

Pakistan's Designs to Destabilise India

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भारत नीति प्रतिष्ठान
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Pakistan came into existence on the persistent demand of Muslims in undivided India who refused to live in an independent Hindu-majority India and so, overwhelmingly voted for Muslim League, which contested for a separate Muslim nation in 1946 Indian provincial elections. Realising that the Hindus would not easily accept their demand for partition, Indian Muslims indulged in violent agitations and riots all over India to pressurise and terrorise them.

The carnage that followed partition of India was a result of years of radicalisation of Muslims, which culminated in the bloodbath that partition brought with it.

Pakistan, which chose Islamic radicalism over diversity, needed to keep the politics of hatred simmering for its own survival. Immediately after coming into existence, Pakistan tried to capture Muslim-dominated region of Kashmir, and occupied some parts of it. Indian armed forces retaliated and could have recaptured the Pakistan occupied territory but for the decision of the then Indian Prime Minister J. L. Nehru to declare a ceasefire and take the dispute to the United Nations.

When Pakistani tribal militia tried to invade Kashmir, the Kashmir ruler Hari Singh signed the Instrument of Accession with India on 26 October 1947 which allowed the situation to be brought under control. The fact that Pakistan attacked India within weeks of taking birth when there was a standstill agreement in place between both the countries was the first sign of how the nation could not be trusted. It had reneged on its promise and the coming decades would stand testimony to the multiple times that Pakistan raised the issue of Muslims in India for its political gains and also with the intention of creating instability within India by sponsoring terrorism and inciting violence.

It had often presented a distorted version of history to defend its actions and in a way ensured that it played the same divisive

politics of the British with the aim of creating internal strife in India.

It will not be wrong to argue that when looked at from a vantage point, the India-Pakistan wars of 1947, 1965 and 1999 were all efforts by Pakistan to incite Muslims in India to indulge in violence against the Hindus. In 1971, Pakistani army massacred nearly 30 lakh innocent Bengali people and raped lakhs of helpless Bengali women in East Pakistan. Most of the victims in this genocide were Bengali Hindus. More than one crore people from East Pakistan ran for safety to India, which provided them shelter and security. This resulted in another war in 1971 December and Pakistan had to accept defeat within days. It lost its control over the East Pakistan, which became an independent nation Bangladesh.

In addition to these wars against India, Pakistan also instigated and sponsored the violent insurgency against the Indian rule in the Kashmir Valley that forced lakhs of Kashmiri Pandits to leave their birthplace, their homes, their properties and run for safety. The radicalisation of Kashmiri Muslims transformed them into violent enemies of their childhood friends and neighbours merely for their faith in Hinduism. Kashmiri Pandits were forced to become refugees within their own nation. The calls for “Azadi” (freedom) that became louder over the years have been backed by Pakistan sponsored radicalisation that has spread to many states threatening the internal security of India.

Pakistan has played a huge role in radicalising the Indian Muslims, and thereby instigating them to join the terror organisations sponsored by Pakistan. The terror groups backed by Pakistan have tapped into this religious affinity and have been recruiting young Muslims to wage a proxy war against Indian forces and civilians.

The United Nations has on multiple occasions cited Pakistan's role in the violence in Kashmir. Pakistan has been providing

both moral as well as material support to Kashmiri militants and extremists groups like Jaish-e-Muhammad to rally the youth behind the cause of Kashmir's independence.

If viewed from a wider spectrum, Pakistan's duplicity would have been established long ago. As pointed out by Taha Siddiqui¹, Pakistan has shown little commitment to Kashmir self-determination over the past decades. The Pakistani Kashmir consists of Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan, jurisdictions that want to gain more autonomy over their internal affairs. But the administration in Pakistan has denied them their political rights exposing its double standards when it advocates for the supposed cause of the Kashmiri people.

The 1948 Resolution passed by the United Nations had clearly established Pakistan as the aggressor and had asked for the forces to be removed first by Pakistan. That was not heeded to and Pakistan continued spreading a false narrative against India while denying its own population political, civil and administrative rights. In Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, political parties cannot contest the general elections if they do not agree to an accession agreement to Pakistan. This effectively means that only Pakistan-based political parties can contest elections and the power rests in Islamabad. Also, it needs to be noted that most of the bureaucracy and civil service is controlled by a body called the Kashmir Council headed by the Pakistani prime minister. Pakistan has also illegally allowed property rights to outsiders in Gilgit Baltistan in the 1970s². The main aim of this move was to push Sunni settlements in Shia dominated Gilgit Baltistan and to create political unrest.

¹Taha Siddiqui, 'Why Pakistan is no friend of Kashmir either', *Al Jazeera*

²Prabhas K Dutta, 'Beyond Kashmir: Status of Gilgit-Baltistan is a case in contrast', *India Today*

If Pakistan indeed believed in the concept of freedom and Kashmiris being able to decide their own fate, then it should have first demonstrated that commitment at home.

In 1965, the Pakistani military launched a secret mission called Operation Gibraltar when the military dictator General Ayub Khan was in power. It involved military officials infiltrating the valley and attempting to engineer a rebellion from within by mixing themselves with the locals. The logic was that India was exhausted by the 1962 war with China and it would be a good time to strike. But Pakistan's plan failed when India launched a counter-offensive which forced Pakistani forces to retreat.

After this, Pakistan decided to infiltrate the separatist movement in Kashmir by killing the local leadership and handing over the reins of protests to Pakistani militia. Pakistan once again infiltrated Kashmir in 1999 through Kargil for gaining geopolitical supremacy in the region. Though Pakistan did not win the war, it was a wake-up call to the damages that Pakistan-based extremists' groups can do to the political, social and economic fabric of the nation.

In the decades that followed India saw several attacks orchestrated by Pakistan with the violence spreading to mainland. From the 2001 attack on the Indian Parliament to the Mumbai attack in 2008, to the 2016 attack in Pathankot and the 2019 Pulwama attack, the invisible presence of the Pakistani Deep State has been undeniable.

The role of ISI in terror attacks

The Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), the premier intelligence agency of Pakistan has been notorious for its involvement in many of the terrorist and money laundering activities carried out in India. While the ruling dispensation in Pakistan and the military are cohorts to ISI's operations, what makes the agency more dangerous than the other two organs are the clandestine ways in which it is able to carry out its activities in India and

how deep it has penetrated into the country to radicalize the youth in the name of Islam.

Created after the Indo-Pakistani War of 1947, due to the weak performance of the Military Intelligence of Pakistan, ISI has kept India as its primary focus. When Zia-ul-Haq seized power in July 1977, he started his K2 (Kashmir and Khalistan) strategy, initiating Operation Tupac. The mandate given to ISI was to make Jammu and Kashmir a part of Pakistan and to send terrorists to Punjab. The goal was not just to carry out attacks and pose a threat to the Indian administration but also to systematically radicalize the Muslim-dominated regions. This would help them get the support of Indian Muslims while they urge the Kashmiri Muslims to take up arms against the Indian state. This strategy was time and again reiterated by the ISI agents who were arrested in India over the years. The ISI has also allegedly set up bases in Nepal and Bangladesh, which are used for operations in North-East India³.

A report⁴ by India's Intelligence Bureau (IB) has indicated that the ISI was "desperately trying to revive Sikh militant activity" in India. For this, ISI has extended support to pro-Khalistan militant groups such as the International Sikh Youth Federation (ISYF) with the primary aim of destabilizing the Indian state.

It is now well-known that the Joint Signal Intelligence Bureau⁵ (JSIB) department of Pakistan has been involved in providing communications support to Pakistani terrorists operating in region of Jammu and Kashmir. The Joint Intelligence North

³Col Y Udaya Chandar (Retd), *Independent India's All the Seven Wars*, 2018

⁴"International Sikh Youth Federation (ISYF) South Asia Terrorism Portal article", *The Institute for Conflict Management*

⁵Pakistan: The Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), including its activities between 1991 and 1994", *Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board, Canada*

section of the Joint Counter-Intelligence Bureau (JCIB) wing deals particularly with India.

According to a 2002 report⁶, about Rs. 24 million are paid out per month by the ISI, in order to fund its activities in Jammu and Kashmir. The agency was behind the creation of six militant groups in Kashmir which included the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT). The Pakistan Army and the ISI were hand in gloves in helping militants trained in Pakistan to infiltrate Jammu and Kashmir through Pakistan Occupied Kashmir.

The nexus between the ISI and terrorist outfits was proven conclusively in the 1993 Mumbai blasts which were a series of 13 coordinated explosions which resulted in the death of over 350 people and left 1200 injured. The mastermind behind the attack was Dawood Ibrahim, a gangster from the Mumbai-based international organised crime syndicate named D-Company. In 2013⁷, when Indian agencies arrested Lashkar-e-Tayyaba (LeT) terrorist Abdul Karim Tunda, he revealed during the interrogation that the ISI has provided Dawood Ibrahim shelter in Islamabad's Margalla Road area on the condition that he invests 30 per cent of his earnings to fund terror.

Mumbai witnessed another deadly attack on 26/11 2008 when 10 terrorists of the LeT who had infiltrated from Pakistan went on a rampage killing 180 people and leaving over 300 injured. Zabiuddin Ansari, a Lashkar-e-Taiba militant accused for his involvement in the 2008 Mumbai attacks, said that ISI and Pakistani army officials were involved in planning the attacks and had attended the meetings. An Indian report, summarising intelligence gained from India's interrogation of David Headley⁸ alleged that ISI had provided support for the attacks by providing

⁶ Pike, John, 'Directorate for Inter-Services Intelligence', *Federation of American Scientists*

⁷ 'ISI promised Dawood Ibrahim protection, shelter if he invested 30% of his earnings to fund terror: Sources', *India Today*

⁸ 'Pakistan Spies Tied to Mumbai Siege', *Associated Press*

funding for reconnaissance missions in Mumbai. The report included Headley's claim that Lashkar-e-Taiba's chief military commander, Zaki-ur-Rahman Lakhvi, had close ties to the ISI. He alleged that "every big action of LeT is done in close coordination with [the] ISI."

In 2010, former Pakistani president Pervez Musharraf had conceded that his forces trained militant groups to fight India in Indian-administered Kashmir. He confessed that the government "turned a blind eye" because it wanted to force India to enter into negotiations, as well as raise the issue internationally. Many Kashmiri militant groups designated as terrorist organisations by the US still maintain their headquarters in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir.

The same year, the then Pakistan President Asif Ali Zardari admitted that militants had been "deliberately created and nurtured" by past governments "as a policy to achieve some short-term tactical objectives" stating that they were "heroes" until 9/11.

In 2012 Pakistani civilian security agencies told Pakistan courts that "suspects in the Mumbai attacks case got training at various centres of the banned Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) militant organisation, including navigational training in Karachi" and "suspects, who allegedly participated in the attacks, were trained at the LeT training centres at Yousaf Goth in Karachi, Buttle in Mansehra, Mirpur Sakro in Thatta and Muzaffarabad".⁹

In 2018, former Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif also suggested that the Pakistani government played a role in the 2008 Mumbai attack. In July 2019, the incumbent Pakistan prime minister Imran Khan on his official visit to the United States claimed the presence of 30000-40000 armed terrorists in the

⁹ 'Mumbai case suspects trained at LeT camps', *Dawn*

country. He further stated that previous governments were hiding this truth particularly from the US in the last 15 years.

Interestingly in 2019, Khan publicly discouraged Pakistani people from going to Kashmir to do Jihad. People who went to Kashmir will do an "injustice to the Kashmiri people". The importance of this statement will be understood when seen in the context that a sitting prime minister who has always taken the official stance that Pakistan does not use its soil for spreading terrorism

The other major terrorist attacks across India that ISI has been accused of playing a role in are the 2001 Indian Parliament attack, 2005 Delhi bombings, 2006 Mumbai Train Bombings, 2006 Varanasi bombings, 2007 Hyderabad bombings, 2008 bombings in Delhi markets, 2016 Pathankot attack, 2016 Uri attack and 2019 Pulwama attack.

Pakistan also had a role to play in many of the major riots that happened in India. By trying to create ideological divisions within the country, it effectively waged a proxy war – one that would do far more damage to the country than conventional wars. Post the demolition of the Babri Masjid demolition in 1992, the country was witness to widespread communal violence that resulted in the death of close to 2000 people. Former military officer R S N Singh¹⁰ had argued in a paper that the military-intelligence establishment and jihadi groups of Pakistan had “precise hands in orchestrating” the Godhra train carnage. It pointed to how it boded well for Pakistan to take advantage of the simmering communal tensions and create an internal security challenge for India that will be difficult to contain. The subsequent years were a testimony to the damage that was done post the Babri Masjid demolition riots. The 1993 Bombay blasts unveiled the unholy nexus of the underworld and the ISI. Following that terrorism in India that was till then confined to

¹⁰R S N Singh, ‘Was Pakistan behind Godhra attack?’, *Canary Trap*

the northern most part of the country began spreading in a rampant manner to all the corners. The ISI through its various channels were able to influence impressionable minds and spread a discourse of communal hatred that went on to do lasting damage to the societal fabric of India.

It is not surprising that in an analysis published by the Saban Center for Middle East Policy¹¹, Pakistan was found to be the world's "most active sponsor of terrorist groups" with the possible exception of Iran. Journalist Stephen Schwartz had once noted that several terrorist and criminal groups are "backed by senior officers in the Pakistani army, the country's ISI intelligence establishment and other armed bodies of the state".

After Article 370 was scrapped by the Indian government which came as a setback for the forces that were trying to destabilize the nation, an *Economics Times* report¹² brought to light the sinister plan by the ISI and several Pakistan-based terror outfits to kill "non-residents and non-locals". The aim is to drive a deep wedge between "non-Kashmiris" and Kashmiris, and finally upsetting entry of Indians into the Union Territory, thereby defeating the very purpose of the move to revoke the special status that was granted to Jammu and Kashmir through Article 370.

In an Intel report that was accessed by India Today TV, it came to light that a meeting was facilitated by ISI at a safe house of the Pakistan Army, terror groups Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM), Lashkar-e-Taiba, Hizbul Mujahideen and Khalistani Zindabad Force (KZF) met and discussed plans to carry out activities against India.

Another area where the ISI may clearly have had a hand is in the revival of pro-Khalistani protests in countries like US and UK.

¹¹Brookings Institution, 2008

¹² 'ISI's sinister plan of killing more 'non-residents' in Kashmir exposed', *Economics Times*, 31 October, 2019

In the report, it was stated that ISI met Ranjit Singh Neeta of the Khalistan Zindabad, a pro-Khalistani terror group, and asked him to activate his channel in Jammu for attacks in India. The aim is to draw international attention for the anti-India propaganda that ISI has been spreading especially at a time when Pakistan has been facing international isolation for its involvement in terror activities.

A more disconcerting revelation of ISI's involvement in changing the demography of India was revealed when a UNHRC data showed that out of 16,500 Rohingya Muslims settled in India as refugees, 5,700 are in Jammu and Kashmir and the population is increasing at an alarming rate. Unofficial estimates have stated that there may be as many as 40,000 Rohingya Muslims residing in India. In Jammu, they reside in the strategically important Doda and Samba sectors and in Ladakh.

When seen in the context of certain events¹³ that happened in the last few years, the sinister plan of ISI behind this move becomes clear. In 2015, Chota Burmi of Rohingya origin was killed along with Pakistani mercenaries in Kashmir. It is believed that he had received patronage from the 26/11 attacks mastermind Hafiz Saeed who is even to this day sheltered by Pakistan. In October 2016, there were reports that Rohingya terror group, known as Aqa Mul Mujahideen (AMM), was in touch with terrorist outfits active in the state including Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) and men belonging to AMM got trained in Pakistan. Zakir Musa, the Head of Al-Qaeda's offshoot in Kashmir, Ansar Gazawat-ul-Hind, has expressed solidarity with Rohingyas living in Jammu. In a 10-minute-long audio clip, Zakir Musa warned the Modi government against deporting Rohingyas from India and called for liberating Kashmir from the leadership of 'cow-worshipping' Hindus. In early September 2019, the Mutahida Majlis-e-Ulma (MMU), headed by separatist

¹³Parjanya Bhatt, 'Rohingya Muslims in Kashmir: Part of a larger game plan to escalate hybrid warfare; no room for politics', *First Post*

Mirwaiz Umar Farooq and other religious organisations also observed a Solidarity Day in the Valley for Rohingya settlers.

Khalistani Movement

The Sikh separatist movement or the Khalistani movement is yet another medium through which Pakistan and the ISI have spread its tentacles in India. The Khalistani movement may have had its origin in the British Policy of Divide and Rule, but it was Pakistan that has kept the movement so long with the primary aim of creating instability on India's western borders. The rise of Sikh nationalism in the 1930s and 1940s had led to the calls of a separate Sikh state within Punjab. But it was not until the 1970s that the movement took a militant form. And when observed closely, it is clear that it was not just the political developments within India and the support of the Sikh diaspora that gave voice to the movement but Pakistan also had a huge role to play in destabilizing the nation.

In a 1965 speech to the UN Security Council, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto who was then a member of the military regime of the General Ayub Khan declared a thousand-year war against India. The Pakistani Army Chief General Zia-ul-Haq furthered this objective with the "bleed India with a thousand cuts" doctrine which involved using covert and low-intensity warfare with militancy and infiltration. This was first used to fuel the Punjab insurgency.

Soon after that speech, the political decisions taken in India at that time ensured that foreign actors could enter the country and manipulate those supporting the separatist movement. On 7 September 1966, the Indira Gandhi-led government gave in to the demands of a separate state based on religious lines which effectively went against the principles embodied in the Constitution. The Punjab Reorganisation Act was passed in Parliament which trifurcated Punjab creating Punjab, Haryana and transferring certain areas to Himachal Pradesh. Chandigarh was made a centrally administered Union territory.

Outside India, the seeds of the violent Khalistan movement were sown in London when Davinder Singh Parmar and Jagjit Singh Chohan in a press conference formally announced the launch of the Khalistan movement. Pakistan seizing this opportunity proposed the location of Nankana Sahib in Punjab, Pakistan as the capital of Khalistan.

After the Indo-Pakistan War of 1971, Chohan visited Pakistan. He went to Nankana Sahib in Pakistan and toured several historical gurudwaras. The visit which was given wide publicity by the press in Pakistan played a huge role in introducing the idea of Khalistan to the international community even though the movement did not have enough public support at that point.

The visit to Pakistan enabled Chohan to travel to United States and interact with the Sikh diaspora there. On 13 October 1971, he placed an advertisement in the New York Times proclaiming an Independent Sikh state which helped him collect millions of dollars from the Sikh diaspora. In 1979, he established the Khalistan National Council and in 1980 he declared the formation of a "National Council of Khalistan", at Anandpur Sahib.

The years that followed saw the rise of the Sikh extremist leader Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale. He got himself increasingly involved in Punjab politics and kept on fanning the separatist sentiments among Sikhs. The Congress in its quest for power aided in his rise and gravely compromised national interests in the process. With the intention of splitting Sikh votes and weaken the Akali Dal which was its chief rival in Punjab, Congress supported the candidates backed by Bhindranwale in the 1978 SGPC elections. With power in hands, Bhindranwale was able to spread his political objectives and the damage that Congress had done to the nation became clear.

The period between 1982 and 1984 saw 1200 violent incidents in which 410 persons were killed and 1180 injured which were all

perpetrated by the followers of Bhindranwale. This led to the Indian Army carrying out Operation Bluestar on the orders of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi between 1 and 8 June 1984 with the aim of removing Bhindranwale and his armed followers from the buildings of the Harmandir Sahib complex in Amritsar, Punjab. Though this operation was successful, the Sikh militancy was yet to be crushed completely. In fact, the inflamed feelings after Operation Blue Star saw the assassination of Indira Gandhi on 31 October, 1984 by her two Sikh bodyguards in what was seen as a retaliation for her actions.

The efforts by the Rajiv Gandhi government in 1985 which led to the signing of the Rajiv-Longowal Accord as a result of negotiations between the late Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and Harchand Singh Longowal, the President of the Akali Dal failed to yield any results. That year saw Air India Flight 182 operating on the Montréal-London-Delhi-Bombay route being blown up midair off the coast of Ireland by members of a Sikh separatist group called the Babbar Khalsa. In all, 329 people were killed, among them 280 Canadian nationals and 22 Indian nationals. By the 1990s, due to widespread condemnation of the terror activities and the steps that the then Prime Minister Narasimha Rao took to control the spread of violence, the movement had abated.

But the announcement of the Kartarpur Corridor saw the revival of the Khalistan movement and this time also the push is from Pakistan. According to a report¹⁴ that appeared in *The Print*, it is widely speculated that ISI has been funding pro-Khalistan activities like Referendum 2020, which its website calls “a campaign to liberate Punjab, currently occupied by India”. The report cites official sources in the Punjab police that states that Referendum 2020 are funded by ISI through pro-Khalistani lawyer Gurpatwant Singh Pannun, legal advisor of Sikhs for

¹⁴Regina Mihindukulasuriya, ‘Pakistan is ‘funding’ pro-Khalistan hysteria online, despite banning on-ground events’, *The Print*

Justice, the organisation which heads the movement. Though Pakistan had banned Referendum 2020-linked activity on its soil at the request of India, it is believed that activities are being carried out in Pakistan with the government's covert support.

In addition to this, sources¹⁵ in the Indian intelligence have said that ISI officers are acting as handlers and organizers of Sikh separatist activities in Canada, Europe, US, UK and Malaysia. The ISI is allegedly making vigorous attempts to revitalize the Khalistan movement by providing weapons, financial support, moral backing and propaganda in mainland Punjab and abroad. It is speculated that Lt. Colonel Shahid Mehmood Malhi, better known as "Chaudhary Sahib" among the Pakistani military, is the mastermind of Referendum 2020. Indian security services are said to have recovered documents about Referendum 2020 from his computer.

Recently, there has been a resurgence in social media activities calling for support of the Khalistani movement. A report by the Delhi-based social media monitoring lab, Innefu corroborates this in their report which says that "Khalistan propaganda was almost inactive before the announcement for the Kartarpur Corridor". It tracked Khalistani propaganda online between April 2018 and April 2019. It compared the amount of pro-Khalistan content in November 2018 with number of pro-Khalistan content a month before, and found the number of Twitter posts increased to 1,181 from 161, the number of YouTube propaganda videos to 1,374 from 208, and the number of Facebook posts to 1,439 from 556.

Two pro-Khalistan Twitter accounts in particular that have been identified by Innefu as spreading propaganda — @GurmeetKaur2020 and @1984Tribute. A recent Whatsapp video of a woman calling for Khalistan's freedom has led to

¹⁵Abhinav Pandya, 'India fears revival of Sikh Militancy', *Fair Observer*

speculations that Whatsapp might emerge as the next big tool to spread the Khalistani movement.

ISI and Hawala

It is said that if a country has to be destabilized completely, then its economy has to be attacked first. By printing and supplying counterfeit Indian rupee notes, the ISI has been trying to destabilise Indian economy. The recourse they take to is “Hawala” that is derived from the Arabic word for trust, a key attribute that oils a parallel banking network involving many strangers, few of whom even meet face to face.

Since the 1990s, clear linkages were established with gold smuggling networks and terror finance. Hawala today is the medium of choice for terror networks as it is anonymous, leaves no electronic trails and is difficult to trace back to the source, making it ideal for terror sponsors in countries like Pakistan. Besides the international hawala links, domestic channels further facilitate internal transfers, obfuscating the trail.

India first grappled with the use of hawala for terrorist financing during the 1993 Mumbai serial blasts. It is alleged that Dawood Ibrahim syndicate got close to Rs 14 crore through hawala to carry out the attacks. Since then, the hawala angle has cropped up in multiple investigations related to terrorist financing, including in the 2006 Mumbai train blasts. It was carried out by the Indian Mujahideen (IM), the Pakistan-based handlers of the group used the hawala route to transfer money to IM cadres to execute the attack.

Then came the Jain Hawala scam which involved the transfer of hawala money to politicians which ran into Rs 72 crore. A hawala operator by the name Choksi had transferred this amount of Rs 72 crore to Maharashtra and this was distributed among

several other politicians. Another key figure was Moolchand Sampatraj Shah, who funnelled Rs 2.3 crore to fund the local operatives in the 1993 Bombay blasts. He was described by the Bombay police as the kingpin in the hawala racket. They arrested him in April 1993 and charged him with "conspiracy" and financing the blasts in Bombay. He had maintained a benami account for prime Bombay blast accused Tiger Memon, codenamed Haathi.

The Hawala operations did compromise national security to a large extent with Kashmir becoming the focal point of its operations. Prior to the Bombay blasts, on March 25, 1991, the police picked up Ashfaq Hussain Lone¹⁶, deputy chief of intelligence of the Hizbul Mujahideen, in Srinagar. The Rs 16 lakh seized from him was meant for militant groups in the Valley and had been routed by a person named Dr Ayub in London. Two days later, on the basis of Lone's statement, Shahabuddin Ghauri, a student at Delhi's Jawaharlal Nehru University, was arrested "for collecting large sums of money for financing militants". He revealed the existence of five hawala dealers—Moolchand Shah, Shambhu Dayal Sharma, Mohammed Shahid, Rais Anwar and Nand Kishore — all of whom were booked under TADA.

These arrests, in turn, led to the CBI raid on the premises of S.K. Jain and Jainendra Kumar Jain. The haul: Rs 58 lakh in cash, Indira Vikas Patras worth Rs 10 lakh, \$20,000, two diaries and two notebooks. As it has now turned out, the same hawala operators had financed ministers and bureaucrats. This scam set the trend in India and politicians increasingly relied on the hawala channel to park and also receive funds. All the transactions were directly related to ISI agents and this gave the Pakistan spy agency an iron hand against these politicians as they were blackmailed against taking action.

¹⁶ Ajith Pillai and Ranjit Bhushan, 'A National Risk', *Outlook*

Nearly a decade ago, in July 2007¹⁷, then Kerala intelligence chief Jacob Punnoose had warned of the nexus between the fake currency racket, hawala networks and radical Islamist networks like the National Development Front (NDF), the parent organisation of the Popular Front of India (PFI), in a five-page secret report to the home secretary. He had even listed case studies of hawala operators with close ties to the NDF. No action was taken on this report.

In 2009, a report by the National Intelligence Agency (NIA) had cited two high security printing presses run by Pakistan's ISI in Karachi's Malir Cantonment as the source of the Fake Indian Currency Notes (FICN).

In 2017¹⁸, during the overnight raids carried out as part of the joint exercise with the Uttar Pradesh Anti Terrorism Squad (ATS), the Maharashtra ATS, two hawala racketeers who had allegedly funded ISI agents in India. The ATS arrested 37-year-old Altaf Hanif Qureshi from Pydhoni area of South Mumbai on Wednesday night after his name propped up during interrogation of ISI agent Aftab Wajid Ali, who was arrested by the UP ATS from Faizabad. Altaf's interrogation led the police to Javed Iqbal Naviwala, who was picked up from Yusuf Manzil building of Agreepada area of South Mumbai on Thursday morning. It later came to light that Javed controlled the Hawala business and Altaf worked for him. Javed was in constant touch with ISI officials in Pakistan and had been getting instructions from the agency to deposit money in Aftab's bank accounts. Javed then used to pass on the instructions to Altaf, who used to deposit the money to the said bank accounts, said the ATS official.

At present, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) is investigating 11 cases of hawala-routed terrorism funding in

¹⁷Sameer Patil, How 'hawala' impacts national security, *Gateway House*

¹⁸ Hawala operators who funded ISI agents in India arrested from Mumbai, *The New India Express*

India. The most prominent among these is related to the Jammu & Kashmir Affectees Relief Trust (JKART), a front organisation set up in Rawalpindi, Pakistan, by the anti-India terrorist group, Hizbul Mujahideen (HM). The NIA believes that the HM, under cover of the JKART, transferred Rs. 80 crores through hawala over a span of many years to fund terrorist activities in Jammu and Kashmir.

Cases such as these are just the tip of the iceberg within Kashmir Valley—security agencies allege that Kashmiri separatists receive regular hawala payments from Pakistan for anti-India activities. In one prominent case, the police twice arrested Ghulam Mohammad Bhat, an aide of Syed Ali Shah Geelani (who heads the hardliner faction of the Hurriyat Conference) in 2008 and 2011, for allegedly receiving money from Pakistan via hawala for separatist activities.

Recent media reports indicate a surge in hawala funding from charity organisations in the Persian Gulf to the seminaries in the Kashmir Valley; these funds are used to indoctrinate the local youth.

ISI terror modules in India

Radicalizing the minds of the young is the most potent way of waging a silent war against a nation. By influencing young minds through social media and subsequently creating terror training modules within the country, ISI has been active in making its presence felt in India from Kashmir to Kerala and from Gujarat to Arunachal Pradesh.

Kashmir has remained the focal point of ISI's activities. According to top sources¹⁹ in the Army, Pakistan has activated 16 terrorist training camps in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (PoK). In addition to this, the Islamic State (IS) had announced a “new province” in India in the wake up of its decreasing influence in

¹⁹Manjeet Singh Negi, ‘Pakistan activates 16 terrorist training camps in PoK: Top Army sources’, *India Today*

West Asia. But it is the growing radicalization in other states of the country that have become a cause for concern. The ISI is expanding its footprints in India with South India having become a hotbed for its activities. In 2019, the National Investigation Agency raided locations in Kerala and Tamil Nadu based on the information²⁰ that few people are working from India to further the objectives of IS. Earlier, the NIA²¹ had claimed that it had arrested 127 IS sympathisers during probes in 28 cases registered from across India since 2014 and the highest number of 33 were from Tamil Nadu. Uttar Pradesh was on second position from where 19 IS sympathisers were arrested, followed by 17 from Kerala, 14 from Telangana, 12 from Maharashtra, eight from Karnataka, seven from Delhi, four each from Uttarakhand, and West Bengal and three from Jammu and Kashmir. The agency arrested two persons each from Rajasthan and Gujarat and one each from Bihar and Madhya Pradesh. In November 2019, digital footprint had helped the police in busting an IS terror module in Assam²²

What needs to be noted is that all the IS activities in India are controlled through foreign channels. The presence of IS modules in different parts of the country with the necessary infrastructure to carry on their terror activities is a clear indication that a foreign player that has access and proximity to India has played an important role. In an interview to News18²³, the former interior minister of Afghanistan Amrullah Saleh confirmed that Pakistan is behind the growing presence of IS in the region. He said, “Some of the ISIS activists captured by our security forces

²⁰ ‘NIA Raids Two Locations in Tamil Nadu in ISIS Conspiracy Case’. *IANS*

²¹ ‘Tamil Nadu tops states having Islamic State sympathisers’, *The New Indian Express*

²² ‘Digital footprint led to the arrest ISIS terror module in Assam’, *The Economic Times*

²³ ‘Have Hard Evidence Linking Pak to ISIS Presence in Region, Says Afghan V-P Hopeful and Ex-Spy Boss’, *News 18*

do admit to having received financial transaction and weapon-training from Pakistan. When our government has monitored their communications, they communicate a lot to Pakistan and the main branch of the Daish ISIS Khorasan, which was active, and is still active to some degree in our eastern region, has a very functioning channel of communication by road and by other means to Pakistan. Therefore, the amount of hard and circumstantial evidence suggesting the linkage with Pakistan is there.”

The NIA had in a charge sheet filed in June 2019 corroborated what Saleh said by claiming that the IS in Jammu and Kashmir had links with Pakistan²⁴. In a separate incident, the Indian Army had cautioned²⁵ its personnel that there are 150 fake profiles being used by ISI agents to extract sensitive information. Here, the modus operandi of those radicalising the youth as well as those looking to gain inside information seems to be the same. Social media is extensively used and the vulnerabilities are identified and taken advantage of. The use of dark web for these activities complicates things further and makes a strong case for the involvement of Pakistan in establishing and operating the terror modules in the country.

Spreading terror in the neighbourhood

Pakistan is among those nations that have sponsored terrorists in its neighbourhood with the sole aim of increasing the threat to India. The real threat of how far Pakistan has strengthened its grip in the region came to light during when an Indian Airlines Airbus A300 en route from Tribhuvan International Airport in Kathmandu, Nepal to Indira Gandhi International Airport in Delhi, was hijacked in December 1999 and flown to several locations before landing in Kandahar, Afghanistan. Harkat-ul-

²⁴ Rahul Tripathi, 'IS will try to go glocal, says India at Oz anti-terror summit', *The Economic Times*

²⁵ 'ISI Agents Posing As Women Can Trap You On Social Media: Army Warns Soldiers', *Outlook*

Mujahideen was accused of the hijacking with the support and active assistance from ISI. At that time, most of Afghanistan was under Taliban control and initially it was thought that Taliban was on Indian side but later it became apparent that they are working in collaboration with ISI. The motive of the hijacking was to secure the release of terrorist who were held in Indian prison. The hostage crisis lasted for seven days and ended after India agreed to release three militants – Mushtaq Ahmed Zargar, Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh, and Mulana Masood Azhar – the latter then went on to mastermind the 2008 terror attacks and is to this day protected by the Pakistani administration.

A US Congressional report²⁶ had stated that Pakistan considers Afghan Taliban as a “reliable anti-India element” in Afghanistan. An earlier report by the US Department of State²⁷ had called out Pakistan for its double-speak on Afghanistan. It had categorically stated that Pakistan provides haven to the Haqqani network and Afghan Taliban by helping them raise finance and also facilitating training of militants in Pakistan. The report also pointed out to how Pakistan government is even letting the terror accused contest elections.

Ever since the mastermind of 9/11 attacks in the US, Osama bin Laden was killed in a US drone strike in Abbottabad, Pakistan, the nation's role in global terror as well as the support it was giving to terror organisations like Al-Qaeda were established beyond doubt. It is for this same reason that Pakistan was put in the grey list by the global terror watchdog Financial Action Task Force (FATF). But the international condemnation and the regional isolation that Pakistan faces have not deterred the country in facilitating the spread of terror, especially in South Asia.

²⁶ ‘Report on Afghanistan’, *Congressional Research Service (CRS)*, November 2019

²⁷ ‘Country Report on Terrorism 2018’ (CRT), *US Department of State*

With porous borders and cultural proximity to India, Nepal is fast becoming a country where the ISI is able to wield considerable influence. For years, militants from India have been escaping to Nepal and the open borders have given ISI-sponsored terrorists an open passage to India. In a document²⁸ released by Wikileaks in 2011, it was pointed out that the organisation created by the ISI, the Jammu and Kashmir Islamic Front (JKIF) with its main base in Kathmandu was using vulnerable Kathmandu-based businessmen to carry materials to be used in explosions in India.

India has time and again exchanged intelligence with Nepal on suspected ISI activities. In 2018, India had provided Nepal details of five suspected terror-facilitators operating from Biratnagar and Kathmandu who were also involved in drug trafficking, human trafficking and counterfeit Indian currency. In April that year, a pressure cooker bomb went off outside India's consulate in Biratnagar and it was found that a local political group supported by the Communist Party of Nepal (CPN) was behind the blast. It is interesting to note that CPN²⁹ was banned by the US Treasury since 2012 and it is believed that the party is getting support from the ISI ever since. In May 2018, just before Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Nepal, suspected jihadi elements attacked the office of Arun-III, a 900 MW hydropower project in Sankhuwasabha being developed by India's Sutlej Jala Vidhyut Nigam. When seen in the context that organizations like Tehfuzul Madrasa and the 45-year-old Dharmoiji masjid cum madrasa are suspected ISI bases which house sleeper cells for targeting India, the involvement of Pakistan in the attack cannot be ruled out.

In Bangladesh, ISI-backed groups have been following the policy of radicalizing the youth and using Bangladesh as a base

²⁸ ISI used Nepal as a hub for terror inside India: WikiLeak, *PTI*

²⁹ Lt Gen Prakash Katoch (ret'd), 'Is Nepal fast becoming ISI control centre?' *Indian Defence Review*

to spread terror in the entire region. In the wake of the Rohingya refugee crisis, the state government had expressed concerns that the stateless people will be used by ISI to create trouble in the country. Security agencies³⁰ have pointed out that Aqu-Mul Mujahedeen (AMM), the group blamed by Myanmar for the violence that triggered the refugee crisis in Rakhine is an offshoot of the Harkat-ul-Jihad Islami Arakan (HUJI-A) which is a Pakistan-based extremist outfit which espouses the Rohingya cause in Myanmar. It is also believed that HUJI-A's leader Abdus Qadoos Burmi is a Pakistani national of Rohingya descent and is a close associate of Lashker-e-Taiba (LeT) chief Hafiz Sayeed.

After the Holey Artisan café attack in 2016, Bangladesh had launched a massive crackdown on terror groups and has been vocal about the ISI backing of certain groups. In January 2020, intelligence agencies³¹ have warned Indian forces that there are reports that ISI is training around 40 Rohingya Muslims with the help of terror outfit Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) in Bangladesh so that they can push them into India to carry out terror activities. The report speculated that Pakistan has funded terror training through Saudi Arabia and Malaysia and in the first instalment, JMB has received funds worth one crore takas for terror training.” It is clear that despite Bangladesh categorically stating that it will not allow its soil to be used for terrorist activities including against India, the ISI has been relentlessly pursuing ways to make inroads to spread its nefarious activities in the region.

³⁰Sundhi Ranjan Sen, 'As Rohingya deepens, Bangladesh fears Pakistan's ISI will foment trouble,' *India Today*

³¹'Pakistan's ISI funds training of 40 Rohingyas in Bangladesh,' *The New Indian Express*

Revocation of Article 370

For Pakistan that has centred its foreign policy and domestic policy on Kashmir, the revocation of Article 370 by the Indian government came as a shock. Pakistan had long used the special status granted to Kashmir under Article 370 to foment tensions and radicalize the Kashmiris. The move dealt a massive blow to the proxy war that Pakistan has been carrying on for the past several decades as well as the image within Pakistan that it has been championing the cause of the Kashmiri people. Now Kashmir would directly come under the control of the central government which meant that there was very little room left for political manoeuvring and the age-old practice of Pakistani agents being hand in glove with separatist leaders in India will no longer bear fruits. Since the issue of Kashmir is vital to the lies that the Pakistani establishment has been spreading for its existence, immediately after the decision to revoke Article 370 was announced, Pakistan decided to internationalize the issue and took recourse to global lobbying.

Prime Minister Imran Khan-led government was quick in approaching the UNHRC, UNSC and UNGA aiming to corner India but was met with tepid response from the global community. Due to the support Pakistan received from its all-weather ally China, there was a closed-door consultation on the issue that was held at the UNSC. But with the over whelming majority deciding that Kashmir was a bilateral matter between New Delhi and Islamabad, Pakistan once again found itself isolated. For China that has followed a policy of duality³² when it comes to its stance on terrorism vis-à-vis Pakistan, a control over Kashmir has remained integral to its hegemonic ambitions. It is for this reason that China has been funding Pakistan to carry out terrorist activities in Kashmir.

³²Parjanya Bhatt, 'Revisiting China's Kashmir Policy,' *Observer Research Foundation*

Now with Pakistan unable to get any traction on the Kashmir issue globally, it is likely that Kashmir will see violence in the coming days. Latest intelligence reports³³ have suggested that Pakistan is planning to deploy Afghan terrorists in Kashmir. In September 2019, three terrorists³⁴ carrying arms and ammunition in truck were arrested and six AK-47 rifles were recovered from them. The signs are evident and the chances are that Pakistan will find new allies in the region and resort to new methods of terrorism and violence to ensure that Kashmir remains in a state of unrest perennially.

The Anti-CAA protests and the Pakistan angle

Ever since the Citizenship (Amendment) Act(CAA) was enacted that aims to grant citizenship to Hindus, Sikhs, Jains, Parsis, Buddhists and Christians fleeing religious persecution from Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh and came to India on or before December 31, 2014, India has seen widespread protests. Though the CAA is no way affects the citizens of India and is a humanitarian step that addresses India's historic responsibility and preserves its civilizational values, the multiple attempts to thwart the process of dialogue should be analysed and deliberated on.

While the dissenting voices against this Act are getting louder, it is necessary to not lose sight of why such a legislation had to be enacted in the first place. From a historical as well as a vantage point, this Act has humanity at its core and it would be a grave injustice to those thousands of people who will be benefitted by this step if India as a nation doesn't acknowledge it.

In a world order where national identity is the most important factor that determines one's existence, statelessness is the most

³³ Abhishek Bhalla, 'Intel inputs suggest Pakistan preparing Afghan terrorists for attacks in Kashmir, New Delhi,' *India Today*

³⁴ 'Three terrorists carrying arms and ammunition in truck arrested, six AK-47 rifles recovered,' *India Today*

brutal of all conditions that a human being can be subjected to. South Asia as a region has been privy to the horrors of religious persecution and sectarianism. The Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) recognises the role that each nation has to play in ensuring that all human beings are given a chance to live a life of dignity.

India might be a non-signatory to the 1951 UN Convention on Refugees, but it has never shied away from granting asylum to those in need. From the 12th century when India welcomed the Zoroastrian community facing persecution by Iran's Qajar dynasty to 2019 when it granted citizenship to the Pakistani Hindus facing persecution, the country has absorbed many who have been wronged into its syncretic culture. It is in this spirit that the CAA should be seen and understood.

The persecution that the religious minorities face in the Islamic nations of Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh are not hidden. There are well documented cases of the minorities in these nations being subjected to torture, forced conversions, arson and kidnappings for ransom. They are treated as second class citizens in countries which have the moral and legal obligation to ensure their safety and facilitate conditions for their economic well-being.

Today, the fact that the proportion of non-Muslims declined to just three per cent of the Pakistan's population from the 23 per cent at the time of partition is a telling sign of the violence that the minorities are subjected to. A report by the Asian Human Rights Watch have stated that that around 20-25 kidnappings and forced conversions of Hindu girls take place in Sindh every month.

It is also important to recollect the case of Asia Bibi, a poor Christian woman from Punjab who was the first woman in Pakistan's history to be charged with blasphemy and sentenced to death. The international outrage that followed may have led to

her acquittal, but it is worth pondering if such unfortunate instances can be avoided altogether if those who face who 'othering' in their own homeland can be given a safety net?

The situation in Afghanistan and Bangladesh is no different. The destruction of the 6th-century statues of Bamiyan Buddha by the Taliban even today remains the greatest symbol of religious intolerance. In Bangladesh, according to Bangladesh National Hindu Mahajote, there have been 1,792 incidents of persecution that have been reported against people of religious minorities in the last 11 months.

Taking this into account, the argument that CAA is a divisive legislation rests on false premises. India is the only nation in South Asia that has a syncretic culture and can absorb all the persecuted minorities who have nowhere to go. The three nation-states of Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh have followed the policy of state-led Islamisation which have dehumanised people hailing from other communities.

CAA is not an attempt to subvert the Indian Constitution. In fact, for a Constitution that tells a tale of evolution to accommodate new challenges, every Indian should be proud of the step that the government has taken. Also, Article 14 should not be read in isolation. "Persecution" and "suppression" are enough grounds for special provisions to be made in the Constitution and ensure that India fulfils its historic responsibility of protecting those come seeking asylum.

In a democracy, there is space for everyone to have different opinions and the due process would have ensured that dialogue takes places and every section takes the effort to understand different narratives. Unfortunately, that did not happen in India and the protests in effect demanded complete repression of all voices. This is where the need arises to probe further to find out if there are any outside forces involved fanning the flames of hatred.

According to a report prepared by a cybersecurity company³⁵ which works with the government and enforcement agencies, during the time of anti-CAA protests, more than 1,079 Twitter accounts were created in Pakistan to spread hate speech around CAA. Till 23 December, 2019, hashtags, influencers and bots were used to spread anti-national content using social media. Hashtags like #NaziIndiaRejected, #IndiaDiscriminatesMuslims, #IndiaToEndia are created by Pakistan-based PTI Social media activists and Pak Cyber Force.

According to a Times of India report³⁶, #NaziIndiaRejected was created by @PTI_VF, which has more than 28,000 followers. Other ones such as #IndiaDiscriminatesMuslims was created by Pakistan-based influencer Husnain Baloch on 21 Dec, 2019. The hashtag #ModiTerrorismPolicy was created by F_H_B_PK on 20 Dec, 2019. And some other of the handles that propagated hate speeches are @KranchiKings19s (does not exist now) and @Rayyank077. Some of the other hashtags originating from Pakistan are #caa_nrc_protests, #citizenshipamendmentact, #indiaagainstcaa_nrc, #indiahatemodi, #cabprotests, among others, used for negative propaganda.

These hashtags were used to spread hate speech and post propaganda videos, misinformation, and police brutality. What is also interesting here is that all these hashtags invariably made it to the trending list. The role of Twitter as a platform for inciting violence through lies and propaganda needs to be probed, debated and discussed at length. It needs to be ensured that checks and balances are in place and they work effectively when accounts opt for paid promotions. Social media should not become a platform for spreading claims that are not substantiated with facts.

³⁵Innefu Labs, December 2019

³⁶Ishita Bhatia, 'ISI, foreign powers responsible for 'violent' anti-CAA protests, says BJP MP', *Times of India*

The interference of ISI also needs to be looked into the violence that erupted during the anti-CAA protests in Delhi's Jamia Nagar, Seelampur and Jafrabad areas of the country. According to police reports, of the ten arrested in Seelampur, four of the accused have criminal background. They have been accused of pelting stones, burning the police booth and setting two-wheelers on ablaze during the protest.

Another incident³⁷ that should be investigated is the detention of eight persons including five women, for drawing anti-CAA 2019 kolam (rangoli) in Chennai's upmarket Besant Nagar area. Of interest here is Gayatri Khandhadai, a lawyer. In an interaction with the media on Wednesday 1 January, 2019 Chennai Police Commissioner A K Viswanathan said that his staff have found out that Khandhadai is a research personnel with Pakistan-based Bytes For All, which claims to be a human rights organisation and a research think-tank. The evidence was found on her Facebook profile, which has since been removed. The Police Commissioner added that it had links with the Association of All Pakistan Citizen Journalists and his men were trying to gather more details.

An angle that has not garnered much attention is the raising of slogans like *Hum Leker Rhenge Aazadi, Jinnah Waali Aazadi* and *Kafiron se Aazadi* during the Shaheen Bagh protests where women and children have blocked a major roadway demanding the withdrawal of CAA. Why were slogans of religious and anti-national sentiments raised at a place where people are supposedly fighting for an idea of India with no religious boundaries remain a lingering question. Also, at a time when even student-led protests that are often considered the most powerful movements in a democracy have fizzled out, it needs to be probed how Shaheen Bagh protests have continued reportedly

³⁷M R Subramani, 'Anti-CAA Rangoli Protests: A Pakistan Connection Emerges; And It Seems Protesters Drew 'No To CAA' Kolams Without Consent Of House Owners', *Swarajya*

with no outside support. Many of the women who may not have even received primary education can be seen with bands and posters which say “No to NRC and No to CAA”. Even children who seem to have just started school have developed an opinion about a Constitutional Amendment Act that they would not have been able to comprehend in normal circumstances. It needs to be asked if such a strong narrative can be spread without political, tactical and financial support.

Universities as battlegrounds

Prior to the anti-CAA protests, the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) fee hike had divided the nation and its universities. While access to affordable public education is the right of every student and they stand justified for fighting for a cause that they believe in, what is interesting is how spaces for learning have become spaces where propaganda is being spread.

During protests that were supposedly to show solidarity with the students of JNU in their fight against fee hike, 'Free Kashmir' posters emerged at the Gateway of India in Mumbai, and at St Stephen's College, Delhi.

JNUSU president Aishe Ghosh at the anti-CAA protests outside Jamia Millia Islamia said. *“Hum is ladai mein Kashmir ka pichha aur unki baat nahi bhul sakte. Unke sath jo ho rahahai, kahin na kahin wahin se is sarkar ne shuru kiya tha ki hamare samvidhan ko hamse chheena jaye.”* (This roughly translates to: “We can't forget the past and the issue of Kashmir in this movement. The current incidents happening with the people of Kashmir were the beginning of this government's effort to violate our Constitution.”)

The mention of Kashmir in what are essentially protests fighting for student rights or democratic rights throws question over whether there are any external forces controlling the students.

It also needs to be probed if the anti-CAA protests that was erupted was Jamia University in a huge way were indeed a

student-led movement. On a Sunday when the University was closed, was it possible to organize such a huge gathering of students. The students had themselves admitted that what they carried out was a peaceful protest and they only wanted to voice their concerns. In the Seemapuri violence that rocked East Delhi, a Special Investigation Team³⁸ of the Delhi Police had found the involvement of at least 15 illegal Bangladeshi immigrants. In the case of Jamia Milia Islamia, there were unverified reports that certain Bangladeshi workers who were staying in a nearby colony may have been responsible for starting the violence which saw arson and pelting of stones. This angle needs to be probed further in the interest of national security. It also needs to be investigated if they are any foreign players involved in fuelling the hate narrative that is being spread.

Conclusion

Pakistan, lately through the ISI, has been trying to destabilise India ever since Independence. Through conventional, proxy and ideological warfare, Pakistan's goal has always been to ensure that India remains in a state of perennial unrest. Their target is not just the borders but they have penetrated the political, social and cultural arena of the nation. By fanning flames of hatred within India, Pakistan has been in a quest to project a divisive face of India to the world. It is clear that the enemy India is fighting at present is invisible and the nation needs to prepare itself for the silent war that is being waged.

It is unfortunate that the message of inclusiveness that India has embraced for so long is being lost in a false rhetoric that is being spread. The policies implemented by the BJP government like subsidising LPG connections under Ujjwala Yojana which has benefitted five crore rural households and electrifying villages

38 Anti-CAA stir: Illegal Bangladeshis behind violence at Delhi's Seemapuri, Seelampur, *India Today*

had at its core the benefits of all Indian citizens. These steps have especially benefitted the women who have always had to carry the disproportionate load of domestic chores. In addition to this, the government has taken particular interest in the welfare of minorities. With particular focus on education, the government has announced scholarships for five crore students from minority communities. 50 per cent of these scholarships will be reserved for girls from minority communities. An awareness campaign, *Padho-Badho* to encourage education among girls is also proposed to be launched. Moreover, it is this very same government that is accused of divisive politics that took the historic step of passing a legislation banning the practice of Triple Talaq.

Prior to this, minority religious institutions have been exempt from paying taxes and they have the constitutional right to establish minority religious institutions. The legal and constitutional rights given to Indian citizens have never been infringed upon and as a nation, India has never discriminated between its people. It has taken every step to ensure that the identity of being an Indian supersedes all other religious, caste, gender and regional identities.

Yet in recent years, Pakistan have been using minority religious institutions and learning centres in India to further its propaganda. Those from economically weaker sections and the youth who are driven by a false sense of ideology are particularly susceptible to believing that India has also embraced the politics of exclusivism that is a feature of theocracies. What is needed is to make people aware of the civilisational as well as the political values of India so that the nation stands united in the face of all adversities. The government on its part should sensitize citizens on the gravity of the threat that Pakistan poses to the stability of India and rally its population to fight for a future where peace and amity prevails within the borders.