**FINAL PAPER: RESEARCH PROPOSAL**

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**Subject of the paper: To study Counter Proxy war strategies of India and Israel to draw strategic options (relevant lessons) for India.**

**Background:**

**India’s Counter Proxy war in Kashmir**

India has faced numerous insurgencies since independence in North East India, Jammu & Kashmir and Punjab due to various political, social and economic reasons. While the insurgencies in most of the North Eastern states and Punjab have been managed and controlled***, terrorism in Jammu & Kashmir(J&K)***, abetted by Pakistan***,*** remains one of the **major security challenges of India(Price 2011)**. What started as an insurgent movement in 1989 slowly transformed into an intense proxy war with overt & covert support from a belligerent neighbor. It has manifested itself in myriad ways to include infiltration of terrorist across the line of control, provision of material, ideological & military support. In addition India has borne the brunt of some senseless terror acts like blasts in public places in Hyderabad, Delhi and various other cities, attack on hotels & railway station in Mumbai in Nov 2008, attack on Indian parliament and so on. Investigation into these acts have provided incontrovertible proof of these acts having direct linkages to Pakistan.

Indian response to these acts has been gradual with mixed success. While there is a marked drop in terror acts across India, the situation in Kashmir has been a matter of concern. India has adopted a multi-pronged strategy to deal with the problem with its military at the forefront. Coupled with the soft power of the state and political initiatives, this strategy has yielded positive dividend. Yet more needs to be done in order to free this region from the scourge of terrorism. Broadly speaking Indian response has been inward looking and defensive in its intent in keeping with its policy of peaceful co-existence which befits its status as a mature democracy. *During the last 26 years –neither after the attack on Parliament nor after the multiple terrorist strikes at Mumbai, did India choose to address the perpetrators of terrorism in Pakistan and Pak occupied Kashmir (PoK) and conducted its counter-proxy war*

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*campaign on its own side of LoC. However, the recent terrorist attack on the army base at Uri could be deemed to have crossed India’s* ***‘red lines’*** *and India responded by launching* ***‘Trans LoC Surgical strikes’*** *on terrorist training camps with its Special Forces sending a strong message that the Indian establishment will not tolerate the wanton killing of innocent Indian civilians or soldiers by state-sponsored terrorists.* This was as much a message to the sponsors as to the world community at large.

**Israel’s Counter Proxy War along Northern Borders**

The state of Israel since its formation, too, has faced terrorism from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and Hezbollah, the proxy terror groups **harboured and encouraged by its neighbouring inimical states**, who have failed to defeat the Israel Defence Forces on the battlefield. The most potent amongst these, Hezbollah was founded in the early 1980s as part of an Iranian effort to aggregate a variety of militant Lebanese Shi’a groups under one roof.  Over the past three decades, Hezbollah has become a powerful guerrilla and terrorist group with Iran and Syria’s help. As per estimates Iran provides Hezbollah with weapons and spends up to $200 million a year funding the group’s activities. Over time, these efforts, have made Hezbollah into its current avatar which is a mix of military organization, terrorist group, social welfare agency, and political party.

As part of this arena, at the other end of spectrum are the Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihadi groups in the southern (Gaza and Sinai Peninsula) areas and to a relatively lesser degree from Palestinian territories comprising the West Bank, who indulge in various forms of terrorist violence against Israel ***to undermine physical security and generate fear in the local population***. In the decade since the end of the second Intifada, there has been a relative lull in the number of terrorist incidents on Israeli soil, despite the periodic increase in the nature and scope of this threat in the form of **high *trajectory fire***, which has resulted in series of operations, the most recent being ‘**Operation Protective Edge’ in 2014**.

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**India and Israel’s Proxy Wars: Is there a Common Ground?**

**What is Different?**

In their fight against terrorism, India and Israel face distinct security challenges, the primary element that is at a variance with the Israeli model is the approach to insurgencies within the country in India. While the Indian approach is aimed at political accommodation and reconciliation as the primary element of countering insurgency with the military acting as a support element to maintain a degree of stability, the Israeli approach seems to be focused towards breaking the military capability of a group through targeted killings. ***It is (researcher's) considered opinion that military means have their limitations and will rarely be enough to defeat an insurgency without the final political resolution of the problem***. Second, India is a victim of proxy war from Pakistan -a nuclear state, which underlines the hypothesis of a direct link between nuclear weapons and the rogue terror policy pursued by the state, because the former provides cover for the latter, in as much as nuclear weapons are meant to neutralise the threat posed by a possible response based on India’s proactive conventional military strategy. Therefore, India conducts its **counter proxy war strategy under a nuclear overhang** which necessitates an extremely **calculated approach** which not only controls the situation from spinning out of control but also calibrated to call the nuclear bluff. Exemplified, even in the recent trans LoC response to the Uri incident, where, India conducted this operation in a ***well-orchestrated narrative calling it 'strikes against terror operatives and not against the Pakistani state*** as such', forcing Pakistan to deny any attack by Indian forces across the LoC. On the other hand, Israel’s declared policy of deterrence has always afforded her the leeway to launch ***pre-emptive offensive actions across its borders,*** aimed at mitigating both existing and potential future terror threats and develop some of the most advanced strategies to better cope with constant and evolving threat of terrorism. Third, the Israeli model relies on intelligence to undertake clinical standoff strikes against targets. India has instead witnessed a grid form of deployment which is more

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manpower intensive but is able to physically control an area. Conversely, the vulnerability of security forces increases. There are both pro and cons of these methods. Lastly, India, unlike Israel, doesn’t enjoy a force asymmetry vis-à-vis the real sponsors of terrorism. Also the fact that most military ops have to be conducted in areas dominated by our own population adds a totally new dimension to it.

**Issues of Convergence**

Both countries have learned over the years that terrorism is a stubborn phenomenon and that, in contrast to conventional warfare, **decisive victory over terrorism is rare**. When countermeasures **block one avenue** of attack, terror organisations adopt more flexible methods in changing circumstances to ***improvise*** some new means of inflicting damage. The Indians much like the Israelis have attempted to create physical boundaries to stop the movement of terrorists. Both of us have realised that it has its advantages, however, it will always be impossible to ensure zero infiltration. And therefore, additional measures have to be in place to fight the challenge. The use of technology is yet another force multiplier which is increasingly being seen as a critical element of counter insurgency. While the Israelis have been pioneers in this field, the recent cross-border strike by India reinforces the importance of this trend. The Indians have much to gain from the Israeli experience in this regard. ***Thus, despite the divergent nature and approaches,*** many of the ***lessons learned by Indian and Israeli counterterrorism experts*** are ***relevant*** to the each other country’s fight against terrorism.

Goal of the Paper: To study Counter Proxy war strategies of India and Israel to draw relevant lessons for India.

**Specific Research Questions:**

Relevant to Indian Context from Israeli Experience

1. Lessons from Israeli Operational Strategies.
2. Specialised Intelligence operations.

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3. Co-option of modern technology to strengthen physical security infrastructure at border areas (territories) and hinterland bases.

**Relevant to Israeli Context from Indian Experience**

1. Design, nature and scope of counter terrorist operations waged against a

Nuclear armed neighbour.

2. Counter terrorist operations in increasingly radicalized society.

Research Claims: As terrorism increasingly becomes a global phenomenon, insights and lessons of counterterrorism strategies of each country *have significant relevance to both in the present and foreseeable future.*

Method of presenting the Idea of the Research: Outline Chapterisation

1. Chapter 1. Historical background - Pak sponsored terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir (Partition on religious lines, India emerging as multi ethnic, multi religion and liberal democratic society with numerous fault lines).

2. Chapter 2. India’s Counter terrorism strategy in Kashmir and its shortcomings:-

1. Political level. Conflict management vs. Conflict resolution.
2. Inability to hold Pakistan accountable for immoral and unjust

war at diplomatic and economic level.

1. Persecution or Alienation of Kashmiri Awam.

 (b) Military Level.

(i) Border Security- ability of terrorist to infiltrate despite LoC

 fence and Counter Infiltration Grid.

1. Ability of terrorist to strike at security forces bases as well as

 Civilian targets and inflict high causalities.

1. Fighting terrorism in own territory: Predictability of response.
2. Inadequacy of intelligence, equipment and technology.

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3. Chapter 3. Israeli Experience – Historical background, lessons and conditions for waging a successful war against terrorism.

4. Chapter 4. Israel Counter Proxy Strategy.

5. Chapter 5. Proposed Strategy (options) for India:

1. Politico – Economic and Social Level (External & Internal).
2. Synergised integrated approach
3. Redraw area of influence – control the surroundings.
4. Use diplomatic and economic leverages against Pakistan.
5. Political solution to address alienation within Kashmir.
6. Military Level.
7. Strengthening of Internal security mechanisms including

exploitation of technology for security along borders and in hinterland.

1. Potency and unpredictability (timing) of response.
2. Capability building for covert operations.

6. Chapter 6. Way forward and Summary.

The Importance/novelty of the Paper:

The paper will draw out lessons relevant to India for conduct of counter terrorism

operations and set out areas of mutual interest in specific fields between India and

Israel.

Connection of the paper to National Security:

The topic is fundamental subset of national security, is topical and in line with

the current and the evolving nature of future wars/conflicts.

Author’s link to the work:

The paper is based on the professional experience and the anticipated employment

requirements of the author in the Indian Army.