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'Ground Hog Da Din' for the Sikh insurgency?

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ABSTRACT

Between 1978 and 1992, Sikh militants rampaged across the northern Indian state of the Punjab demanding that a homeland for Sikhs, called Khalistan, be carved from that state. The so-called Khalistanis, with Pakistan's extensive support, waged a brutal campaign of violence that killed tens of thousands. While Indian security forces eviscerated the various Khalistani groups by 1992, support for the movement remained strong in pockets of the global Sikh diaspora. Pakistan's intelligence agency, the ISI, also worked to keep the movement alive wherever possible. Pakistan's efforts have paid off: in recent years, the Khalistan movement has rehabilitated itself even within India. We constructed a novel dataset of Khalistani terror incidents perpetrated in the last decade. These data demonstrate the revivification of Khalistani terrorism, with perduring support from the ISI, which has engineered connections among Khalistani activists, militants operating in Kashmir, and narcotics traffickers. We argue that the renaissance of Khalistan is part of Pakistan's strategy to wage proxy warfare under its nuclear umbrella as a substitution strategy for its use of Islamist proxies, such as *Lashkar-e-Tayyaba* and *Jaish-e-Mohammad*, which has become more constrained by international pressure.

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The return of Khalistan?

On 9 November 2019, the Kartarpur Corridor became operational; a few days before the 550th birthday of the first Sikh Guru, Guru Nanak, on 12 November of the same year. Sikh pilgrims who possess a special permit can now traverse this 9 km (5.6 miles) stretch between Dera Baba Sahib, one of Sikhism's most sacred sites situated on the banks of the Ravi River in India, and Gurudwara Shri Kartarpur Sahib, located in Shakargarh in Pakistan's Punjab province. Sikhs hold this gurdwara in high esteem as it is built on the site where Guru Nanak founded the first Sikh community. While many of India's Sikhs are ecstatic that they can now access this holy site in Pakistan easily, scholars and analysts of India's internal security

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situation are concerned that the Kartarpur Corridor may become a 'Khalistani Corridor'. Their fears are not unfounded.

While the Khalistan insurgency largely ended in 1992 after the deeply flawed Punjab Assembly elections that year, over the past decade, the political legitimacy of the violent movement and its most prominent terrorist leader, Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, has been recuperated within India itself. Enthusiasm for the belligerent icon and the brutal militancy he led has sustained enthusiasm in many Sikh diaspora sub-communities in the United Kingdom, United States, Canada, and other settlements of Jat Sikhs. Bhindranwale t-shirts, posters, and other paraphernalia are purveyed in markets around India's various gurdwaras – including the Sikh's holiest of holies, the Golden Temple – and Bhindranwale's photo is included among many of Sikh's historical martyrs within many Gurdwaras.¹ (See [Figure 1](#).) Without a proper census, it is



Figure 1. Author Photographs of Bhindranwale Paraphernalia in and Around the Golden Temple in Amritsar (August 2019).

impossible to estimate the share of Gurdwaras in India and beyond that include his photo among those of traditional martyrs. More worrisome yet is that in recent years there have been several dozen Khalistani attacks within India itself and many more that were disrupted by security forces.

A second reason for alarm is the public nature of Pakistani political officials' declaration that the Kartarpur Corridor was 'the brainchild of [the Pakistani] Army Chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa.' Sheikh Rashid, a long-time politician who has held multiple federal ministerial positions since 1991 and who currently holds the coveted portfolio of Federal Minister for Railways, quipped that 'India will remember forever the kind of wound inflicted on it by Gen. Bajwa by opening the Kartarpur Corridor ... Gen. Bajwa strongly hit India by opening the corridor'.² As is well known, the Pakistan army does not undertake palliative measures in its relationship with India unless doing so advances its strategic interests.³

A third reason for skepticism about the ultimate utility of the corridor is the sustained support the Khalistan movement has enjoyed particularly among Jat Sikhs in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom among other places as noted – even if support for the movement virtually disappeared in India until the recent decade. Equally discomfiting, the Interservice Intelligence Directorate (ISI, Pakistan's premier intelligence agency) has worked to mobilize the Khalistani diaspora, often in conjunction with purportedly Kashmiri groups protesting India's various actions in Kashmir and elsewhere in India.⁴

Fourth, the Indian state of Punjab has been deeply affected by drug addiction and drug trafficking. The All India Institute of Medical Sciences published a report in 2015 asserting that more than 200,000 persons out of 28 million in the Punjab are addicted. While many in the state accuse Pakistan of waging a new proxy war by flooding the state with drugs, the state's local security agencies are also involved.⁵

Finally, there is ample and growing evidence of active collusion between the Islamist terror group *Lashkar-e-Tayyaba* (LeT) and key Khalistani activists, who were also integral members of the Kartarpur Corridor process.⁶ The reasons for this are practical: Pakistan has been increasingly constrained in its use of LeT and other proscribed Islamist militant groups because of the sustained international attention on Pakistan's recalcitrant commitment to these groups under the aegis of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF). The FATF is an obscure international watchdog of countries suspected of taking inadequate action to crack down on terrorist groups operating in their countries. Should Pakistan receive a 'blacklisting' by the organization, it would be ineligible for International Monetary Fund lending.⁷ This also likely means that Pakistan will continue to sustain a 'grey' listing by FATF because it has deftly cultivated a perception that it is too dangerous to economically fail. Nonetheless, this does put pressure on Pakistan to maintain the illusion that it is working to constrain these

groups. This puts a premium upon Pakistan's less-well-known non-Islamist proxy assets, such as the Khalistanis it has worked to cultivate over many decades.

In this empirical paper, we advance two aims. First, we document the growing re-emergence of the Khalistan movement within India itself. To do so, we first collected and then analyzed a novel data set of Khalistani activism within India over the last decade – long after the militancy ended in 1993. Second, we provide evidence for the twinning of Khalistani and Kashmir-based militancy, mediated by Pakistan's premier intelligence agency, the Inter-services Intelligence Directorate (ISI).

We organize the remainder of this paper as follows. Next, we provide a very brief history of the Khalistan movement and its ultimate demise. Second, we describe the methods by which we assembled our Khalistani incident database. Third, we present our analyses of these events. Fourth, we mobilize and assess the growing evidence of Pakistan's security calculus in the region. We submit that Pakistan's ability to rely upon Islamist proxies to advance its security competition with India is constrained by Pakistan's economic malaise and the explicit linkage between Pakistan's compliance with the expectations of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF). We contend that in the short term, Pakistan, *per force*, will undertake efforts to increase international confidence in its capability and willingness to crackdown on groups like *Lashkar-e-Tayyaba*. While these efforts will likely resemble past efforts in their theatrical affect with little effect on the groups' ability to operate, it does mean that non-Islamist groups become more important. We conclude that the circumstances in which Pakistan finds itself suggest that the Khalistani groups offer an important alternative or even complimentary strategy in the near-term. Indeed, as we note here, there is on ground evidence for increasing collaboration between Khalistani and Islamist activists, most likely mediated by the Pakistani state itself. We conclude with a discussion of areas for concern in the short and medium time horizons.

A brief history of the Khalistan movement

Between 1978 and 1993, India's northern state of Punjab was riled by violence perpetrated by various groups who ostensibly espoused aspirations to form a Sikh state called Khalistan or Sikhistan out of the Punjab, variously redrawn.⁸ (See [Figure 2](#)) Scholars of the movement generally take 1978 as the starting point of the insurgency. In that year, Sikh extremists assaulted an annual gathering of Nirankaris (a sect they believed to be heretical and even apostates) in Amritsar, the most important city for Sikhs.⁹ Many analysts put the end of the insurgency in 1992, following the restoration of normal electoral cycles, the near cessation of violence and the absence of new militant recruitment.¹⁰ While few analysts outside of India are aware of this



Figure 2. The Punjab, India and Asia. Source: Maps of India and Asia, Courtesy of the University of Texas Libraries, The University of Texas at Austin. Map of the Punjab is a free-use map available at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Punjab_map.svg.

insurgency, it claimed many lives – far more than the total fatalities of all Indo-Pakistan wars. Estimates of the insurgency’s casualties vary considerably: according to official figures, some 21,000 people died between 1980 and 1993¹¹ but according to unofficial estimates, as many as 40,000 people perished.¹²

In the early years of the militants’ campaign, most observers agree that the militants retained a coherent ideological and political platform, largely centering around, at a minimum, greater Sikh autonomy and, in extreme, independence. One of the most important leaders was Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, who eventually led the call for Khalistan. He was killed in June 1984 when Prime Minister Indira Gandhi ordered the Indian army to storm the Golden Temple in what was called ‘Operation Blue Star.’¹³ Despite warnings from her intelligence team after the operation, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi refused to dismiss the Sikh members of her security detail. While the decision may have been well intended, it proved imprudent. In October 1984, two of her Sikh bodyguards (Satwant Singh and Beant Singh) shot her to death. Members of the Congress party and party workers, to punish the Sikh community, organized anti-Sikh riots that killed more than 3,000 Sikhs on 1 November 1984. Despite the findings of the Nanavati Commission that was completed decades later in 2005, the Congress Party failed to prosecute any of its perpetrating members, leaving a nagging call for justice.¹⁴ The Nanavati Commission described the events of that day as ‘organized carnage’ during

which none of the attackers indicated any fear of the police, suggesting that the police themselves were involved in the atrocity.¹⁵

After Bhindranwale's death, no single leader emerged while Sikh militant groups mushroomed under highly personalized and fractious leaderships. The Sikh militants, along with their political allies and supporters, generally argued that only Sikh governance could protect Sikh religious, social, and cultural interests from a predatory Hindu-dominated state. Sikh popular perception of a Hindu-dominated India was aggravated by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's efforts to concentrate power in the center, which culminated in the declaration of a state of emergency between 1975 and 1977 and by her son, Rajiv, who was elected Prime Minister following his mother's death. Rajiv Gandhi's subsequent refusal to punish anyone for the pogroms against Sikhs, which Congress officials organized to punish Sikhs for his mother's assassination.¹⁶ Rajiv Gandhi's insouciance about the atrocity was epitomized by his statement about his mother's murder: 'When a big tree falls, the earth shakes'.¹⁷

By 1988, the remnants of ideological commitment within the various militant groups dissipated and their ranks became increasingly swollen with criminal elements and militants seeking to establish their own spheres of influence as violence entrepreneurs. In this latter phase of the militancy, groups engaged in theft, kidnapping for ransom, bank robberies, and targeted and random killings. Equally problematic for the ostensible 'Khalistan movement' in this period was the pervasive internecine fighting that emerged as militant groups splintered, formed alliances, and developed deeply hostile rivalries. Consequently, while the various militant groups claimed to be fighting the Indian state on behalf of Indian Sikhs, Sikh villagers often were the victims of these proliferating gangs. Because of the changing nature of this violence and the groups perpetrating it, the period of violence from 1978 to 1993 has been characterized differently, with some analysts considering it to be a terrorist campaign devoid of meaningful political or ideological content while others consider it to be a period of insurgency.

While Pakistan's varied support of Islamist militant groups in India since 1947,¹⁸ reliance on Islamist militants in Afghanistan since 1974,¹⁹ and instrumentalization of an array of Islamist militance in East Pakistan before and during 1971 to brutalize ethnic Bengalis in East Pakistan²⁰ are well known, Pakistan's extensive history of supporting non-Islamist militants is less appreciated in scholarly discourse. Notably, Pakistan has also supported other kinds of militant movements in India. In the mid-1950s, Pakistan (as well as China) supported India's Naga rebels in the northeast and, in the 1960s, it supported the Mizo rebels, also in India's northeast.²¹

From the mid-1970s through the early-1990s, Pakistan also supported the Sikh insurgency in India's northern state of Punjab. This support included exfiltrating Indian Sikhs into Pakistan for training and infiltrating

them back into India for operations; provision of weapons; military advice; as well as funding. Pakistan's third military dictator, General Zia ul Haq, opened the historical Sikh Gurdwaras in Pakistan after the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan. Many Afghan Sikhs took refuge in those Gurdwaras and Indian pilgrims visited them during important events such as Guru Nanak's Gurburab (birth celebration), among others. These Gurdwaras were opportunities to spread Khalistani propaganda. Pakistani national radio also hosted a Punjabi-language drama to encourage Sikhs in India's Punjab to support the Khalistani cause. The persons involved in the production of those dramas also learned Gurmukhi, the script used to write the Punjabi language primarily in India, to facilitate exchanges by posted letters with Sikhs in India. (The author visited these studios near Lahore. Lahore Punjabi is quite similar to the Punjabi spoken in India and learning the Gurmukhi script was not difficult for these employees.)²²

A detailed discussion of the modalities of the movement's demise is beyond the remit of this paper in large part because it remains heavily disputed by officials and scholars alike.²³ What is important to note for this analysis is that, by 1993, when the violence had largely subsided, none of the political demands articulated by militants and moderates were ever met. Moreover, while the movement largely dissipated within India by 1993, the Khalistan demand persisted among numerous Sikh communities outside of India.²⁴ Further, there has yet to be any justice for the atrocities endured by the Sikh community and perpetrated by the Indian state.²⁵ These various facts sustained the question of whether or not the movement – or some reincarnation of it – would resurface in the future and what – if any – role Pakistan would play in its resurgence.

The Khalistan database: methodological overview

To understand current trends regarding Khalistani attacks, we created a database of incidents of Khalistani violence that occurred between 1 January 2009 and 25 January 2019 in Excel. We began with data from the Global Terrorism Database (GTD). The GTD, managed by the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), has documented over 190,000 terrorist attacks from 1970 through December 2018. GTD data collection is ongoing and incorporates both artificial and human intelligence, beginning with a computerized scan of over two million articles daily. Then, START researchers identify and document new attacks, as well as update old ones. Each GTD entry provides a summary of the attack as well as when and where it occurred; who claimed it; and additional information on casualties, the target, and the weapon(s) employed.²⁶ From the total START sample, we filtered out events in India that were attributed to a Khalistani group between 1 January 2009 and

25 January 2019, which is the cutoff timeline for this analysis. This effort yielded 14 unique incidents between 1 January 2009 and 25 January 2019. For each incident, we documented its status (either occurred or pre-empted); perpetrator; date of occurrence; location (town, state, and district); intended target (civilian, civilian government, state police, or federal security forces); and casualty toll. If we discovered that a group was merely suspected of having ties to Khalistani militant groups, we noted this in a separate column.

Despite START's efforts to be as comprehensive as possible, previous work has shown that START dramatically undercounts events.²⁷ For this reason, we augmented this core sample with the Khalistani datasheets from the South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP), maintained by the New Delhi-based Institute of Conflict Management.²⁸ Most SATP entries for Khalistani attacks cited English-language Indian newspapers like the *Times of India* as their source. We compared each incident in the SATP data with the GTD to ensure that we did not include duplicates. This exercise yielded an additional 12 unique events.

Third, in an effort to find events that SATP or START omitted, we employed NexisUni to find other unique violent events attributed to Khalistanis. NexisUni indexes two important English-language daily newspapers in India: *The Times of India* (TOI) and *Hindustan Times*. To obtain articles on NexisUni, we queried 'Khalista*' and then specified several search parameters, including the Timeline (1/1/2009-25/01/2019) and Location by Publication (selecting 'International', then 'Asia' and finally 'India, Republic of'). We then went to the Sources tab and selected 'Hindustan Times.' After sifting through 2,081 results to find attack-related articles, we then repeated the process with 'The Times of India (TOI)' selected as our Source, which yielded another 1,135 articles. Because it is possible not all articles were about Khalistani violence, we perused each article carefully. We then extracted data elements for those events that were unique. This exercise yielded 43 events, 30 of which were not included in either the GTD or SATP. (We saved a PDF of all non-duplicative articles retrieved for references.)

Finally, we sought to find a Punjab-based daily which is archived for the time period of our sample and online. We found one English daily published in the Punjab that had online archives, *The Tribune*.²⁹ We queried 'Khalistan', selecting 'Punjab' as the Section and modifying the end date to 25/01/2019. Unfortunately, the *Tribune* search feature only displays entries from December 2014 onwards. This exercise yielded four incidents, only one of which was not in the other sources. (We saved a PDF of each article for reference.)

Taken together, from all sources, we found 21 attacks and 36 pre-empted attacks from 1 January 2009 to 25 January 2019.

There are several limitations of these data. First, all sources are in English. It is possible that a Punjabi-language newspaper would contain other events.

Unfortunately, we could not find a Punjabi paper that is electronically archived during this period. We recognize that this may be an important lacuna. We would have prioritized this more aggressively had the Punjab-based *The Tribune* yielded more observations than it did. Nonetheless, we suspect that this database will be an undercount of all incidents because we can only observe those which the various media employed covered. We were surprised that *The Tribune* recorded so few events.

Second, at the same time, the various sources contained some speculative and unconfirmed information about the incident and the perpetrators. For this reason, while constructing the database, we indicated whether the account merely suspected a Khalistani connection or whether this connection was confirmed.

Third, Indian newspapers (and indeed most newspapers anywhere) rarely follow through with information after the accused have been tried in a court of law. It is possible that the accused were released. In India, it often takes years and sometimes decades for a case to be adjudicated.

This provides an incentive for the police to dispatch the individual in 'encounters', which have become code for extra-judicial killings by police in India. Equally problematic is that an acquittal need not indicate innocence. India's legal system is riven with problems of evidence collection, analysis and storage, and India's police and courts are ill-equipped to incorporate forensic and other evidence. Belur, writing of the Punjab situation, so describes a different kind of 'encounter killing' during which a suspect is detained and tortured for days before being murdered in police custody. Verma notes that the moniker 'encounter' is not simply police jargon; rather, it is a 'part of everyday discourse in India where it is used by police officers, the media, and the public to refer to the use of deadly force by the police'³⁰ which, as Verma has observed, has even been described by some police officers as 'proactive policing'.³¹

On the other hand, just because a person has been arrested does not mean that person is guilty. Police are under considerable pressure to arrest someone after an attack. These factors taken together may mean that we included persons in this dataset who were innocent. Finally, just because a Khalistani connection is asserted, we cannot know for certain. While it would be ideal to have court case data, these data do not exist in the public domain and, as noted, it is possible that, for many of our observations, the accused have not gone to trial.

Despite these limitations, we believe that we have a reasonable estimate of planned but pre-empted, as well as actually executed, attacks. In total, we have recorded 57 incidents, 36 of which were pre-empted. Five of the 21 actualized attacks and four of the 36 pre-empted attacks were merely 'suspected' to have been carried out in association with the Khalistani movement.

What the data say

In [Figure 3](#), we provide a frequency count of incidents by each group in our database. As [Figure 3](#) shows, most attacks are attributed to the Khalistan Liberation Force/Front. In [Figures 4](#) and [5](#), we present time-wise plots of incidents. Whereas [Figure 4](#) includes all incidents ($N = 57$), [Figure 5](#) excludes those ($N = 48$) that are merely suspected of having ties to Khalistani groups. As [Figures 4](#) and [5](#) demonstrate, while there were numerous pre-empted attacks throughout the decade, 2010 was notable for having the largest number of pre-empted attacks and no actualized attacks. However, after 2014, actualized events increased.

We also created heat plots of attacks per district ([Figure 6](#)). In [Figure 6](#), we depict 20 of the 21 actualized Khalistani attacks. (We excluded one of these because it was perpetrated in the United Kingdom.) Of these 21 attacks, 11 were perpetrated by the Khalistan Liberation Force/Front, 5 by Babbar Khalsa International, and 1 by the Bhindranwale Tiger Force. In one incident, multiple groups were involved. And in three incidents, we were unable to tie the perpetrators to a specific Khalistani terror group. In [Figure 6](#), we present an adjacent heat map of 34 of the 36 pre-empted Khalistani attacks, two of which were excluded because they were disrupted in the United States and Germany, respectively. Of these 36 pre-empted terror attacks, 9 were orchestrated by Babbar Khalsa International, 7 by the Khalistan Liberation Force/Front, 5 by Khalistan Zindabad Force, 5 by multiple groups, 3 by unknown or unaffiliated Khalistani sympathizers, 3 by Khalistan Commando Force, 1 by the International Sikh Youth Federation, 1 by Pakistan's Inter-Services

Perpetrator	Attacks Pre-empted	Attacks Perpetrated	Total Number of Incidents
Babbar Khalsa International	9	5	14
Bhindranwale Tiger Force of Khalistan	1	1	2
International Sikh Youth Federation	1	0	1
Inter-Services Intelligence (Pakistan)	1	0	1
Khalistan Commando Force	3	0	3
Khalistan Gadar Force	1	0	1
Khalistan Liberation Force/Front	7	11	18
Khalistan Zindabad Force	5	0	5
Multiple groups identified	5	1	6
Unidentified/unknown	3	3	6
Total	36	21	57

Figure 3. Tabulation of Incidents by Suspected Perpetrator Groups.

Source: In-house tabulations of our dataset.

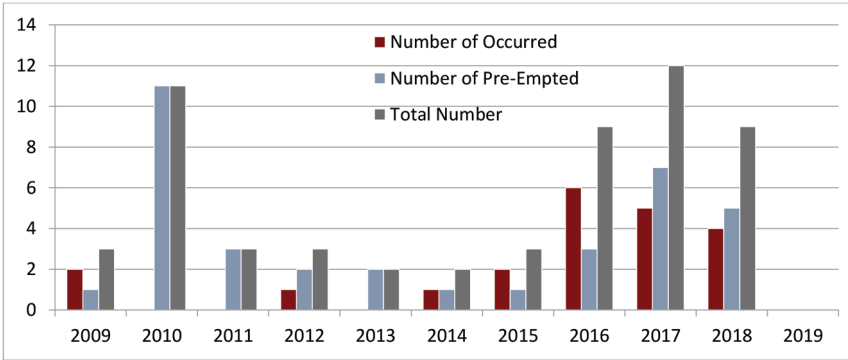


Figure 4. Incidents Per Year Between 1 January 2009 and 25 January 2019 (Suspected and Confirmed).

Source: In-house tabulations of our dataset.

Intelligence, 1 by Khalistan Gadar Force, and 1 by the Bhindranwale Tiger Force of Khalistan.

Pakistan's predicament and the emergence of Khalistani-Lashkar-e-Tayyaba ties

As is well known, Pakistan has faced a fundamental challenge in securing its foreign policy: it remains committed to changing maps in South Asia, principally by wresting that portion of Kashmir controlled by India. However, it has an army that starts – but fails to win – wars with India, and it has nuclear weapons it cannot use because any Indian retaliation would be devastating

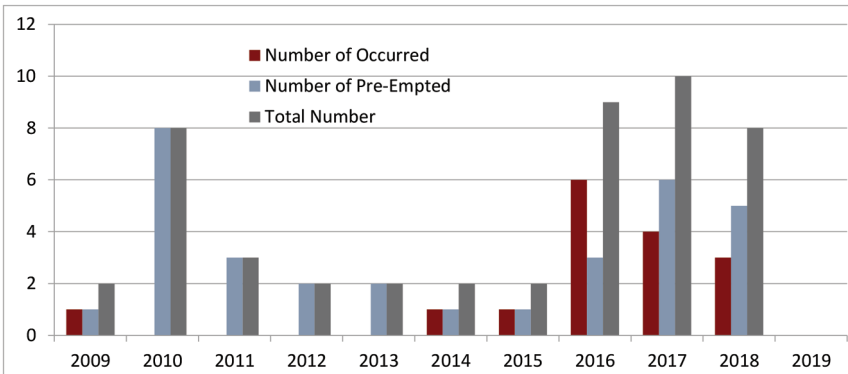


Figure 5. Confirmed Incidents Per Year 1 January 2009 and 25 January 2019 (Excluding Suspected).

Source: In-house tabulations of our dataset.

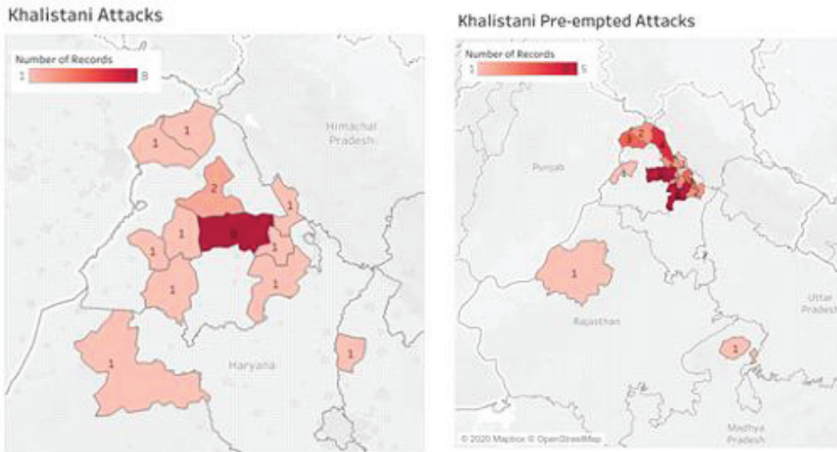


Figure 6. Khalistani Attacks and Pre-empted Attacks. Source: In-house tabulations of our dataset. Notes: [Figure 4](#) (left-most graphic) details 20 of the 21 actualized Khalistani attacks: one was excluded as an outlier because it was perpetrated in the United Kingdom. Of these 21 attacks, 11 were perpetrated by the Khalistan Liberation Force/Front, 5 by Babbar Khalsa International and 1 by the Bhindranwale Tiger Force. One incident identified multiple groups involved and three we were unable to tie to a specific Khalistani terror group. [Figure 4](#) (right-most graphic) details 34 of the 36 pre-empted Khalistani attacks. Two were excluded because they were apprehended in the US and Germany, respectively. Of these 36 pre-empted terror attacks, 9 were orchestrated by Babbar Khalsa International, 7 by the Khalistan Liberation Force/Front, 5 by Khalistan Zindabad Force, 5 by multiple groups, 3 by unknown or unaffiliated Khalistani sympathizers, 3 by Khalistan Commando Force, 1 by the International Sikh Youth Federation, 1 by Pakistan’s Inter-Services Intelligence, 1 by Khalistan Gadar Force, and 1 by the Bhindranwale Tiger Force of Khalistan.

to Pakistan, owing to the concentration of targets in the Punjab, lack of strategic depth, and vulnerability of north-south ground lines of communication. As numerous scholars have described at length, since acquiring an incipient nuclear capability, Pakistan has used Islamist militants to conduct attacks first in Kashmir and later, after India and Pakistan conducted reciprocal tests in May 1998, throughout India.³² While Pakistan’s use of Islamist militants under the safety of its nuclear umbrella is relatively well known, analysts have tended to neglect Pakistan’s use of non-Islamist proxies. For example, in the mid-1950 s, Pakistan supported India’s Naga rebels in north-east India through its own infrastructure in East Pakistan (which became independent Bangladesh following the 1971 India-Pakistan War).³³ In the 1960 s, Pakistan supported the Mizo rebels, also in India’s northeast.³⁴ Support to insurgents became more difficult after the loss of East Pakistan in 1971. Beginning in the late 1970 s and through the early 1990 s, Pakistan supported the Sikh insurgency as well.³⁵

By the mid-1980s, Pakistan's creeping nuclear umbrella emboldened it to pursue revisionist agendas. In the late 1980s, Kashmiris in Indian-administered Kashmir began to rebel against New Delhi for a range of excesses, including appalling electoral manipulation and its malfeasance in managing Kashmiri political expectations. While the rebellion began indigenously, Pakistan quickly exploited these developments. Pakistan redeployed battle-hardened militants from the waning Afghan war to Kashmir. By 1990, Pakistan and India were already behaving as if the other had an existential nuclear deterrent. Within a few years, Pakistan transformed a conflict that began as an indigenous uprising in the late 1980s into a sustained campaign of violence that persists today, albeit with fluctuating intensity and sanguinity.³⁶

Since the events of 9/11 and Pakistan's centrality to the US-led military operations in Afghanistan, Pakistan has come under waves of scrutiny, varying in intensity, for its unrelenting support of a menagerie of Islamist militant groups, including the Afghan Taliban, the Haqqani Network, the *Jaish-e-Mohammad* (and its various pseudonyms), and the *Lashkar-e-Tayyaba* (and its various pseudonyms), among others. The United States has variously crafted legislation holding specific kinds of aid hostage to verifiable proof that Pakistan has reversed course, most of which was waived under national security waivers, rendering the legislation toothless. At various points in time, the United States refused to reimburse Pakistan under the Coalition Support Fund because of its various acts of malfeasance. And upon taking office, President Donald Trump cut off all security assistance to Pakistan.³⁷ As noted above, adding to this scrutiny over its support for Islamist militancy is the work of the FATF. Pakistan considers retaining its 'grey list' as a form of policy success for several reasons. First, because of the linkage of the 'black list' to loss of IMF funding, Pakistan has considerable evidence that its efforts to cultivate the view that it is too dangerous to fail have succeeded. After all, no one wants to see Pakistan financially collapse because of the conjoined threats posed by it being the fastest growing nuclear arsenal in the world and home to some of the most menacing Islamist terrorists.³⁸ Second and related to the first, this fact is further evidence that Pakistan's efforts to use its nuclear arsenal to coerce the international community to remain engaged financially is working. Third, the grey list also allows it to buy time while continuing to support its various Islamist proxies.

As Husain Haqqani has remarked of this situation, 'Pakistan, which has gone on the grey list at least thrice just in the last decade, seems to be striving to do just enough to avoid the black list. When a recent FATF meeting extended Pakistan's grey listing until June 2020, Pakistan's foreign minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi celebrated the decision, saying that India had failed to push Pakistan into FATF's black list'.³⁹ However, this recent scrutiny does raise the cost of Pakistan using militant assets in India for the time being. This means that Pakistan's other, less well-known proxies may well be ascendant.

One subset of these groups consists of the Khalistani organizations that Pakistan has nurtured over various decades outside of India as well as in India.

This intensified scrutiny also comes at a time when Pakistani vexation with India is arguably at an all-time high. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has shown increasing resolve to challenge and punish Pakistan publicly for its support of terrorists operating in Kashmir. In response to the 2016 *Jaish-e-Mohammad* terrorist attack at Uri (in Jammu and Kashmir), Modi launched a so-called 'surgical strike' in Pakistan-administered Kashmir to considerable fanfare, which formed the basis of a popular eponymous Bollywood film titled *Uri: The Surgical Strike*.⁴⁰ Despite claims to the contrary, previous Indian governments launched at least nine such raids between 1998 and 2016, but none made political mileage out of the affairs.⁴¹ Then, *Jaish-e-Mohammad* attacked a Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) convoy using a suicide bomber, killing about 40 and injuring many more. In response, India (with disputed levels of success) bombed a *Jaish-e-Mohammad* training camp in Balakot in Pakistan's Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province. Pakistan in turn attempted to retaliate, resulting in a dogfight in which Pakistan downed an Indian MiG and captured its pilot, who was returned safely after several days. India claims that, prior to being shot down, its MiG pilot shot down an F-16, although the evidence for this claim is scant. (This article cannot adjudicate the competing claims.)⁴²

Then, in August 2019, India changed the status of Kashmir by revoking Article 370 of the Indian constitution, which afforded the state special status in recognition that it was a disputed territory.⁴³ With this revocation, India announced sovereignty over all of Kashmir – including those parts occupied by Pakistan since the 1947–48 war that Pakistan initiated to seize all of Kashmir, despite the fact that the sovereign of Kashmir had acceded to India – and those parts illegally ceded to China in 1963.⁴⁴ Pakistan sought to mobilize the international community against India, but most international stakeholders largely treated it as an Indian domestic concern, which further irritated Pakistan. India's government, controlled by the Hindu chauvinist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) since 2014, has subsequently taken other moves that discomfit Pakistan, including an October 2019 supreme court ruling on Ayodhya and the Babri masjid (mosque) stating that a temple can be built on the ruins of the mosque, which was destroyed by zealous Hindu-nationalist mobs in December 1992.⁴⁵

Then, in December 2019, the Modi government passed the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), which amended India's 1955 Citizenship Act. The CAA, for the first time in India's independent history, introduces religious criterion into the country's naturalization process by permitting immigrants of six religions from Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Bangladesh a path to citizenship while excluding Muslims from those same countries.⁴⁶ The CAA, along with the National Register of Citizens, has raised fears that the Indian

government is seeking to disenfranchise India's large Muslim minority population that numbers nearly 200 million.⁴⁷

Given Pakistan's political pressures to continue using the only means at its disposal to harass India – proxy war under the protection of its nuclear umbrella – and the increased scrutiny of the assets upon which it has traditionally relied in recent decades, its long-cultivated ties with Khalistanis became an important resource for the policy-relevant future. As Wynslett has observed of the ISI's support for Khalistani groups, they offer the same benefit to the Pakistani state as *Lashkar-e-Tayyaba* has: no threat to the Pakistani state itself.⁴⁸ While Khalistanis have often depicted Pakistani territory in their various maps of Khalistan, they have never posed a threat to Pakistan and have often viewed Pakistan as a friendly sanctuary.

While the ISI has maintained sub rosa ties with Sikhs for decades,⁴⁹ Pakistan's ties to the Khalistanis began to draw attention in 2015 when the General Secretary of the Pakistan Sikh Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (PSGPC), Gopal Singh Chawla, was photographed shaking hands amiably with *Lashkar-e-Tayyaba* (LeT) leader Hafiz Saeed. LeT was designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization by the US Department of State in 2001, and by 2015 the organization was infamous worldwide for the coordinated 26 November 2008 terror attacks in Mumbai, India that killed at least 166 people.⁵⁰ The photo of Gopal Singh Chawla and Hafiz Saeed was released shortly before an attack on a police station in the Gurdaspur District of Indian Punjab that the Indian Home Ministry attributed to LeT,⁵¹ which brought Chawla and the PSGPC under intense scrutiny. The PSGPC is responsible for administering the Pakistani side of the Kartarpur Corridor Project, and to have its General Secretary associated with a terrorist leader was unacceptable to India. Following a sustained campaign of diplomatic pressure from the Indian side, Pakistan removed Gopal Singh Chawla from the PSGPC in late 2015.⁵²

Gopal Singh Chawla's removal from the PSGPC proved to be short-lived. By 2017, Chawla had ascended once again to the position of PSGPC General Secretary. Chawla's second tenure as PSGPC General Secretary became equally controversial when, in August 2017, Chawla was photographed and videotaped addressing a gathering of the LeT's political wing, the Milli Muslim League (MML).⁵³ In fact, Chawla had arranged for the conference to take place in his home base of Nankana Sahib, the birthplace of Sikhism's founder Guru Nanak, and reportedly pledged his and the Sikh community in Pakistan's support to Hafiz Saeed and his political party. Chawla organized a second conference at Nankana Sahib for the MML in July 2018,⁵⁴ even after the United States designated the party as a Foreign Terrorist Organization and the Electoral Commission of Pakistan (ECP) twice declined to allow the party to contest elections (the first ECP decision was reversed and sent back to the commission by the Islamabad High Court⁵⁵ before being reaffirmed by the ECP).⁵⁶ Gopal Singh Chawla was photographed on the dais of this

conference surrounded by MML leaders and reportedly delivered a vitriolic speech in which he urged Sikhs to join with the MML in order to form a front against India.

In spite of clear evidence that Chawla continued to support an outlawed political party with ties to LeT in 2018, he was allowed to remain General Secretary of the PSGPC and was even photographed shaking hands with Pakistan Army Chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa in November 2018, mere months after organizing the MML convention. The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the public relations wing of Pakistan's military and intelligence services, dismissed criticism of this photo-op,⁵⁷ but it defies reason and logic to believe that the man ultimately responsible for the Pakistani intelligence apparatus had no idea who Chawla was given his ties to Hafiz Saeed and the outlawed MML.

On 12 July 2019, ahead of a second round of technical and logistical talks on the Kartarpur Corridor issue, Pakistan removed Gopal Singh Chawla as General Secretary of the PSGPC for the second time at the behest of India.⁵⁸ Among the concerns raised by India in the subsequent Kartarpur talks on 14 July were Chawla's ties to the Sikh-separatist Khalistan movement – ties that Chawla openly admits in public statements –⁵⁹ and his aforementioned relationship with *Lashkar-e-Taiba* (LeT) leader Hafiz Saeed.⁶⁰

Gopal Singh Chawla is often referred to in the Indian media as a 'close aide' to LeT leader Hafiz Saeed and thereby also tied to the Pakistani state and its intelligence apparatus. While the characterization of Chawla as an aide of Saeed is difficult to substantiate, there is no shortage of evidence that suggests Chawla sees Hafiz Saeed and LeT as important allies in the struggle against India. For Chawla, Pakistan and its terrorist proxies represent a reciprocal opportunity to further his Khalistan agenda, while also advancing the interests of the Pakistani state.

In August 2019, Harpal Singh Pala, the son of an Indian Air Force pilot based out of Jalandhar in Punjab, was arrested for espionage. According to the initial investigation, Pala found Gopal Singh Chawla's ideology compelling and initiated contact through Facebook.⁶¹ After cultivating Pala as an asset, Chawla allegedly urged Pala to use his connections (Pala's mother also worked on the base as a laborer until her death) to gather intelligence on the base. Because Pala used his cellular phone to maintain contact with Chawla in Pakistan, Indian intelligence was able to flag his communications and eventually arrest him for spying. Under interrogation, Pala admitted his connection to Gopal Singh Chawla and Ranjit Singh Neeta, leader of the terrorist organization Khalistan Liberation Force (KLF).⁶² The arrest of Harpal Singh Pala represents a breakthrough in tying Gopal Singh Chawla and other Khalistan elements to the Pakistani state, making it all the more troubling that Chawla held such a prominent position in a body responsible for the Kartarpur Corridor

Project. Additionally, it leads to further questions regarding Pakistan's intentions behind this ostensibly benign project.

Part of the problem with the PSGPC is that, for a body that serves at the behest of an ostensibly democratically elected government in Pakistan, there is a decided lack of transparency and accountability until external pressures force Pakistan to act. The PSGPC is an enigmatic body when compared to its Indian counterpart, the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC). Whereas India's SGPC leadership is elected by any registered Sikh man or woman over the age of 18,⁶³ the Government of Pakistan selects the members of the PSGPC, who in turn appoint their own President and General Secretary. Pakistan's approach to appointing PSGPC members would not be so troubling were it not for the level of opacity surrounding the selection criteria and the biographies of the committees' members. The Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB), which is the government body directly responsible for overseeing the PSGPC, offers no information on its website regarding its selection process. As far as the current members of the PSGPC are concerned, there is only a list of members without accompanying biographical information.⁶⁴ The PSGPC has its own website; however, the only additional information provided about its members are pictures of the members – again without biographical information.⁶⁵

In internal elections following the removal of Gopal Singh Chawla, the posts of President and General Secretary were filled by Satwant Singh and Ameer Singh, respectively. Ameer Singh has proven to be the more controversial choice, as he is the brother of alleged Khalistani leader Bishen Singh.⁶⁶ Another member, Sardar Sarbat Singh, was named a prominent participant in a pro-Khalistan rally in Lahore on the anniversary of Operation Blue Star in 2018.⁶⁷ The inclusions of Ameer Singh and Sarbat Singh highlight what appears to be a policy of Pakistan placating India in the short term, as they did by removing Gopal Singh Chawla in 2015 and 2019, while continuing to include members with ties to the Khalistan movement in the PSGPC.

Although Ameer Singh's continued presence in the PSGPC is unsurprising given Pakistan's record of advancing pro-Khalistan Sikh leaders, the election of Satwant Singh as PSGPC President represents a puzzling move. The PSGPC does include legitimately accomplished and respected public figures within the Sikh community. Dr. Mimpal Singh, for example, is the first ever Sikh MBBS Doctor in Pakistan and specializes in pediatrics.⁶⁸ Dr. Sagarjeet Singh, another PSGPC member of note, is a Nephrologist and the only Sikh MBBS Doctor in Pakistan's Sindh province.⁶⁹ For reasons that remain unclear, instead of electing a spiritual leader or an accomplished professional, the PSGPC chose to elect the young and unknown Satwant Singh to the body's most important position. There are no public records that suggest any accomplishments that would merit Satwant Singh's inclusion on the PSGPC. In fact, the only newsworthy item regarding his past came in the form of a minor

controversy when old Facebook photos surfaced of him holding what appeared to be a beer bottle –⁷⁰ a violation of the Sikh code of conduct were it to be proven that he drank alcohol. Regardless of whether Satwant Singh ever drank, the real problem with his sudden rise to prominence is Pakistan's lack of transparency when it comes to the PSGPC selection process. Pakistan's motives will continue to be called into question until the government either democratizes the PSGPC – as India has for its counterpart SGPC – or allows for robust public scrutiny of potential nominees.

More recently, Indian intelligence sources have asserted that Pakistan's ISI has helped to form the so-called 'Kashmir Khalistan Referendum Front (KKRF)', which has recently filed a class-action suit against the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Houston, mere days ahead of his arrival in the same city, for alleged human rights violations in Kashmir and the Punjab.⁷¹ At the same time, police in India's Punjab have told the authors that the ISI is helping the KKRF recruit youth and arm them for terror attacks in India. Indian officials have captured Chinese hexacopters (one of China's tactical drones with six blades) dropping drugs and munitions across the international border for attacks in India. These hexacopters have a payload of 80 kg.⁷² In September 2019, Punjab police learned that at 'At least eight drone sorties, carrying a total of 80 kg of weapons (arms and ammunition), were sent across the border into Punjab by Pakistan-based Khalistani terror groups between September 9 and 16' in Amritsar and Tarn Tarn. This consignment was facilitated by the Khalistan Zindabad Force (KZF) network, with support from the ISI, with the aim of supporting violence in Jammu and Kashmir.⁷³ In January, Indian police arrested an Indian Army soldier and two others, including a drone operator. They were part of a gang launching drones with a 2–3 km range between India and Pakistan for narcotics trafficking. The police seized 'drone batteries, custom-made drone containers, two walkie-talkie sets, Rs 6.22 lakh, believed to be proceeds of drugs, and a magazine of an INSAS rifle'.⁷⁴

Conclusion and implications

In this essay, we have documented the re-emergence of Khalistani-inspired violence within India, as well as the historical ties that Pakistan's intelligence agencies – and the army that controls them – have enjoyed with Khalistani activists within India and among various Sikh diaspora communities throughout the world. In the diaspora, the ISI has worked to coordinate protests by Sikh and Kashmiri activists at Indian missions – sometimes with violent outcomes – which raise the opportunity costs for India's diplomatic presence in global capitals.⁷⁵ While Indian moves in Kashmir – whether we consider Indian punitive strikes to punish Pakistan for Pakistan-backed Islamist terror attacks or the revocation of Article 370 – antagonize Pakistan along with the NRC and the ACA, Pakistan is and will be increasingly constrained in its use of its long-

standing staple of Islamist proxies as it continues to manage its 'grey listing' with FATF and its need for IMF lending.

India's Punjab offers a target-rich environment just as it did in previous decades; however, the ongoing narcotics problem in the state renders it even more vulnerable. Moreover, Sikhs and Kashmiris have shown an interest in working together to antagonize the Indian state, and there is ample evidence that terrorist groups and narcotics gangs have much to offer each other. The current generation of young Sikhs – born after the tragic violence of the 1980s – has recuperated Bhindranwale and his image as a valiant warrior defending the Sikhs from a predatory state.

All of this suggests that the time is right for a re-emergence of some variant of the Khalistan movement. To quote a shirt that one of the authors saw during a recent trip to the Golden Temple in Amritsar, the Khalistanis are proclaiming 'sara time ayega' (our time will come). And, regrettably, they may be correct.

Notes

1. Singh and Purewal, "The Resurgence of Bhindranwale's Image in Contemporary Punjab."
2. Vinay Kaura. 2019. "Best Time to Walk out of Kartarpur Corridor".
3. See Fair, *Fighting to the End: The Pakistan Army's Way of War*.
4. Purewal, "Sikh Diaspora and The Movement For Khalistan.;" Majumdar, INTERVIEWS Captain Amarinder; Singh, "Sikh Extremists In Canada, The UK And Italy Are Working With ISI Or Independently."
5. BBC, "Punjab's Drug Menace: 'I Wanted my Son to Die.'"
6. Roche, "India, Pakistan to hold Talks on Kartarpur Infrastructure."
7. George and Hussain, "Pakistan hopes its steps to "eradicate" terrorism will keep it off a global blacklist," International Monetary Fund, "IMF Executive Board Completes the First Review of Pakistan's Extended Fund Facility"; and Rezaul, "Pak gets 4 more months to deliver on terror financing watchdog FATF plan."
8. Sikhs account for about 2% of India's population and are mostly concentrated in the Punjab, where they comprise a majority of the state's population.
9. I use the starting point of 1978 because this is the year in which a violent clash took place between a group led by Bhindranwale and Fauja Singh (of the Akhand Kirtani Jatha) against the Nirankaris, who the former viewed as a heretical offshoot of mainstream Sikhism. The Nirankaris had gathered in Amritsar for their annual convention and were attacked. While Fauja Singh tried to kill the head of the Nirankaris, he himself was killed. Bhindranwale himself did not participate in the assault claiming he was ill. However, two of his followers, 11 of the Akhand Kirtani Jatha and 3 Nirankaris were killed. This is widely seen as the first act of gratuitous violence by Sikh militants and is often taken as the starting point for the Sikh insurgency.
10. Gill and Sahn, "India: The Defeat of Religious Extremist Terror in Punjab."
11. Wallace, "Countering Terrorist Movements in India: Kashmir and Khalistan."
12. Human Rights Watch suggests 40,000 died. "Protecting the Killers: A Policy of Impunity in Punjab India."

13. The most authoritative – albeit descriptive – account of this operation is given by the officer that led the operation, Brar, *Operation Blue Star: The True Story*.
14. *The New York Times*; “Report on Riots Opens Old Wounds”; Human Rights Watch, “India: No Justice for 1984 Anti-Sikh Bloodshed.”
15. “Report of the Justice Nanavati Commission Of Inquiry (1984 Anti-Sikh Riots).”
16. Prime Minister Gandhi declared emergency rule largely to nullify legal proceedings that implicated her in illegal pre-election activities that may have facilitated her 1972 election and to silence public accusations of political corruption within the Congress (I) government.
17. Uttam, “BJP reminds Congress of Rajiv Gandhi’s “Big Tree” Remark, asks for Explanation,”.
18. Nawaz, “The First Kashmir war Revisited.”
19. Haqqani, *Pakistan: Between Mosque and Military*; Sattar, *Pakistan’s Foreign Policy 1947–2005*; Hussain, Rizwan. *Pakistan and the Emergence of Islamic Militancy in Afghanistan*; Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan*; Arif, *Working with Zia: Pakistan Power Politics, 1977–1988*.
20. Haqqani, *Pakistan: Between Mosque and Military*; Biberman, *Gambling with Violence: State Outsourcing of War in Pakistan and India*.
21. Chadha, “India’s Counterinsurgency Campaign in Mizoram.”
22. Fair, *Urban Battle Fields of South Asia: Lessons Learned from Sri Lanka, India and Pakistan*; Fair, “Lessons from India’s Experience in the Punjab, 1978–1993”; and Fair, “The Golden Temple: A Tale of Two Sieges.”
23. Among Indian analysts, the chief cleavage falls between the narratives espoused by two important Punjab police chiefs (co-called ‘super cops,’ both of whom take credit for the movements demise, and their respective followers. The chief protagonists are K.P. Gill, who served as Director General of Police in the Punjab from 1988–1990 and again from 1991–1995, and his acolytes as well as Julio F. Ribeiro, who held that post from March 1986 to April 1988 when he handed it over to Gill, and his defenders. See, for example, Ribeiro, *Bullet for Bullet: My Life as a Police Officer*; Gill, *Knights of Falsehood*; Bal, “Lessons Not Learnt: The Left and the Right Have Distorted KPS Gill’s Success Against Terrorism.”; Sandhu, “J.F. Ribeiro’s reign as Punjab director-general of police under severe critical scrutiny.”
24. Purewal, “Sikh Diaspora And The Movement For Khalistan”; Tatla, *The Sikh diaspora: The search for statehood*; and Shani, “Beyond khalistan? sikh diasporic identity and critical international theory.”
25. Human Rights Watch, “Dead End in Punjab”; Human Rights Watch, “Protecting the Killers: A Policy of Impunity in Punjab, India”; Human Rights Watch, “Punjab in Crisis”; and Gossman, *Dead Silence: The Legacy of Human Rights Abuses in Punjab*.
26. “Global Terrorism Database.”
27. Mesquita, “Measuring political violence in Pakistan: Insights from the BFRS Dataset.”
28. “Khalistan Tiger Force (KTF).” South Asia Terrorism Portal; “Babbar Khalsa International (BKI).” South Asia Terrorism Portal. “International Sikh Youth Federation.” South Asia Terrorism Portal; “Khalistan Zindabad Force.” South Asia Terrorism Portal; “Khalistan Commando Force.” South Asia Terrorism Portal; “Bhindrawala Tigers Force of Khalistan (BTFK).” South Asia Terrorism Portal; and “Khalistan Liberation Front.” South Asia Terrorism Portal.
29. The Tribune Trust, “The Tribune: Punjab.”
30. Belur, *Permission to Shoot?: Police Use of Deadly Force in Democracies*.

31. Verma, "Governance and Coercion in India." Some India officials would take issue with this description, although these practices are well-known and well-recorded across numerous academic disciplines as well as Indian and international human rights organizations. See for example Duschinski, "Reproducing regimes of impunity: Fake encounters and the informalization of everyday violence in Kashmir Valley" Laws and Iacopino. "Police Torture in Punjab, India: An Extended Survey"; and Kaur, "A Judicial Blackout: Judicial Impunity for Disappearances in Punjab, India."
32. Scholars agree on the general contours of this argument although they may disagree about the years when Pakistan became so emboldened. Fair has argued that Pakistan was emboldened after acquiring the status of 'nuclear overhang' in the spring of 1979 when the United States first sanctioned Pakistan for improvements in enrichment technology. Paul S. Kapur, for reasons that are not clear, views as Pakistan as non-nuclear until about 1990 when the United States reimposed sanctions following US President George H. W. Bush's refusal to declare Pakistan a non-nuclear state and the reimposition of sanctions deferred by the American Pressler Amendment. The ballast of evidence falls to Fair as it is likely that Pakistan acquired its crude nuclear capability between 1980 and 1983, as noted independently by Feroz H. Khan and Abdul Sattar, the former is a retired general from Pakistan's Strategic Plans Directorate while the latter is a former foreign minister. See, inter alia, Fair, *Fighting to the End: The Pakistan Army's Way of War*; Kapur, *Jihad as Grand Strategy*; Khan, Feroz H. *Smoking Grass The Making of the Pakistani Bomb*; Sattar, Abdul. *Pakistan's Foreign Policy 1947-2005*.
33. Shekatkar, D.B. "India's Counterinsurgency Campaign in Nagaland."
34. Chaddha, "India's COUNTERINSURGENCY Campaign in Mizoram."
35. Talbot, "Pakistan and Sikh Nationalism: State Policy and Private Perceptions."
36. See inter alia Fair, *Fighting to the End: The Pakistan Army's Way of War* and Fair, C. Christine. *In Their Own Words: Understanding the Lashkar-e-Tayyaba*; Kapur, *Jihad as Grand Strategy*; Ganguly, and Kapur. "The Sorcerer's Apprentice: Islamist Militancy in South Asia"; and Evans, "As Bad as it Gets: The Kashmir Insurgency."
37. See Congressional Research Service (CRS), "Direct Overt US Aid Appropriations for and Military Reimbursements to Pakistan, FY2002-FY2020." 12 March 2019; Kronstadt, K. Alan. "Pakistan-US Relations."
38. Kerr, Paul K., and Mary Beth D. Nikitin, "Pakistan's Nuclear Weapons"; Toon et al. "Rapidly Expanding Nuclear arsenals in Pakistan and India Portend Regional and Global Catastrophe"; Mattis, "Pakistan: Most Dangerous Country I have Dealt,".
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40. Khan, "India's "surgical strikes" in Kashmir: Truth or illusion?"
41. Joshi, "The Line of (out of) Control."
42. See Noor and Rajagopalan, "Lessons From Balakot: One Year On."
43. Maheshwari, "How the Indian Government Changed the Legal Status of Jammu and Kashmir"; BBC, "Article 370: What happened with Kashmir and why it matters."
44. Nawaz, "The first Kashmir war revisited"; Whitehead, *A Mission in Kashmir*.
45. Abi-Habib and Yasir. 2019. "Court Backs Hindus on Ayodhya, Handing Modi Victory in His Bid to Remake India."

46. Kronstadt, "18 December 2019 Changes to India's Citizenship Laws."
47. India's National Register of Citizens (NRC) was established in 1951; however, it has not been updated since then. In 2013, India's Supreme Court ordered the federal and Assam governments to undertake an updating process. This was ostensibly motivated by illegal immigration from Bangladesh. In 2018, Assam's BJP-led government issued a draft NRC that was widely condemned. Its critics alleged that the draft NRC is an effort to oust the Bengali immigrant from Assam, presumably because many assumed those immigrants were Muslim. Assam's 33 million residents were forced to prove that they or their ancestors were citizens of India prior to 25 March 1971 (when Bangladesh became independent from Pakistan) by August 2019. On the last day of August 2019, the final list of citizens omitted nearly 2 million residents, nearly all of whom are ethnically Bengali and half of whom are Muslims. Those who were not on the list had until 31 December 2019 to appeal before a 'Foreigner Tribunals.' If they are unable to prove their lineage, they may be sent to one of six newly-build detention camps. See Anon "'Six detention centres in Assam with capacity of 3,331 persons: Home Ministry tells Lok Sabha"; Kalita, "Assam told to free non-Muslims from detention camps: MoS in Lok Sabha"; Tahmina, "Detention Centres in Assam Are Synonymous With Endless Captivity."
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54. Rana, "Hafiz Saeed's Political Outfit Holds Convention at Nankana Sahib."
55. Khan, "ECP's Decision not to register JuD-backed Milli Muslim League as Political Party Set Aside."
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60. Sandhu and Singh., "India Submits 23-page Dossier to Pakistan on Pro-Khalistan Activities on its Soil."
61. Sehgal, "How Khalistani Leader Gopal Singh Chawla Radicalised Punjab Man to Get Sensitive IAF Info."

62. Sehgal, "Hafiz Saeed Aide Gopal Chawla Running Spy Network, ISI Agent Held in Jalandhar."
63. Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee. "About SGPC."
64. Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB). "Pakistan Sikh Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (PSGPC)."
65. Pakistan Sikh Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee. "Who We Are."
66. Asian News International Staff. "Pro-Khalistani Leaders Continue to Hold Key Positions in PSGPC."
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69. Kaur, "Dr. Sagarjeet Singh is the Only MBBS Sikh Doctor in Sindh & Third MBBS Sikh Doctor in Pakistan!".
70. Rana, "Photo With Liquor Bottle: PSGPC Chief Courts Row."
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72. Author interviews with police officials in Chandighargh in December 2019. This has also been well-reported. See, for example, Anon, "Two Chinese drones seized in Punjab, soldier among 3 held."; Gupta, "Pak terror groups use Chinese drones to airdrop 80 kg weapons in Punjab for J&K"; Bajwa, "Punjab to counter drone-aided smuggling from neighbouring Pakistan."
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