
India

Terror and riots fuel secession threats

by Susan Maitra in New Delhi

The kidnapping and murder of an Indian diplomat in Birmingham, England in early February by a group calling itself the "Kashmir Liberation Army" was part of a larger destabilization plot against the Indian nation. In recent weeks a series of violent riots between the Hindus and Sikhs has rocked the states of Punjab and Haryana. These developments, occurring at the border of Pakistan and China, are targeted to combine the secessionist forces all along India's borders.

The KLA terrorists kidnapped Ravindra Mhatre on Feb. 3 and demanded a million-dollar ransom and the releasing of their leader, Maqbool Butt, a Kashmir secessionist agitator having bases both in the Indian and Pakistan part of disputed Kashmir who was being held in an Indian prison, convicted of murdering an Indian government official and participating in an airline hijack attempt in Kashmir in the 1970s.

The Indian government rejected the blackmail demands. On Feb. 9, following Indian President Giani Zail Singh's rejection of a plan for amnesty, an Indian judge ordered Butt's execution.

'Khalistanis' and the KAL

Meanwhile, the Indian government's efforts to resume dialogue with the Sikh-dominated opposition party, Akali Dal, in Punjab received a major setback in early February when fundamentalist Hindu fanatics, in order to abort the negotiation and keep Punjab in turmoil, started sporadic riots attacking the Sikhs. Akali Dal, which is locked in a three-year-old dispute with New Delhi over its claims for more water from the riparian system and larger state territory, is still under control of moderates, although the Sikh secessionists, known as "Khalistanis," have been steadily gaining ground with the help of fanatics based in London and Canada and by the Nazi International financiers.

Sources in the West report that KLA supporters had toured the United States and Britain attempting to secure backing to pressure the Indian government to release Maqbool Butt. These sources confirm that the KLA has made common cause with the so-called Khalistan secessionists in the state of Punjab, who seek the "liberation" of the Sikh population from the Indian nation.

"Khalistan" is headquartered in London around its leader Jagjit Singh Chauhan, who maintains financial links with the

infamous Swiss Nazi financier François Genoud and Islamic fundamentalists such as Qaddafi and Ben Bella. Chauhan acts as the titular head of an operation to foster the break-up of India by destabilizing Punjab, the nation's grain-producing heartland. He also maintains ties with other exiled secessionist leaders in the country's other strategic border area, the Northeast. Recently, pro-Khalistan leaflets were distributed by the Naga secessionists in northeastern India. The Nagas, one of many secessionist groups in northeast India whose leader, Phizo, meets Chauhan frequently in London, are armed by the Maoists based in the Himalayan hideouts.

Last summer, reports of Pakistani flags hoisted in some parts of the Kashmir Valley to celebrate Pakistan's independence day signaled an unprecedented level of defiance. The Kashmir government, under the administration of Chief Minister Farooq Abdulla, has also brutally repressed members of Indira Gandhi's Congress Party, who are opposing the secessionists.

In a recent interview with the London *Financial Times*, Congress Party General Secretary Rajiv Gandhi mooted the ouster of Farooq and imposition of "president's rule" in the troubled state.

The Central Government has been imploring Farooq to crack down, to no avail. Reports of armed training camps for Sikh extremists inside Jammu and Kashmir, near the Punjab border, have confirmed New Delhi's concerns.

The Hindu extremists

While the Kashmir secessionists are collaborating with the Nazi-financed Khalistanis in London, it is becoming clear that the enemies of India's integrity are also playing up the so-called "Hindu cause" to agitate the Hindu fanatics. In the Feb. 11 issue of *The Tablet*, an international Roman Catholic weekly published from London, the resurgence of the Hindu religious fervor was played up to the hilt. Repeatedly saying that "no fair-minded Indian could have had any quarrel with the aims" of the Hindu fanatics, it gave full publicity to Swami Chinmayananda, leader of a Hindu fanatic front group. Swami, in an interview with the *Unstutro Weekly* of India, when told that in the name of religion people are killing each other in India, replied: "Nature maintains a certain balance, as the Malthusian theory says. When the population rises beyond a certain point, nature brings down the level."

The board of trustees of *The Tablet* is "advised" by such close friends of incoming NATO Secretary-General Lord Peter Carrington, Henry Kissinger's business partner, as the Duke of Norfolk and Lord Hunt. Also included on the board is Henry Keswick, head of the drug-linked Jardine Matheson Ltd. of Hong Kong.

These provocations are also exacerbating India's tense and difficult relations with Pakistan and China. Since the secessionists are primarily active in these border areas, they have provided an opportunity for any third party bent on provoking war on the India-Pakistan subcontinent.