

## India's Internal Security: The year that was, the year that may be

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## **Summary**

India's internal security situation in 2011 was relatively better than in previous years. The LWE-affected states, Jammu and Kashmir and the North East all experienced declining levels of violence and the hinterland was also relatively free of major terrorist incidents. Will this trend continue in 2012 as well? The steps taken in the last few years to strengthen internal security have started to show positive results. However, the causes of instability have not disappeared, the counter-terrorism mechanism continues to be largely ineffective, the police forces are still highly politicised and incapable of handling terrorists and insurgents, and state governments remain apathetic towards enhancing internal security. To ensure that 2012 also turns out to be a quiet and secure year, New Delhi not only has to consolidate the gains made in 2011 but also undertake new initiatives to address these gaps.



The year 2011 opened a new chapter for internal security in India with the country experiencing reduced levels of violence and accompanied by a visible strengthening of security within. 2011 was remarkable as it witnessed the busting of several terrorist modules, the killings and arrests of top leaders of several militant groups as well as the signing of peace agreements with some of these groups, all of which contributed to the reduced level of violence. The year also saw the successful resolution of the decades-old border dispute with Bangladesh, which provided a fillip for more efficient border management. This Brief provides an assessment of the internal security situation in India during 2011 pertaining to terrorism, left wing extremism, the North East, Jammu & Kashmir, and border management.

## Terrorism

Barring a few incidents, India remained relatively secure from terrorist strikes during the year. The first significant attack occurred on July 13, 2011 when terrorists exploded three bombs in quick succession in Mumbai killing 21 persons. This was followed by another terrorist attack in Delhi on September 07, 2011, when a major bomb blast took place at the High Court premises killing 11 people. Incidentally, a similar bomb attack had been carried out earlier at the same place on May 25, 2011 without any casualties. In addition, terrorists also exploded a low-intensity bomb in Agra on September 17 injuring four persons.

The relative success in limiting the number of terrorist attacks stems from two key reasons. First, intelligence gathering and dissemination as well as operational co-ordination between various security forces and law enforcement agencies - both at the central and state levels - have been strengthened and streamlined in recent years. The immediate identification and arrest of two individuals involved in the Delhi High Court blast by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) and the police bear testimony to this fact. Secondly, because of better intelligence and information sharing, several potential terrorist attacks were foiled. The seizure of five kilograms of explosives in Ambala is one such instance. However, the most significant achievement was the busting of a pan-Indian module of the Indian Mujahideen (IM) in November 2011 by the Delhi Police. During this operation, eight IM operatives including a Pakistani national suspected to have been involved in the Pune German Bakery blast, the Chinnaswami stadium blast in Bangalore and the Jama Masjid shoot-out in Delhi were arrested.

During the year, the central government continued to enhance the process of information sharing among various agencies. A significant move in this regard was the decision to establish the National Intelligence Grid (NATGRID), the Detailed Project Report for which was approved in principle by the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) in June 2011. The NATGRID will essentially have access to 21 categories of data bases of 11 agencies like those concerned with rail and air travel, income tax, bank accounts, visa and immigration, etc., and which could be accessed by various security forces and law enforcement agencies.

In addition, the government also implemented the Crime and Criminal Tracking Network Systems (CCTNS) to connect 2,000 police stations and other police offices throughout the country.

International cooperation is vital for fighting terrorism. In this regard, the first India-US Homeland Security Dialogue begun in May 2011. Also various agreements and memoranda of understanding were signed this year with Maldives, Indonesia and United Arab Emirates for cooperation in combating terrorism and crimes, transfer of sentenced criminals, etc.

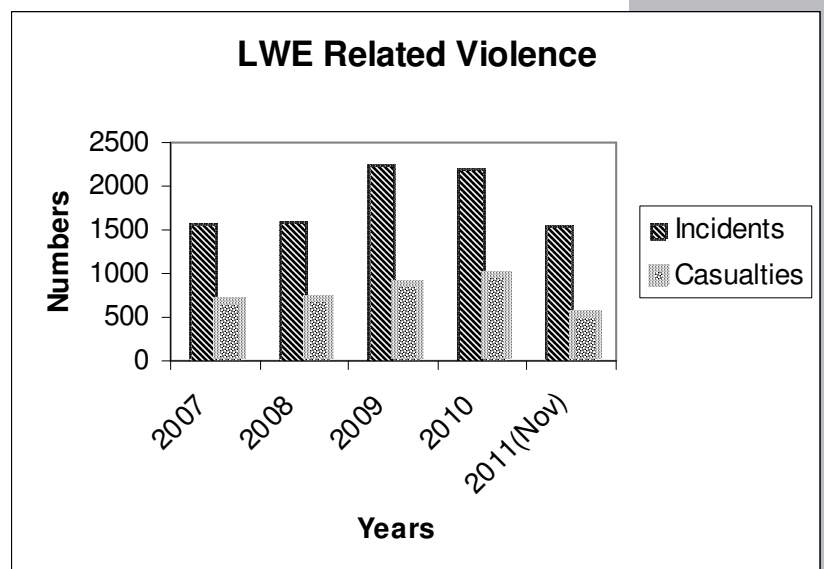
### Left Wing Extremism

Left Wing Extremism (LWE), which has been often described as the gravest internal security challenge, experienced several reverses in 2011. The most severe was the killing of Kishenji alias Mallojula Koteswara Rao, a prominent politburo member of the CPI (Maoist) on November 24, 2011 in Berusole forest of West Bengal. His killing is a serious setback for the movement as Kishenji was an important leader of the movement’s eastern regional bureau and responsible for strengthening the movement in West Bengal. He was also instrumental in the merger of the Peoples’ War (PW) and Maoist Communist Centre-India (MCC-I) and the formation of the CPI (Maoist) in 2004. Apart from Kishenji, 98 other left wing extremists were killed and 1808 were arrested till November 2011.

The reclamation of the Saranda forest Area by the Security Forces was another significant achievement as this was the Headquarters of the Maoist Regional Command. In 2011, the number of violent incidents perpetrated by these extremists declined in all the LWE affected states, except Bihar and Maharashtra, as compared to the previous year. This year (till November) 80 districts of the country witnessed 1554 incidents of violence, which resulted in 542 deaths (security forces and civilians), compared to 2212 incidents of violence resulting in 1003 (security forces and civilians) deaths in 95 districts of the country in 2010.

#### LWE related Violence

Year	Incidents	Casualties
2007	1565	696
2008	1591	721
2009	2258	908
2010	2212	1005
2011(Nov)	1554	542



These successes can be attributed to the effective implementation of the government's two-pronged strategy of ensuring security and development in LWE affected areas of the country. As part of its first prong, the government endeavoured to neutralise the extremists militarily and compel them to start dialogue with the government. For this purpose, it deployed 76 battalions of the central armed police forces (CAPF) along with 10 Commando Battalion for Resolute Action (CoBRA) battalions in the affected states to carry out joint coordinated operations along with state police forces. Air assets such as helicopters were used for logistical support.

In order to further strengthen the CAPF and state police, the central government also took several other measures during the year. To begin with, it raised the security-related expenditure in the LWE affected states from Rs. 331.12 crore to Rs. 598.08 crore. In July, the CCS approved the raising of 10 new specialised India Reserve Battalions (SIRBn) to carry out anti-Naxal operations as well as developmental work in the LWE-affected areas. Further, in October, the government approved an enhanced grant of risk/hardship allowance for CAPF deployed in 35 "focus" LWE-affected districts. Substantial funds were also sanctioned for the recruitment of CAPF personnel as well as for the procurement of arms and ammunition such as AK 47 rifles, Deep Search Metal Detectors, Passive Night Vision Binoculars, Automatic Grenade Launchers, Mine-protected vehicles Light Armoured Troop Carriers, ALH Helicopters, etc.

Bringing development to the economically depressed LWE-affected areas forms the second prong of India's strategy. For this, the central government enhanced funds for schemes for special infrastructure (SIS) to Rs. 362 crore in 2011. Also, under the Integrated Action plan (IAP) for 78 tribal and backward areas which included LWE-affected districts, the government initiated 63,416 projects of which 26,593 were completed by November 2011.

Despite these efforts, Maoists were able to carry out some daring attacks on the security forces as well as on infrastructure. Some of the noticeable attacks were: the December 2011 attack on police stations, railway lines and government buildings in Patna – an attack that was carried out to avenge the killing of Kishenji. In this attack 11 people were killed and a few others were injured. Earlier, in May 2011, the Maoists attacked a police station in Lohardaga, Jharkhand, killing 11 people and injuring 15 others. Till November 2011, the Maoists successfully carried out 234 attacks on railway lines, roads, schools, power plants, telephone exchanges, office buildings, etc. Jharkhand was the worst LWE-affected state during the year (till November) with 452 violent incidents, followed by Chhattisgarh (407), Bihar (270), and Odisha (176).

There has been no significant improvement in civil administration in the LWE-affected areas, which will have implications on the sustainability of the various government initiatives. Bihar and Chhattisgarh continue to be areas of concern and left wing extremism has spread to six new areas in these states. The continuance and spread of LWE has

primarily been because of lack of unanimity among political parties on ways to deal with it and the incapacity of the state police to take on the extremists.

## The North East

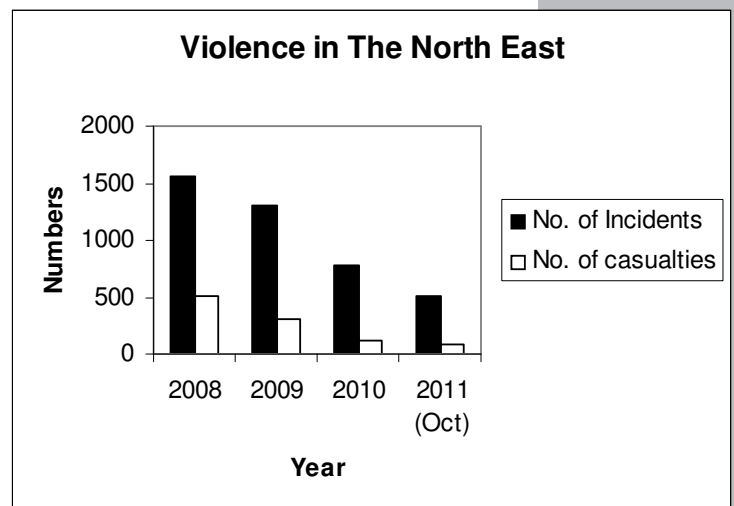
As compared to previous years, the North East states were largely peaceful during the year. In fact, the number of violent incidents has steadily come down since 2008. Till November 2011, the region as a whole witnessed 537 violent incidents as compared to 1561 incidents in 2008, 1297 in 2009, and 773 in 2010. Correspondingly, the number of security forces and civilians killed has also reduced drastically from 466 in 2008 to 61 in 2011 (till October).

### Violence in Northeast

Year	No of Incidents	No of casualties
2008	1561	512
2009	1297	306
2010	773	114
2011 (Oct)	512	93

The prevalence of relative peace in the region was mainly due to the fact that most insurgent groups such as ULFA, National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB- anti-talk faction), Dima Halam Daogah- Joel (DHD-J), United National Liberation Front (UNLF) and National Liberation Front of Twipra (NLFT) have been rendered ineffective with the arrest of their top leaders. These arrests also eventually forced them to announce ceasefires and initiate talks with the government. Thus, the ULFA announced the cessation of all violent activities in July, which was followed in September by its signing of an agreement for the suspension of operations with the government. The government also started formal talks with the ULFA on October 25. Another faction (the military wing) of the ULFA led by Paresh Baruah, however, remains opposed to any talks with the government.

Apart from the ULFA, the Indian government is also holding talks with nine other groups including the NSCN (IM), NDFB (Progressive), DHD-J and DHD-Nunisa, United Progressive Democratic Solidarity (UPDS), Karbi Longri North Cachar Hills Liberation Front (KLNLF), Achik National Volunteer Council (ANVC), and Gorkhaland Mukti Morcha (GMM). In 2011, there were two successful outcomes from these talks: the first was the July 18 tripartite agreement between the Government of India, the Government of West Bengal and the GMM for the setting up of a new Gorkhaland Territorial Administration for the hill areas of Darjeeling; and the second a tripartite memorandum of settlement between the Government of India, the Government of Assam and the UPDS.



Two other such memoranda of settlement with the DHD-N and DHD-J are also on the anvil for which talks were held in October. Also, as part of the phased multi-year programme of resettling the Bru refugees, around 2000 Bru were repatriated from Tripura to Mizoram by November 2011.

Nevertheless, complete peace remained elusive. Manipur was the most disturbed state during the year with 257 incidents of violence. It also experienced a number of bandhs and blockades. Two blockades in particular, called by rival Naga and Kuki groups, lasted for more than 100 days. Both the blockades were called simultaneously on August 1st. The first blockade, which was imposed by the Sadar Hills District Demand Committee (SHDDC) demanding a separate district for the Kukis was called off on October 30th. The second blockade imposed by the United Naga Council against the SHDDC's demand lasted till November 29. The apathy of the state government in speedily resolving the issue and moving essential supplies to remove hardship of the common man in Manipur is a matter of concern. The growing distrust between the Meities and the other communities does not bode well for the future of Manipur.

Notwithstanding the initiation of talks with ULFA and some other militant groups, Assam was the second most disturbed state with 128 incidents of violence. Most violent incidents were perpetrated by the anti-talk faction of the NDFB in the Bodo-dominated areas. Meghalaya, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh also remained partially disturbed due to the activities of insurgent groups as well as because of the ongoing operations by the security forces against NSCN (K), Garo National Liberation Army (GNLA) and Hynniewtrep National Liberation Council (HNLC).

Like in other insurgency affected areas of the country, the government has deployed military and paramilitary forces in the North East as well to maintain peace. To successfully counter the various insurgencies in the region, the government deployed four more companies of Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) in Tirap and Changlang districts of Arunachal Pradesh during the year. It also sanctioned Rs. 138.95 crore to strengthen the state police. Further, Rs. 3.20 crore was released to revamp the North East Police Academy at Shillong. The government also sanctioned Rs. 1.5 crore as grant-in-aid to Nagaland for setting up a counter-insurgency and terrorism school in the state. In addition, the government approved the restructuring of the Assam Rifles including the addition of 1035 new posts at an estimated cost of Rs. 60.67 crore.

## **Jammu & Kashmir**

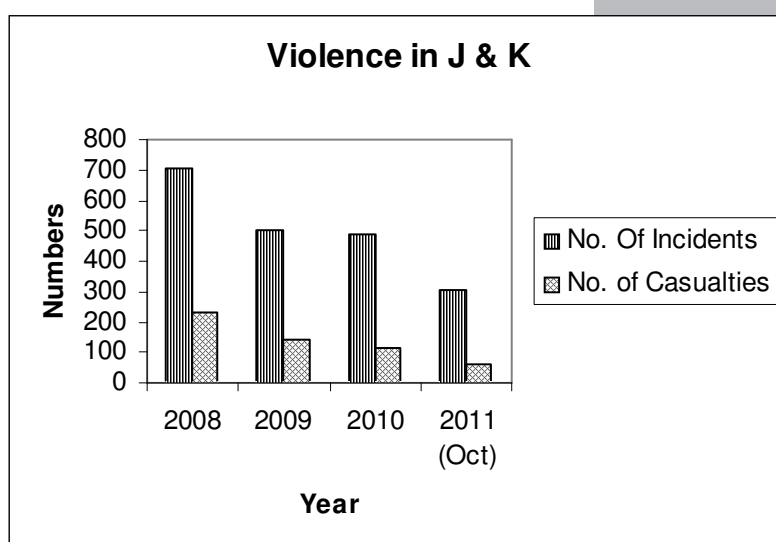
After three summers of unrest, protests in the summer months in 2011 was absent in Jammu & Kashmir. Although a potential trigger for protests arose in the form of the discovery of more than 2000 unmarked graves, the separatists did not attempt to galvanise popular protests on this issue. One reason for this could be the strong appeal made by the business community in the state against any disruption to their livelihood. Another factor

could be the improvement in policing in the state especially in the Valley which has acted as a deterrent for the protestors. The lack of support or the absence of a signal from Pakistan to incite trouble in the Valley could also be a hidden reason behind the separatists' decision not to organise protests.

Whatever may have been the reason or combination of reasons, the fact remains that there were lesser numbers of violent incidents in the state. Till October 2011, there were only 308 violent incidents with 58 deaths (security forces and civilians), compared to 488 incidents and 116 deaths (security forces and civilians) in 2010. Another important event, which demonstrated that the insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir has definitely declined, was the successful conduct of panchayat elections in June, which saw a voter turnout of over 80 per cent. The hope is that since the panchayats are entrusted with greater financial powers they will improve governance at the grassroots level thus further mitigating popular grievances.

### Violence in J & K

Year	No Of Incidents	No of Casualties
2008	708	232
2009	499	142
2010	488	116
2011 (Oct)	308	58



Realising that a political solution and overall economic development are the key to bring peace in the state, the central government constituted several committees and task forces to study the

genuine political and socio-economic aspirations of the people and suggest suitable recommendations. In this regard, three such committees and task forces submitted their reports during the year. The most important was the report submitted by the three interlocutors (Dileep Padgaonkar, Radha Kumar, M.M. Ansari) in October 2011, the findings of which are yet to be made public. Secondly, the reports of the two special task forces appointed to examine the developmental needs of Ladakh and Jammu regions were submitted in January and February 2011. Based on their recommendations, Rs. 100 crore and Rs. 150 crore respectively were announced for various short term projects to be implemented in Ladakh and Jammu. In March 2011, the expert group headed by Dr. C. Rangarajan also submitted its report on the job plan for the state.

In July 2011, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved 'the special industry initiative in Jammu & Kashmir' scheme, which aims to impart training for 40,000 youths of the state over a period of five years at a cost of Rs. 1000 crore. The scheme, however, needs to be closely monitored by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) and

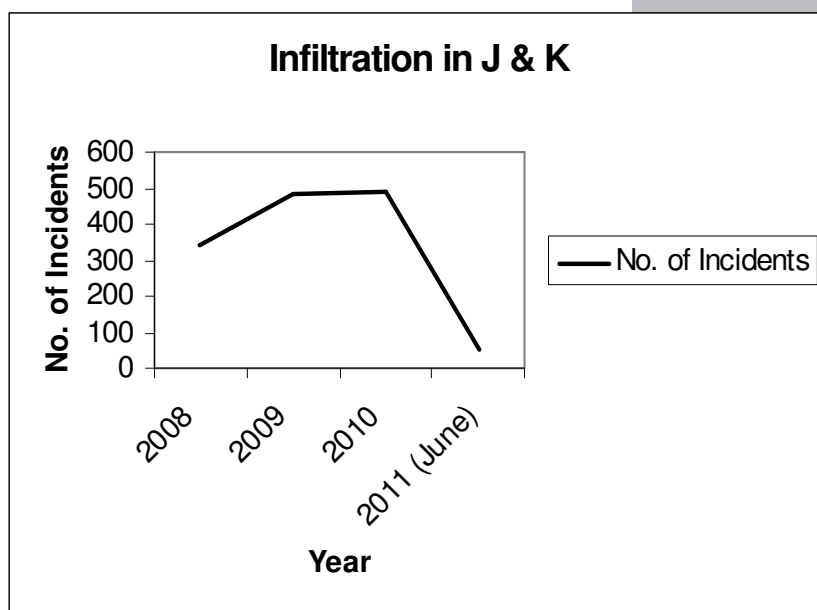
National State Development Corporation (NSDC). In addition, as part of the PM's reconstruction programme, 2112 apartments for Kashmiri migrants in Jammu were inaugurated in March 2011. Further, in a significant move to bolster cross-border trade, in November 2011 the government released Rs. 20 crore for the upgradation of two Trade Facilitation Centres (TFC) - Salamabad in Uri and Chakan-da-Bagh in Poonch - and increased the number of days for cross Line of Control (LoC) trading from two to four every week.

In spite of these positive developments, the political temperature in the state continued to remain high on the issue of the withdrawal of the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA). While the Chief Minister demanded the withdrawal of the Act from some parts of the state citing the prevalence of peace, the Army was adamant that such a step would jeopardise the security situation given the continued infiltration attempts by terrorists from Pakistan. The fact that Jammu & Kashmir continues to be vulnerable to cross-border terrorist infiltration cannot be ignored, even though the number of such attempts during 2011 (till November) was only 70 - the lowest in the last 20 years.

#### Infiltration across Line of Control in J&K

Year	No. of Incidents
2008	342
2009	485
2010	489
2011 (June)	52

As far as cross border infiltration is concerned, the most affected districts were Poonch and Rajouri which together witnessed 42 infiltration attempts during the year (till November), accounting for more than half of the total number of infiltrations. Also, these districts witnessed 30 ceasefire violations by the Pakistan Army as compared to 44 in 2010 along the entire LoC. The use of riverine routes for infiltration by terrorists was noticed during the year; two such infiltration attempts occurred along the Kishanganga River but were foiled by the army.



#### Border Management

The year 2011 has set a precedent as far as border management is concerned. This year India and Bangladesh signed a series of agreements, which will contribute towards an effective management of their common border in future. Most important was the September 2011 Protocol to the Agreement concerning the Demarcation of Land Boundary.



This agreement settled the issue of enclaves, adverse possessions and demarcation of the border, which had strained bilateral relation for decades. Second was the March 2011 Agreement on the use of non-lethal weapons by the Border Security Force (BSF) and third was the July 2011 Coordinated Border management Plan signed between the border guarding forces of both the countries. For the purposes of improving cross border movement of legal passenger and cargo, foundations for two new Integrated Check Posts (ICP) were laid at Akhura in May and Petrapole in August this year. A haat for cross border trade at local level was also opened in Meghalaya in July 2011.

As part of its efforts to prevent illegal migration, infiltration and other cross border illegal activities, 123 kilometres of fences along with 161 kilometres of border roads were constructed along the India-Bangladesh and India-Pakistan borders during the year. In addition, 148 kilometres of old fencing along the India-Bangladesh border was replaced. In order to floodlight the fences, poles were erected for a stretch of 328 kilometres and 213 kilometres of cables were laid.

The government also paid special attention to strengthening the capacities of the border guarding personnel by sanctioning a substantial amount of funds for this purpose. For instance, the Central government approved the raising of a marine company in the BSF at an estimated cost of Rs. 43.95 crore and sanctioned 415 additional posts to strengthen the BSF's Engineering Wing. Further, the government sanctioned Rs. 220.75 crore to upgrade the training capacity of BSF at its various training centres. Similarly, it sanctioned Rs. 3046.48 crore for the Indo-Tibetan Border Police Force (ITBP) to raise 13 additional battalions, establish new training institutes and strengthen its intelligence set-up.

Considerable progress was made during the year to strengthen coastal security. Firstly, the task of delivering 204 interceptor boats to the nine coastal states and union territories was completed. Secondly, land was identified for the construction of 109 out of 131 Coastal Police Stations sanctioned under Phase II of the Coastal Security Scheme by November 2011; in 74 cases the process of land acquisition has also begun. Sanction for the acquisition of new interceptor boats has also been given.

The development of border areas, which remains an important element of border management, also received a fillip during the year. The government allotted Rs. 900 crore under the Border Area Development Plan (BADP) for the financial year 2011-2012, an increase of approximately Rs. 300 crore from previous years.

Meanwhile the building of 23 strategic roads along the India-China border also showed progress in 2011. By November, a total of 437 kilometres of formation works and 145 kilometres of surfacing works were completed.

These efforts have undoubtedly yielded the desired results. To begin with, the construction of fences and enhanced vigil along the borders has reduced the flow of illegal migrants

along the India-Bangladesh border. This is corroborated by the fact that the number of illegal migrants apprehended over the years has steadily declined from 2677 migrants in 2008 to 468 migrants in 2011 (till October). There have also been a number of seizures of arms, drugs and fake Indian currency notes being smuggled into the country from across the borders.

## Prognosis for 2012

Overall, India's internal security situation in 2011 was relatively better than in previous years. The LWE-affected states, Jammu and Kashmir and the North East all experienced declining levels of violence. The hinterland was also relatively free of major terrorist incidents. Will this trend continue in 2012 as well?

As far as terrorism is concerned, the busting of 57 IM modules over the last three years including a pan-Indian module in 2011 and the arrests of a number of IM operatives have robbed the organisation of its ability to conduct major terrorist strikes in the country. However, the fact that Yasin Malik Bhatkal alias Shahrukh, the mastermind behind previous bomb attacks, is still at large does keep alive the prospect of terrorist attacks in the coming year. Potential attacks can also be anticipated from Pakistan supported terrorist organisations such as Babbar Khalsa International (BKI) as well as by Pakistani jihadist terrorist groups like the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) in 2012.

In the case of left wing extremism, the reverses it suffered during 2011 could prove to be at best temporary. Its central command structure remains intact and the Maoists have strong grass roots leadership and dedicated activists. They have also enhanced their striking power by acquiring sophisticated weapons such as AK-47s, SLRs, mortars, etc. and by forging linkages with North East rebels. Further, they have spread their tentacles to urban areas and have opened various front organisations to influence people and fight for their cause. Given all this, 2012 is likely to witness similar levels of violence in LWE-affected states.

The North East, on the other hand, will remain largely peaceful in 2012 given that most of the insurgent groups are holding talks with the government. Some groups such as the NSCN (IM) and the NDFB (progressive) have, however, begun to show signs of restlessness regarding the talks. It is, therefore, possible that the Naga and Bodo dominated areas may witness some violence in 2012. In particular, Manipur, Assam and parts of Arunachal Pradesh are likely to continue to remain disturbed. At the same time, the intensified activities of a resurgent PLA and election-related violence may also enhance the levels of violence in Manipur substantially in 2012.

The situation in Jammu & Kashmir remains sensitive and would require careful handling to avoid likely flashpoints in 2012. The issue of AFSPA, which remains a contentious issue in the state, might trigger some protests in the state. There is unlikely to be any

respite from cross-border infiltration given that Pakistan is believed to have reactivated 42 terrorist training camps in territory under its control and about 2500 terrorists are estimated to be waiting to cross over into Jammu & Kashmir.

As regards border management, the ICP at Attari and Raxual will be operationalised in 2012. The fencing along the India-Bangladesh border will be completed and the flow of illegal migrants and cross border illegal activities will further reduce. Greater attention will be focussed on improving border management along the India-Myanmar border to prevent the free movement of insurgents as well as arms and drug traffickers. Coastal security will be further strengthened with the setting up of additional coastal police stations. However, challenges such as illegal migration, infiltration, smuggling of goods, trafficking of guns and drugs, cross border criminal activities continue to remain.

Overall, 2011 has been a good year for internal security. The steps taken by the government in the last few years to strengthen internal security have started to show positive results. However, the causes of instability have not disappeared, the counter-terrorism mechanism continues to be largely ineffective, the police forces are still highly politicised and incapable of handling terrorists and insurgents, and state governments remain apathetic towards enhancing internal security. Given these gaps, the central government has to direct greater attention towards addressing the real causes of instability, strengthen counter-terrorism mechanisms, implement police reforms and co-opt state governments in its efforts to strengthen internal security. To ensure that 2012 also turns out to be a quiet and secure year, New Delhi not only has to consolidate the gains made in 2011 but also undertake new initiatives.

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