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National Counter-terrorism Centre (NCTC): Issues and Options

1 Apr, 2013 Dr. N Manoharan, Senior Fellow, VIF View3563 Comments 0

Going by the recent claims of Home Minister Sushil Kumar Shinde, NCTC would see the light of the day after next month's Chief Ministers Earlier attempts to set-up an umbrella body on counter-terrorism failed mainly because of opposition from states ruled by non-Conconcern was that the idea of unilateral operations by the NCTC would infringe on the states' powers and hurt the federal structure of the was also another hurdle in the form of reservations about placing NCTC within the Intelligence Bureau (IB). These two issues have now taking out "operations part" of the NCTC and also by not locating the NCTC within the IB.

Way back in 2009, the then Union Home Minister P. Chidambaram had outlined his vision for "the broad architecture of a new security sy the country today and in the foreseeable future." His idea was to institute an umbrella body dedicated to counter terrorism on the lin NCTC with control over intelligence, operations and investigation of all matters pertaining to terrorism. The NCTC's goals, according to include preventing a terrorist attack, containing a terrorist attack should one take place, and responding to a terrorist attack by inflic perpetrators". The aim of NCTC, according to the former Home Minister Chidambaram, was to reduce the failures of busting terror module

Even a die-hard critic would not question the need for NCTC. Response to threats should depend on their nature. Undoubtedly, India affected countries by terrorism and, in the recent period, it has witnessed more terrorist incidents than any other country in the wo varied forms of threats that range from militancy in Jammu & Kashmir, insurgency in the northeast of India, Left Wing Extremism in jihadi terrorism threatening the hinterland. Then there are other threats, over and above the identified main forms, such as illegitrafficking, smuggling of counterfeit currencies, small arms proliferation, organised crime and cyber warfare. All these determine the confronted by India. Yet, the country lacks a single overarching body dedicated to counter terrorism. The time limit for constituting the set as end-2010, but is yet to see the light of the day. Now, the present Home Minister Sushilkumar Shinde has indicated his recontroversial proposals to break the impasse." Any new counter-terrorism body would be a failure unless it is evolved based on conser India.

To avoid duplication, Chidambaram wanted all related agencies involved in counter-terrorism (although they are part of different minis and Analysis Wing (R&AW), Intelligence Bureau (IB), Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC), National Technical Research Organisation (NT Revenue Intelligence (DRI), Aviation Research Centre (ARC), Multi-Agency Centre (MAC), Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA), Investigation (CBI), National Investigation Agency (NIA) to report to the proposed NCTC (under the Ministry of Home Affairs) on terrorism. However, there is an intense resistance to this "submission". There is a pervasive fear that such an arrangement would lead to of powers in the Home Minister and the Ministry of Home Affairs emerging as "super ministry".

Although the above apprehension is farfetched, it is the responsibility of the Center to convey in unambiguous terms NCTC's focus i.e. should be acknowledged that intelligence/investigation/security agencies have a far wider mandate than terrorism. Even on mat methodology of working would be cooperation and coordination and not subordination of one agency to the other. The final objectiv synergy and cohesion in counter-terrorism efforts, by doing away with overlapping, duplications, bottlenecks and unnecessary hurdl objective, it is enough if NCTC functions as an umbrella organisation with representations from intelligence, investigation and security ag in a position to integrate all instruments of national power, including diplomatic, economic, social, political, military, intelligence, and ensure unity of effort. It should happen at central, state and local levels. The tentacles of the NCTC should penetrate deep down upto di of being another top-heavy organisation.

It need not follow any international model – US, UK or European – but that which suits India's capabilities and threats. It has to be innow in its approach rather than defensive and reactive. 'Prevention' and 'protection' should be the main watch words. For this, the Centre monitor terror/militant groups, their support network, sponsors, sanctuaries, mode of operation, threat potential, and leadership and m assessments for policy makers. In this regard, it can effectively use 'Crime and Criminal Tracking Network System (CCNTS), Nation (NATGRID), Central Monitoring System (CMS) and Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI). Personnel for NCTC could be pc intelligence, investigation and security agencies headed by the senior most experienced officer on rotation basis with simple comman way, turf wars could be avoided, with the potential and efficacy of the agencies maximised.

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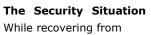


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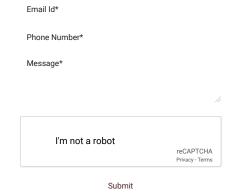
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