the ruler and the ruled share those interests. Logically, it is paradoxical to say that the ruling class represents national interests. The state in the context of domestic politics is a tool of the ruling class. That tool always reflects the user's will, not vice versa. A

nation in international politics is not a ruling tool; it is a political group of people. Therefore, it definitely represents the interests of the entire group.

In some countries where there is no party in control, national interests often overlap with the key political leader's individual interest. In Russia after the disintegration of the Soviet Union for example, the key political leader, Boris Yeltsin, did not rely on his political party for governing but on his charisma. These are all indisputable facts. However, these phenomena only occur under certain historical conditions, therefore we cannot draw a universal conclusion that national interests have a religious nature, a political party nature or an individual nature. Likewise, the overlap of national interests with ruling class interests is also conditional.

Definition of National Interest

What exactly is national interest? Napoleon had said that he was acting in the interest of France when he initiated his campaign against Russia, and later when he launched his desperate battle at Waterloo. Adolf Hitler justified his expansionist policies, including annexation of Austria and breakup of Czechoslovakia, in the name of Germany's national interest. "Friendly socialist" governments were installed in Poland and other East European countries by Stalin in the name of Soviet Union's national interest. President Bush was acting in America's national interest when he led the war against Iraq on the question of Kuwait's annexation by Iraq. Benazir Bhutto thought that it was in Pakistan's national interest to destabilize the Indian State of Jammu and Kashmir.

Thus, all actions, howsoever, wrong are taken in the name of national interest. We must now try to find an acceptable definition of national interest. The idea of national interest is singularly vague. It assumes variety of meanings in different contexts. The concept of national interest has not been objectively or scientifically defined. However, Padleford and Lincoln observe: "Concepts of national interests are centred on the core values of the society, which include the welfare of the nation, the security of its political beliefs, national way of life, territorial integrity and its self preservation." The government tries to narrow the definition of "National Interest" to

- Defence.
- National Security
- Economy
- Interstate and Foreign Commerce
- Foreign relations
- The state of general national affairs.

One of the good examples that can be set in concrete with national interest is for instance a federal energy policy. Since "energy" is at the root of just about every issue from transportation, national defence, commerce and foreign relations, not to mention national security etc. that it's strategic in nature; energy is a "national interest". The reason why it's so hard to nail down is that the national interest is so varied and extends into so many corners of our daily lives; it's sometimes hard to define only one area unless it's a glaring area. Another area would be defence. The

defence of this nation requires a standing military made up of several branches. Therefore it is in our national interest to have a strong and capable military.

Formulating National Interest

As a political unit, states were formed when mankind reached a certain stage of development. Therefore the concept of national interest did not exist before the formation of states. Did the concept of national interest emerge with the state? The answer is still negative. This is because national interest is largely defined as the interest of the modern nation state. But the concept of the modern nation state emerged relatively late in human history. Therefore, it is impossible that national interest emerged with the early formation of states. It took as many as thousands of years for some states to develop into modern nation states.

In the 1950s, China had economic relations with only 40 or so countries. China's overseas economic interests were therefore limited to trade with these countries. By the beginning of the 1980s, China had established economic and trade relations with 178 countries and regions; obviously, the scope of its economic interest had expanded. Along with the continuous implementation of the open door policy, the scope of China's overseas national interest will naturally expand even further. After the disintegration of the Soviet Union, Russia's domestic politics became chaotic. China believes that Russia's domestic political stability is important to China's interests.

Therefore, China developed policies to support Yeltsin in stabilizing domestic politics. After the Sino-Russian Foreign Ministers Talks in 1992, Foreign Minister Qian Qichen addressed journalists. He said: "Central Asian countries have close ties with Russia in every aspect and at the same time are members of the Commonwealth of Independent States. China and Russia share a common interest in keeping Central Asia stable and economically prosperous."

Utility of National Interest

The utility of national interest is not in any formula that can untangle complex issues. National interest is useful in training the decision maker to ask a series of questions, such as: How are current developments affecting my nation's power? Are hostile forces able to harm my vital interests? Do I have enough power to protect my vital interests? Which of my interests are secondary? How much of my power am I willing to use to defend them? What kind of deals can I get in compromises over secondary interests? The net impact of these questions is to restrain impetuous types from embarking on crusades. Morgenthau's argument is that the world would be a much better place if all statesmen would consistently ask such questions, for that would induce a sense of limits and caution into their strategies that might otherwise be lacking.

The statesman is constantly scanning the horizon to detect the growth of hostile power centres, and if they seem likely to impinge on his national interests he formulates strategies to safeguard them, each step grounded on adequate power.

The national interest approach is terribly old-fashioned and some thinkers argue it has been or must be superseded by "world interest" or "world order" approaches, which go beyond the inherent selfishness of national interest. Empirically, however,

one would still find national interest a better predictor of state strategy than world order. In a crisis, when it comes to putting their troops in harm's way, statesmen still ask themselves, "What is my nation's interest in all this?" It is still not a bad question.