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Sangeeta Mahapatra

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Education

Ph.D. Student, International Relations, Jadavpur University, Kolkata, India
M.A., International Relations with a specialization in West and Central Asia, Jadavpur University, Kolkata, India
B.A., Political Science (Honours), St. Xavier's College, Kolkata, India

Mershon Project

As a Fulbright-Nehru Doctoral and Professional Research Fellow, Mahapatra is currently working on a comparative study of "Counterterrorism Strategies of India, Israel and the United States."

The core of counterterrorism is capability. While states may set for themselves certain goals, how far they are able to deliver on them determines the strengths and weaknesses of their counterterrorism strategy. The research objectives of this study are:

- To analyze the threat perceptions of the three focus countries and evaluate the extent to which these modulate their response to terrorism.
- To trace the evolution of the major terrorists groups targeting these countries and find out why and how they spread, morph or disband.
- To assess the cost of terrorism, including collateral damage, to the target country.
- To understand the ways in which to leverage the media, civil society and community/religious leaders to undermine the appeal of terrorism as an ideology of change and goal realization.
- To conduct a feasibility study that links resources and capabilities with intentions that will help in chalking out a counterterrorism policy.

The starting hypothesis is that while terrorism is a universal phenomenon, counterterrorism strategies have domestic applicability. These need to be contextualized as countries that share certain similarities still differ in their understanding of and reaction to terrorism. This explains to an extent the continuing disagreement on the definition of terrorism and the preference of states to tackle terrorism in their own way rather than



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subscribe to an internationally sanctioned guideline on countermeasures.

The aim of the study is to expand the scope of counterterrorism decision-making by studying how the three countries use their political, legal, civilian and economic structures to deal with an outlier event. The question is not about expending a lot of resources on a "high risk-low probability" threat but about responding to it in timely, cost-efficient and effective manner.

Publications

"Economic Globalization: Understanding the Process beyond the Politics," in *Globalization in India: New Frontiers, Emerging Challenges*, ed. by Swapan Kumar Pramanick and Ramanuj Ganguly (Prentice Hall of India, 2009)

"Human Rights in Pakistan: A Heuristic of Hope and Despair," in *Human Rights in South Asia*, ed. by Joseph Benjamin (Nagpur University, 2009)

Secularism, Communalism and Politics (School of International Relations and Strategic Studies, Jadavpur University, Kolkata, forthcoming)

Pacification of the Irreconcilable: The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict (Kolkata, 2005)

Miasma: A Collection of Short Stories (Chowringhee Prakashini Press, Kolkata, 1999)

"Capitalism: In a Fix or a Flux" (*Jadavpur Journal of International Relations, 2009-2010*)

"All the King's Men: The Thai Coup" (*Jadavpur Journal of International Relations, 2005-2006*)

Work Experience

Executive Editor, *Business Economics*, a national magazine (2008-present)

Executive Editor, *The International Gazette*, published every two months from Kolkata, India (2007-09)

Founder, Chiron Research and Action Group (ChiRAG), an independent and registered academic and policy research organization, West Bengal, India (2005-present)

Honors and Awards

Fulbright-Nehru Doctoral and Professional Research Fellowship (2009-10)

Research grant, West Bengal State Human Rights Commission for Research on delivery mechanisms ensuring human rights in the state (2007-08)

Corporate Sponsorship and winning approval from SIRSS, Jadavpur University for conducting independent research on the Hindu-Muslim Relations: The Communal Scenario in Interface Areas of Kolkata (2005-2007)

Group Representative, Politics/Security Group, South Asia-Japan Youth Conference, organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan (2004)

President, Indo-Japan Student's Conference, India (2004)

Best Speaker, Youth Parliament, organized by Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, India (1999)

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