



## The India-United States Counterterrorism

Dr.V.GOVINDU\*

&

D.SANGEETHA\*\*

*\*Academic Consultant,*

*Department of Political Science & Public Administration,  
Vikrama Simhapuri University, Nellore.*

*\*\* Lecturer, Sri Sarvodaya Degree College, Nellore.*

### **Introduction:**

India and United States, both the countries are linked by a deep commitment to freedom and liberty; national diversity; human resourcefulness and innovation; a quest to expand prosperity and economic opportunity worldwide and a desire to increase mutual security against the common threats posed by intolerance, terrorism, and the spread of WMD. The US has praised India for its significant counter-terrorism actions and said Pakistan-based terror groups continued their terror attacks in the country. In its annual 'Country Report on Terrorism', as mandated by the Congress, the State Department on Wednesday said the Indian leadership has expressed resolve to prevent terrorist attacks domestically and to bring to justice the perpetrators of terrorism, in cooperation with the US and other like-minded countries. The parts of India seriously impacted by terrorism in 2017 included Jammu and Kashmir, the northeast Indian states, and parts of central India in which Maoists remain active. This paper investigate counterterrorism initiatives united States and India.

### **India and the US pledged to strengthen cooperation**

India continued to experience attacks, including by Pakistan-based terrorist organisations as well as tribal

and Maoist insurgents. Indian authorities blamed Pakistan for cross-border attacks in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. In the same year, India and the US pledged to strengthen cooperation against terrorist threats from groups, including Al-Qaida, ISIS, Jaish-e-Mohammad, Lashkar-e-Taiba and D-Company. During a June 2017 summit, President Donald Trump and Prime Minister Narendra Modi directed officials to establish a new mechanism for cooperation on terrorist designations.

The United States can play a helpful role in bolstering India's counterterrorism capabilities. There has already been extensive cooperation between the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation and Indian security services in the wake of Mumbai, illustrating the dramatic improvement in Indo-U.S. relations. There has also been increased intelligence sharing with India, most of it obviously related to Afghanistan and Pakistan.

The relationship should move beyond investigative collaboration and intelligence sharing into a broader project of training and capacity building. One of the traditional strengths of the U.S. law enforcement establishment has been training other countries' police and domestic intelligence forces. India would benefit enormously from even a small, but sustained program bringing Indian police



to the United States for training, and sending American trainers to India to lecture on successful practices. This could be a small program aimed at providing specialized training to state and federal police.

Even basic training would have a broader effect of increasing the professionalism of India's domestic security forces. In addition to helping to prevent and respond to terrorist attacks, increased professionalism might reduce the resentment of the security forces in parts of the Indian Muslim community, which perceive the police as indiscriminate and brutal. Small but meaningful grants could also be provided for training and equipping police forces.

#### **UNO and Counter Terrorism:**

The United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism was established through the adoption of General Assembly resolution 71/291 on 15 June 2017. Mr. Vladimir Ivanovich Voronkov was appointed as Under-Secretary-General of the Office on 21 June 2017. As suggested by Secretary-General Antonio Guterres in his report (A/71/858) on the Capability of the United Nations to Assist Member States in implementing the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force and the UN Counter-Terrorism Centre, initially established in the Department of Political Affairs were moved into a new Office of Counter-Terrorism headed by an Under-Secretary-General. The new Under-Secretary-General will provide strategic leadership to United Nations counter-terrorism efforts, participate in the decision-making process of the United Nations and ensure that the cross-cutting origins and impact of terrorism are reflected in the work of the United Nations.

#### **The Office of Counter-Terrorism has five main functions:**

(a) provide leadership on the General Assembly counter-terrorism mandates entrusted to the Secretary-General from across the United Nations system;

(b) enhance coordination and coherence across the 38 Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact (former CTITF) Task Force entities to ensure the balanced implementation of the four pillars of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy;

(c) strengthen the delivery of United Nations counter-terrorism capacity-building assistance to Member States;

(d) improve visibility, advocacy and resource mobilization for United Nations counter-terrorism efforts; and

(e) ensure that due priority is given to counterterrorism across the United Nations system and that the important work on preventing violent extremism is firmly rooted in the Strategy.

The Office will aim to have a close relationship with Security Council bodies and Member States, strengthening existing and developing new partnerships through regular travel and attendance at counter-terrorism-related meetings. The creation of the Office is the first major institutional reform undertaken by the Secretary-General.

#### **USA-India Counterterrorism Initiatives**

India and the United States, top homeland security officials of the two countries have worked on a draft plan related to six areas, including anti-terror cooperation in intelligence sharing, terror financing and cyber security. During the Indo-US Homeland Security Dialogue, held recently, senior officers deliberated on a draft work plan relating to the activities of the six sub-groups, an official privy to the development. The six sub-



groups formed under the Indo-US homeland security dialogue cover the areas of

1. Illicit finance,
2. Illegal smuggling of cash,
3. financial fraud and counterfeiting,
4. cyber information,
5. megacity policing and
6. sharing of information among

federal state and local partners, global supply chain, transportation, port, border and maritime security, capacity building and technology upgradation.

Cooperation in matters related to counter terror initiatives and intelligence sharing were given stress during the recent meeting. Both the sides agreed to work out the modalities to address these issues and agreed to maintain sustained interactions to enhance security cooperation between the two countries. The Indo-US homeland security dialogue was launched in 2010 as the mechanism to a sequel to the signing of the India-US counter-terrorism initiative. The maiden two-plus-two dialogue between India and the United States.

Counterterrorism partnership is a critical component of strategic cooperation between India and U.S. The U.S. and India share best practices and information with each other through training programs, joint working groups, and a myriad of other interactions at the bilateral, regional, and global levels. USA is committed to cooperating with India and other partners to prevent terrorist attacks and bring to justice those who commit them. This section highlights U.S.-India counterterrorism cooperation, and provides additional information on U.S. counterterrorism policy and initiatives worldwide.

### **Strategic Cooperation**

Strategic cooperation working groups address nonproliferation,

counterterrorism and military cooperation. Here are some of the activities between the two governments that are advancing strategic cooperation. Secretary of State Michael R. Pompeo and Secretary of Defense James Mattis look forward to meeting with their Indian counterparts, Minister of External Affairs Sushma Swaraj and Minister of Defense Nirmala Sitharaman, to discuss strengthening strategic, security, and defense cooperation as the United States and India jointly address challenges in the Indo-Pacific region and beyond. “The U.S. designation of India as a Major Defense Partner marked a milestone in U.S.-India defense cooperation,” said Ambassador Juster. “President Trump and Prime Minister Modi are driving forward this Major Defense Partnership and our broader strategic relationship with a shared vision for peace, security, and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region.” Goldfein said, “India is a leading power and strategic partner in the Indo-Pacific region. From our Presidents, to our Defense Secretary and Minister, to our Air Force Chiefs, we’re working together and looking for opportunities to enhance the inter-operability of our two forces as major defense partners in the Indo-Pacific region.”

Over the past 17 years, the United States and India have made enormous strides together. Some of the landmark steps along the way include the expansion of our defense cooperation and combined military exercises, the work of the High Technology Cooperation Group and the Next Steps in Strategic Partnership, the historic civil nuclear deal, the nearly six-fold increase in U.S.-India trade, the Defense Technology and Trade Initiative and the designation of India as a Major Defense Partner, and many other initiatives related to commerce, energy,



the environment, science, technology, health, and other fields. Significantly, there has been strong, consistent, and sustained support for this partnership from the major parties in each of our countries, across multiple changes of government.

The two leaders discussed the comprehensive strategic partnership between the United States and India and their shared commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific region. The U.S.-India defense cooperation has steadily expanded in recent years, underpinned by common objectives and goals in the region, Defense Secretary Jim Mattis said En route to India, Sept. 24, 2017, adding that such cooperation will benefit both economies while reducing any legacy or trust issues between the two democracies. Secretary Mattis specifically applauded India's efforts to promote stability in the South Asia region. Both leaders reaffirmed building upon the significant defense cooperation progress made in recent years.

In their first conversation, Secretary Mattis committed to build upon the tremendous progress in bilateral defense cooperation made in recent years, underscoring the strategic importance of the U.S.-India relationship and India's role in advancing global peace and security. India-U.S. defense relations in recent years have moved along a remarkable upward trajectory. Marked progress on agreements, including the signing of a Defense Framework Agreement in 2015, have laid a blueprint for collaboration between our defense establishments and enabled deeper cooperation. As Prime Minister Modi said in his recent address to the U.S. Congress, "A strong India-U.S. partnership can anchor peace, prosperity and stability from Asia to Africa and from Indian Ocean to the Pacific." We couldn't agree more. The leaders affirmed

the increasing convergence in their strategic perspectives and emphasized the need to remain closely invested in each other's security and prosperity. The United States and India share a deep and abiding interest in global peace, prosperity, and stability.

The Defense Framework is foundational and it's going to guide the U.S.-India defense relationship for the next decade. We welcome the participation of all countries that subscribe to the goals set out in this Joint Statement and wish to contribute to the work of the Contact Group. Clearly, as we are reminded too often, the threat of international terror remains a defining challenge for both our countries. U.S. Missile Cruiser USS Antietam and Missile Destroyer USS McCampbell generated a lot of interest in India's International Fleet Review, hosted by the Indian Navy. U.S. Chief of Naval Operations Adm. John Richardson was on deck for the festivities.

### **The Hidden Failure of US-India Counterterrorism Cooperation**

Late last month, the United States penalized three Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) terrorists and terror financiers as Specially Designated Global Terrorists (SDGT) in a move that challenged Pakistan's professed earnestness in its fight against terrorism. With the objective of restricting the financing and fundraising of the LeT, the U.S. Department of Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) designated two of the group's financial facilitators, Hameed ul Hassan (Hassan) and Abdul Jabbar (Jabbar), as Specially Designated Global Terrorists (SDGTs) in accordance with Executive Order (E.O.) 13224. The two individuals were accused of working with or on behalf of the LeT. Sigal Mandelker, undersecretary for terrorism and financial



intelligence, said that these “financial facilitators” were responsible for “collecting, transporting and distributing funds to support this terrorist group and provide salaries to extremists.”

The consequences are not insignificant. This action prohibits any U.S. citizens from conducting any transactions with them, in addition to blocking the property and assets in the name of the two individuals within the United States. In addition to blocking the LeT’s financial assets and network, it will seriously impair their capacity to raise funds for their activities. The individuals in question are also notable. According to the U.S. Treasury Department notification, Hassan has been a financial facilitator for LeT, having worked earlier with Falah-e Insaniat Foundation, an alias of LeT, to send funds to Syria in late 2016. The notification provides additional background information too: Earlier in 2016, Hassan worked with his brother, Muhammad Ijaz Safarash and Khalid Walid to send funds to Pakistan on behalf of LeT. Safarash and Walid were earlier designated as SDGTs for their links with LeT in March 2016 and September 2012 respectively.

Hassan on his Twitter account identifies himself as the leader of Jamat-ud Dawah (an alias of LeT) in Azad Kashmir. Likewise, Jabbar also has been a financier for LeT and is believed to have been working for the finance department of LeT since 2000. The third person designated as an SDGT is Abdul Rehman al-Dakhil. This measure will similarly impose sanctions on the terrorist leader, blocking his property and assets in the United States as well denying his ability to engage in fundraising activities. Al- Dakhil, was “an operational leader for LeT’s attacks in India between 1997 and 2001” according to the State

Department. Al- Dakhil was a senior divisional commander for the Jammu region in the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir in 2016. As of early 2018, he was a senior commander within LeT.

There is no doubt that the designation of the Pakistan-based LeT and penalizing it for their continuing acts of terrorism highlights the increasing synergy between India and the United States on counterterrorism. And one ought not to understate the importance of that collaboration. But at the same time, that cooperation also has its limits. It is doubtful that these designations, and other moves like it, would be in any way sufficient to deter Pakistan and Pakistan-based terrorist organizations from continuing terrorist attacks against India.

Of course, the U.S. move has been welcomed by the Indian establishment. The MEA spokesperson in his press briefing said, “India welcomes the announcements... The announcement vindicates India’s consistent stand that internationally designated terrorist groups and Individuals, including LeT and it’s front, Falah-e-Insaniyat Foundation [FIF], continue to operate from and raise financial resources with impunity in Pakistan, and use territories under its control for carrying out cross-border terrorism in India and elsewhere in South Asia.” Clearly, New Delhi is pleased.

On the other hand, both the LeT and Jamat-ud Dawah have been under both U.S. and UN terrorist group categorization for some time. The U.S. designation is the only the latest in a long string of Indian diplomatic victories in getting other countries and groups to support the Indian position on terrorism, even though there have also been occasional setbacks such as China blocking the effort in the UN to put Masood Azhar, a leader of the Jaish-e-



Mohammad terror group, in a list of UN-designated terrorists.

There are questions about the utility of this diplomatic strategy. Pakistan has shown little indication that its policies will be dictated by fear of international diplomatic response. Thus, India is facing a situation today where it has substantial diplomatic success in its fight against terror, but with little real benefit in terms of any reduction in the threat it faces. Facing up to this reality is also challenging because it requires New Delhi to consider harder options that it has little appetite for.

#### **Future very bright for US-India counter-terrorism cooperation:**

Describing India as an "incredibly valuable and close counter-terrorism partner" of the US, the Trump administration today said the future is "very bright" for bilateral co-operation in this arena. US Counterterrorism Coordinator, Nathan Sales credited the meetings between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Trump early in the latter's tenure as the reason behind a "powerful" partnership between the two nations. Future is very bright for US-India counterterrorism corporation. South Asia is one of the areas of the world where ISIS has an increasingly robust presence. "Bangladesh is a good example of this. The Holey Artisan Bakery attack in July of 2016 in Dhaka killed 22 people. The US is also tracking in South Asia the ISIS Khorasan affiliates of ISIS becoming increasingly ambitious and increasingly active.

#### **Conclusion:**

Cooperation between the India and United States in the warfare against terrorism could face some obstacles imposed by the differences in the two countries' policies regarding the Greater

Middle East. The manner in which the warfare in Iraq was launched remains a controversial matter for the Indian government. There is particular concern on the Indian side that the warfare on terror could destabilize the Persian Gulf. India's close ties with Iran also go against American policy and concerns about Iranian nuclear ambitions. Despite the above consideration, India is bound to assist United States in Afghanistan and Iraq to fight against Jehadi forces. It is significant to note that if Jehadi forces are not defeated, it would have most awful effect in South Asia and ultimate India would be the sufferer. Samuel Huntington rightly pointed out India, China and United States, all the three of the countries as "Core States of Seven Civilizations." The United States' largest strategic rival in the Asian continent is, or soon will be, China. The United States generally frames the Chinese in the context of Northeast Asian regional matters, and in the context of Japanese, Korean, and Russian relations. India, on the other hand, sees China has a neighborhood rival, as the two countries often vie for influence in Southeast Asia and in the Himalayan states. India would like to prevent China from exerting influence in the South Asia region. The obvious reason is that China considers its claim line in the area up to foot hills bordering Assam. Its refusal to give visa to a Indian Civil Servant from Arunachal Pradesh, was a careful move to ensure that India should not at a future quote the instances to make claims over Arunachal Pradesh, which China regards its territory .

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