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Thwarting Radicalization in India: Lacunae in Policy Initiatives

Bajpai GS[1]* and Kaushik A[2]

[1]Registrar, National Law University, Dwarka, Delhi, India
[2]Research Associate, National Law University, Dwarka, Delhi, India

Abstract

Paper is an attempt by the authors to measure the magnitude of the problem of radicalization facing the country and analyze the need of de-radicalization and its accompanying strategies to tackle the threat comprehensively. Given that the concepts of radicalization and de-radicalization and its associated strategies are not yet conclusively defined in either political or academic discourses, the authors have in the first part clarified the understanding and extent of both the terms for the purpose of the paper.

Keywords: Terrorisms; Radicalization; De-radicalization; Humanity

Introduction

On 3rd October, 2016 the country woke up to headlines in every newspaper highlighting the arrest of six youngsters in Kerala by the NIA for conspiring to carry out terrorist attacks in the name of the caliphate owing allegiance to Abu-Bakr al-Baghdadi. Since the inception of the ISIS, about fifty people have been picked up by the NIA for having links with the ISIS or for being sympathizers and another twenty-five persons, including six women and three children have been confirmed to have joined the IS in Afghanistan. Less than two weeks later, ten Naxalites were arrested while preparing to carry out terrorist attacks in Noida, a region adjoining the national capital of Delhi, three of whom were recidivists.

The two instances mentioned above, signify the stark reality of the threats to internal security that stare India in the face, from both the right wing as well as the left. Having experienced various forms of terrorisms, extremisms and insurgencies for over seven decades, the governmental agencies tasked with tackling such threats understand that while intelligence gathering, counter terrorism and counter insurgency operations can operate as effective stop gap measures, there is a need for effective and comprehensive policy which strikes at the root of the issue.

The preceding paragraph is indicative of and in line with the relatively new academic and political discourse seeking to deal with the question of: "What leads to radicalization of an individual?" As well as the corollary to the above question: "How can the same be prevented?" Firstly, it is the answers to these questions within the context of the Indian scenario that will decide the future success and failures of radicalization from the various sources that seek to destabilize and overthrow the constitutional machinery of the Indian state. Secondly, the application of what the policy makers believe to be the solutions to the above two questions will decide the success and failures of the policies which seek to counter them.

This paper is an attempt by the authors to measure the magnitude of the problem of radicalization facing the country and analyze the need of de-radicalization and its accompanying strategies to tackle the threat comprehensively. Given that the concepts of radicalization and de-radicalization and its associated strategies are not yet conclusively defined in either political or academic discourses, the authors have in the first part clarified the understanding and extent of both the terms for the purpose of the paper.

Keeping in mind the definitions and approaches established in the first part, the second part of the paper seeks to identify the different facets of radicalization which pose a threat to the democratic and constitutional fabric of the Indian society and which undermine national security. It further analyzes critically the strategies evolved by the policy makers to deal with the threats and problems facing the policy makers despite of the existing strategies. Further, the authors hope to give effective suggestions to combat such radicalization in the Indian scenario relying upon the applicability of the experiences of similar programmes in other countries.

Radicalization and De-Radicalization in India: Examining the Relationship

Radicalization

Taken literally and without any context, any deviation from the prevailing norm can be termed radicalization [1]. From scientists like Galileo and Charles Darwin to musicians like Bob Dylan and Elvis Presley and even towering political figures like Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King have all been branded as radicals at some point of time in their illustrious lives. Radicalization is a word which is often used to mean a range of concepts and ideas, leading to a large degree of confusion [2]. The term is used by the media and politicians on the one hand to depict the threat to stability and security and on the other hand the same media and politicians value beneficial challenges to status quo in light of the defects in our economic and social systems.

A truism seems to have emerged; we like 'good radicalism and radicalization' but do not like 'bad radicalism and radicalization.' To exemplify bad radicalization, post 9/11, the western media was quick in its appropriation of the term 'radicalization' as a descriptive explanation of how and why Muslims participated in terrorism and violent extremism against the West. It would be pertinent to note here that both the terms - violent extremism and terrorism have also been frequently used interchangeably, even though the former often

is broader and includes extreme right wing groups that aren't always deemed 'terrorists [3].'

In this modern context, most policy analysts and academicians have a broad consensus on the definition of radicalization as a process whereby individuals or groups develop, over time, a mindset that can-under the right circumstances and opportunities-increase the risk that he or she will engage in violent extremism or terrorism [4]. European Commission defines radicalization as the phenomenon of people embracing opinion, views and ideas which could lead to acts of terrorism [5]. Wilner and Dubouloz determine radicalization to mean a process wherein "individuals adopt extreme political, social and/or religious ideals and aspirations, where the attainment of particular goals justifies the use of indiscriminate violence" [6]. Although, some might see radicalization in terms of causation rather than as a process citing the push for societal change or poor governance as triggers.

In the opinion of the authors, however, for developing a holistic understanding of the term radicalization, stress should be laid upon the change in the ideological mindset rather than the justification of violence. It is evident that radicalization increases the potential for violent action but it does not de facto necessitate violence, as most radicals are not terrorists [7]. Thus, for the purpose of this paper, radicalization can be considered as the process whereby an individual abandons societal standards and accepts the ideas, opinions and values that seek to challenge the existent societal norms and replace them with norms that would ordinarily be deemed unacceptable in a society that seeks to promulgate rational thoughts, humanity and scientific temperament [8].

De-Radicalization

The dominant understanding of radicalization as a process has led to the creation of a corollary political agenda: how best to counter what are interpreted or indeed socially constructed, as problematic challenges to existing order of states and societies. There is an emerging consensus among counter terrorism analysts and practitioners that in order to defeat the threat posed by violent extremism and terrorism there is a need to go beyond the use of intelligence and security approaches and take measures to prevent the radicalization of gullible individuals and rehabilitation of those who have already embraced the radical ideology [9]. In this context, de-radicalization has been defined as the process of changing an individual's belief system, rejecting the extremist ideology, and embracing mainstream values.

However, certain confusion arises in respect to the definition of the term 'de-radicalization' when it is used broadly as encompassing all different but related methods aimed at reducing the society's risk of radicalization; namely, counter-radicalization and anti- radicalization. Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution of India, 1950, grants to all citizens the right to freedom speech and expression subject to reasonable restrictions. India's international obligations under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights also cast upon the Indian state a duty to ensure the delivery of the abovementioned right. Thus, a person experiencing a transition to radicalization or even a radicalized individual is guaranteed

a right to hold such a view until he, under the influence of the radical ideology, oversteps the boundaries created by law. In both the cases, where the individual is in the process of being radicalized or has not yet been radicalized, the individual cannot be held in state detention and hence is not subject to the direct and rigid controls that the detention brings. Therein lays the need for effective counter radicalization and anti-radicalization strategies as opposed to mere de-radicalization.

The terms 'de-radicalization' and 'counter radicalization' are poorly defined and mean different things to different people [10]. Viewed from a different perspective, distinction between de-radicalization and counter radicalization could be explained w.r.t. objectives and strategies needed, where counter-radicalization refers to proactive initiatives that are targeted towards communities to reduce potential risk of radicalization, such as mass distribution of counter-extremism messages, while the term de-radicalization is reactive and describes interventions that address a specific individual to reverse the radicalization [11].

Such a distinction between de-radicalization and counter radicalization in terms of the approaches towards strategies and objectives has also been drawn up by Amir in the context of the Swat Valley in Pakistan through the Table 1 [12]:

However, the further segregate aspect of counter radicalization from anti radicalization and club the varied measures needed for both into one broad expression. From the above table, only the security approach can be referred to as a de-radicalization strategy, while societal, ideological and political approaches cut across and overlap both counter radicalization and anti-radicalization strategies.

For the purpose of this paper, the term 'de-radicalization' has been used on a standalone basis to signify that the individual in question has already been radicalized as opposed to 'counter-radicalization' where the individual is in the process of being radicalized and 'anti-radicalization' where the individual or the group has not yet been radicalized. Clutter buck goes a step further than Bertram and Amir to meticulously explain the key characteristics relevant to de-radicalization, anti-radicalization and counter-radicalization strategies in the Table 2:

The difference between the targeted behavior, aims, objectives and conditions under which the type of program needs to be implemented becomes much clearer from a prima facie observation of the above table by Clutter buck. Such distinctions can also be exemplified through programs implemented in various jurisdictions.

Strategies in practice

The most prominent example of de-radicalization is the 'softer de-radicalization' approach adopted by the Saudi Arabian government post 9/11 after its counter terrorism policy which included counter terrorist operations as well as widespread arrests and execution of Al-Qaeda leaders proved fruitless [13]. The Saudi government viewed the struggle against violent extremism as a 'war on ideas,' [14] and the first stage of de-radicalization began inside the prisons through religious re-education and counseling by clerics. It sought to treat the terrorists

Approach	Focus	Strategy	Objective
Security	Detainees	Rehabilitation	Reducing security threats
Societal	Vulnerable Communities	Engagement	Developing moderate tendencies
Ideological	Clergy	Highlighting religion's emphasis on peace	Developing counter arguments/ narratives
Political	Society at large	Winning hearts and minds	Neutralizing security threats

Table 1: Context of the Swat Valley in Pakistan.

Type of Program Required	Type of Behaviour Targeted	Main aims of the Program	Main objectives of the Program	Conditions under which program in implemented
Deradicalization	Insurgency	Rehabilitation	Cessation of Violence	Post Surrender
	Terrorism			Post Detention
			Reintegration	Post Conviction
Counter Radicalization	Transition to Terrorism	Mitigation	Disengagement	Pre Conviction
	Violent Extremism		Reintegration	Pre Detention
			Rehabilitation	Active Radicalization
Anti Radicalization	Vulnerability to risk from radicalization and violent extremism	Prevention	Detection	Pre-Radicalization
			Deterrence	Early Radicalization

Table 2: Characteristics relevant to de-radicalization, anti-radicalization and counter-radicalization strategies.

as victims who were lied to and misled by extremists into straying from true Islam. Further, as a counter radicalization strategy, the Saudi government established a peer leader system of academicians, judges, clerics and de-radicalized individuals to disseminate government driven counter narratives to radicals. To prevent the radicalization of the masses who have not yet been radicalized but who may sympathize with the extremist ideology or do not condemn their beliefs, the Saudi government designed programs which promoted and propagated a more judicious interpretation of religious doctrines. Further, to deter radicalization, activities were created to keep the youth busy and away from radicals. This latter part of the Saudi strategy can be termed as anti-radicalization programs.

Similarly, Norway's EXIT program was aimed at supporting young people who wanted to disengage from radical racist and other violent extremist groups such as Neo-Nazis. This program was managed by local government in collaboration with civil society to enable a successful implementation and can be paraded as a de-radicalization strategy. Singapore's strategy to engage with minorities and call on religious leaders to denounce extremism at an ideological level and promote moderate interpretations is an example of counter radicalization [15]. A creative proposal under counter radicalization strategy in one instance is where under the German EXIT program when free T-shirts with the logo of skull and bones with the title 'Hardcore Rebels' were distributed at a concert where Neo Nazis were in large attendance; the logo and title faded after a wash and were replaced by a hidden title - 'If your T-shirts can change, so can you [16].' Lastly, the development of course curriculum taught in schools which uphold values of non-violence, peaceful co-existence and tolerance by United States of America, United Kingdom, Austria and Netherlands is an illustration of a basic anti-radicalization program.

Such distinction among strategies, however, has not been factored in by the policy makers in India as can be seen through a prima facie analysis of the 'de-radicalization programme' rolled out by the Maharashtra government in February, 2016 [17]. In comparison to the Saudi strategy, the Maharashtra plan seems like a feeble, imprudent and absent minded attempt. The plan focuses on increasing the rate of inclusion of the minority community in the mainstream by making activities in the National Cadet Corps and Bharat Scouts and Guides mandatory in minority schools, teaching all religious texts in minority schools, teaching values of democracy and demerits of dictatorship in Urdu schools and development of minority areas into urban smart clusters etc. It should be noted that none of the above listed programs fall under the definition of 'de-radicalization' and are at best forms of 'anti-radicalization' programs. Such misnomers in policy making can, in practice, lead to realization of cobra effect whereby the policy results in the exact opposite of what was intended.

It should also be factored in that a belief in the radical ideology may not necessarily be religious, as the motivating factor may be political or social [18]. In the Indian context, left wing extremism as well as separatist movements in the North East is glaring examples. Any policy that seeks to combat radicalization would need to grasp the subjectivity and tailor its points accordingly at all levels ranging from prevention of radicalization to disengagement and subsequently, reversal of radicalization.

Extremism in India

Policy and/or lack of there Islamic extremism

Problem: At a time when the world is struggling to find its feet in the face of global jihad, India's geographical location along with its political history of partition on the basis of religion puts India in a precarious position. While professedly secular from a bird's eye view, a closer examination of India's diversity reveals several faultlines. The most apparent of these are the anxieties of the largest minority community – Muslims [19] vis-a-vis the apprehensions of the security establishment that Islamic terrorism in the neighbouring countries might spill over into India and embroil the country's 172 million Muslims into a confrontation that threatens internal peace and security [20].

So far, India's handling of its minority problem, facilitated by the presence of the Muslim elite class which seeks to resolve the problems of the community within the democratic framework, has been marked by a great degree of sensitivity and caution. However, as a result of the partition in 1947, India came to be confronted with the reality of being in a neighborhood dominated by Islamic states. Most of these states have since undergone radicalization of large sections of their populations.

With Kashmir as the disputed issue, India has since the late 1980s faced and stood up to the threat posed by cross border terrorism emanating from Pakistan. The December 2001 attack on Indian Parliament and the 26/11 Mumbai attacks by Lashkar-e-Taiba as well as the recent attacks on military bases in Pathankot and Uri, stand out prominently as examples of the reach of terrorists from across the border. Between 1990 and December 2001, 5178 incidents of terrorism were reported in Kashmir alone [21]. However, such is the magnitude of the problem that off late, cross border terrorism has by itself become the bone of contention, [22] with the present Indian establishment refusing to engage in dialogues with Pakistan unless it renounces the use of terrorists as an instrument of state policy [23].

Secondly, although the threat from the rampant radicalization of the Kashmiri youth is subject to a broader discussion and cannot be examined in detail within the confines of this document, it is closely linked to Islamic extremism and needs to be addressed at hand. Post the killing of the Hijubul Mujhadeen commander in July 2016, the valley of Kashmir witnessed protest marches by masses which frequently turned into violent confrontations with the security forces leading to death

of 82 people [24] with over 11000 injured [25]. The violence plunged the valley into a state of curfew lasting over hundred days, caused incalculable damage to public property and even greater damage to the democratic fabric of the Kashmiri society. Such sympathy of the Kashmiri masses with the slain Hijbul commander who was portrayed as a 'martyr' throughout the protests depicts the gargantuan magnitude of radicalization among the Kashmiri youth who now tend to actively sympathize with terrorists. The raising of Pakistani and ISIS flags is a common occurrence [26]. It is here that the need of active counter-radicalization and anti-radicalization programmes are needed to be implemented on a war footing.

A third aspect to Islamic terrorism in India is the revival and unprecedented rise of a phenomenon comparable to that of 'home grown terrorism' on the upswing throughout Europe and USA. India is no stranger to this phenomenon; the 1993 Mumbai bomb blasts, 11/7/2006 Mumbai bomb blasts, 2008 Jaipur, Bangalore and New Delhi blasts were all conducted by 'home grown terrorists.' However, the recent arrest of six persons in Kerala for planning terrorist strikes under the banner of ISIS reveals that India is now more at risk of lone wolf style terrorist attacks than before. Furthur, since Ibrahim Awwad Al-Badri, an ISIS commander, announced in 2014 that India was a target country [27] many Muslims have tried to leave the country to join the ISIS.

One news article puts the number of affected youths i.e., those who left for Syria as well as others who were stopped from leaving India and those under surveillance at 350 [28]. The arrest of Islamic cleric Mohammed Haneef [29] in Kerala for radicalization of the twenty five youth thought to have travelled to Afghanistan in order to join the Islamic State shows that active radicalization is in progress in some parts of the country. Further, easy access to radical content on the internet also affords an opportunity for radicalization and recruitment which has been effectively utilized by the Islamic State [30].

Policy: India's response for combating radicalization of members belonging to the Muslim community has rarely, if ever, been policy based. The stress has been on debates within the political sphere which in turn have been used in conjunction with a continual enhancement of security and intelligence apparatus of the country. As Hussain Haqqani, a noted Pakistani academician and political activist concedes: [31] "India's secular democratic constitution empowers the country's Muslims more than their co-religionists in Muslim majority states. Indian Muslims are able to elect and replace their rulers, in addition to influencing public policy. As a minority, however, Indian Muslims cannot benefit from democracy without coalition building. This need to establish broad based democratic conditions has acted as a check on radical and extremist ideologies, and as such, most orthodox and conservative Muslim groups use their political power to operate within the democratic context."

Even so, it is quite apparent from the above illustrated problems that many Islamist radicals are operating away from the political mainstream and pose a threat to the fabric of the Indian society as such. The Indian response in this regard has been to build up the intelligence and security capabilities to the extent where such extremist activities can be frustrated pre-emptively. The ISIS terror module operating in Hyderabad which was busted on 29 June 2016 [32] and the arrests made on 23 January 2016 of terrorists in preparation of the Paris styled attacks in India on Republic Day [33] shows that the Indian state has more or less been effective in its aim.

The above, however, is merely a counter terrorism strategy and does not function effectively to neutralize radicalization itself. In absence of any official documents, the only policy measures which can be gathered from press reports are as follows: those arrested by the authorities while in transit to Islamic State were counseled and let off; the Anti-Terrorism Squad of the Maharashtra Police started an 'I am anti-terrorist campaign' in which 25000 college students enrolled; the Maharashtra government's 'de-radicalization programme' which has been detailed above in the paper and blocking of websites with radical content [34]. These actions are not only disorganized but betray a compartmentalized thinking process on part of the policy makers as opposed to a comprehensive one. It should also be noted here that while the above programmes are ill conceived attempts solely aimed at curbing the radicalization of 'home grown terrorists' they completely ignore the issues pertaining to de-radicalization of terrorists from across the border captured in action as well as the large scale measures needed to combat the radicalization of Kashmiri youth.

Suggestions: There is a dearth of research into the causes for radicalization of the country's Muslim population. Much less empirical, most of the evidence presented as proof is anecdotal in nature. The marginalization of Muslim community attributed to the rise of Hindu nationalist forces in the country has often been singled out as the greatest factor leading to such radicalization [35]. Some scholars place the blame solely on the inaction of the government machinery in dealing with atrocities committed by the majority against the minorities [36]. Others go a step further and say that the laws passed by the lawmakers, by their very nature single out the Islamic community in their definition of terrorism. Thereby, allowing the enforcement agencies to treat acts of violence committed by Muslims as terrorist acts and the acts of violence committed by Hindus as crimes [37].

Nevertheless, all the above elicited explanations tend to sideline the ideological component behind the radicalization of the Muslim youth. The Darul Uloom Deoband, popularly known as the Deobandi School is today the largest institution for dissemination and propagation of Islam in the sub-continent. It was formed in 1866 to counter the apprehensions of the Indian Muslims in the face of colonial expansion. The above statement can be corroborated from the introduction on the website of Darul Uloom Deoband which has been reproduced hereunder: [38]

"The time when the Darul Uloom Deoband, was established, the old Madaris in India had almost become extinct, and the condition of two or four that had survived the ravages of time was not better than that of a few glow-worms in a dark night. Apparently it so looked at that time as if the Islamic sciences had packed up their kit from India. Under these circumstances, some men of Allah and divine doctors, through their inner light, sensed the imminent dangers."

The Deobandis attribute the decline of Islamic societies to Muslims being seduced by an amoral and materialist Western culture, and from assorted Hindu practises believed to have crept into and corrupted the Islamic religion. Further, a persecution complex of the school is evident from the statement titled Concept of Peace and Condemnation of Terrorism in Islam which is present on the schools own website and states, "the Indian media has played a subservient role of the western and Zionist elements in linking Islam with terrorism [39]." The same statement goes on to state that the struggles waged by Muslims in Palestine, Chechnya and Xinjiang could not be considered terrorism as it is a "legitimate resistance against aggressors and oppressors for securing their rights [40]." Even though the Deobandi School has disassociated itself from the terrorist groups, it is still widely believed

to be the fountainhead of Taliban, Harkat-Ul-Mujahideen, Harkat-Ul-Jihad Islami and Jaish-e-Mohammed [41].

A second school of thought is that of Jamaat-e-Islami, which was founded in 1941 under the tutelage of Abu Ala Mawdudi, who is considered as the first complete theoretician of the modern Islamic state. The Jamaat-e-Islaami has been a dominant force in radicalization in Pakistan and Jammu & Kashmir. Although the Indian faction of the Jamaat-e-Islami (Hind) does not consider the conditions in India to be ripe for it assume an overt political role, the Jamaat ideology itself has influenced terrorist organizations such as Hizb-ul-Mujahideen and Students Islamic Movement of India [42].

In this digital age, the internet further catalyzes the threat from radicalism. A report published by RAND corporation in 2013 found that the internet created more opportunities for people to become radicalized; provided the people with an echo-chamber or confirmation of their beliefs by others; and facilitated the process of radicalization if not accelerating it although it iterated that the internet was not a substitute of in person radicalization but complementary to it [43]. The internet has been utilized effectively both by radicals as well as intelligence agencies keeping tabs on viewers and proponents of such radical content [44].

A third causal factor for such radicalization can be the identity crisis faced by Muslims in India, mainly due to marginalization. While many western scholars have thrown their weight behind such a discourse in context of the radicalization of second and third generation Muslims in Europe and USA, Huffman; the same might be applicable in India albeit under different conditions. On the one hand, Muslims in India are branded as 'anti nationals' on the other hand any pro Muslim policy on part of the government is labeled as 'appeasement' [45]. The Sachar Committee report highlights these identity concerns in the following words:

"Markers of Muslim Identity — the burqa, the purdah, the beard and the topi — while adding to the distinctiveness of Indian Muslims have been a cause of concern for them in the public realm. These markers have very often been a target for ridiculing the community as well as of looking upon them with suspicion. Muslim men donning a beard and a topi are often picked up for interrogation from public spaces like parks, railway stations and markets. Some women who interacted with the Committee informed how in the corporate offices hijab wearing Muslim women were finding it increasingly difficult to find jobs."

The report goes on further to comment on discrimination against Muslims in buying and renting accommodation in the locality of their choice. The same is corroborated from the findings of the Misra Commission report which found that 34.63% of the Muslims lived in 'kutcha' (Temporary) houses and 41.7% lived in 'semipucca' (semi-permanent) while the figures are 6.68% and 49.67% respectively, for the Sikhs [46]. Similarly, the ratio of those living in rented houses was highest among the Muslims (43.74%) and among minorities, only 78.78% of the Muslim Households had electricity as a source of lighting as compared to Parsis (99.21%) and Sikhs (88.81%).

The Sachar Committee report also states that their Muslim identity is increasingly becoming an impediment in getting their children admitted to good educational institutions which has given rise to a number of Muslim denominational schools which according to some are the only source of good education for their children. The Misra Commission Report found that only 3.6% Muslims graduated college as compared to 7.01% of Hindus, 8.71% of Christians and 6.94% of Sikhs.

The roots of radicalization cannot be singled out to any one causal factor; the effect of marginalization of the Muslim community in India as a causal factor is closely interwoven with the anxieties of the community in the face of the perceived or actual discrimination at the hands of the majority. These anxieties are preyed upon by unscrupulous elements within the community which seek to spread their radical interpretations of Islam. While this explanation may not constitute a stolid fact, and is subjective to each terrorist, it is an attempt by the authors to provide the policy makers with the requisite scope of perception and to widen their latitude of comprehension with respect to the complexities involved in dealing with the threat.

It is clear that merely strengthening and expanding the security and intelligence apparatus cannot work as a substitute for de-radicalization, counter radicalization and anti-radicalization. Moreover, the very threat of Islamist extremism cannot be tackled with any straight jacket formulas for combating radicalization for the simple reason that the factors responsible for such radicalization are different when the threat comes from the across the border as compared to when Kashimiris throng out in protest which are again different from the growth of ISIS inspired modules.

With respect to cross border terrorism emanating from Pakistan, in light of an uncooperative government in the neighbouring country, the only option available to policy makers is de-radicalization of captured terrorists. Currently the practise is that of isolating the prisoners from the general pool of criminals. A case in point is that of Mohd. Ajmal Kasab, who was lodged in a specially built bullet proof cell for the duration of his incarceration prior to his hanging. This policy itself is questionable as it can increase disruptive behaviour, further enforcing the psychology of exclusivity and 'martyrdom' [47]. It is important to note in this context that not all cross border terrorists are aliens, but that some cross border terrorists are Indian nationals who received arms and training from across the border.

A key finding in a report by RAND Corporation was that a de-radicalization programme should work to break the militants affective, pragmatic, and ideological commitment to the group [48]. Any successful de-radicalization programme in such cases will have to be specifically tailored to the subject terrorist and should focus on religious re-education, family engagement, re-integration [49]. Even though de-radicalization needs to be a highly subjective process, three components can be applied generally, first is the identification religious inaccuracy, secondly vocational training of the terrorist to financially support himself upon release and lastly community re-integration [50].

Further, counter radicalization programs based on ideological approaches are needed to be made applicable. The first task should be the identification of states where the Islamic radicalization seems to be more active than others. In such identified states, proper counter radicalization infrastructure should be created which entails creation of counseling and rehabilitation centers, laws enabling courts to transfer radicalized individuals to counseling and rehabilitation centers as well as providing the centers with requisite manpower such a noted psychologists, criminologists, counsellors, prominent religious leaders etc. Lessons for such rehabilitation programs should be taken from countries such as Singapore, Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, Indonesia and Pakistan where such programs have been implemented. It is imperative that such programs should not inadvertently stereotype or marginalize the community and hence should be open to all radicals of all shades and colours.

Development of counter narratives with the help of prominent

religious leaders should be the next step towards countering radicalization. Such narratives should be spread widely through an effective use of social media platforms, the idea being to provide those in the process of being radicalized with a different perspective. For this purpose, not only should India take lessons from the Saudi strategy of creating a peer leader system of academicians, judges, religious leaders from the Muslim community but go a step further to create such systems within all other communities to promote harmonious relations and remove misplaced misconceptions.

Finally, to prevent radicalization, anti-radicalization programs centered on societal and political approaches should be made effective which involve not only the Muslim community but all other communities as well. There is a need to promote integration instead of ghettoization of the community within clusters. Secondly, apart from the different programs launched by Maharashtra government aimed at anti radicalization but misnamed as de-radicalization; the community itself needs to be actively engaged. Lessons should be taken from community based outreach programmes such as the British Prevent program to ensure that the community does not feel targeted as a whole; community representatives are selected carefully and that such programmes do not become a ruse for increased surveillance.

Modernization of madrasas through the SPQEM scheme which seeks to introduce subjects taught through the formal education system in the madrasas is also a step in the right direction since the same would make the students competitive in the job market thereby leading to reduction in unemployment [51]. However, the SPQEM scheme has been observed to be faltering due to lack of proposals from state governments [52]. Such modernizing efforts should be made mandatory instead of voluntary. Going a step further and bringing the madrasas within the purview of various boards of education would lead to an increase in the standard of education among the Muslim community and also allow for the propagation of peaceful interpretations of Islam. The same needs to be complemented with development of course curriculums in the formal education system which focuses on peace, stability, tolerance and social syncretism. It is imperative for the future stability and security of the country that the question with regards to education of minorities or majorities, is kept out of the sphere of politics and religion which only promote vested interests of the few as against the benefits of the larger whole.

Focus should be upon mainstreaming of the community through incentivizing the admissions of minorities in formal schools. Grants of funds and equipments to schools which admit minority students would not only increase their chances of getting admissions incrementally, but the children of other communities would also benefit from such funds and equipment's so granted. Further, activities which promote integration, such as sports, academic competitions and other co-curricular and extra-curricular activities should be encouraged. For example, simple regulations making it mandatory for every school to have a playground large enough to allow sports such as cricket or football, and encouraging the municipal authorities to lease such grounds to the schools in case of unavailability, would allow children from different religions to freely interact and integrate in a congenial atmosphere apart from providing them with activities to keep busy with.

In short, the policy makers need to change the compartmentalized mindset and make effective a plan that addresses all of the above mentioned concerns. It should also be borne in mind that the above suggestions are merely illustrative and not exhaustive. Creative solutions are needed to counter the threat of radicalization; after all, extraordinary problems need extra ordinary solutions.

Policy and/or Lack of there Saffron Extremism

Problem: On 9th February 2016 students of Jawaharlal Nehru University organized an event questioning the manner of execution of Afzal Guru, a convict in the Parliament House attack in December 2001. Members of the Akhil Bhartiya Vidhyarthi Parishad (ABVP), a student wing of the Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh (RSS) [53], protesting the organization of the event, clashed with the organizers and the crowd after alleged Pro Pakistan and Anti-Indian sloganeering [54]. A case of sedition was registered at the police station and what followed took the whole country by storm; exposing a seven decade old fault line which was supposedly bridged after independence by the country's the then leadership.

The police arrested the JNU Students Union functionaries and the organizers of the event under section 124A of the Indian Penal Code. With cultural nationalists appropriating the term 'nationalists' for themselves [55]; anyone questioning the arrests and the charge of sedition was termed anti national. Indeed, even the halls of justice weren't spared when on 14th February 2016, whilst the JNUSU President was appearing before the court for trial, and a mob dressed in lawyer's robes inclemently thrashed him and anyone who supported him [56]. Sharma OP, a sitting MLA of the ruling party who participated in the violence [57] was quoted as saying [58]:

"The problem of this country at present is that terrorism and being anti-national are considered being progressive. And JNU is promoting this kind of ideology and producing anti nationals. JNU should be sealed."

On either side of the fault line, the country's intelligentsia, holding the banner of secular nationalism and space for dissent within democracy faced off an interpretation of nationalism defined and constricted by its cultural and majoritarian construct. The striking pattern emerges when the JNU row is seen in the light of preceding incidents such as that of the student's strike over the appointment of Gajendra Chauhan as Chairman of FTII [59], the controversy over banning of the Ambedkar-Periyar Study Circle in IIT Madras [60] etc - the high handedness with which the matters were handled represents the right's insistence on changing the public discourse in the country and making sure that its concept of nationalism is embraced by the rest of the India as well.

In line with the trend, in June 2016 the then Minister of State in the Ministry of Human Resource Development –Katheria RS was quoted at an event saying – "Saffronization in education will happen, whatever is good for the country will be done, whether it is saffronization or sanghwaad." [61] When such statements are made by those in power and are met with thunderous applauds, mass radicalization of the cadres and storm troopers by the Sangh and it's the splinter organizations can hardly be questioned.

In May 2016, a video of members receiving arms training in rifles, swords and lathis went viral on social media platforms [62]. The training was being provided in a 'self defence camp' organized by Bajrang Dal at Ayodhya purportedly from unnamed 'extremists'. The video, however, shows that the members wearing a saffron waistband were performing drills on aiming and shooting at individuals wearing the taqqiyah (Muslim headgear).

In 2009, a group of men belonging to Sri Ram Sene, barged into a Pub in Mangalore and assaulted the women inside for "flouting traditional 'Indian' norms of decency [63]." Such moral policing is characteristic of Hindu nationalists who issue regular threats against

any celebrations of Western festivals such as Valentine's Day for being against 'Indian culture [64].'

At other times, the ideology takes a communal turn leading to sporadic incidents of violence such as Gujarat pogroms in 2002, Kandhamal violence against Christians in 2008 and more recently, the spurt in the incidents of cow vigilantism, in particular the mob lynching of Mohd. Akhlaq, a resident of Dadri, for allegedly consuming beef. It is important to note that upon the death of the main accused in the Dadri lynching case, his corpse was draped in the Tri-Colour, an honour reserved only for soldiers, paramilitary and policemen who are martyred in the course of their duty [65]. This gesture by the family of accused epitomizes the much larger issue - an inextricable connection between one's communal ideology and one's sense of Nationalism.

The roots of Hindu nationalism can be attributed to the rise of a communal consciousness as a result of the transformation of the Indian society under the impact of colonialism and the struggle against it [66]. Many of the leaders during the freedom movement inadvertently added a religious tinge in nationalist thought and propaganda. It was this Hindu tinge that created an ideological opening for Hindu communalism to creep. Once the basics of communal ideology are accepted, it is argued, the ideology takes over a person slowly, transforming him first from a nationalist to a communal nationalist and finally a liberal communalist.

The role of the Muslim league which represented Islamic nationalism is taught widely as a cause of the country's partition in 1947. What is ignored for the large part is the role of Hindu nationalist organizations such as the Hindu Mahasabha and the RSS in fuelling the fire leading upto the partition and the communal riots that followed. In his speech at the 37th session of Hindu Mahasabha at Karnavati in 1937, V. D. Savarkar stated that: [67]

"They want to brand the forehead of Hindudom and other non-Moslem sections in Hindusthan with the stamp of self-humiliation and Moslem domination and we Hindus are not going to tolerate it any longer not only in the interests of Hindudom alone but even in the interest of Indian Nation as well."

In his book titled, we or Our Nationhood Defined published in 1939, MS Golwalker, the head of RSS, declared that the "Hindu National life runs the risk of being shattered." These statements sought to create a fear psychosis in the masses and to appeal to their religious identities through insinuations such as:

"When an overwhelming majority in a country goes on its knees before a minority so antagonistic as the Mohammedans, imploring them to lend a helping hand and assures it that otherwise the major community is doomed to death, it would be a wonder if that minor community does not sell their assistance at the higher bidder possible, does not hasten the doom of the major community and aim to establish their own political suzerainty in the land."

After the partition, while the Muslim Leaguers got their prized nationhood on the basis of religious identity leading to the formation of Pakistan, such luxury was not accorded to Hindu nationalists. The nationalist movement under the Indian National Congress was able to successfully create an ideology and culture of democracy and civil liberties based on respect for dissent, freedom of expression, the majority principle, and the right of minority opinions to exist and grow. Secularism in this context was made the basis of the nationalist ideology. However, the Hindu nationalist project of 'Indianization' drew upon a historical imagination at odds with the definition of 'Indianess' the nationalist elite had aspired to install after 1947. It has thus been argued that it is not the Muslim community that is the target of Saffron extremism but secular nationalism itself since the idea of secular nationalism threatens the project of cultural homogeneity undertaken by the Hindu nationalists.

The political heirs to the ideology have since carried the baton of Hindu nationalism well into the 21st century, adapting the philosophy to the (perceived) needs of the time but retaining the basic ideological traits of the original proponents. Recently, Mohan Bhagwat, the current chief of RSS was quoted saying that "the RSS vision of development will be the vision of India." The statement sounds menacing when read in context of the supreme goal of the RSS as stated on the official website which is "to bring about - the all-round glory and greatness of our "Hindu Rashtra." Its vision and mission further gives a cry of a culture in danger, quite similar to those of the Deobandi school elaborated above in the paper:

"It is therefore clear that if Hindustan is to be protected, we should first nourish the Hindu culture. If the Hindu culture perishes in Hindustan itself, and if the Hindu society ceases to exist, it will hardly be appropriate to refer to the mere geographical entity that remains as Hindustan.

It is therefore the duty of every Hindu to do his best to consolidate the Hindu society. The Sangh is just carrying out this supreme task. The present fate of the country cannot be changed unless lakhs of young men dedicate their entire lifetime for that cause. To mould the minds of our youth towards that end is the supreme aim of the Sangh."

Policy: As is the case with Islamic extremism, there is no policy which seeks to combat saffron extremism comprehensively and conclusively. To make matters worse, the existence of saffron terrorism has been denied vehemently by successive governments. There is a widespread assumption among the various organs of the state and the national security establishment that firstly, terrorism in India is exclusively an enterprise run by Islamic extremists and secondly, saffron extremists are basically nationalists and patriots, even if misguided ones. As noted Indian academician and political scientist - Pratap Bhanu Mehta accepts in an editorial:

"our response to this challenge has been, at best, an embarrassed denial. In the process we have put on display our double standards. We could not even get ourselves to admit that anyone claiming the appellation Hindu could be terrorists. This is more a symptom of our prejudice than a fact."

To exemplify, in 2013, the central government under the UPA rejected the Maharashtra government's proposal to ban Abhinav Bharat, the organization allegedly responsible for the Malegaon blast, after it came to the conclusion (regardless of the ongoing prosecution in the judicial system) that the organization had not been responsible for any terrorist or anti-national activities. Further, the investigation of the Malegaon Bomb blast case was transferred from the Maharashtra ATS to the National Investigation Agency on 01/04/2011. Out of the 11 individuals charge sheeted by the ATS, six names were dropped by the NIA in 2016, submitting that the prosecution was not maintainable. Additionally, charges under the Maharashtra Control of Organized Crime Act (MCOCA) which allowed for greater freedom in prosecution were also dropped by the NIA against all the remaining accused in the case even though the Supreme Court had held that there was prima facie evidence against one Rakesh Dawde to be tried under the MCOCA.

Similarly, after the Godhra incident, 131 Muslims were charged under the POTA while the few rioters who were arrested in the pogroms that followed were charged under the IPC. This almost seems to be in conformity with the belief that special laws such as POTA and MCOCA are for Muslims extremists while the Indian Penal Code is for Hindu extremists.

With respect to the incidents where the radical tendencies of the Hindu extremists overstepped the lines drawn by the law just short of terrorism, the response of the state has been found to be even more wanting. In an affidavit submitted to the Supreme Court by a senior Police official from the Gujarat cadre in light of the Gujarat pogroms in 2002, the official claimed that there was a "half-hearted approach and lack of determination" on the part of the police in dealing with the "widespread incidents and orchestrated violence." On 18th February, 2016, the police stood by as a silent spectator while right wing radicals defied the Supreme Court orders on restricted entry into the court complex unleashed violence for the second time in the same week. BJP MLA O.P. Sharma who was video graphed indulging in the violence was arrested by the police three days after the incident but was let out on bail immediately thereafter. A corollary from the all of the above is that the problems emanating from such radicalization thus receive either apathy or active sympathy of the institutions constitutionally mandated to uphold the virtues of democracy.

Suggestions: The first step towards combating such radicalization entails an acceptance of a problem that has percolated the cultural, political, ideological, religious and social spheres of the Indian society. It is important to bear in mind that the Indian constitution bears traces of a historical context of religious dissension and conflict, and it comes down heavily in favor of tolerant humanism. The preamble of the constitution secures for all citizens liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship; the constitution further enunciates on this principle through nondiscrimination in employment, education, access etc. apart from protecting the rights of all religions. Any appeals and efforts for religious and cultural engineering of the masses in such a case, only work to hark back to the period of turmoil to which, for our constitutional forefathers, secularism was the answer. It is on this count that the post-independence policy makers of the country have failed at curbing radicalization.

Enough space has been granted within our democratic structure for organizations such as the RSS and its affiliate groups to continue the social work which they pride themselves on as well as granting other Hindu nationalist organizations continual opportunities to voice their concerns. It is the presence of this space which has guaranteed that even though RSS as an organization has been banned thrice, the ban has always been lifted unconditionally in the absence of any direct connections between the organization and the extreme acts of violence that preceded the bans. While the disassociation of the RSS from members and organizations which adopt violent means can be regarded as plausible deniability, the deniability of the existence of such elements is neither plausible nor prudent.

At the same time, it is an important burden on the constitutional machinery to safeguard the same spaces which the same democratic structure provides to every citizen who does not conform with the ideology of cultural nationalism. All activities of Hindu nationalist organizations, fringe or mainstream, should thus be confined within the sphere of constitutional values. Any attempts to propagate bigotry, sustained or un-sustained, systematic or unsystematic should be dealt with strictly and without hypocrisy. In the face of a pronounced growth in intolerance and an unabated practice of post truth politics; there has

been an exponential increase in the need for de-radicalization, counter radicalization and anti-radicalization measures by the state.

De-radicalization of those Hindu extremists found indulging in violent activities (terrorist or otherwise) on grounds of religion, inciting communal hatred, giving hate speeches and playing on the apprehensions of the masses on the basis of religious identities is imperative. Therefore, stress needs to be laid on development of prison based counseling which increase the exposure of the extremists to moderate and secular ideologies. For the purpose, development of de-radicalization programmes specifically tailored to the needs of the Hindu extremist is a pre requisite. As in the case with Islamic extremism, such programmes should aim at breaking the ideological commitment of the individual to the group. It should however be noted that unlike Islamic extremism where particular schools of thought propagate violence against non-believers on the basis of interpretation of religious texts; it is only the narrow interpretation of Indian history and the perceived threat to their cultural moorings by certain groups which lead to such radicalization among Hindu nationalists.

Building a support structure on the lines of the German EXIT programme where an individual who voluntarily wants to leave the extremist group is guided towards development of new perspectives outside of the right wing environment in the Indian context could also go a long way in setting an example for other radicals to leave such groupings. Arranging contacts, providing practical aid and support, answering questions regarding personal safety and social problems as practised by the EXIT programme would also encourage such individuals.

While the de-radicalization programme deals with the security aspect for the state, counter radicalization efforts should be stepped up simultaneously to tackle the ideological angle. Thus the de-radicalization efforts will need to go in hand with legislation of special laws empowering the judiciary with greater independence to send those charged with rioting, promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion or race, offences committed in places of worship, or criminal conspiracy to commit any of the above to counselling and rehabilitation centres. Such centres should be equipped with adequate infrastructure to deal with the radicalization and any releases should be subject to the recommendation of certified counsellors, psychologists or psychiatrists and other professional experts administering the programme.

The lessons for developing counter narratives in the sense of saffron extremism cannot be drawn from the programmes implemented in other countries where the same has an Islamic extremism context. However, creating peer leader systems among the majority community would provide the existing cadres of the Hindu nationalist organizations with a more tolerant and less apprehensive world view. Such peer leader systems should be encouraged to open lines of communication with peer leaders from other communities to remove any misunderstandings or miscommunications and diffusion of communal tensions.

Finally, anti-radicalization programmes focussing on societal and political approaches are imperative to forward the project of nation building as envisaged by our constitutional forefathers. As is the case with Islamic education, the question of saffron education in school needs to be separated from the spheres of vote bank politics and religion. The issue has been subject to much debate with the Hindu nationals alleging that the course curriculums mis-portray their idols while (perceived) occupiers/tyrants have been glorified, while the left

accusing the right wing of influencing the curriculum to forward its own cultural nationalistic agenda. To develop course curriculums which uphold the constitutional values and promote peace, tolerance, humanism, scientific temper, rationality without interpreting history through the lens of any one religious grouping is the need of the hour. Any textbooks taught in schools, religious or otherwise, state sponsored or private, should be subjected to strict scrutiny and all attempts to cultivate a sense of collective religious identity at the cost of religious tolerance should be suppressed.

It is equally important to instill a sense of camaraderie in children belonging to different religions. Activities such as sports and camps held by state through NCC and Bharat Scouts and Guides present such opportunities while keeping the children physically fit, busy and away from radical elements. Experience of the Saudi prevention programmes in schools should be considered where it was found that many young children had been drawn in with the extremists during their unsupervised free time such as after school or term breaks and the Saudi government organized sporting events, car racing, camel racing and desert excursions to keep the children occupied.

Policy and/or Lack There Of Left Wing Extremism

Problem: Naxalism is today considered by the all political pundits as the single greatest threat to the security and stability of India. What began as a struggle rooted in a violent peasant uprising in the otherwise peaceful village of Naxalbari in West Bengal, Naxalism quickly became a fully-fledged ideological movement in conflict with the Indian state. The five decade old revolutionary ideology behind Naxalism has sought to present itself as a challenge to the tradition of peaceful and constitutional methods of social reconstruction.

Characteristic of the ideology is a cult of violence garbed in the cloak of class struggle. Charu Mazumdar, one of the founders of the movement is reported to have stated - "He who has not dipped his hands in the blood of class enemies can hardly be called a Communist." This cult of violence combined with a constant insistence on the cleansing role of shedding blood and desensitization and dehumanization of the cadres has resulted in petrifying consequences. Over two thousand one hundred people were killed by the Naxalites between 2011 and 2016 alone.

To exemplify, in one of the worst attacks since the start of the movement seventy six Central Reserve Police Force personnel were ambushed and killed by Naxalites in a single attack in April 2006. The ferocity of the attack and the flawless execution reveals a highly organized and meticulous planning by the left wing insurgents. More recently, on March 30th 2016, seven personnel of CRPF were killed in a landmine explosion in the same district of Dantewada where the April 2006 attack took place. In April 2016, three villagers were abducted and beaten to death by Naxals in two separate incidents in Bastar, Chattisgarh after a public trial in a kangaroo court.

The above stated incidents have been illustrated to put in perspective the seven thousand four hundred and seventy one such incidents of violence by the left wing extremists that were reported from across the country between 2011 and 2016. In 2014, in a reply to a question in the parliament the Ministry of Home Affairs estimated that approximately eight thousand five hundred left wing extremists were operating in India's red corridor. The red corridor refers to the geographical area covering a total of hundred and six districts across ten states where the left wing extremists have an established presence.

It is pertinent to note that most of these hundred and six districts

have a substantial tribal population. The tribal districts of Andhra Pradesh were major centers of the Naxal movement in the 1960s; the caste ridden districts of Bihar and the tribal districts in the southern regions of the state saw an increased Naxal influence in the 1970s while more recently the tribal districts of Maharshtra, Odisha, Jharkhand and Chattisgarh have seen a spurt in the growth of Naxal activities. While this increase in Naxal presence in tribal areas has a geographical reason – the forest cover and terrain is suitable to guerrilla warfare; the chief reason is that the tribal population has gained least and lost most post-independence.

Despite its penchant for violence, the Naxal movement under the CPI (Maoists) enjoys a large support of the population in these areas because no other political party has taken up the cause of the rural poor with such vigor, zeal and devotion. These districts where the Naxalites have been most prominent and active are those where the virtues of the Indian democracy and the benefits from the boom in its economy have not yet trickled down. In May 2006, the planning commission appointed an expert committee to study issues and address the causes of 'unrest, discontent and extremism.' The report highlighted the lack of empowerment of local communities as the primary reason for the spread of Naxalism while laying the blame solely on the doorstep of the state for its failure to provide good governance. As the report of the Expert Committee points out in direct words:

"The failure to provide infrastructure and services as per national norms is one of the many discriminatory manifestations of Governance here. These disparities result in non-available/poorly provided services."

According to the committee, the causes for the extremism are many and each is as precipitating a factor as the next one, viz., landlessness; failure to bring about land reforms; lack of minimum wages; the usurpation of common property resources by the powerful; the state's failure to prevent the concentration of wealth in a few hands as it is constitutionally mandated to do; denial of justice to human dignity of lower castes and tribals; the threats to their forest dependent lifestyles; political marginalization of communities; failures of re-settlement policies and the treatment of unrest as a mere law and order problem. In April 2006, when the former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh addressed a standing committee of chief ministers of six Naxal affected states he blamed factors such as exploitation, artificially depressed wages, iniquitous socio-political circumstances, inadequate employment opportunities, lack of access to resources, under developed agriculture, geographical isolation and lack of land reforms as the primary contributors to the growth of the Naxal movement.

Faced with the overwhelming reality of a life of repression, the tribals become easy targets for Naxal propaganda which guises the actual political motives of the Naxalites. The issues of the tribals actively taken up by the Naxalites reflect the practical needs and expectation of its mass base, namely; land rights, minimum wages, common property resources and housing. In the affected districts, the representatives of the government are thought to be less trustworthy than the Naxals who can provide tough and ready justice. The tribals align themselves with the Naxalites because they want practical change often joining the movement for short term goals dependent on the immediate situation, unlike the Naxals who themselves dream of a Maoist revolution and a protracted war.

On the other hand, the actual motives of the movement themselves can be deduced from the Party Programme of the Communist Party of India (Maoist) released in 2004, which is an essential document for

decoding the Maoist ideology behind Naxalism. The key points which define the ideology can be surmised as: to take the path of armed struggle for seizure of political power; to follow the Chinese path of armed struggle; to unite with Maoist forces in South Asia to overthrow the Indian state; to declare India as a prison house of Nationalities; to support unequivocally the struggle of various nationalities within India and to carry forward armed agrarian revolutionary war.

Policy: For the greater part of the movement, the policy makers considered the Naxal movement as a 'law and order' problem and took a security centric approach while completely ignoring the underlying socio economic and political conditions explaining its popularity. This security centric approach was unable to check the threat since the same only led to a change in the individual extremist's behaviour from being an actively violent into a passive supporter of the ideology leading to resurgence of Naxalism after periods of dormancy. Any force driven reaction as a substitute to a permanent solution simply leads to a change in the behavior of the terrorist and not his belief in the extremist ideology.

A departure from the above perspective came in May 2006 when the government came out with the Ministry of Home Affairs Status Paper underlining the stress on government policy for dealing with the problem on political, security and development fronts simultaneously and in a holistic manner as well as according priority to faster socio economic development of Naxal affected and prone areas. The Expert Committee while lauding the efforts of the government for taking a step in the right direction in its report, went a step further to recommend that:

"The basic steps required in this direction include establishment of credibility and confidence of government; keeping a continuous vigil for fulfillment of people's vision; effective protection, peace and good governance; rejuvenating tribal economy including social services; sustainable development with equity in tribal areas; holistic planning from below in scheduled areas; and negotiating crises by focussing on ending of confrontation…."

Currently the government follows a four pronged strategy under the National Policy and Action Plan to tackle the threat emanating from left wing extremists. The policy lays stress upon; security, development, ensuring rights & entitlements of local communities and management of public perception. On the security front, the government focus has been on providing the states with Central Armed Police Forces while strengthening the intelligence and policing apparatus of the states through modernization and up gradation. For the purpose of development various initiatives to develop skills, increase road connectivity, Geographic Information System mapping of essential services and installation of mobile towers have been undertaken.

Surrender cum rehabilitation policies have also been introduced by the central government in the past decade. In 2010 an immediate grant of Rs. 1.5 Lakhs was provided to those Naxalites who surrendered along with a stipend of Rs. 2000 for three years and provisions for vocational training. In 2013, the policy was revised and it was decided that Rs. 2.5 Lakhs would be provided to 'senior members' and Rs. 1.5 Lakhs to 'junior members' as well as Rs. 3000 in the form of a monthly stipend for a period of time. The above policies of the central government are over and above similar policies undertaken by the various state governments. In 2013 the MHA also made grants to conduct community programmes and sporting tournaments in order to bring youths to the mainstream of the society.

Suggestions: Any comprehensive de-radicalization strategy must

have the twin objectives of cessation of violence and reintegration and its aim should be the rehabilitation of the individual concerned. Since the introduction of the Surrender cum Rehabilitation Policy in 2010, a total of three thousand seven hundred and eighty one left wing extremists surrendered before the state. While this policy seems to be succeeding on the count of cessation of violence, the same does not stress upon the other objective of reintegration and the aim of rehabilitation effectively. Further, the policy does not put into place any mechanism to check recidivism amongst those 'rehabilitated.'

An effective implementation of a de-radicalization strategy in the context of left wing extremism would need to include relocation of the individuals who surrendered to prevent a Naxal backlash therefore ensuring personal safety as well as a complete rehabilitation which not only includes vocational training but counseling to help the radicalized individual in question in the process of reintegration with the society along with the support of his family. Moreover, the idea of de-radicalization is to sever the individuals' ideological commitment to the group and would since require re-education of the individual through an exposure to mainstream ideologies. The same is also applicable to those Naxals who didn't surrender but were detained or convicted.

Even within the Surrender cum Rehabilitation policies no segregation has been made between those Naxals who were involved in underground and covert operations which needed for them to be fully radicalized from the over ground workers who were still in the process of being radicalized i.e. no segregation is made on the basis of their level of indoctrination. While no set criteria can be developed and should be subjective to each case, the course of action required to deal with both is undoubtedly different.

Moreover, the policy itself is security centric in its objective to reduce the security threats through cessation of violence and does not focus as much on societal, ideological and political factors in order to deal with the threat comprehensively. As a counter radicalization strategy, the surrender cum rehabilitation policy fails on the count of its inability to effectively mitigate the causes of radicalization as well as reintegration and rehabilitation of the individual in question.

Even so, it can be made out from the slew of policy decisions in recent years that there is an ongoing deliberation among policy makers with regards to the subject matter of a development oriented approach in dealing with the threat from left wing extremism. While the mindsets of the policy makers have become visibly more open to the need of a holistic approach, the approach itself is nowhere as comprehensive as the need of the hour dictates. The four pronged strategy is not enough to curb the phenomenon of radicalization given that the stress of the government policy on the development of civilian infrastructure fails to directly address the concerns of the tribals regarding land rights, minimum wages, common property resources and housing, rights over use of forests, the threats to their dignity, political marginalization etc. These concerns are further exacerbated due to the problem of laxity in implementation of government policies and the history of poor governance in such parts of the country.

The grants made for community programmes and organization of sporting tournaments in order to encourage the mainstreaming of youth can be termed as a halfhearted measure given that the same was introduced under the 'community policing scheme' for which the grants are a mere Rs. 10,00,000 per affected district per year. Further, between 2011 and 2016 only Rs 36.83 Crores were released for the purpose of skill development of the youth even as the government sought to create Skill Development Centers in thirty four affected districts. Moreover,

the scheme to provide Additional Central Assistance for creating infrastructure such as primary health care centers, school buildings and drinking water supply was discontinued from 2015 onwards.

The efficacy of the current state of the development centric approach can thus be questioned easily on the grounds of its counter radicalization and anti-radicalization effects which it seeks to address 'holistically.' For both counter radicalization as well as anti-radicalization, the engagement of the vulnerable communities as well as development of narratives which counter the threat of radicalization and a neutralization of the threat using political means rather than sheer force are a sine qua non.

Conclusion

India is not a stranger to the various forms of insurgencies, communalism and terrorisms perpetrated by radicalized individuals. The multi-faceted problem of radicalization faced by India today, threatens to smudge, if not tear, the canvas upon which the leaders of the freedom struggle painted the constitutional masterpiece. A historical analysis of radicalization in the context of the modern society reveals to us that the problems we face today are mutated versions of issues which have festered, unchecked and unresolved, for decades. To these problems, the security centric approach adopted by successive governments as a solution to rooting out the problem of radicalization has failed to deliver results, acting merely as a band aid where reparative surgery is required.

In their dealings with the above problems the policy makers have offered stop gap solutions to immediate problems and in the process often lost sight of the larger picture. Barring the threat from left wing extremism which had been researched extensively both empirically and doctrinally by both domestic and foreign academicians thereby allowing the inculcation of a holistic understanding in the policy makers, there is a dearth of research into the causes of radicalization from the right wing in the Indian context. Without such a discourse, answering the complex questions raised in the introduction as to what works to radicalize an individual and how to prevent it, becomes nearly impossible.

In such a case, halfhearted and ill-conceived attempts at countering radicalization tend to have unintended consequences. 'De-radicalization (and its synchronous) policies' carry with it an inherent tension: those who provide the most invaluable support in drawing people away from violent extremist groups generally come from the demographic or community that is under suspicion. The situation of second and third generation Muslims in Europe is a case in point. When these generations feel rejected by the host society despite integration attempts, it creates feelings of bitterness, resentment, and insecurity as to which group they identify more with. In such a scenario, any discriminating policy within the host society can serve as a catalyst for radicalization.

In this context, assessment of the Prevent Program, which was aimed at preventing radicalization in the UK, reveals that the program led to the stigmatization of the entire minority Islamic community and created a feeling that the community was being targeted as a whole for the acts of a few. The same has been accepted by the then Secretary of State for the Home Department and the current Prime Minister of Britain, Theresa May, in a report submitted to the British Parliament in June 2011. Moreover, since its inception under the Blair administration, the program has been embroiled in controversy and contention with respect to basic rational and ideological issues such as what programs, activities or methodologies constitute 'prevention.' Given that de-

radicalization programs in India are still in an embryonic stage, such pitfalls should be and can be avoided.

That there is a need for an implementation of programs to combat radicalization itself is not in question. The geo-political location of India along with the cyclic play of reactive and counter reactive forces make it imperative that such programs be made effective immediately. The sophistications and complexities involved with such policy making however require that the policy should be comprehensive and take into account all related perspectives in order to achieve the desired outcome of a society which promotes humanism, rationality and scientific temper.

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