FINAL PAPER: RESEARCH PROPOSAL

**PROXY WARS OF INDIA AND ISRAEL:**

**LESSONS FOR INDIA’S COUNTER PROXY WAR STRATEGY IN KASHMIR**

BRIGADIER RAJENDRA SACHDEV, INDIAN ARMY

**PROXY WARS OF INDIA AND ISRAEL: LESSONS FOR INDIA’S COUNTER PROXY WAR STRATEGY IN KASHMIR**

**India’s Proxy war in Kashmir**

India has faced numerous insurgencies since independence 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 neighbour. It has manifested itself in myriad ways to include infiltration of terrorist from Pak Occupied Kashmir (POK) across the line of control into India, provision of material, ideological & military support. The major terrorist attacks in the recent past have been on the Indian Parliament (December 2001), Mumbai (November 2008), Pathankot Air Base (Jan 2016) and Uri Army Base (August 16). Investigation into these attacks have provided incontrovertible proof of these acts having direct linkages to Pakistan.

Broadly speaking, the Indian response has been ambiguous and lacked strategic direction other than that time will overcome the crisis thus, meeting with mixed success. 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, yet more needs to be done in order to free this region from the scourge of terrorism. During the last 26 years, despite severe provocations in keeping with the proven **‘Irrational’** behavior of (nuclear) Pakistan, wherein, a major terror incident (trigger) could lead to a conventional spectrum, India as a mature democracy has conducted its counter-proxy war campaign on own side of LoC. However, the recent terrorist attack on the army base at Uri could be deemed to have crossed the **‘*red line’***and India (Sep 2016) responded by launching***‘Trans LoC Surgical strikes’ using its special forces*** sending a strong message that the Indian establishment will henceforth, not tolerate the wanton killings of innocent Indian civilians or soldiers by state-sponsored terrorists*.* The world-wide support to these strikes is an indication that India too can fight conventional action just below the threshold of conventional warfare. This term is also referred as Masked War, coined

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due to Putin’s actions in Ukraine and Georgia, “*maskirovka” at times or “*asymmetry of wills”. This also takes care of nuclear bogey.

**Israel’s Proxy War**

The state of Israel since its formation, has faced terrorism from 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. At the other end of spectrum are the Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihadi groups in (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**.

**Linkages and Challenges: Proxy Wars of India & Israel**

In their fight against terrorism, India and Israel face distinct security challenges and 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 like the Israelis have attempted to create physical boundaries to stop the movement of terrorists. Both have realised that it

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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. Their decades long involvement has established that the ***military means have their limitations and will rarely be enough to defeat an insurgency without the final political resolution of the problem***. Related to this, the Clausewitizian trinity addresses the government as **‘Rational’**, people as **‘Irrational’** and military as ‘**Non-Rational’**. The major challenge for ‘India in Jammu & Kashmir’ and for ‘Israel in Palestinian territories’ is that, the Non-rational tool is being employed for prolonged rational application with irrational populations.

Goal of the Paper: To study proxy wars of India & Israel and derive lessons for India’s counter proxy war strategy in Kashmir.

**Specific Research Questions:**

**Relevant to Indian Context from Israeli Experience**

1. Lessons from Israeli operational strategies and specialist organisations.
2. Intelligence operations.

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.*

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Method of presenting the Idea of Research

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

2. Chapter 2. India’s 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 population.

 (b) Military Level.

(i) Border Security- ability of terrorist to infiltrate despite LoC fence/ counter infiltration grid and inflict high causalities.

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

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

5. Chapter 4. Proposed strategy for India:

1. Politico – Economic and Social Level (External & Internal).
2. Synergised integrated approach.
3. Redraw area of influence – shaping the environment.
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 5. Way forward and Summary of lessons for India and Israel.

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Importance/novelty of the Paper:

The paper will draw out lessons relevant to India for conduct of 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, and in line with current and

evolving nature of future wars/conflicts.

Author’s link to the work:

The paper is based on professional experience and anticipated employment

requirements of author in Indian Army.