



## New signals in the Northeast

16 Jun, 2015 [PM Heblikar](#) [View1153](#) [Comments 0](#)

The decision of the BJP-led NDA government to take military action against the northeast militants, particularly those involved in the recent (04, 2015) on the Indian army in Chandel district of Manipur has brought to the fore several important discussion points.

From a strategic perspective, the government response was swift and executed in a clinical manner, the result was commensurate with that given to the army. It had desired effect. This action is unprecedented in recent times and not witnessed earlier. In military terms, the "joint" involving the both the army and Indian Air Force is a matter of satisfaction confirming high levels of coordination, technology and sophisticated intelligence as a key ingredient of success has been acknowledged. Importantly, such an operation was necessary, especially in Nagaland to make the militants feel the weight of the state and deter them from such misadventures. Time has therefore become appropriate to break insurgent groups in a manner that they will hesitate to repeat or even contemplate such brazen acts. It is also opportune to put the political message across party lines, in this region on notice and suggest that they refrain from giving sustenance to these renegades.

Media reports suggest that the Nationalist Socialist Council of Nagaland (Khaplang faction) is involved in most of the recent attacks, apparently claimed responsibility for the recent attacks. The NSCN (K), had signed the peace accord with the central government, during the government of 1999-2004, enjoyed largesse of the state and consequently grew in strength. It also received patronage from the "influential" community in the state having their own agenda. The NSCN (K) unilaterally walked out of the ceasefire arrangements with the central government of months ago. The authorities should have immediately dealt with the situation instead of allowing it to regroup and create nuisance. If the government deals with this militant group with a heavy hand, the NSCN (K) must be made responsible for consequences of its ill-considered message must be unequivocal to all groups that are active in other parts of this region especially in Manipur.

However, the political management of the insurgency situation in the entire northeast region is a matter of great concern. It may have existed for past several years. This is despite the fact that the central government has invested heavily in creating an elaborate security infrastructure. There is neither any accountability nor audit so far of the government's efforts. The country needs to know reasons for the virtual absence of worthwhile political settlements with agitating ethnic communities since the Mizo Peace Accord of 1986. More importantly, the tax payer is demanding information for lack of progress in the talks with diverse groups such as the NSCN(I/M), ULFA and the NDFB. The talks with ULFA commenced in 1997 and may very soon have the dubious distinction of being the longest talk-fest between the two parties. The ULFA and NDFB to parley with Delhi mainly due to Sheikh Hasina, who had systematically dismantled their bases and arrested their entire leadership in Bangladesh. The political will and inability to convert existing cease-fire agreements has reflected poorly on our strategic outlook. It can be concluded that at the state and Center, have subordinated national interests to serve party fortunes in these troubled states. Further, benefactors of insurgency have ceded space to the very Frankenstein's created by them to wage war against the nation leading to unprecedented situation. A constitutional arrangement has to be dealt with severely. The need to end such nexus cannot be over emphasized. Let a start be made by those giving shelter and support to NSCN(K). Attacks against the military by insurgent groups must be considered as an act of war against the nation. FIR against Khaplang is the first step, even though he is a foreign national. The next step would be for either the NIA or CBI to get a Red Corner Notice against him. Let law take its course.

Myanmar has been caught in the cross-fire. Myanmar's assistance to India in the past has perhaps not been taken into account by our smaller neighbors have stepped up to the plate whenever required. India has however failed to seize such opportunities to its advantage. In such a situation to drift, India has left itself open to external interference in the northeast region. There is no doubt that both China and Pakistan have done here in the past and continue to do so. Our intelligence community has time and again pointed out this aspect.

It is unfortunate that our political class including government ministers, have spoken strongly on the military action and made threats and threats to shelter to anti-national elements. This was unnecessary. It goes against Prime Minister Modi's public statements of making a new beginning with neighbors. The public posturing was uncalled for and counter-productive.

The need for continuous action against the militants in the northeast region cannot be overemphasized. Further, there is also the advantage of political and other elements that provide support and sustenance to the anti-national elements. A blue print is essential to tackle this

More importantly a White paper must be forthcoming from the government on what is really happening in northeast region. This will put parts of the country on notice and send out a message that India is no longer a soft state.

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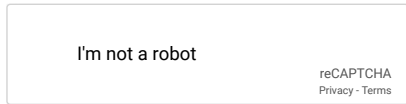
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