



Terrorism Monitor

In-Depth Analysis of the War on Terror

VOLUME VIII, ISSUE 22 • JUNE 5, 2010

IN THIS ISSUE:

BRIEFS.....	1
EGYPT AND GAZA'S ISLAMIC JIHAD: A STEADY DETERIORATION IN RELATIONS By Hani Nasira.....	3
EUROPOL REPORT SUGGESTS SEPARATISM RATHER THAN ISLAMISM CONSTITUTES BIGGEST TERRORIST THREAT TO EUROPE By Raffaello Pantucci.....	4
100 MORE TERRORIST GROUPS BANNED IN INDIA: WHAT ARE INDIA'S COUNTERTERRORISM PRIORITIES? By Animesh Roul.....	6



NATO Supply Convoy

Terrorism Monitor is a publication of The Jamestown Foundation. The Terrorism Monitor is designed to be read by policy-makers and other specialists yet be accessible to the general public. The opinions expressed within are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of The Jamestown Foundation.

Unauthorized reproduction or redistribution of this or any Jamestown publication is strictly prohibited by law.

AFRICOM'S OPERATION FLINTLOCK: NEW PARTNERS AND NEW QUESTIONS

In the midst of a major drive to increase security in Africa's Saharan and Sahel nations, American, African and European military forces have just concluded the latest version of Operation Flintlock (May 2-23), one in a series of multinational military exercises designed to foster and develop international security cooperation in North and West Africa. The latest exercises came at a time of growing concerns over large-scale drug trafficking in the region and kidnappings carried out by elements of al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). The maneuvers are conducted as part of the Trans-Sahara Counter Terrorism Partnership (TSCTP).

1200 soldiers participated in the latest maneuvers, including 600 U.S. Marines and Special Forces, units from France and Britain and smaller European contingents from Germany, Spain and the Netherlands (*L'Essor* [Bamako], May 5). African countries with military representation included Mali, Algeria, Burkina Faso, Niger, Mauritania, Nigeria, Chad, Senegal, Tunisia and Morocco. The exercises were headquartered out of a Multinational Coordination Center set up at Camp Baangre in the Burkina Faso capital of Ouagadougou. Malian Special Forces received training in responding to hostage-taking operations (as carried out by AQIM). Many of the Malian participants were veterans of fighting Tuareg rebels in northern Mali.



For comments or questions about our publications, please send an email to pubs@jamestown.org, or contact us at:

1111 16th St. NW, Suite #320
Washington, DC • 20036

Tel: (202) 483-8888
Fax: (202) 483-8337

Copyright ©2009

The new participant in these exercises was Spain, once a formidable colonial power in Africa. Though the Flintlock command center in 2008 was at the Spanish-American joint use naval base at Rota, this was the first time Spanish troops joined the exercises. There were suggestions in 2008 from AFRICOM leader General William Ward that Rota might make a suitable permanent headquarters for AFRICOM—whose HQ is currently based in Stuttgart, Germany—as no African nation appears prepared to host it on the continent (*El País*, April 16). Other than the Spanish garrisons in the tiny coastal colonies of Ceuta and Melilla, it has been 16 years since the Spanish ended their military presence in Africa by withdrawing an air detachment in Equatorial Guinea (*El País*, May 24). The Spanish Defense Ministry withheld details on its participation for fear the mission might be mistaken for a rescue team going after two Spanish citizens currently being held hostage by AQIM (*El País*, May 24).

Senegal was another new participant, sending 38 Special Forces soldiers. Their commander, Major Cheikhna Dieng, said their presence was part of Senegal's preparations for al-Qaeda infiltration efforts (Agence de presse Sénéglaise, May 11). Senegal is over 90% Muslim. Despite the stated objective, there were apparently some concerns that the Senegalese Special Forces trained in Operation Flintlock might be deployed against separatists in southern Senegal's Casamance region, where elements of the Mouvement des forces démocratiques de Casamance (MFDC) have been engaged in a low-level conflict with the government since the 1980s (Agence de presse Sénéglaise, May 11).

Despite having the largest and most effective military in the Sahara region, Algeria has always been a small player in the exercises. Despite its efforts to draw Algeria into coordinated counterterrorism efforts, Washington's reluctance to provide Algeria advanced military equipment due to Israeli objections has caused dissatisfaction in Algiers, which is now looking to its old Cold War supplier, Russia, for sophisticated military supplies it cannot obtain from the United States (*El Khabar* [Algiers], May 24; *Khaleej Times* [Dubai], May 4).

The exercises began a week after Algeria, Mali, Mauritania, Chad and Burkina Faso, and Niger established a "Joint Operational Military Committee" at Tamanrasset on April 20, tasked with improving regional security and military cooperation. Libya

initially signaled it would join, but later withdrew (see *Terrorism Monitor*, April 23).

TAJIK-UZBEK RAILWAY DISPUTE UNDERLINES FRAGILITY OF NATO'S AFGHAN SUPPLY LINES

Developing supply lines to NATO forces in land-locked Afghanistan has required both logistical and diplomatic creativity. The shortest and technically easiest supply line runs from the port of Karachi through the Khyber Pass, but this is also the most insecure. One of several supply lines currently in use brings supplies by rail through Uzbekistan and Tajikistan into Afghanistan.

According to the deputy head of Tajik Railways, over 300 rail cars containing aviation fuel, oil and lubricants destined for NATO forces are parked on sidings in Uzbekistan (Eurasianet.org, May 26; Central Asia Online, May 26). They are among some 2,200 to 2,500 freight cars bound for Tajikistan that are being held on Uzbek territory (RFE/RL, May 26; Ferghana.ru, May 25). Tajik Railways say the delays began in February and are now preventing Tajikistan from exporting its fruit and vegetables (*Daily Times* [Lahore], May 26).

Unlike other disruptions to NATO's Afghanistan supply lines, this latest difficulty has little to do with militant attacks or political disapproval of the NATO or American mission in Afghanistan. The basis of the current dispute is Tajikistan's plans to construct a major hydroelectric power plant in Roghun, a measure that Uzbekistan claims would worsen regional water shortages. Many of the rail cars being held in Uzbekistan hold construction supplies for the power plant. Others hold much-needed reconstruction materials destined for Khatlon Province, which suffered heavy floods in early May. Rail wagons headed for Khatlon have been held up since May 18 (Ferghana.ru, May 25). Uzbekistan has said only that the delays are "technical."

On May 7, Uzbekistan imposed temporary restrictions on passenger and cargo transport to Tajikistan due to an outbreak of polio in Tajikistan (RFE/RL Tajik, May 25). In addition, floods along the Uzbekistan line to Termiz (the Uzbek rail terminus at the Afghan border where NATO supplies are offloaded for road transport into Afghanistan) were reported to have wiped out 11 kilometers of track. Uzbekistan says it does not have sufficient funds for repairs but has refused Tajik Railroad offers to rebuild that section at its own expense (RFE/RL Tajik, May 25).

Lieutenant-Colonel Goetz Hasske, a spokesman for the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) brushed off the impact of the delay, saying it was “not affecting logistics in the area. We have several border crossing points that we can use and we may have to reroute some shipments” (*Moscow Times*, May 26).

Fuel is the most vital of the NATO supplies being shipped into Afghanistan. As such, fuel tankers are the most targeted vehicles crossing into Afghanistan. Units of the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) conduct regular attacks on tankers passing through Pakistan. While NATO is downplaying the impact of the supply obstruction in Uzbekistan, the delays raise further questions as to the reliability of Uzbekistan as a supply-chain partner beyond the immediate problem of replacing 300 tankers of fuel. On the bright side, the expected September completion of a connection between Afghanistan’s limited rail network at Marzar-i-Sharif and the Uzbek line at the border town of Termiz will enable some shipments to bypass Tajikistan (AFP, May 29).

Palestinian divide. There also seems to be an Egyptian strategic concern regarding the possibility of the birth of an Islamic emirate in Gaza.

Relations were threatened again on June 23, 2008, when elements of the Palestinian factions led Gazans storming into the Rafah crossing, demanding food supplies. The Egyptian government then allowed food supplies into Gaza, but the factions still rejected a draft deal for Palestinian reconciliation prepared by Cairo in 2009 after the failure of a Saudi-brokered deal between Hamas and Fatah in February, 2007.

Gaza’s factions have also stepped up their tunnel digging activities along the Egypt-Gaza border. Cairo sees this as a violation of the crossings deal signed by the Palestinian Authority, Israel and Egypt and also as a strategic danger to Egyptian national security. In response, Egypt started in late 2009 to build a steel underground fence to destroy the tunnels used for trafficking from Egypt into Gaza. The factions naturally resented that move.

Tension has also manifested in response to Egypt’s arrest of 16 Islamic Jihad members on May 15 at the Rafah Crossing, upon their return from Saudi Arabia. A May 17 statement by the Islamic Jihad said the arrest took place as the members were returning from medical treatment in Saudi Arabia and coincided with factions in Gaza preparing to mark Nakba Day (“the day of the catastrophe,” marking the anniversary of the expulsion of the Palestinians from the new Israeli state in 1948) (Al-Quds Brigades, Saraya.ps, May 17).

It seems that Egypt’s concern over the logistical and ideological relations that Hamas and Islamic Jihad have with Syria and Iran renders an improvement in ties between Cairo and these factions a far-fetched dream. It is known that Islamic Jihad enjoys deep ties with Tehran, while Hamas leader Khaled Meshaal resides in Damascus and frequently visits Iran. The latest arrests by Cairo were made only three weeks after the release of six Islamic Jihad members who were detained for over two months.

Hamas and Islamic Jihad assert, through testimonies by the released members, that Egyptian security forces tortured and even killed several detainees. Salah al-Bardawil, a Hamas leader, accused the Egyptian security forces of torturing Yusuf Abu Zuhri – brother of Hamas spokesman Sami Abu Zuhri—with electric shocks until he died in detention (Ikhwanweb.net, May 9; May 12; May 13). On May 10, the Hamas government in Gaza called on Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak to order

Egypt and Gaza’s Islamic Jihad: A Steady Deterioration in Relations

By Hani Nasira

Egypt’s relations with the Palestinian factions have become remarkably cold recently, with Egyptian efforts to end the Palestinian divide hitting a dead end. Cairo no longer has direct contacts with Hamas and contacts with the Palestinian Islamic Jihad Movement have retreated recently. According to several sources, meetings between Egyptian and Gaza officials have been reduced to include only those with Palestinian officials who pass through Egypt on their way out of the Gaza Strip to visit other Arab countries (alaahd.com, May 21).

The Gaza factions, for their part, see Egypt as Israel’s partner in the siege of Gaza since June 2007. That siege limits the entry of basic goods into the Strip, forbids fishing in deep seas and closes crossings between the Strip and Israel as well as closing the Rafah crossing on the border with Egypt, which is Gaza’s only link with the outside world. On the other hand, the Egyptian government sees Gaza’s political factions as a stumbling block in the way of peace and an ending to the

an end to the detention and torture of Palestinians by the Egyptian security forces. Families of detainees also expressed their deepest concerns, demanding the Egyptian government immediately disclose information about the detainees and their fate (Paltoday.ps, May 10). Hamas further sought the intervention of the Arab League and Arab and international human rights groups in a bid to open the file of Palestinian detainees in Egypt. It seems that Islamic Jihad detainees in Egyptian prisons are significantly greater in number than those of Hamas, despite the fact that Cairo accuses both factions of destroying efforts to end Palestinian differences and resume peace talks. Hamas, meanwhile, shows sympathy and support for Islamic Jihad detainees and participates in celebrating their release. On May 10, Hamas leaders visited and congratulated Darweesh al-Gharabli, an Islamic Jihad leader, just a few days after his release by Egyptian authorities (Samanews.com, May 10). Al-Gharabli is also alleged to have been tortured through various means by Egyptian security agents during his detention (Ikhwanweb.com, May 12).

Despite differences between Hamas and Islamic Jihad, the current Gaza rulers are using Egypt's detentions to bolster ties with Islamic Jihad. This has led to warm relations between the two Palestinian factions since early 2009, reflected in joint meetings of their leaders with Syrian and Iranian officials (Al-Quds Brigades, Saraya.ps, May 19).

Meanwhile, Islamic Jihad declared that a delegation of their leaders went to Egypt on May 19 to discuss the detention of their members by Cairo. Dawood Shehab, the faction's spokesman, told reporters in Gaza that the delegation, headed by leader Nafith Azzam, crossed into Egypt through Rafah at Egypt's invitation in a bid to solve the issue of Islamic Jihad members recently detained after trying to cross into Gaza through Egypt. The spokesman emphasized his movement's keenness on the "wise handling of the detention of mujahideen," asserting the faction's good relations with Cairo by adding, "we do not need mediations with Egypt" (*Asharq al-Awsat*, May 19). Islamic Jihad also rejected what they called "attempts by some media to distort our relations with the Egyptian government" (Saraya.ps, May 19).

The Egyptian government's arrest of members of Palestinian factions, especially those of Islamic Jihad, falls within the context of Cairo's defense of its national security and rejection of the "Axis of Resistance" as represented by Syria and Iran and factions affiliated

with them. The policies of that axis contradict those of the Egyptian regime. It also seems that Cairo is trying to put pressure on Hamas and Islamic Jihad as they appear to have decided to ally themselves with Tehran and the Axis of Resistance, ignoring the Egyptian-Saudi Axis.

Hani Nasira is a Dubai-based Egyptian specialist in Islamic movements and religious phenomena.

Europol Report Suggests Separatism Rather than Islamism Constitutes Biggest Terrorist Threat to Europe

By Raffaello Pantucci

Europol, a European Union law enforcement agency dedicated to improving the effectiveness and cooperation of member states' security agencies, released its annual report on terrorism in Europe on April 28. [1] The report provides an overview of the current situation regarding terrorism in Europe and shows that while incidents of terrorism across the Union appear to be diminishing, "the threat emanating from terrorist groups remains real and serious." [2]

While the actual numbers seem to indicate that separatist and other forms of terrorism pose a larger threat in Europe, "Islamist terrorism is still perceived as the biggest threat to most Member States." In fact, Europol only tracked one effective Islamist terrorist attack in Europe during 2009 – Mohammed Game's unsuccessful attempt to carry out a suicide bombing on a Milan military barracks – in contrast to 237 attacks defined as separatist, 40 attacks by left-wing groups and an additional 124 attacks in Northern Ireland (for Mohammed Game's attack see *Terrorism Monitor*, November 19, 2009). There were also a smattering of right-wing attacks, single issue attacks and attacks with no definable political orientation. [3] Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab's unsuccessful attempt to bring down an airliner over Detroit is repeatedly identified in the report as evidence of the threat from Islamist networks in Europe and in particular of "how the E.U. can be

used as a platform for launching attacks on the United States.”

Overall, the number of attacks is down by 33% from 2008. This trend is also reflected in the number of arrests, which are down 22% from 2008 (with 587 arrested in 13 member states in 2009), and down 30% from 2007. The majority of arrests were of individuals involved in separatist groups, while the number of individuals arrested in relation to Islamist groups was down from 187 in 2007 to 110. It is worth noting that these figures do not include the UK, which according to the Home Office arrested 201 people from January to September 2009. This resulted in charges against 33% of those arrested, though it is not clear what their political orientations were. [4] In the Europol report, France (37), Italy (20), and Spain (40) marked the highest number of arrests related to Islamist terrorism.

But while the threat from Islamist terrorists is seen as important, it seems clear that on a daily basis it is separatist and other forms of terrorism which pose the most regular threat to European security. The Basque separatist group ETA laid claim to the most deadly attacks in 2009, killing four police officers in two separate attacks (part of some 14 separate attacks the group carried out in Spain), while two British soldiers were killed in Northern Ireland during the course of a year which saw some 124 separate attacks in the province by Loyalist or Republican factions.

Nevertheless, Europol’s assessment of the threat from separatist groups is sanguine in contrast to the growing threat that is seen from left-wing and anarchist groups. Some 40 such attacks were reported in 2009, an increase of 43% from the previous year (and part of a year-on-year trend) and included the death this year of a police officer in Greece. While many attacks by such groups are characterized as spontaneous, Europol highlights a “growing willingness” by such groups “to confront right-wing activists and police,” noting that “the ability to translate violent ambitions into action seems to have grown stronger.” Another growing menace is seen in the increased criminal activities by animal rights extremists which are “expanding throughout Europe,” while the threat from right-wing extremists remains a running theme with some evidence of attempted attacks and training in Europe. However, far-right groups appear to find it hard to maintain coherence, with the greatest threat from this ideology seen in “individuals motivated by extreme right-wing views, acting alone” rather than existing networks or groups. Nevertheless, Europol

concludes that activities by all of these groups “are developing a transnational character” and “are now becoming more serious.”

The drivers for this ongoing din of menace are not particularly touched upon in the report, though some thoughts are offered as to why Islamist terrorism continues to pose such a large threat, while in practice seeming less threatening than separatist terrorism. The internet is referred to as an important driver in the growing trend towards Islamist terrorist activities “perpetrated by self-radicalized and often self-instructed individuals,” but the existence of terrorist safe-havens outside the E.U. as locations for training are perceived as posing a continuing threat.

Islamist terrorism clearly remains Europe’s primary counterterrorism preoccupation, but as the continent watches its economy falter, security assessors have started to worry about what the resulting impact might be in terms of political extremism. Europol’s annual accounting of trends across Europe shows that a possible spike in left, right, anarchist and single issue terrorism might be a possible result, something which is likely to only further distract already stretched security services.

Raffaello Pantucci is a Consulting Research Associate with the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) and an E.U. Science and Technology Fellowship Programme (China) Research Fellow.

Notes:

1. For the official press release: <http://www.europol.europa.eu/index.asp?page=news&news=pr100428.htm>. The full report can be found at: http://www.europol.europa.eu/publications/EU_Terrorism_Situation_and_Trend_Report_TE-SAT/TESAT2010.pdf.
2. Earlier Europol Reports were discussed in Terrorism Monitor, May 1, 2008 and May 8, 2009.
3. Due to differences in counting and measuring, the United Kingdom is not included within the Europol numbers. Consequently, their statistics are frequently listed separately in the report.
4. “Operation of police powers under the Terrorism Act 2000 and subsequent legislation: Arrests, outcomes and stops & searches,” Home Office Statistical Update, February 25, 2010, <http://rds.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs10/hosb0410.pdf>.

100 More Terrorist Groups Banned in India: What are India's Counterterrorism Priorities?

By Animesh Roul

India, one of the most terrorism-troubled countries in the world, is finally pursuing the idea of proscribing nearly 100 terrorist entities, both regional and international. The proscription will exist in tandem with the United Nations' consolidated list of al-Qaeda and Taliban linked groups. Many of these outlawed entities have staged numerous attacks either in India or abroad and threaten to continue their transnational terrorist activities in order to further their violent jihadi ideology.

The case of India is unique in comparison to many other countries of the world as it is the country with the greatest number of indigenous, home-grown terror groups along with a substantial presence of transnational terrorist entities on its soil and in neighboring countries, posing a constant threat to its security. India has witnessed the rise of Islamist terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir and beyond in the last two decades, as well as left wing extremism in central and eastern India, ethnic separatist movements in the northeast and pro-Khalistan (Sikh homeland) militancy in Punjab.

Facing a Range of Threats

India has already outlawed 36 terrorist organizations which have carried out operations and have a physical presence across the country. [1] The prominent terrorist groups currently outlawed reflect diverse ideologies and objectives. They include:

- Northeastern separatist groups like the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA), the People's Liberation Army - Manipur (PLA), the United National Liberation Front (UNLF), the People's Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak (PREPAK) and the All Tripura Tiger Force (ATTF).

- Sikh separatist groups spearheading the Khalistan (Sikh homeland) movement, such as Babbar Khalsa International (BKI), the Khalistan Commando Force (KCF), and the International Sikh Youth Federation (ISYF).

- Kashmir-focused Islamist terrorist groups based in Pakistan, such as Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM), Harkat-ul-Jihad-e-Islami (HuJI) and the Hizb-ul-Mujahideen (HM).

- Left wing extremist groups like the Communist Party of India – Maoist (CPI-Maoist), the Akhil Bharat Nepali Ekta Samaj (ABNE), a Maoist group based on Nepali migrants to India, the Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI), the recently defeated Sri Lanka based Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and the lesser known Tamil National Retrieval Troops (TNRT).

Quoting Home Ministry sources, the Indian media indicated that the terror organizations soon to be added to the revised and expanded list include Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG), the Groupe Islamique Combattant Marocain (GICM), Egyptian Islamic Jihad (EIJ), the International Islamic Relief Organization of the Philippines (IIRO PHL) and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) (*The Hindu*, May 16; *Indian Express*, May 17).

Problems in Legislating Economic Measures against Terrorist Groups

In August 2009, the Indian government issued an order detailing the implementation of Section 51A of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967, which empowers the government to freeze and seize any financial assets or economic resources held by any suspected individuals or entities engaged in or suspected to be engaged in terrorism activities.

Adhering to U.N. guidelines, the Reserve Bank of India (the apex bank of the country) directed all banking and commercial institutions to scan all existing accounts to ensure that these are not held by or linked to any entity or individual figured in the U.N. list of terrorists and terror-related organizations. The Reserve Bank of India issued a similar directive to all financial institutions to be on the alert for entities linked with al-Qaeda and the Taliban and mentioned in the UNSC list of designated terrorist groups (*Indian Express*, November 12, 2009). [2]

The revised list will include all the groups already designated as banned entities under the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1267, the U.N. sanctions regime which covers entities associated with al-Qaeda and the Taliban irrespective of their locations.

Unlike some other countries and international agencies, India does not have a consolidated terrorist list which includes individuals, charities or undertakings associated with either al-Qaeda or Lashkar-e-Taiba.

India's Counterterrorist Priorities

Although Islamist groups such as the LeT remain a major threat to Indian security, India has recently expressed more immediate concerns about two domestic sources of terrorism – “Naxalism” (Maoist, or more generally, left-wing terrorism) and Sikh extremism.

Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh identified Naxalism as India’s biggest internal security challenge in a statement on May 24 in which he emphasized the importance of the central government’s efforts in helping India’s states deal with the threat:

Naxalism remains the biggest internal security challenge facing our country. I have been saying this for the last three years. I have spoken to the chief ministers of the states many times on the Naxal issue. The chief ministers understand that it is imperative to control Naxalism for the country’s growth” (Press Trust of India, May 24).

The Indian Prime Minister says that the full benefit of economic reforms cannot be realized without controlling Naxalism and related terrorist elements.

It is believed as well that Sikh extremists are preparing to revive a militant campaign against the Indian state in Punjab (Sify.com, May 16). In February, the Khalistan Zindabad Force was added to the UAPA list of terrorist organizations (*Times of India*, May 16). The listing came just ahead of important talks between the foreign ministries of India and Pakistan in which India turned over the names of several wanted Sikh extremists believed to be based in Pakistan. In late May, Indian security forces arrested an alleged agent of Pakistan’s Inter-Services Intelligence and seized a pistol and maps of sensitive Indian military installations. The suspected spy, Irfan Ulla, was identified as a close associate of Rajit Singh (a.k.a. Neeta), the leader of the KZF, and his aide, the German-based Gurmeet Singh Bagga. Security forces said Ulla was supplying information on air force and other military installations to KZF associates abroad, possibly for use in planning attacks (*The Hindu*, May 30; *Hindustan Times*, June 4). Bombs have been found

planted outside Indian Air Force bases twice this year already (Sify, May 29).

A day after Ulla’s arrest, Amritsar Police detained Bakshish Singh, a highly wanted member of the Khalistan Liberation Front (KLF) who was suspected of participation in several attacks and had been on the run for two years (DNAIndia.com, June 1). Earlier in the month, Nirmal Singh (a.k.a. Nimma), an operative of the Khalistan Commando Force (KCF) was arrested after allegedly returning from Germany with instructions from his superiors to carry out an attack on the Adampur Air Force base in Punjab (*Times of India*, May 5; *India Daily*, May 4).

Recognizing Internal Threats

The Ministry of Home Affairs listing often receives criticism at home for excluding homegrown groups posing a threat to India’s national security and territorial integrity. In actuality, besides the 35 terror entities currently under proscription, there are more than 100 separatist and extremist armed groups, both active and dormant, that remain a threat to the state (*Times of India*, June 24, 2009, *Hindustan Times*, April 13, 2008). However, the official listing overlooks many of these clandestine networks and fails to put any curb on their activities. India’s northernmost state of Jammu and Kashmir and the northeastern states of Manipur and Assam share between them more than 100 terrorist organizations operating from their soil. The Ministry’s list also fails to take note of the activities of pan-Islamic terrorist groups based in Bangladesh that operate both internally and externally across the Indian border.

The idea of proscription itself draws flak in India because very often terror groups go underground after the ban and regroup again under the guise of other names to operate more clandestinely inside the country or in their safe havens in neighboring countries. The most recent examples are Jaish-e-Muhammed (JeM) and Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), who have both been operating freely in Karachi and other cities despite being banned by both Pakistan and India (One India News/ANI, May 10).

Even though the recent move by the MHA can be seen as symbolic, some argued that this is an essential effort to avoid legal ambiguity in case Indian security agencies want to investigate the named foreign terrorist groups or track their transnational linkages, including finance, arms and other terrorist-related logistics (DNA India/PTI, May 16). More certainly this new updated list is

the result of India's commitment to fight international terrorism.

Indeed, the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks and subsequent national and international developments have forced India to realize that in order to curb transnational terror groups like Lashkar-e-Taiba or al-Qaeda, there is a need for strong international cooperation, mutual understanding and counterterrorism mechanisms. In light of India's experience with terrorist groups evading proscription by operating under different names, it is imperative that a comprehensive proscription be developed that would ban not only terrorist groups, but also their front organizations and sympathetic groups and individuals. A step in this direction was recently undertaken with the June 4 proscription of the Indian Mujahideen (IM), a group believed responsible for several bombing campaigns and allied to SIMI and the LeT. The government's ban includes all of IM's formations and front organizations. [3]

Conclusion

Rather than just being a reflection of regional concerns, the expanded list of designated terrorist groups conveys India's priorities and security interests at a global level. To remain a front-runner in the global fight against terrorism, it is necessary for India to step up its legal mechanism and counterterrorism framework for dealing with transnational terrorism, including new measures related to financing and support for terrorism at home and beyond.

Animesh Roul is the Executive Director of Research at the New Delhi-based Society for the Study of Peace and Conflict (SSPC).

Notes:

1. See the names of 34 such entities declared as terrorist organizations under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967, listed in the Ministry of Home Affairs website http://www.mha.nic.in/uniquepage.asp?Id_Pk=292. On June 23, 2009, the MHA imposed a ban on India's CPI-Maoist, the unified conglomerate of left-wing extremist organizations in India, under the Unlawful Activities Prevention (Amendment) Act, 2008, making it the 35th banned entity. See Rediff.com, June 22, 2009.
2. Details of the consolidated list are available on the UN website, <http://www.un.org/sc/committees/1267/consolist.shtml>
3. Ministry of Home Affairs Press Release, June 4, <http://pib.nic.in/release/release.asp?relid=62324&kwds=>