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**European Desi Activism, Resistance, and Terror: A comparative study of the South-Asian diaspora politics impact on India's counterterrorism cooperation with France, Germany, and the United Kingdom**

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Leiden University

Advanced MSc in International Relations and Diplomacy

**Master's Thesis**

**European Desi Activism, Resistance, and Terror:**

A comparative study of the South-Asian diaspora politics impact on India's counterterrorism cooperation with France, Germany, and the United Kingdom

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അവസാനമായി, എല്ലാ അനുഗ്രഹങ്ങൾക്കും ദൈവത്തിന് നന്ദി പറയാൻ ഞാൻ ആഗ്രഹിക്കുന്നു.

## **Abstract**

In recent times, the diaspora has become a focus of interest in the study of International Relations. The diaspora communities have been engaged in both peaceful activism and violent resistance fighting for the cause of homeland conflicts. Can these groups influence the foreign policy decisions on security cooperation (particularly counterterrorism) between host and homeland countries? Using the Host Integration Theory, this study investigates the impact of South Asian diaspora-led activism (India and Pakistan) on India's bilateral counterterrorism cooperation with France, Germany, and the United Kingdom. To answer the question, India's counterterrorism cooperation with three cases (France, Germany, and the United Kingdom) and South Asian diaspora-led activism/resistance with these states have been mapped out using content analysis. Additionally, three semi-structured interviews were conducted with terrorism studies researchers to explain the trends observed in the content analysis. The findings of the comparative study revealed that Indo-French counterterrorism engagement has high levels of cooperation and lower levels of diaspora-led activism. Similarly, the Indo-German counter-cooperation showed medium to high levels of cooperation and lower levels of diaspora-led activism. On the other hand, lower levels of counterterrorism cooperation and higher levels of diaspora-led activism/resistance involving violence were identified in the case of the United Kingdom. Hence, the study helps to understand how diaspora-led activism/resistance can impact the bilateral counterterrorism cooperation between host and homeland countries.

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## **Introduction**

Terrorism has emerged as a major security concern for global peace and security. The post-9/11 period resulted in the growing significance of counterterrorism at the bilateral and multilateral institutions (Romaniuk, 2010). As a result, international organisations (IOs) and countries started engaging in anti-terror efforts to combat radicalisation, extremism, and violence. These engagements are focused on combating security challenges caused by terrorist organisations. However, recent times have witnessed security challenges emerging from the diaspora community. These communities operate within the abroad space and fund resistance/activism for homeland conflicts.

The diaspora communities have been engaged in both peaceful activism and violent resistance advocating the cause of homeland conflicts. For instance, the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora of France is a prime example of the community engaged in funding the ‘Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam armed insurgency’ against the Sinhala-dominated Sri Lanka state (Demmers, 2007). The other major diaspora groups engaged in activism/resistance include Albanian, Croatian, Oromo, Eritreans, Kurds, Jews (United States), Armenians, Palestinians, and Chechens (Demmers, 2007).

The South Asian diaspora or *Desi* is a pop-cultural terminology referring to the South Asian diaspora (Mallapragada, 2014). Hence, the South Asian diaspora in Europe can be called ‘European Desi’. Within Europe, the South Asian diaspora (primarily India and Pakistan) is actively engaging in activism and resistance advocating the cause of Kashmir (a separate state of Kashmir) and Khalistan (a Sikh militant movement demanding a separate state) challenging the national sovereignty of India.

## **1.1 Activism and Resistance**

The Kashmiri activism and resistance movement consists of individuals and institutions (both India and Pakistan) advocating for the independence and autonomy of the region. On the other side, Khalistan is a transnational separatist movement consisting of multiple organisations run by the Sikh community (both in India and abroad) demanding a separate state from India.

Currently, certain sections of the diaspora community have been resisting and engaging in violent actions abroad threatening both the national security of India and the internal security of Western countries. In recent times, India has been accused of committing assassinations of diaspora leaders fighting for homeland conflicts (primarily Sikh separatist leaders) (ICCT, 2023). Hence, it becomes important to understand the motivations of these diaspora groups and how they impact security cooperation between their host and homeland country. This research study seeks to understand the impact of South Asian diaspora politics (activism and violent resistance) on India's bilateral counter-terrorism cooperation with France, Germany, and the United Kingdom. Using a comparative approach, the study aims to understand the relationship between diaspora politics (activism and resistance) and bilateral counterterrorism cooperation between host and homeland countries. Hence, the research study seeks to investigate the question "What is the effect of diaspora-led activism and resistance on bilateral counterterrorism cooperation between the host and homeland country?"

## **1.2 Research goal.**

The study aims to understand how South Asian diaspora-led activism and resistance shape India's bilateral counter-terrorism cooperation with France, Germany, and the United Kingdom. The



research aims to investigate the levels (low, medium, and high) of India's counterterrorism cooperation with France, Germany, and the United Kingdom. Also, it seeks to map the pattern (peaceful and violent) of South Asian activism/resistance within France, Germany, and the United Kingdom. The study seeks to investigate the answer to the research question using content analysis (of counterterrorism agreements and diaspora activism/resistance) and conducting three semi-structured interviews with researchers working in the field of terrorism studies.

### **1.3 Significance of the study**

The research study holds academic and social relevance as it examines the role of diaspora politics in shaping international cooperation on a critical issue like counterterrorism. Academically, contemporary studies on Diaspora and International Relations primarily look at the economic and socio-cultural aspects. Whereas this study delves into a less explored area of how diaspora activism/resistance influences a state's foreign policy, particularly on counterterrorism. Also, this study contributes to the existing works on diaspora and transnationalism. The study uses the 'Host Integration Theory' proposed by Joelle Demmers to understand the relationship between host and homeland countries (Demmers, 2007). The findings of the study bring innovation to the theory of how diaspora activism can shape international cooperation between host and homeland countries on an issue like counterterrorism. On a societal level, the study will help security policymakers within India, France, Germany, and the United Kingdom to engage with the diaspora group for effective counterterrorism cooperation. Also, this study will bring informed discussions on diaspora community activism and counterterrorism cooperation. Overall, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of the role of diaspora in international security cooperation.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Literature Review and Theory**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

The second chapter will provide an initial overview of the Kashmir and Khalistan conflict and offer a justification for using the broader term of South Asian diaspora politics. Further, the literature review section will explore the broader themes of counterterrorism, domestic politics, diaspora violence, and India-EU counterterrorism cooperation. The final section of the chapter will explore the theoretical framework, relevance, and central argument that the study aims to investigate through the research project.

#### **2.2 Brief overview of the Kashmir and Khalistan conflict (Indian diaspora role)**

The British left India in 1947 dividing the sub-continent (partition) into India and Pakistan. After Indian independence, the territorial issue of Kashmir came to the forefront resulting in the first India-Pakistan war in 1947 (Sil, 2009). At that time, Kashmir was ruled by the Hindu King Maharaja Hari Singh who signed the treaty of accession with India because of Pakistani infiltration into the Kashmir territory (Sengupta, 2020). However, Pakistan took over a part of Kashmir in 1947 that came to be known as Pakistan-controlled Kashmir or Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (Indian perception). On the other hand, Pakistan calls the Indian-administered territory as ‘Indian-occupied Kashmir’. Hence, both sides have been blaming each other over Kashmir for more than 70 years. Also, the post-independence period witnessed large-scale migration and a changing perception of

identities within the diaspora space. Firstly, the Indian and Pakistani diaspora came to be viewed as separate national identities.

Within the United Kingdom, the Kashmiris especially from the Mirpuri region (Pakistan-administered) constitute the largest Kashmir diaspora group compared to the Indian-administered Kashmir (Gardner & Osella, 2003). At the same time, the armed militancy strengthened its roots in Kashmir during the 1980s (Haq, 2020). The Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), a formerly armed separatist organisation that demanded a separate state of Kashmir was founded in Birmingham, United Kingdom (SATP, n.d.). Hence, the Kashmiri diaspora has played a crucial role part in funding the armed insurrection and terrorism within Kashmir.

On the other side, the Sikh community started their separatist movement demanding the separate state of Khalistan during the 1980s. The Sikh movement was supported by the Pakistani intelligence agency (Inter Service Intelligence) and the Sikh diaspora living in Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, and other countries (The Daily Guardian, 2023). The assassination of Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi by her Sikh bodyguard resulted in the 1984 anti-Sikh riots (Jodhka, 1997). This led to mass killings, torture, murder, rape, attack, and violent actions targeting the Sikh community. The riots prompted large-scale migration of the Sikh community to Western abroad countries (Rajan & Percot, 2020). Currently, the Sikh diaspora has been quite active in running the Khalistan movement in countries like Canada, the United States, Germany, Australia, etc (The Tribune , 2024). In 2023, the Indian government was accused by Canada of assassinating a Sikh leader involved in these diaspora-led activist movements. The assassination of Sikh leaders has strengthened and energised the Khalistan movement in the diaspora space resulting in a major diplomatic tussle between India and Canada (especially the UK, US, and Canada) (ICCT, 2023).

Hence, the South Asian diaspora community plays a major role in the Kashmir and Khalistan separatist movements.

### **2.3 South Asian diaspora terminology**

The broader term of South Asian diaspora has been used for the study due to the contestation of territories and conflictual identity associated with the Kashmir and Khalistan separatist movements. The Kashmiri and Sikh diaspora belong to both India and Pakistan. Most sections of these groups are affiliated with either India or Pakistan. Certain sections of these diaspora groups want to be associated with a separate identity of ‘Kashmiri’ and ‘Punjabi’ away from India and Pakistan. Hence, these factors make the broader umbrella term of the South Asian diaspora suitable for this study.

### **2.4 Literature Review**

The academic literature on counterterrorism witnessed a manifold increase in the post-9/11 period. Romaniuk argues that the post-9/11 era prompted counterterrorism efforts in the multilateralism forums spearheaded by the United States of America (Romaniuk, 2010). On the contrary, domestic attacks and events have motivated countries to adopt terror legislation and engage in counterterrorism cooperation. Several scholars have investigated the vested interest behind counterterrorism policies. In the Global South, Josua argues that the anti-terror legislation specifically within the MENA (Middle East and North Africa) region has been used to suppress and criminalise peaceful dissent and protest (Josua, 2021). From a critical lens, Bakare explores the relationship between race and counterterrorism addressing systemic racism and the colonial tendency of security institutions engaged in anti-terror efforts (Abu-Bakare, 2020). Biswas argues that US-led counterterrorism impacts the sovereignty of Canada influencing the domestic politics of the Great

White North (Biswas, 2009). So, what is the relationship between security cooperation and domestic politics?

Fearson explores the role of domestic politics in shaping the state's foreign policy using International Relations theories (Fearon, 1998). However, theoretical explanations without case studies do not help to understand the relationship between domestic politics and security cooperation. The critical evaluation of the literature highlighted the significance of norms in the discussion on domestic politics and security cooperation. Anno has explored the impact of Japanese domestic politics on the country's security cooperation illustrating norm erosion, political leadership domination over bureaucracy, and normalisation (Anno, 2011). Moraes's study on BRICS reveals that domestic political dynamics including regime type and domestic group interest play a crucial role in facilitating security cooperation (Moraes, 2020). Further, Michalski and Norman's investigation of European member states varied security cooperation patterns brings out the influence of competing norms and domestic factors in shaping security engagements (Michalski & Norman, 2016). Verma argues that the Chinese reluctance to designate Pakistan-based terrorist organisation and individuals in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is not only due to the India-China rivalry but also due to the domestic drivers of terrorism, separatism, and extremism in Xinjiang along with the role of East Turkmenistan Islamic Movement (ITIM) (Verma, 2020). Hence, domestic politics plays a crucial role in International Relations.

Within discussions of domestic politics, the role of the diaspora communities has generated greater levels of scholarly interest within academic discourse. The power dynamics of diaspora politics is a major discussion within the academic community. Adamson looks at the practice of non-state authoritarianism enforcing monitoring and surveillance over the diaspora population using the case study of Turkey and Sri Lanka (Adamson, 2020). The findings of the study revealed that diaspora

politics can be influenced by both state and non-state actors leading to long-distance authoritarianism and transnational repression (Adamson, 2020). Further, King and Melvin argue that diaspora politics influences foreign policymaking using the case study of Russia, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan (Eurasia) (King & Melvin, 1999). The findings of the paper show that the relationship between states, diaspora, and ethnic identities is influenced by domestic politics, resource allocation, and foreign policy goals. However, the findings of the study raise questions on external validity and generalisability due to the Eurasian context presented in the study.

In diaspora studies, a great deal of scholarship has shown keen interest in Muslim diaspora and ethnic activism. Kelly focuses on Kurdish diaspora activism looking at the impact of the 1980 Turkish military on Islamic radicalisation in Western Europe (Eccarius-Kelly, 2002). Over the years, resilience has emerged as a major theme within Islamic diaspora studies. Weine explores the concept of resilience with the Muslim diaspora community to counter extremism in the United States of America (Weine, 2012). Whereas Willson critiques the use of resilience for counterterrorism within illiberal regimes examining Russian repression against the Crimean Tatar Muslims (McNeil-Willson, 2021). On the democratic framework, Steven and Curtis investigate the role of British Public Diplomacy in engaging with the Muslim diaspora community and preventing terrorism (Curtis & Jaine, 2012). Contrary to the previous argument, Abbas critiques the British counter-terrorism policy and the challenges faced in Muslim societal integration bringing out the social issues of islamophobia and radicalisation (Abbas, 2012).

Within the academic literature, violence, and diaspora are a major section of interest for both academic scholars and policymakers. The large-scale quantitative study conducted by Piazza and LaFree revealed that Islamic violent groups with diaspora links have lower casualty rates (Piazza & LaFree, 2019). At the same time, scholars have looked at ethnic diaspora communities'

engagement with violence. Fair has explored the diaspora involvement in insurgency movements using the case study Sikh (support for Khalistan movement) and Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora community (Tamil Eelam movement) in the homeland conflicts (Fair, 2005). Demmers delves into positive (mobilisation and cultural harmony) and negative factors (social exclusion and discrimination within the host country) influencing diaspora support for homeland conflict using the case study of the Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora community in France (Demmers, 2007). Going ahead, Piazza argues that diaspora-supported terrorist groups have more resilience and longevity and are less likely to be impacted by counter-terrorism efforts (Piazza, 2018). On a general scale, labelling diaspora-supported groups as terrorist organisations without classification based on varied levels of actions raises ethical concerns for research. Now, it becomes important to understand the counter-terrorism cooperation debates between Europe and India to bring in the South Asian diaspora connection in the literature.

The European Union and India counter-terrorism literature has focused on the institutional side, radicalisation, and limitations of the engagement. Taneja and Mukherjee provide an in-depth exploration of the EU-India Working group on counterterrorism. Mukherjee has provided a detailed account of the Indi-EU joint working group on counterterrorism (Mukherjee, 2020). However, the bureaucratic positionality of the scholars has prevented an objective critical exploration of the working group (JWG). Another major discussion has been centred around radicalisation. Taneja explored the role of technology cooperation in countering radicalisation between the EU and India (Taneja, 2023). The findings reveal the lack of technological cooperation with India-EU counterterrorism engagements. Amidst these works, Kugiel's critical argument on the lack of trust between the European Union and India preventing counterterrorism cooperation raises a significant question in the literature (Kugiel, 2018). He argues that the significance of

India's bilateral engagement with EU member states will generate more outcomes compared to the subcontinent's direct cooperation with the European Union.

Understanding this limitation, India established separate working groups on counterterrorism with the European states of France, Germany, and the United Kingdom (Mukherjee, 2020). Despite Brexit, India's cooperation with the United Kingdom has continued in the domain of counterterrorism. In recent times, the Indian and Pakistani diaspora led activism and resistance has gained significant media prominence raising security concerns both in India and respective European states (ICCT, 2023). The diaspora led movements like Khalistan and Kashmiri resistance groups are gaining traction challenging the national sovereignty of India. However, there is a variation (policy shift in security cooperation) observed among specific European states in responding to this diasporas-led activism. These shifts (positive and negative) in security cooperation by the three European states with India can be due to foreign policy considerations, diaspora vote bank, and common threat perception. This opens the gap to explore the impact of South Asian diaspora-led resistance and activism on India's bilateral counterterrorism cooperation with France, Germany, and the United Kingdom through a comparative lens.

## **2.5 Theoretical Framework**

The study will primarily use the 'Host Integration Theory' proposed by Dutch Political Scientist Jolle Demmers to understand the relationship between South Asian diaspora-led activism/resistance and bilateral counter-terrorism cooperation. Demmers explored the Tamil diaspora resistance against Sri Lanka using the Liberation of Tamil Tigers (LTTE) platform within France (Demmers, 2007). The LTTE is an armed resistance movement that started against the



majoritarianism of the Sinhalese community in Sri Lanka (Stokke, 2006). The theory argues that diaspora mobilisations are shaped by the homeland and host country contexts (Demmers, 2007). The homeland refers to the diaspora community's country of origin (Demmers, 2007). This homeland-country context involves the nature of war and the centrality of group identity. Whereas the country where the diaspora is currently living is called the host country. The host country context involves an environment provided by the new country for diaspora strategies of political action. So, the host and homeland countries are very important in understanding the mobilisation of diaspora communities. The scholar also argues that the diaspora imagination and action can be shaped by positive and negative factors (Demmers, 2007). The positive side opens room for political mobilisations within the community. On the negative side, the social exclusion, discrimination, loss of social status, and exploitation faced by the diaspora open the need for support from homeland organisations. This study will investigate the diaspora lobby and foreign policy argument proposed by the scholar. It relates to the interplay between host governments' foreign policy strategies and the organisation capacities of diaspora movements (Demmers, 2007). Now, this theory will be customised to look at how diaspora-led activism and resistance (organisational capacity) influence foreign policy particularly security policy (counterterrorism cooperation) between the host and homeland country.

## **2.6 Relevance of the theory**

This theory will be applied to the cases of France, Germany, and the United Kingdom. A comparison between the three cases will allow us to understand the variations and factors influencing or preventing South Asian diaspora mobilisation and how it is impacting the foreign policy and security relations between the homeland (India) and host country (France, Germany, and the United Kingdom).

## **2.7 Central Argument**

Using the Host Integration Theory, the study seeks to argue that higher levels of diaspora-led activism/resistance results in lower levels of bilateral counterterrorism cooperation between host countries (France, Germany, and the United Kingdom) and homeland countries (India). Hence, diaspora-led activism/resistance can impact the bilateral counterterrorism cooperation between host and homeland countries.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Methodology**

The research will use a qualitative method for the study. A qualitative approach will enable the researcher to understand the motivation and strategies of the diaspora groups and how they impact the counterterrorism policy between the host and homeland country. The qualitative approach will capture diverse perspectives and help to understand the relationship between diaspora-led activism/resistance and bilateral counterterrorism cooperation.

#### **3.1 Positivist approach**

The study will adopt a positivist approach to address the research question. Positivism is a scientific approach rooted in objectivity, measurement, empiricism, and quantification (Halperin & Heath, 2012). A positivist approach will help to explain the relationship between the cause (effect of domestic politics) and effect (counterterrorism cooperation) helping to identify a causal relationship (Halperin & Heath, 2012). Using the positivist aspects, the study seeks to measure India's levels of counterterrorism cooperation (France, Germany, and the United Kingdom) and diaspora activism and resistance led by the South Asian communities in Europe. (mechanism- how this diaspora activism/resistance can affect security cooperation)

#### **3.2 Unit of Analysis**

The unit of analysis for the study will be India's counterterrorism cooperation with individual countries (France, Germany, and the United Kingdom) and different levels of diaspora-led activism and politics within the European countries under investigation.

### **3.3 Conceptualisation and Measurement**

Diaspora politics refers to the South Asian diaspora (India and Pakistan) led activism, resistance, and militancy. Primarily, Kashmir and Khalistan (Sikh community) support groups constitute the main anti-India resistance network operating abroad. The South Asian diaspora terminology has been chosen to include diverse groups like Pakistan and Kashmir involved in diaspora activism and resistance against India. Also, the Sikh and Kashmiri diaspora engaged in activism/resistance belongs to the territories of India and Pakistan. Also, certain sections within the Sikh and Kashmiri diaspora do not identify with either India or Pakistan. The mixed and conflicting identities will be a challenge for the study. Hence, the broader terminology of the South Asian diaspora will be used for the study.

Also, India has established bilateral joint working groups (JWG) on counterterrorism with France, Germany, and the United Kingdom (Taneja, 2023). These groups work together to combat radicalisation, and terror financing and improve security intelligence-sharing cooperation (Mukherjee, 2020).

The study will try to understand the relationship between counterterrorism cooperation and diaspora activism/resistance. The Indo-French, Indo-German, and Indo-British counterterrorism cooperation will be measured using the category of low, medium, and high levels of engagement. Whereas diaspora activism in three cases will be measured using the category of peaceful and violent actions.

### **3.4 Variables and Indicators**

The Independent variable of the study is the Diaspora-led resistance/activism in France, Germany, and the United Kingdom. Indicators have been shaped by historical relations between India and

partner countries, diaspora activism, support groups, and militancy. The diaspora activism will be measured using the binary categorisation of the peaceful and violent nature of engagement.

The dependent variable of the study includes India's counterterrorism cooperation with France, Germany, and the United Kingdom. Indicators are shaped by different levels of counterterrorism engagements, especially intelligence sharing agreements, de-radicalisation efforts, and anti-terror financing cooperation. The counterterrorism cooperation (2000-24) will be measured using the binary categorisation of low, medium, and high levels of cooperation.

### **3.5 Hypothesis**

The theoretical framework (Host Integration Theory) of the study argues that the diaspora actions impact foreign policy decisions of the host country. This study seeks to investigate how diaspora activism/resistance impacts the foreign policy aspect of security cooperation (counterterrorism) between the host and homeland country. Understanding the trends in counterterrorism cooperation and diaspora activism in three cases will offer more clear insights. The study hypothesises that a high level of diaspora-led activism and resistance results in low levels of counterterrorism cooperation between the host countries (France, Germany, United Kingdom) and the homeland country (India).

### **3.6 Research Design**

#### **A. Case Selection Justification**

The European states of Germany, France, and the United Kingdom have established a counterterrorism working group with India (Taneja, 2023). All these democratic countries are UN members who closely work with the UN Office for Counterterrorism (UNOCT). However, there is variation in India's counterterrorism approach to these countries shaped by foreign policy

considerations. The active Indo-French counterterrorism cooperation has been shaped by defense trade relations. The Indo-German counter-terrorism cooperation has been shaped by multilateralism and global security. Whereas the Indo-British counter-terrorism cooperation has been shaped by colonial heritage. Hence, varied levels of bilateral engagement have been observed. Also, the different levels of South Asian diaspora engagement can be observed within the three European states. This variation within counterterrorism and diaspora politics opens space for a comparative study with the selected cases.

### **B. Analytical framework**

A qualitative comparative study based on the Most Similar System Design (MSSD) will help to uncover the variation in India's counter-terrorism approach with France, Germany, and the United Kingdom. MSSD is an approach of selecting cases with important similar characteristics and variations in one crucial aspect related to the hypothesis (Halperin & Heath, 2012). By minimising the influence of other variables, the MSSD strengthens the ability to draw casual links between the independent variable and the dependent variable (Halperin & Heath, 2012). The European countries under investigation are similar (European, Democracies, CT working group, strategic partnership with India) in many ways. However, there is a variation in levels of counterterrorism and diaspora activism between these countries. By using positivist elements, the comparable cases allow us to draw causal inferences about the effect of diaspora activism/resistance on counter-terrorism cooperation.

### **C. Data collection**

The data collection for the study will involve both Primary and Secondary sources. Mainly, qualitative content analysis (QCA) and semi-structured interviews have been used for the study.

Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) involves systematic analysis of textual information (Halperin & Heath, 2012). Also, three Semi-structured interviews were conducted with researchers working in the field of terrorism studies.

The qualitative content analysis involves data from the Indian government websites (Embassy, Home Ministry, Foreign Ministry), press releases, and joint statements signed between India and the European countries (both primary and secondary) on counterterrorism cooperation collected and grouped into three tables with varied categories (with timelines). Also, news sources from India, France, Germany, and the United Kingdom were used as secondary data for collecting information on diaspora-led activism and resistance.

For the semi-structured interviews, academic researchers and policymakers were selected using purposive sampling. Purposive or Judgmental sampling is a non-probability sampling strategy where the researcher deliberately chooses participants/respondents based on specific characteristics matching their research goal (Halperin & Heath, 2012). The respondents were contacted through email attaching the data collection request letter and informed consent.

#### **D. Data Analysis**

The content analysis of the secondary and primary sources collected for counterterrorism cooperation and diaspora-led resistance/activism was analysed using thematic coding. Within data analysis, thematic coding is a technique used in qualitative research to identify, analyse and interpret patterns of meaning within text or images (Halperin & Heath, 2012). The semi-structured interviews were transcribed, and patterns were identified through thematic coding of the interview transcript. The data analysis helped to understand the influence of domestic politics shaping the variation in India's counterterrorism cooperation with France, Germany, and the United Kingdom.

The multiple sources of data ensured triangulation and increased the validity and reliability of the findings (Halperin & Heath, 2012).

### **E. Reflexivity**

The researcher's Indian nationality has the potential to create personal bias in the research. Also, the previous association of the researcher with security risk consultancy can bring professional bias to the research.

### **F. Ethical Considerations**

Understanding the limitations, the researcher stayed objective and neutral during the entire research process by keeping the following considerations in mind.

- Obtaining the informed consent of the respondents for the semi-structured interview.
- Keep the respondent's identity confidential considering the sensitivity of the topic.
- Being transparent with research methods and acknowledging the limitations of the positivist approach in capturing the complexities of domestic politics and counterterrorism cooperation.



## **Chapter 4**

### **Indo-French:**

### **Counterterrorism cooperation and diaspora activism**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

The fourth chapter will explore Indo-French counterterrorism cooperation by exploring the colonial history, post-independence bilateral relations, and counterterrorism engagement between India and France. Using content analysis, the Indo-French counterterrorism agreement and South Asian diaspora-led activism have been mapped out.

#### **4.2 Colonial era**

Historically, the French controlled several parts of the Indian sub-continent along with other Western powers like the British, Dutch, and Portuguese. The colonial success of European powers like the British and Dutch prompted the arrival of French traders into the sub-continent. The French traded within the sub-continent with the support of the Mughal Empire (Steiner, 2020). The establishment of the French East India Company (in 1664) aimed at competing with the British and Dutch in the subcontinent (Cross, 2017). The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries witnessed the expansion of the French within colonial India. French India or *Établissements français dans l'Inde* was a French colony comprising the present Indian territories of Pondicherry, Karikal, Yanam, Mahe, and Chandernagore (Namakkal, 2021). The French also established lodges (trading posts) in Surat (west coast), Masulipatanam (east coast), Mahe (Malabar coast), Cassimbazaar, Jougdia, Dacca, Balasore and Patna (Bengal) (Rai, 2007).

The Britishers were the main rival for the French within colonial India. The French rivalry reached a high point during the Battle of Plassey in which the British defeated Nawab of Bengal (Eastern part of present India) Siraj ud-Daulah and the French allies (Reid, 2017). The French failed to win the Carnatic wars, a series of conflicts to win dominance in Southern India with the British (Bryant, 2004). After ten years, the French East India Company unable to sustain itself financially was abolished by the French Crown (Cross, 2017). From the eighteenth to the twentieth century, the French had limited territorial control and presence in the Indian subcontinent. In 1947, India gained independence from the British Empire. By the 1950s and 1960s, the French-controlled territories were integrated into the Indian Union. Despite the exit, the French language, culture, and cuisine remain very popular in the former colonies of the Indian subcontinent.

#### **4.3 Bilateral relations**

Independent India and France established diplomatic relations in 1947. The shared democratic values, respect for international law, and multilateralism form the foundation of Indo-French relations (MEA, 2009). The 1998 visit of French President Jacques Chirac to India led to the signing of the historic strategic partnership between both countries (Racine, 2002). The Strategic partnership involves cooperation in the field of defense and security, civil nuclear matters, space, and regular high-level engagement between India and France (Racine, 2002). The high-level diplomatic visits by state executives (from both sides) have cemented and strengthened the bilateral relationship between India and France.

In 2008, French President Nicholas Sarkozy visited India as the Chief Guest at India's Republic Day parade (Gupta S. , 2009). In the same year, the Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh embarked on a diplomatic visit to France (MEA, 2009). In 2009, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh was invited as the Guest of Honour for the Bastille Day celebrations in Paris (Barma &

Sinha, 2023). The French President Sarkozy paid a second state visit to India in 2010 (French Embassy India, 2010). Later, French President Francois Hollande visited India in 2013 (MEA, 2013). In 2015, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi held strategic bilateral discussions with President Hollande publishing a joint report titled 'India-France Joint Statement' (MEA, 2015). In the same year, India and France co-founded the International Solar Alliance, an international group of countries working to improve the consumption of solar energy by reducing fossil fuel usage (ISA, n.d.). In 2016, a French delegation headed by President Hollande along with cabinet ministers embarked on a 3-day visit to India (MEA, 2016). In the same year, President Hollande was invited as the chief guest for the Republic Day celebration in India.

The 2018 visit by French President Emmanuel Macron followed by multiple visits from both sides solidified and emboldened the bilateral relationship between India and France. In 2023, India and France celebrated 25 years of the India-France strategic partnership signed in 1998 (Indian Embassy Paris , 2024). In the same year, the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid an official state visit as the Guest of honour for the French National Day (Reuters , 2023). The friendship between Prime Minister Modi and President Macron has shaped the strategic partnership in areas like maritime security, digitalisation, cyber security, advanced computing, climate change, renewable and sustainable growth, and counterterrorism (Indian Embassy Paris , 2024). During the 2023 visit, both leaders adopted the 'Horizon 2047' roadmap that focuses on future cooperation plans for the next 25 years. Recently, the Indo-Pacific has gained greater amounts of traction in the India-France bilateral relationship. In 2023, India and France adopted the Indo-Pacific roadmap outlining a strategic vision for their cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region (Indian Embassy Paris , 2024). At the same time, defence and security form the cornerstone of the Indo-French bilateral relations.

Historically, the eighteenth-century Carnatic wars form the basis of the defence collaboration between France and the Indian subcontinent. In the post-independence period, France has been one of the weapon suppliers for India. The post-Soviet disintegration phase witnessed the turn of India towards France for weapon supply. Currently, France is India's second-largest defence exporter after Russia. Over time, India has acquired Rafael jets, Scorpene submarines, MISTRAL air defense system, and other equipment from France (Politico, 2024). The French have shown greater interest in technology transfer contributing to the development of India's *Atmanirbhar* (self-reliant) military industry initiative as part of the 'Make in India' project (Indian Embassy Paris, 2024). Also, the joint military exercises like Garuda (Air Force) and Varuna (Navy) conducted between Indian and French forces have improved the security relations between India and France (Singh, 2019). Also, intelligence sharing within maritime security has strengthened the Indo-Pacific cooperation in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). Overall, India and France have benefitted from their enhanced bilateral relationship,

#### **4.4 Counterterrorism cooperation**

In recent times, counterterrorism has become a major area of engagement within the strategic cooperation between France and India. After the 2008 Mumbai attacks (26/11), India and France started cooperating on counterterrorism. The joint action and operational exchanges between French and Indian intelligence and security forces especially *Groupe d'intervention de la Gendarmerie nationale* (GIGN) and National Security Guards (NSG) through training programs and collaborations have generated positive outputs for the Indo-French counter-terrorism efforts (MEA, 2023). Further, the 2015 Paris attacks strengthened the counterterrorism cooperation between India and France. The 2018 state visit to India by French President Macron strengthened cooperation to prevent radicalisation (online and social media spaces) and prevent terror financing

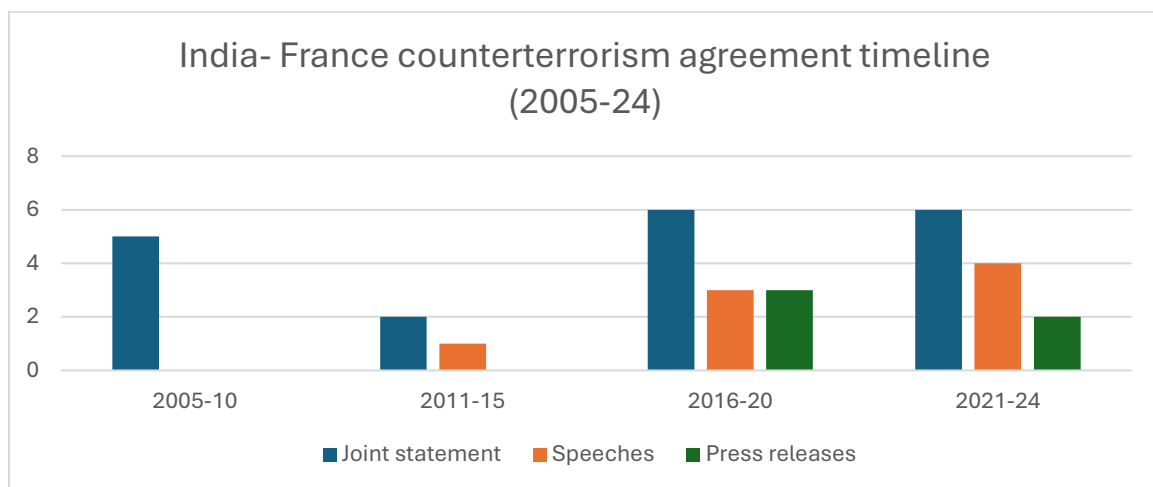
(MEA, 2018). In the same year, India participated in the ‘No Money for Terror’ conference hosted by France (Indian Embassy Paris , 2024). Alongside these efforts, India and France established a joint working group (JWG) on counterterrorism involving government officials and security experts from both countries who work together to combat terrorism. Recently, the 16<sup>th</sup> meeting of the India -France Joint Working Group on counterterrorism was held in New Delhi, India (MEA, 2024). The meeting discussed state-sponsored and cross-border terrorism in South Asia (especially the Afghanistan-Pakistan region), the Middle East, and Africa assessing the challenges posed by emerging technologies, online radicalisation, and terror financing for counterterrorism efforts (MEA, 2024). Hence, the next section will try to map down the levels of counterterrorism engagements between France and India.

#### **4.5 Indo-French Counterterrorism Agreement**

The counterterrorism cooperation between India and France has been mapped out using qualitative content analysis (QCA) of joint statements, speeches, and press releases obtained from the official website of the Indian foreign ministry (Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India). Content analysis is a systematic method of analysing textual and visual information (Halperin & Heath, 2012). The official documents on Indo-French counterterrorism cooperation from 2005 to 2024 have been selected from the Indian foreign ministry website for the study. Initially, the general agreements on Indo-French partnership were gathered from the media section of the MEA website. Further, keywords like ‘counterterrorism’, ‘terror’, ‘extremism’, and ‘security’ have been used for identifying the Indo-French counterterrorism cooperation documents. The selected data has been categorised into a table based on the timeline (year), agreement content, and statement of the agreement.

### 4.5.1 Timeline

A total of 31 documents from 2005- 2024 on Indo-French counterterrorism cooperation including joint statements, speeches, and press releases have been identified using the above-mentioned keywords (counterterrorism, terror, extremism, and security) for the study. This includes 18 joint statements, 8 speeches, and 5 press releases published by the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. The timeline of the 31 documents will be represented graphically to understand the trend of counterterrorism engagement between France and India.



*Figure 1 India-France counterterrorism cooperation timeline (2005-24)*

A total of 18 joint statements on counterterrorism have been issued by India and France. In Figure 1, the timeline has been divided into 2005-10, 2011-15, 2016-20 and 2021-24. From 2005-10, a total of 5 joint statements on counterterrorism have been issued by India and France. In 2011-15, the joint statements declined from 5 to 2. Whereas the 2016-20 period witnessed a massive spike of 6 joint statements on counterterrorism signed between India and France. In this period, joint statements have been issued in every year except 2017 showing a consistent pattern of engagement.

The 2021-24 period also shows a consistent pattern with six joint statements on counterterrorism between India and France.

As mentioned earlier, there have been a total of 8 speeches delivered by the Indian Prime Minister and External Affairs Minister Dr. S Jaishankar. No speeches have been found in the 2005-10 timeline. Only a single speech on counterterrorism has been identified for 2011-15. Whereas the 2016-20 period saw three speeches by the Indian Prime Minister and External Affairs Minister (MEA). The 2021-24 witnessed a mild increase in speeches from 3 to 4. Overall, there is an increasing trend in speeches issued on Indo-French counterterrorism cooperation from the Indian side. Like speech, no press releases on counterterrorism have been obtained in the 2005-10 and 2011-2015 timelines. The period from 2018-2024 has observed 5 press releases. The 2018 visit of French President Macron to India could have been the factor behind this increasing trend.

#### **4.5.2 Major areas of counterterrorism cooperation**

All the 18 joint statements issued by India and France condemn terrorism in all forms and manifestations. Specific areas of counter-terrorism cooperation within the joint statements (2005-2024) have been classified based on the number of observations. These joint statements have been identified using the above-mentioned keywords from the Indian Foreign Ministry website (MEA).

##### **A. Joint Statements**

<b>Areas of cooperation</b>	<b>No. of observations</b>
Countering terror financing	11
Cross border terrorism	9
Multilateralism	9

Countering radicalisation	8
Countering extremism	5
Intelligence cooperation	4
Maritime terrorism	3

*Table 1. Areas of Indo-French cooperation*

In Table 1, the counterterrorism cooperation on countering terror financing constitutes the biggest area of security engagement (11 observations) between India and France. Since 2010, the Indo-French cooperation on combating terror financing has been active maintaining a consistent pattern. Further, the importance of multilateralism and cross-border terrorism (9 observations) can be seen in the Indo-French counterterrorism cooperation. Both India and France acknowledge the role of the United Nations in combating global terrorism citing various UN resolutions in the joint statement. Respondent one believes that the French support for India within the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) has made their security relations stronger. Countering radicalisation has been another important area of cooperation (8 observations) within the Indo-French counterterrorism cooperation. In the post-2015 Paris attacks period, the cooperation on countering radicalisation, especially in the online space has increased seeing a consistent pattern of engagement. In the 2015 timeline, many people from France and India travelled to Syria and Iraq to join the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIS). This could be the reason for the increased engagement in radicalisation between India and France. In 2015, India and France established the Joint Working Group (JWC) on Counterterrorism to combat these security challenges on an institutional level. The other areas of cooperation include countering extremism, intelligence



sharing, and maritime terrorism. Minor counter-terrorism cooperation has been observed within the joint statement on countering narcotics, defence technology, and cybersecurity.

## **B. Speeches**

The eight speeches identified on Indo-French counterterrorism cooperation have been delivered by the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Minister of External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar. The five speeches by Prime Minister Modi have been delivered in Hindi language. Whereas the remaining three speeches by Indian Minister of External Affairs Dr. S Jaishankar have been delivered in English.

The 2015 speech of Prime Minister Modi delivered during his Paris visit reflects the need for India and France to work on counterterrorism connecting the common security challenges and shared history of terror attacks in Mumbai and Paris.

### Translation

*“Maritime, cyber and space security are a cause for concern for all. Terror is spreading and taking new forms. This challenge is being faced in many regions and cities of the world. Be it Paris or Mumbai, India and France have endured and understood each other's pain. This global challenge requires a comprehensive global strategy. In this, it is the responsibility of every country to give full support in the fight against terrorism and not to allow terrorist groups to take shelter and to punish the terrorists as soon as possible. India and France view these challenges similarly in many ways and that is why we will deepen our security cooperation.” (Modi, 2015)*

The 2016 Hindi speech by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the visit of the French President Hollande to New Delhi again brings out the security and terror challenges faced by India and France.

Translation

*“The terrorist attacks on Paris, Pathankot and other cities of the world are a dire example of one such challenge. Terrorism is the enemy of humanity and human values” (Modi, 2016)*

In 2019, the former Indian foreign secretary Dr. Subramanya Jaishankar was appointed as the Minister of External Affairs in New Delhi. From 2019 to 2022, he delivered three speeches in Paris focusing on the security challenges of terror financing, online radicalisation, and maritime terrorism. The remaining two speeches were delivered by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2023 dealing with countering cross-border terrorism, Indo-Pacific cooperation, and the importance of diplomacy in mitigating security challenges.

### **C. Press release on counterterrorism**

A total of five press releases have been identified in the Indo-French counterterrorism cooperation from the Indian foreign ministry website. The press releases on this specific topic started in 2018 with the visit of French President Emmanuel Macron to India strengthened the counterterrorism cooperation between India and France. Later, Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the 2019 G7 summit hosted by France held a discussion on counterterrorism with his counterpart. The 2019 India-France strategic dialogue in New Delhi discussed counterterrorism in the scope of the Indo-Pacific. The other two press releases deal with the India-France Joint Working Group on Counterterrorism (2019 and 2024). The 2019 meeting discussed cross-border terrorism, countering

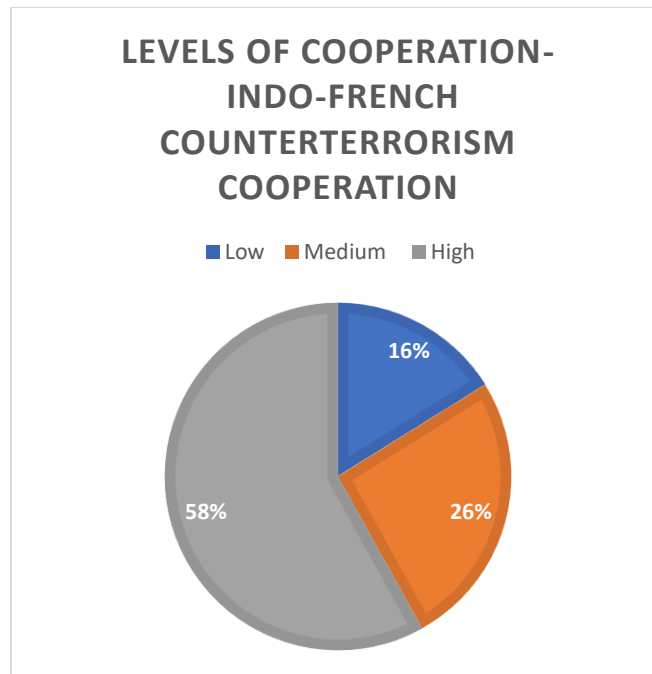
terror financing, and condemned the Pakistan-based terrorist organisation *Jaish-e-Muhammed* for the 2019 Pulwama attack in the Indian-administered Kashmir. The 2024 meeting discussed terror challenges, and developments in the Afghanistan-Pakistan region and assessed anti-India separatist activities happening in the diaspora space. This development is related to the focus of the study looking at the impact of diaspora-led activism and resistance on India's bilateral counterterrorism cooperation.

#### **4.5.3 Levels of Cooperation**

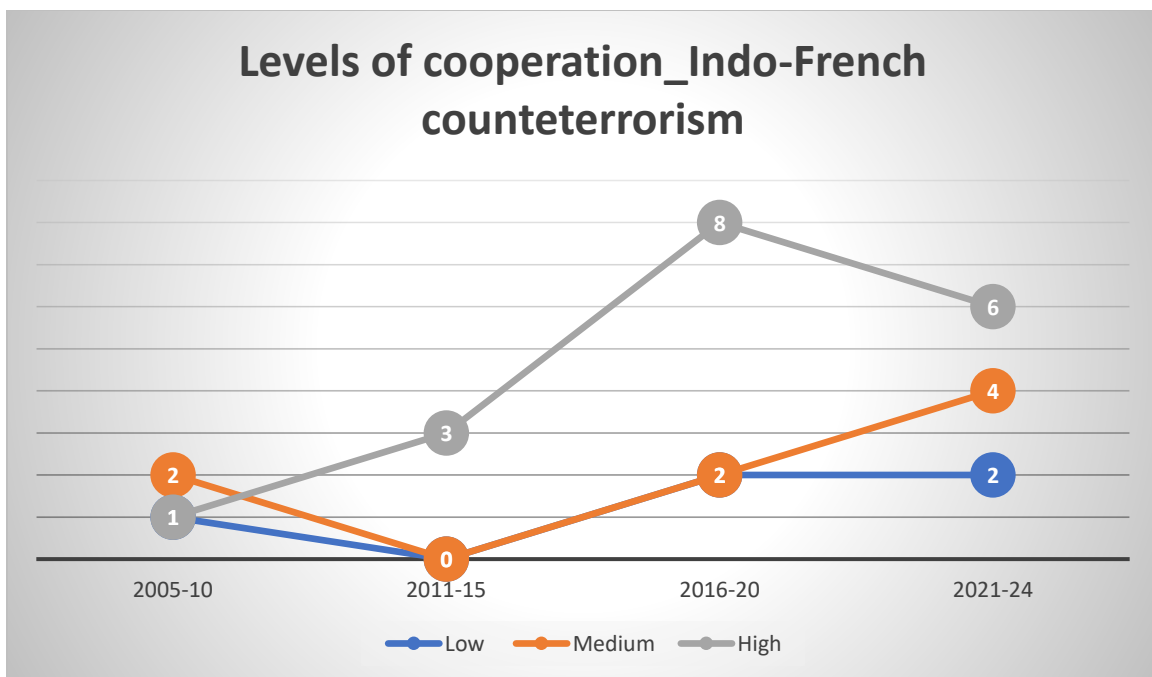
The statement of the 18 official documents including joint statements, speeches, and press releases has been categorised into low, medium, and high levels of cooperation.

- A. Low level of cooperation:** Documents that mention combating terrorism but do not reflect any significant actions from both sides.
- B. Medium level of cooperation:** Documents that condemn terrorism and discuss plans between India and France to counter global terrorism.
- C. High level of cooperation:** Documents that reflect strong engagement and actions between India and France in counterterrorism cooperation. These include documents that talk about joint collaborative efforts like the working group or other kind of closer policy engagement.

The total 31 documents consisting of joint statements, speeches, and press releases will be represented graphically to understand the levels of cooperation in the Indo-French counterterrorism partnership.



*Figure 2 Levels of cooperation- India-France Counterterrorism cooperation*



*Figure 3 Levels of cooperation- Indo-French counterterrorism cooperation- Line Graph*

In Fig.2, low (5), medium (8), and high (18) levels of cooperation have been observed in the Indo-French counterterrorism partnership. Within the joint statement, high levels of cooperation (13) have been observed followed by medium (3) and lower (2) engagement. Within the speeches, medium (4) levels of cooperation have been observed followed by high (3) and low (1). Finally, high (2) and low (2) levels of cooperation have been observed followed by medium (1) for press releases.

Figure 3 represents the Indo-French counterterrorism cooperation (2005-24) levels using a line graph. During 2005-10, the low level of cooperation was very minimal (1). Later it was zero during the 2011-15 period. From 2016-24, low-level cooperation (2) has been showing limited and similar patterns of engagement. The medium level of cooperation was limited (2) in 2005-10. During 2011-15, there was zero medium cooperation within Indo-French counterterrorism. Further, the medium-level cooperation witnessed an increasing trend from 2016-20 (2) to 2021-24 (4). Finally, the high-level cooperation within Indo-French counterterrorism cooperation observed an increased trend throughout the years. From 2005-10 to 2011-15, the high-level cooperation within Indo-French engagement increased from 1 to 3. Then, the high-level cooperation spiked up from 3 (2011-15) to 8 (2016-20). In 2021-24, there has been a minimal fall in high-level cooperation from 8 to 6. Overall, higher (58%) levels of cooperation have been observed followed by medium (26%) and low-level engagement (16%) in the Indo-French counterterrorism cooperation.

#### **4.6 Diaspora activism**

For the study, the South diaspora-led activism/resistance based in France has been mapped out using content analysis of online sources. The data for mapping the diaspora activism has been obtained through online sources that include news sources (French, Indian, and international media sources), diaspora-run websites, and other sources. The following keywords ‘Indian diaspora

protest France’, ‘anti-India protest’, ‘Kashmir protest France’, ‘Khalistan protest France’, and ‘South Asian diaspora violence France’ were used for obtaining data on diaspora activism. The collected data on resistance and activism has been classified into the binary categories of peaceful and violent actions.

<b>Activism/resistance category</b>	<b>Number of observations</b>	<b>Peaceful/ Violent</b>
Kashmir (Anti-India)	6	Peaceful
Kashmir (Anti-Pakistan)	4	Peaceful
Anti-Indian Government (CAA, NRC, Delhi Riots)	2	Peaceful
Khalistan (Anti-India)	1	Peaceful

*Table 2. Nature of Diaspora Activism – India and France*

To begin, France has observed 13 cases of South Asian diaspora-led activism and resistance from 2019 to 2024 (obtained through content analysis). All these protests by the South Asian diaspora in France have been peaceful. Out of the 13 cases in France, most of the activism/resistance has been focused on the Kashmir movement (10). The Kashmir activism and resistance have been led by the Pakistani and Kashmiri diaspora within France. Contesting these efforts, the Indian side has been active in conducting anti-Pakistan protests within France. The diaspora-led activism and resistance within France on Kashmir started in the wake of the post-Article 370 abrogation period. In August 2019, the Indian Government abrogated ‘Article 370’ which previously granted special status to the Indian-administered side of Kashmir. The period of 2019 witnessed two major Kashmir protests led by Kashmiris, Pakistani, Indian, French, and Arab diaspora. The coming together of Arab and French people in the Kashmir protest has been an interesting observation. The Embassy of Pakistan in France has been active in collaborating with the Pakistani diaspora in

organising the Kashmir Solidarity Day seminar in 2022 and 2024. In 2024, the Pakistani diaspora organisations like the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) Europe zone chapter and the Jammu Kashmir Forum held two anti-India protests in Kashmir.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Group</b>	<b>Movement</b>	<b>Category (Violent and Peaceful)</b>
2019 (August)	Kashmiri and Pakistani diaspora	Anti-Government Protest (370 and 35A)	Peaceful
2019 (September)	Kashmiri, Pakistan, French and Arab	Anti-Government Protest (370 and 35A)	Peaceful
2019 (December)	Indian diaspora	Anti-Government protest	Peaceful
2020 (March)	Indian diaspora	Anti-Government protest	Peaceful
2020 (October)	Indian diaspora	Anti-Pakistan activism by Indian diaspora (Kashmir)	Peaceful
2021 (October)	Indian diaspora	Anti-Pakistan activism by Indian diaspora (Kashmir)	Peaceful
2022 (February)	Embassy of Pakistan, Paris and Pakistani diaspora	Pakistani and Kashmiri community	Peaceful
2022 (October)	Indian diaspora	Anti-Pakistan activism by Indian diaspora (Kashmir)	Peaceful
2023 (October)	Gurduwara Prabadank Committee France and European Sikh Organization (Khalistan)	Khalistan	Peaceful
2023 (October)	Indian diaspora	Anti-Pakistan activism by Indian diaspora (Kashmir)	Peaceful
2024 (February)	Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front Europe Zone Chapter (Kashmir)	Kashmir	Peaceful

2024 (February)	The Jammu Kashmir Forum, France	Kashmir	Peaceful
2024 (February)	Embassy of Pakistan, France and Pakistani diaspora	Kashmir	Peaceful

*Table 3- South Asian Diaspora Activism/Resistance- France (2019-24)*

The Indian diaspora of France protested in 2019 and 2020 against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), the National Register of Citizens (NRC), and the Delhi riots. From 2020 to 2023, the Indian diaspora conducted four anti-Pakistan protests contesting its role in harbouring terrorism within Kashmir. During the 2021 protest, it is interesting to observe that a Member of the European Parliament (MEP) joined the Indian diaspora in protesting against Pakistan. Respondent one believes that these pro-India protests are organised by Indian diplomatic missions. He shares his experience of traveling and witnessing both anti-India and pro-Kashmir protests during his annual trips to Brussels. The respondent also shared that the online space of technology and social media is polarising Hindu nationalism and anti-minority sentiments among the diaspora community. Respondent two shares that the Hindu diaspora has been engaged in lawful activism and activities creating more communal tensions within Europe. She shared her experience of getting an invitation from a Hindu diaspora group in Europe for a private movie screening of ‘The Kashmir Files’. The director was conducting a pan-European screening of the film and held discussions with the diaspora community. Hence, the Hindu diaspora radicalisation is an emerging concern in Europe.

Only a single Sikh Khalistan movement led by *Gurduwara Prabhadank* Committee France and the European Sikh Organisation against the persecution of the Sikh community has been held in



2023. Overall, the South Asian diaspora-led activism and resistance have been low, and all the limited cases of diaspora activism have been peaceful.

#### **4.7 Conclusion**

The Indo-French counterterrorism cooperation explored the colonial history, bilateral relations, and counterterrorism cooperation between India and France. A total of 31 documents (18 joint statements, 8 speeches, and 5 press releases) were identified within the Indo-French counterterrorism cooperation. The 31 documents were analysed based on the timeline, areas of cooperation, and levels of cooperation. Within the cooperation, higher levels (18) of cooperation followed by medium (8) and lower (5) levels of cooperation were identified. Hence, the Indo-French counterterrorism cooperation reflects a pattern of higher levels of cooperation. The South Asian diaspora-led activism/resistance (13) is lower in France. Out of the 13 cases, 10 belong to the Kashmiri activism and resistance. All the cases of diaspora activism/resistance have been peaceful in France. Applying the theoretical framework, the lower levels of diaspora-led activism/resistance have resulted in higher levels of Indo-French counterterrorism cooperation between France and India. To conclude, the findings confirm higher levels of counterterrorism (between India and France) and lower levels of peaceful South Asian-led diaspora and activism in France.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Indo-German:**

### **Counterterrorism cooperation and diaspora activism**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

The fifth chapter focuses on Indo-German counterterrorism cooperation and South Asian diaspora activism within Germany. The chapter discusses pre-independence history, bilateral relations, and counterterrorism engagement between India and Germany. Using content analysis, the Indo-German counterterrorism agreements and South Asian diaspora-led activism have been mapped out.

#### **5.2 Pre-Independence history**

During the First World War, the Indian subcontinent was ruled by the British Empire. The Indian soldiers participated in the war efforts on the western front for the British Indian Army. At the same time, the pro-independence activists approached the Germans to assist in the freedom struggle against the British (Nijjar, 2019). This led to the famous Hindu-German conspiracy, a series of attempts between 1914 and 1917 by Indian nationalists living abroad (diaspora) to launch a pan-Indian rebellion against the British Raj (Nijjar, 2019). During this time, the Indian nationalists collaborated with the Germans for weapons and logistical support to fight against the British Empire (Laursen, 2017). However, British intelligence was successful in stopping the rebellion with the assistance offered by the United States of America by arresting key Indian

freedom fighters (Nijjar, 2019). In the United States, the Hindu-German conspiracy trial took place resulting in the conviction of Indian diaspora freedom fighters (Nijjar, 2019).

In the Second World War, two and a half million Indian volunteers joined the Allied war efforts against the Axis powers (Roy K. , 2009). Subhash Chandra Bose aka *Netaji*, a pro-Indian radical Independence leader made efforts to seek military assistance and alliance with Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan. Further, the *Indische Legion* or *Azad Hind Fauj* (Free India Legion) was formed out of the Indian political prisoners as the 950<sup>th</sup> regiment of the German Army serving as a liberation force against the British Empire (Normann, 1997). During the 1940s, Bose established the Azad Hind Radio sponsored by Nazi Germany as a medium to encourage the Indians to fight against the British Empire (Roy B. , 2023). In the same year, the *Zentrale Freies Indien* (Free India Centre) was established in Germany as a European branch of the Azad Hind provisional government (Banerjee, 2002). However, the Germans were unwilling to ally with Bose due to his lack of popularity at the global level compared to Indian freedom fighters like Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru. This led to Bose's exit from Germany, and he departed to seek support from Imperial Japan leading his followers leaderless and powerless losing the significance of the movement. Still, Germany holds a significant part in the Indian freedom struggle against the British.

### **5.3 Bilateral relations (1947-present)**

The Independent Republic of India established formal diplomatic relations with the Federal Republic of Germany in 1951 (Gallenkamp, 2009). At the same time, Germany was quite critical of India during the initial phase of post-independence. During the 1960s, Germany condemned India for liberating the Portuguese colonised territory of Goa supporting Salazar's dictatorial regime of Portugal (Keesing's Record of World Events, 1962). Later, Germany was critical of

India's role in the 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War (resulting in the creation of Bangladesh from Pakistan) and the 1998 nuclear test conducted by the sub-continent (Bhardwaj, 2023).

During the twenty-first century, India and Germany entered a strategic partnership in 2021 enhancing political, security, trade, scientific, and cultural cooperation with each other (MEA, 2014). The shared values of democracy, the rule of law, and mutual interest in promoting global peace form the cornerstone of Indo-German relations. This reached a high point with the launch of the Intergovernmental Consultation (IGC) by India and Germany in 2011 (MEA, 2014). This mechanism which takes place every two years involves the heads of governments performing a comprehensive review of existing cooperation and identifying new areas for future engagement between India and Germany.

High-level state visits with regular interaction involving state leaders (from both sides) on bilateral and multilateral levels have made diplomatic relations stronger between India and Germany. The 6<sup>th</sup> Inter-Governmental Consultation between India and Germany took place in May 2022 (MEA, 2022). Following the consultation, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Germany in June 2022 to attend the 47<sup>th</sup> G7 Summit hosted by Deutschland (MEA, 2022). In February 2023, German Chancellor Scholz visited India heading a high-level business delegation with CEOs from various German companies seeking to invest in India (MEA, 2023). Later in September 2023, Chancellor Scholz joined the G20 summit hosted by New Delhi. Hence, the high-level state visit constitutes an integral part of the evolving Indo-German friendship.

From the German viewpoint, India's growing economic power position is a factor shaping the increased bilateral trade relations. India views Germany as the most important trading partner in the European Union. Improving trade has been a major focus of high-level diplomatic visits between India and Germany. As per the Indian government data, Germany is the ninth-largest

investor in India receiving a cumulative Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) of 14.1 million dollars (April 2000 to March 2023) (MEA, 2023). Around 2000 German companies have invested in various sectors across India (MEA, 2023). Whereas roughly 215 Indian companies primarily in manufacturing, IT, pharma, and biotech sectors operate within Germany (MEA, 2023). Hence, trade is a crucial component of Indo-German friendship.

Over time, defence and security are becoming an important part of the Indo-German bilateral relationship. The ‘Bilateral Defence Cooperation Agreement’ signed in 2006 forms the basis of the security cooperation between India and Germany (MEA, 2023). The agreement aimed at strengthening and deepening the Indo-German defence cooperation dealing with the exchange and training of military personnel, joint defence production, and increasing technology transfer between both countries (MEA, 2023). A High Defence Committee was established headed by the State Secretary (German Ministry of Defence) and defence Secretary (Indian Ministry of Defence) that meets every year to discuss defence cooperation and approve joint projects between India and Germany (MEA, 2023). In 2007, an agreement on ‘Mutual Protection of Classified Information’ was signed between India and Germany to improve security and intelligence cooperation (Gallenkamp, 2009).

Visits by heads of military institutions of both countries have led to improved security cooperation. In March 2019, German Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Eberhard Zorn visited India (MEA, 2023). Three years later, Former German Naval Chief Vice Admiral Kay-Achim Schönbach visited India in 2022 (MEA, 2023). In 2023, German Defence Minister Boris Pistorius visited India, held a bilateral meeting with Indian Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, and paid a visit to the Indian Navy’s Western Naval Command in Mumbai (MEA, 2023).

In 2022, German naval frigate Bayern made a port of call at Mumbai conducting a naval exercise with the Indian Naval frigate INS TRIKAND as part of its 7-month deployment program in the Indo-Pacific (Businessworld , 2022). In August 2024, the German Air Force is likely to participate in a large-scale military exercise hosted by the Indian Air Force in South India (Internationale Politik Quarterly, 2024).

#### **5.4 Counterterrorism cooperation**

Both Germany and India face the challenges of global terrorism. The 2008 Mumbai attacks prompted India to engage in bilateral and multilateral counterterrorism cooperation. The 2006 Cologne train bombing and the 2016 Berlin Christmas market attack have improved counterterrorism infrastructure within Germany. Both Germany and India have established a bilateral working group on counterterrorism that discusses contemporary security challenges faced by countries like cross-border terrorism, online radicalisation, extremism, etc (Mukherjee, 2020). The 8<sup>th</sup> meeting of the India-Germany joint working group on counterterrorism was held in 2019 (MEA, 2019). During the 6<sup>th</sup> India-Germany Inter-Governmental Consultations, Prime Minister Modi and Chancellor Scholz discussed cross-border terrorism, intelligence sharing to improve deradicalisation efforts, and the role of FATF in countering terror financing. Hence, India and Germany have shown significant interest in working towards security and counterterrorism efforts.

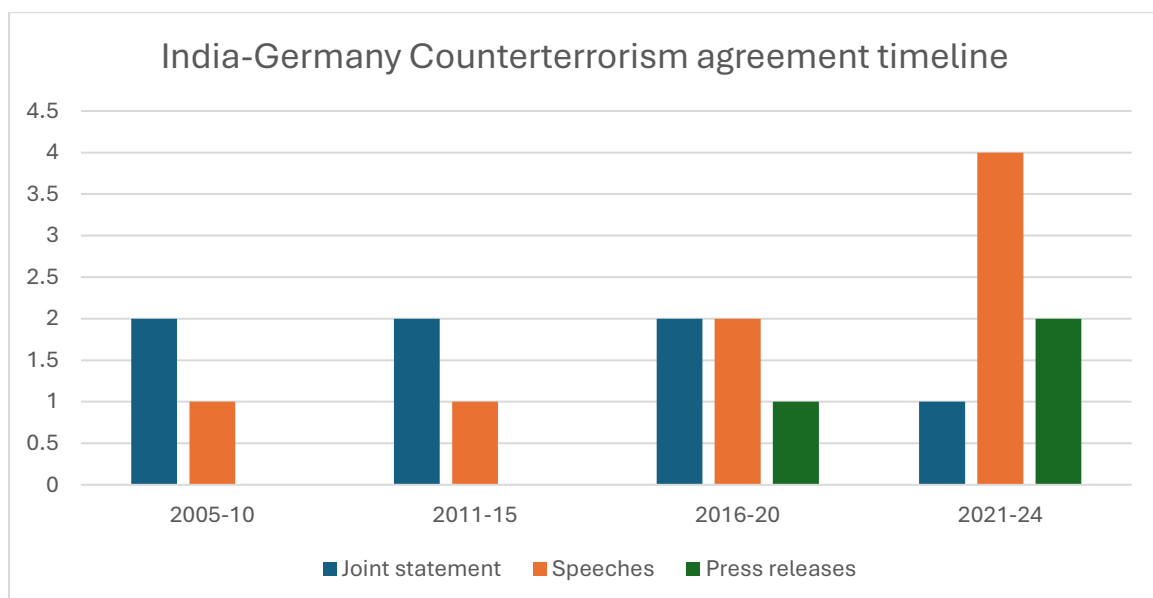
#### **5.5 Indo-German counterterrorism agreements**

The counterterrorism cooperation between India and Germany has been mapped out using qualitative content analysis (QCA) of joint statements, speeches, and press releases obtained from the official website of the Indian foreign ministry (Ministry of External Affairs). Content Analysis is a systematic method of analysing textual and visual information. The official documents on

Indo-Germany counterterrorism cooperation (2005 to 2024) have been selected for the study. The keywords like ‘counterterrorism’, ‘terror’, ‘extremism’, and ‘security’ have been used for identifying the Indo-German counterterrorism cooperation documents. The selected data has been categorised based on the timeline (year), agreement content, and statement of the agreement.

### 5.5.1 Timeline

A total of 18 documents from 2005- 2024 on Indo-German counterterrorism cooperation including joint statements, speeches, and press releases have been identified for the study. This includes 7 joint statements, 8 speeches, and 3 press releases published by the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. Initially, the general documents of the Indo-German cooperation were obtained from the MEA website. Further, the above-mentioned keywords have been used to identify the counterterrorism documents. The timeline of the 18 documents will be represented graphically to understand the trend of counterterrorism engagement between Germany and India.



*Figure 4. India-Germany counterterrorism cooperation agreement timeline (2005-10)*

A total of 7 joint statements on counterterrorism have been issued by India and Germany. In Figure 4, the timeline has been divided into 2005-10, 2011-15, 2016-20, and 2021-24. In the 2005-10 period, two joint statements have been issued by India and Germany. The same trend of two joint statements has been reflected in the 2011-15 and 2016-20 periods showing a consistent pattern of engagement. However, the 2021-24 period witnessed only a single joint statement on counterterrorism issued by India and Germany.

A total of 8 speeches have been identified on Indo-German counterterrorism cooperation. The speeches have been delivered by former Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh (2010), current Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi (2015, 2017, 2019, 2022 and 2023), Indian Foreign Secretary (2021) and Minister of External Affairs (MEA) (2021). During the 2005-10 and 2011-15 periods, only a single speech on counterterrorism has been identified. During 2016-20, two speeches were delivered on Indo-German counterterrorism. Further, the 2021-24 period witnessed a manifold increase from 2 to 4 speeches delivered on Indo-German counterterrorism cooperation. The high-level visits from India and Germany are the reason behind the increased speeches on Indo-German counterterrorism cooperation from the Indian side.

A total of three press releases have been issued on Indo-German counterterrorism cooperation from the Indian side. In 2016-20, a single press release on the India- Germany Joint Working Group on counterterrorism was issued. Further, two press releases on counterterrorism as part of the India-Germany consultation meeting and German foreign Ministers' visit to India were released in 2022. Overall, the India-German counterterrorism cooperation shows a decreasing pattern for joint statements and an increasing trend for speeches and press releases.



## 5.5.2 Major areas of counterterrorism cooperation

### A. Joint statements

All 7 joint statements issued by India and Germany condemn terrorism in all forms and manifestations. Specific areas of counter-terrorism cooperation within the joint statements (2005-2024) have been classified based on the number of observations (identified using the above-mentioned keywords). In Table 4, the major areas of cooperation have been represented.

Areas of cooperation	Number of observations
Multilateralism	5
India-German Joint Working Group (JWG) on Counterterrorism	5
Countering Terror financing	3
Extremism	1

*Table 4. Areas of cooperation-Indo-Germany counterterrorism*

Both multilateralism and bilateral working group cooperation (5 observations) on counterterrorism constitute the biggest area of cooperation between India and Germany. Both Germany and India have reaffirmed their commitment to the multilateral framework for combating terrorism. Also, the 2007, 2017, and 2019 India-Germany joint statements have called for the adoption of the ‘Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism’. The 2022 joint statement issued by India and Germany has called for effective and reformed multilateralism for combating terrorism.

Another major area of cooperation within joint statements has been focused on countering terror finance. This engagement had begun after the 2017 visit of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Germany. Further, the engagement was reflected in the 2019 joint statement issued during the

visit of German Chancellor Olaf Scholz to New Delhi. Also, countering terror financing has been a major area of focus in the 6<sup>th</sup> India-Germany Intergovernmental Consultation that took place in 2022.

## **B. Speeches**

Between 2005 to 2024, a total of eight speeches on Indo-German counterterrorism cooperation were issued by the Indian Government. The 2010 speech by Former Indian Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh talks about working on counterterrorism through multilateralism and shared values of democracy.

Further, the Hindi speeches delivered by the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2015 and 2017 strengthened the Indo-German counterterrorism cooperation. A few excerpts from 2015 and 2017 have been translated into English.

Excerpts from the 2015 Hindi speech of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the visit of German Chancellor Angel Merkel to India.

Translated

*“Our partnership will also grow in areas like defence manufacturing, trade in advanced technology, intelligence, and countering terrorism and radicalism. These are important security dimensions of our expanding relationship.”*  
(Modi, 2015)

Excerpts from the 2017 Hindi speech of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his visit to Germany.

Translated

*“**Terrorism and extremism** are big security challenges in the path of the prosperity of our society. We want a strong and united action against all forms of terrorism. Today we have discussed the possibilities of **bilateral and international cooperation** on this subject in detail. We will also strengthen our cooperation in the fields of **cyber security and aviation security**.”* (Modi, 2015)

Both these speeches signalled India’s clear intention to enhance counterterrorism cooperation with Germany. The increasing pattern of speeches within Indo-German counterterrorism cooperation shows the enhancing bilateral security engagement between India and Germany. The 2019 speech by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the visit of German Chancellor Olaf Scholz reflected the engagement to work together against extremism. The 2021 statements by the Indian Foreign Secretary and Indian Foreign Minister reflected the intention to work on cybersecurity to combat terrorism. Finally, the 2022 and 2023 speeches of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi discuss the fight against terrorism, separatism, and cross-border terrorism through Indo-German counterterrorism cooperation.

### **C. Press release**

There are only three press releases that mention the counterterrorism cooperation within Indo-German bilateral engagement. The press releases on this specific area started in 2019. The 8<sup>th</sup> meeting of the India-Germany joint working group on counterterrorism took place in 2019. The meeting discussed cross-border terrorism in South Asia, intelligence cooperation, and disrupting

terror networks and their financial channels. Further, two press releases on counterterrorism within the Indo-German partnership were released in 2022. The India-Germany consultation on UN and Multilateral issues and the 2022 visit of the German Foreign Minister discussed ways to improve bilateral counterterrorism cooperation between India and Germany. Overall, the press releases deal with institutional arrangements and diplomatic high-level visits between India and Germany.

### **5.5.3 Levels of cooperation**

The statement of the 18 official documents including joint statements, speeches, and press releases has been categorised into low, medium, and high levels of cooperation.

- A. Low level of cooperation:** Documents that mention combating terrorism but do not reflect any significant actions from both sides.
- B. Medium level of cooperation:** Documents that condemn terrorism and discuss plans between India and France to counter global terrorism.
- C. High level of cooperation:** Documents that reflect strong engagement and actions between India and Germany in counterterrorism cooperation. These include documents that talk about joint collaborative efforts like the working group or other kinds of closer policy engagements.

The total 18 documents consisting of joint statements, speeches, and press releases will be represented graphically to understand the levels of cooperation in the Indo-German counterterrorism partnership.

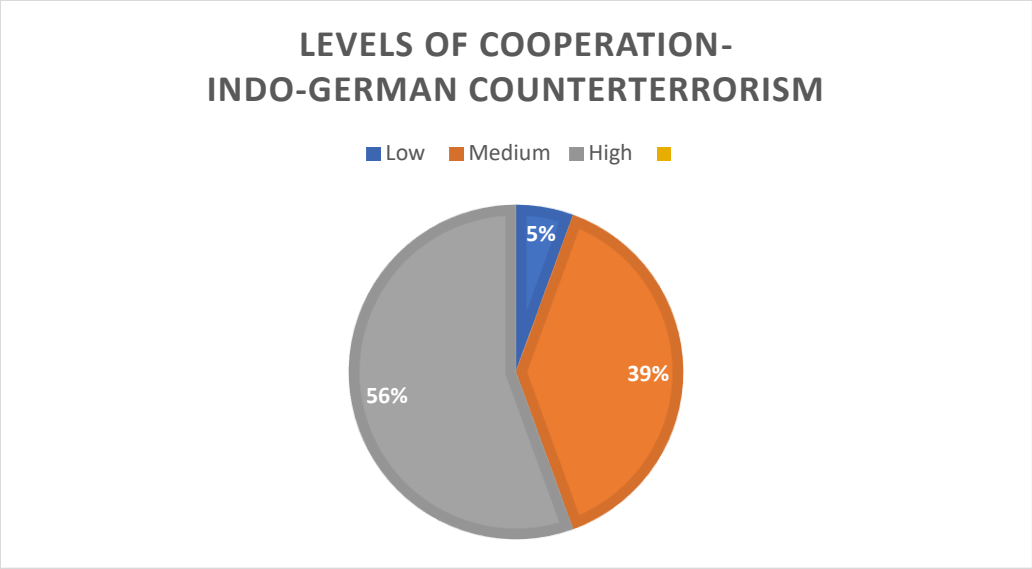


Figure 5. Levels of cooperation-Indo-German counterterrorism cooperation

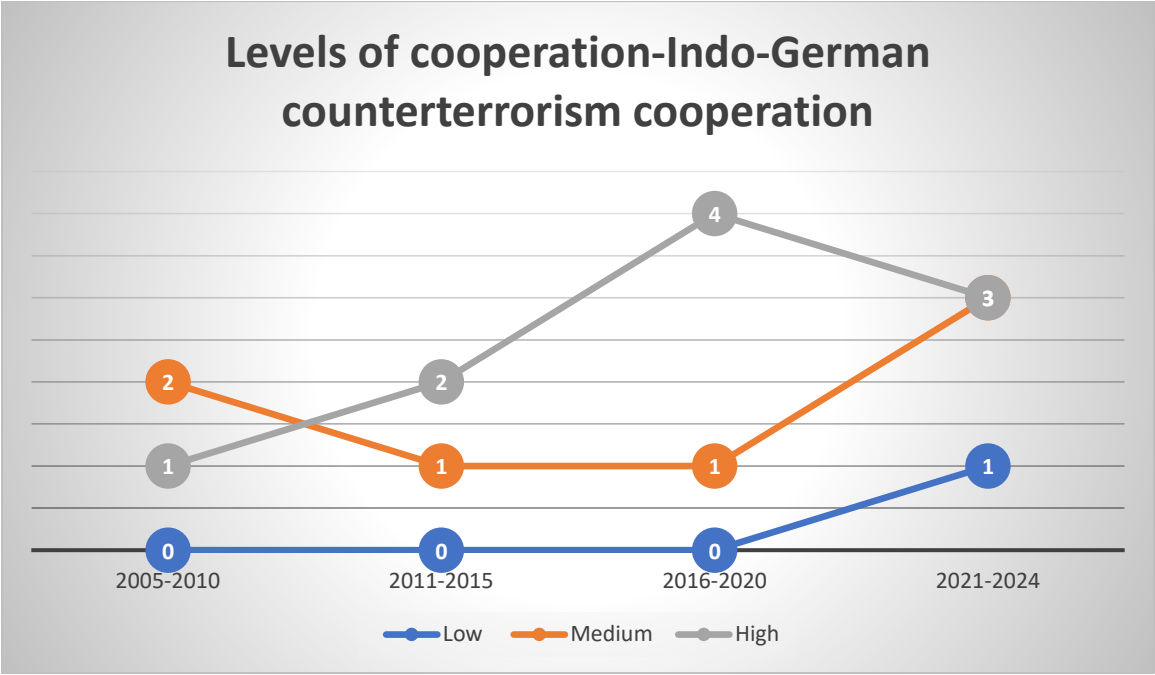


Figure 6 Indo-German Counterterrorism Cooperation-Line Graph

In Figure 5, low (6%), medium (39%) and high (56%) levels of cooperation have been observed in the Indo-German counterterrorism cooperation. Within joint statements, higher levels of cooperation (5) have been observed followed by medium-level engagement (2). For speeches, higher levels (4) have been observed followed by medium (3) and lower (1) levels of cooperation. The press releases show higher levels (2) of cooperation followed by medium (1) engagement in counterterrorism. The higher (10) and medium (7) levels of engagement are close to each other in the Indo-German counterterrorism cooperation.

In Figure 6, the Indo-German counterterrorism cooperation (2005-24) levels have been represented on a line graph. The low level of cooperation remained zero within Indo-German cooperation from 2005-20. In 2021-24, a single low-level cooperation has been recorded in the Indo-German counterterrorism. The medium-level cooperation declined from 2 (2005-10) to 1 (2011-15) and remained the same (1) in 2016-20. Further, there was an increase in medium-level cooperation within Indo-German counterterrorism from 1 (2016-20) to 3 (2021-14). There was only a single high-level cooperation within Indo-German engagement in 2005-10. In 2011-15, it increased from 1 (2005-10) to 2 medium-level cooperation. In 2016-20, the high-level cooperation within Indo-German counterterrorism doubled from 2 to 4. Further, there was a slight decline in high-level cooperation from 4 to 3 in 2021-24. Overall, the pattern shows a medium to high level of engagement within the Indo-German counterterrorism cooperation.

## **5.6 Diaspora activism**

For the study, the South Asian diaspora-led activism/resistance based in Germany has been mapped out using content analysis of online sources. The collected data on resistance and activism will be classified into the binary categories of peaceful and violent actions. To begin, Germany has observed 16 cases from the South Asian diaspora from 2014 to 2024 (obtained through online

sources). The online sources include new sources (Indian, German, and international networks) and diaspora-run websites. The keywords ‘Anti-India protest Germany’, ‘Kashmir protest Germany’, ‘Khalistan protest Germany’, and ‘South Asian violence’ were used to identify the diaspora activism/resistance from online sources. All these protests by the South Asian diaspora in Germany have been peaceful. Respondent one argues that Germany has more South Asian protests compared to France within Europe. Mainly the protests have been organised by Indian, Pakistani, and Kashmiri diaspora. In Table 5, the nature and number of South Asian diaspora activism/resistance within Germany has been represented.

<b>Activism/Resistance</b>	<b>Number of observations</b>	<b>Peaceful/Violent</b>
Kashmir (Anti-India)	8	Peaceful
Khalistan/ Sikh separatism (Anti-India)	4	Peaceful
Anti- Indian Government Protest (CAA, NRC, Delhi Riots)	4	Peaceful
Kashmir (Anti-Pakistan)	1	Peaceful
Anti-Germany Protest	1	Peaceful
Total	16	

*Table 5. Nature and number of South Asian Diaspora activism and resistance*

The anti-India Kashmir activism/resistance (8) accounts for 50% of the total protest data collected for Germany. These are largely organised by the Kashmiri and Pakistani diaspora. One of the protests in 2014 was joined by the Sikh diaspora showing the pan solidarity between the Kashmir and Khalistan movements. Respondent one shared about the Sikh solidarity for the Palestinians who are also fighting for statehood. The period from 2015 to 2020 witnessed 4 anti-India Kashmir

protests from the Kashmiri and Pakistani diaspora. The 2019 abrogation of Article 370 by the Indian Government could have been the reason for the increasing trend in the rise of anti-India Kashmir protests. Respondent one argues that the identity assertion of Kashmiri has become stronger after the abrogation of Article 370 by the Indian government. He shared his experience of a conversation with a Kashmiri driver in Europe who is neither affiliated with India nor Pakistan and chooses to be an independent Kashmiri (during the post abrogation period). One of the 2019 rallies has been organised in collaboration with the Pakistani diaspora organisation ‘Pakistan Friendship Federation Europe’ (Germany Chapter) in collaboration with Germany-based civil society ‘International Society for Human Rights’ (ISHR). This shows the collaborative pattern of the host country (Germany) civil society and diaspora organisations for organising activism on homeland conflict (Kashmir).

<b>Year</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Group</b>	<b>Movement</b>	<b>Category</b>
2014 (August)	Sikhs to hold protest outside Indian consulate in Frankfurt (Germany) on 15th August	Sikh diaspora	Khalistan	Peaceful
2015 (April)	Sikhs, and Kashmiris stage protest during Narendra Modi’s during his visit to Germany; Pro-freedom slogans raised	Sikh (Shiromani Akali Dal Germany, Babbar Khalsa Germany) and Kashmiri diaspora	Khalistan and Kashmir	Peaceful
2016 (April)	Sikhs Rally In Germany Against Gurdwara Attack	Sikh diaspora	Khalistan	Peaceful
2016 (September)	Protest in Germany for Kashmir Cause 18-09-2016 - 92NewsHD	Kashmiri diaspora	Kashmir	Peaceful



2017 (July)	Kashmiri rallied for Burhan Wani in Hamburg- G20	Kashmiri diaspora	Kashmir	Peaceful
2019 (February)	Indian diaspora protest against terrorism	Indian diaspora	Anti-Pakistan protest	Peaceful
2019 (October)	Germany: Kashmiri and Pakistani community protest against India	Kashmiri and Pakistani diaspora	Kashmir	Peaceful
2019 (October)	Protest rally in Germany raises human rights violations in Kashmir	Pakistan friendship federation Europe (Germany Chapter) and German based international Society for Human Rights (ISHR)	Kashmir	Peaceful
2020 (January)	Indians in Germany livid about Citizenship Act	Indian diaspora	Anti-Government protest	Peaceful
2020 (March)	Indian diaspora assembles in 18 European cities to condemn the Delhi riots.	Indian diaspora	Anti-Government protest	Peaceful
2020 (October)	Indian diaspora opposes BJP MP Tejasvi Surya as speaker at Germany conference, call him 'bigoted'	Indian diaspora	Anti-Government protest	Peaceful
2021 (July)	First Kashmir Conference held in Germany Participants unanimously approve resolution	Embassy of Pakistan, Berlin and Pakistani diaspora	Kashmir	Peaceful

	against Indian aggression			
2022 (May)	PM Modi faces protests in Berlin for human rights violations in India	Indian diaspora	Anti-Government protest	Peaceful
2022 (May)	Kashmiris across Europe reject Yasin Malik's farcical sentencing	Kashmir diaspora	Kashmir	Peaceful
2022 (October)	Kashmiris stage a protest outside the Indian embassy in Frankfurt.	EU-Pak Friendship Federation Germany	Kashmir	Peaceful
2023 (May)	Khalistan Zindabad Slogans Raised At Gurdwara Sikh Center In Germany	Sikh diaspora	Khalistan	Peaceful
2023 (August)	The baby at the center of an India-Germany diplomatic row	Indian diaspora	Anti-Germany Protest	Peaceful

*Table 6. South Asian Diaspora led activism and resistance in Germany (2014-24)*

In Table 6, the diaspora-led activism/resistance (2019-2023) has been mapped using content analysis. From 2021 to 2023, three anti-India Kashmiri activism/resistance took place in Germany. Respondent one feels that the fear of exclusion is a major factor influencing activism among the Kashmiri diasporas in Germany. He also argued that diaspora communities from displaced and conflict zones are more prone to get manipulated compared to groups from normal peaceful backgrounds. However, the same respondent contradicted the statement when he mentioned about

Hindu diaspora (peaceful background) in the US who are becoming more religious in the diaspora space. In both cases, deep-seated identity crisis and fear of social exclusion become factors affecting diaspora behaviours.

In one of these cases, it is interesting to observe that the Embassy of Pakistan, Berlin collaborated with the Pakistan diaspora to organise the first Kashmir conference in Germany. On the other hand, there was only a single anti-Pakistan protest (2019) from the Indian diaspora in Germany condemning Pakistan's role in harbouring terrorism within Kashmir.

Between 2020 and 2022, three cases of activism/resistance against the Indian government took place in Germany. These protests took place condemning India's Citizenship Amendment Act, the Delhi Riots, and the visit of a controversial Indian right-wing politician to Germany.

The second major diaspora community is the Khalistan or Sikh extremists demanding a separate state involving the territories of present Pakistan and India. Within Germany, four cases of activism/resistance have been observed from the Sikh diaspora. These movements are supported by Khalistan groups (Babbar Khalsa) in collaboration with overseas center-right Punjabi political parties (Shiromani Akali Dal Germany). The 2014, 2015 and 2016 protests by the Sikh diaspora show a consistent pattern of engagement. Respondent two argues that the treatment of minorities (within India) and the role of the Sikh community in agrarian protest are factors increasing Sikh diaspora activism. Further, there was a break in the Sikh diaspora activism. However, Khalistan has re-emerged after the killing of Sikh separatist leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar leading to the 2023 Sikh diaspora protests within Germany. Also, Respondents one and two feel that the misuse of anti-terror legislation by India is causing greater levels of concern for minority diaspora communities. Overall, all the protests within Germany were peaceful without any public disruption.

## 5.7 Conclusion

The Indo-German counterterrorism cooperation explored the colonial history, bilateral relations, and counterterrorism cooperation between India and Germany. A total of 18 documents (7 joint statements, 8 speeches, and 3 press releases) were identified within the Indo-German counterterrorism cooperation. The 18 documents were analysed based on the timeline, areas of cooperation, and levels of cooperation. Within the cooperation, higher levels (10) of cooperation followed by medium (7) and lower (1) levels of cooperation were identified. Hence, the Indo-German counterterrorism cooperation reflects a pattern of medium to high levels of cooperation. The South Asian diaspora-led activism/resistance (16) is lower in Germany. Out of the 16 cases, 50% belong to the Kashmiri-related activism and resistance. All the cases of diaspora activism/resistance have been peaceful in Germany. Applying the theoretical framework, the lower levels of South Asian diaspora-led resistance and activism have resulted in medium to high-level cooperation in Indo-German counterterrorism. To conclude, medium to high levels of counterterrorism (between India and Germany) and lower levels of peaceful South Asian-led diaspora and activism have been observed in Germany.

## **Chapter 6**

### **Indo-British:**

### **Counterterrorism cooperation and diaspora activism**

#### **6.1 Introduction**

The sixth chapter focuses on Indo-British counterterrorism cooperation and South Asian diaspora activism/resistance within the United Kingdom. The chapter discusses pre-independence history, bilateral relations, and counterterrorism engagement between India and the United Kingdom. Using content analysis, the Indo-British counterterrorism agreement and South Asian diaspora-led activism have been mapped out between India and the United Kingdom.

#### **6.2 Colonial era**

India was a former British colonised territory ruled by Great Britain. The United Kingdom and India have a historical memory of colonialism, exploitation, and the struggle for independence. During the 1600s, the British arrived in India for trade-related purposes. Over time, the East India Company (EIC) grew powerful economically and politically engaging in local affairs. In 1757, the British grew successful in the Battle of Plassey defeating the Nawab of Bengal Siraj-ud-Daulah and his French allies establishing the company rule (Roberts, 2007). In 1857, a major rebellion was orchestrated by the Indian sepoys (soldiers) resulting in the British government taking direct control over India (that involved present India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh) (Roy K. , 2006). Further, the Independence movement led by the Indian National Congress (INC), an elite institution of educated and privileged Indians grew popular among the public (Rag, 1995). The return of Mohandas Karamchandra Gandhi (Mahatma Gandhi) from South Africa and his philosophy of

Satyagraha (non-violence) gained popularity strengthening the Indian freedom struggle. The Indian diaspora communities living in Western countries played a crucial part in the Indian freedom struggle. The diaspora community living in Britain, the United States, and other countries was involved in advocacy and raising awareness through grassroots-level activism and writings reaching out to the immigrant population (Gateway House, 2022). The financial support provided by these diaspora communities helped to sustain the freedom struggle. The immigrant community established organisations advocating for Indian Independence. Some of the diaspora population engaged in armed resistance by allying with other Asian countries fighting against the British Empire. Hence, the diaspora communities played a crucial role in the Indian struggle for independence. During the independence struggle, the Muslim League led by Muhammed Ali Jinnah demanded a separate state for the Muslims (Gupta S. K., 2002). This led to the horrific 1947 partition of India resulting in the creation of Modern India and Pakistan divided on religious lines orchestrated by the British (Chakrabarty, 2004).

### **6.3 Bilateral relations (1947- present)**

The United Kingdom and India established diplomatic relations soon after independence. During the Cold War, India and the United Kingdom had divergent viewpoints and standpoints. India was a founding member of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) led by third-world countries that did not support the United States of America (USA) and the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR) (Raghavan, 2017). Whereas the United Kingdom was the founding member of NATO and a key ally of the United States of America. During the post-independence era, the United Kingdom was vocal in criticising India's takeover of Goa (from the Portuguese), Sikkim, and the series of nuclear tests conducted by India (Akbaruddin, 2021). It has been argued that the disintegration of the USSR and the neoliberal economic reforms initiated by India have played a crucial part in the

India-UK bilateral relations (Akbaruddin, 2021). Further, both countries started working together to improve business and trade.

During the tenure of British Prime Minister David Cameron, India and the United Kingdom entered a strategic partnership in 2004 (MEA, 2014). Further, both have worked together and witnessed increased bilateral visits cooperating on trade, defence, investment, education, science and technology, and cultural engagements.

The 2015 visit of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to the United Kingdom brought momentum to the India-UK bilateral relations. The visit produced a vision statement and roadmap for deepening cooperation, especially in fields like cyber-security, counterterrorism, and maritime security (MEA, 2018). The 2016 business delegation visit to India headed by British Prime Minister Theresa May improved the business and trade cooperation strengthening the bilateral relations (MEA, 2018). Alongside bilateral visits, the Prime Ministers of both countries hold regular interaction in multilateral forms like G7, G20, BRICS, etc.

The 2015 visit of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi opened the potential for defence cooperation within the strategic partnership. Further, both countries established Defence Consultative Group (DCG) which meets on an annual basis (MEA, 2018). Within this security cooperation, counterterrorism has found a new place in the bilateral engagement between India and the United Kingdom. In 2018, the Counterterrorism dialogue was organised by the foreign offices of the UK and India (MEA, 2018). In 2022, the '15<sup>th</sup> UK-India Joint Working Group' on counterterrorism was held in London (Home Office UK, 2022). Another institutional mechanism is the 'Home Affairs Dialogue' (HAD) organised by India and the United Kingdom. The 5th Home Affairs Dialogue (HAD) took place in 2023 and discussed ongoing counter-terrorism cooperation,

advancing counterterrorism cooperation, and anti-India activities including the Khalistan extremism in the United Kingdom (PIB, 2023).

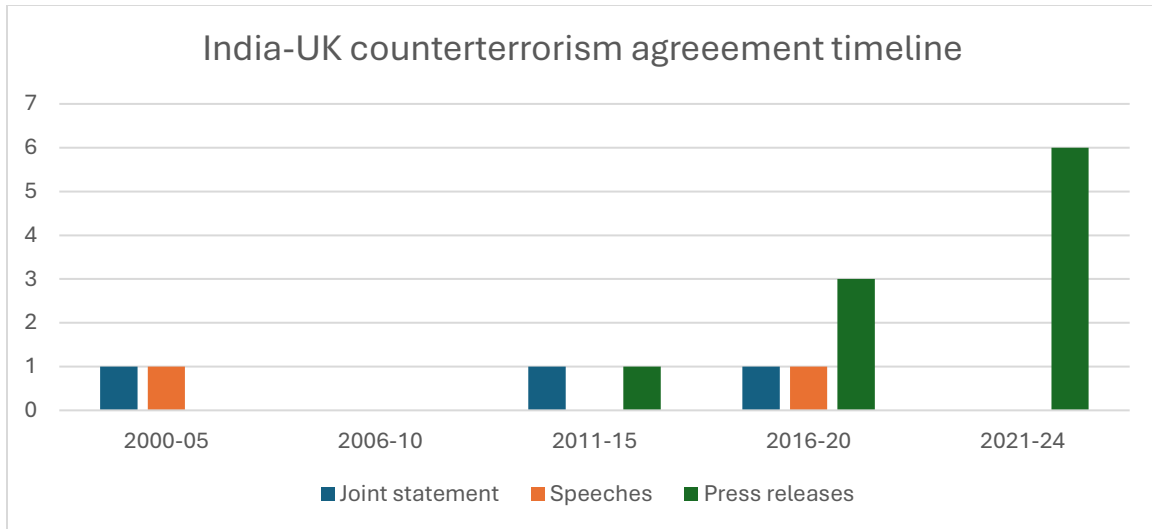
#### **6.4 Indo-British Counterterrorism Agreements**

The counterterrorism cooperation between India and the United Kingdom has been mapped out using qualitative content analysis (QCA) of joint statements, speeches, and press releases obtained from the official website of the Indian foreign ministry (Ministry of External Affairs). Content Analysis is a systematic method of analysing textual and visual information. The official documents on Indo-British counterterrorism cooperation from 2000 to 2024 have been selected for the study. Initially, the general agreements on Indo-British cooperation were selected for the study. The keywords like ‘counterterrorism’, ‘terror’, ‘extremism’, and ‘security’ have been used for identifying the Indo-British counterterrorism cooperation documents. The selected data has been categorised based on the timeline (year), agreement content, and levels of cooperation.

##### **6.4.1 Timeline**

A total of 15 documents from 2000- 2024 on Indo-British counterterrorism cooperation including joint statements, speeches, and press releases have been identified for the study. As mentioned before, these documents were selected using the above-mentioned keywords. This includes 3 joint statements, 2 speeches, and 10 press releases published by the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. In Figure 6, the timeline of the 15 documents will be represented graphically to understand the trend of counterterrorism engagement between France and India.





*Figure 7 India-UK counterterrorism cooperation timeline*

A total of 3 joint statements on counterterrorism have been issued by India and France. In Figure 6, the timeline has been divided into 2000-2005, 2006-10, 2011-15, 2016-20 and 2021-24. A total of three joint statements on counterterrorism were issued in 2002, 2013, and 2016 between India and the United Kingdom. No joint statements on counterterrorism have been issued during the 2006-10 and 2020- 2024 period.

Only two speeches by the state heads of India and the United Kingdom have been focused on counterterrorism. The first speech was made in 2002 by former United Kingdom Prime Minister Tony Blair at the Indo-UK Partnership Summit in Bangalore, India. The second speech was delivered by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the 2016 visit of the UK Prime Minister to India. No speeches have been found on Indo-British counterterrorism cooperation in 2006-2010, 2011-2015, and 2021-24 periods.

Initially, there were no press releases on Indo-British counterterrorism efforts during 2000-2005 and 2005-2010. The first press release on Indo-British counterterrorism cooperation was released in 2013. Further, three press releases (2018, 2019 and 2020) were issued showing an increasing

trend between 2015 and 2020. Between 2021 and 2024, the press releases doubled from 3 to 6 press releases (2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024) showing a consistent pattern of engagement between India and the United Kingdom.

#### **6.4.2 Major areas of counterterrorism cooperation**

All 15 documents on Indo-British counterterrorism cooperation condemn terrorism in all forms and manifestations. These areas were identified using textual analysis of the counterterrorism documents. The areas of cooperation were counted based on observations. In Table 7, specific areas of counter-terrorism cooperation within the joint statements (2005-2024) have been classified based on the number of observations.

<b>Areas of cooperation</b>	<b>Joint statement</b>	<b>Speeches</b>	<b>Press releases</b>	<b>Total observation</b>
Countering Radicalisation	1	1	5	7
Countering extremism	1	1	5	7
Joint Working Group	2	0	2	4
Maritime security	0	0	2	2
Countering terror finance	0	0	2	2

*Table 7. Areas of cooperation-Indo-British counterterrorism*

Within table 7, both countering radicalisation (7) and extremism (7) form the major areas of cooperation between India and the United Kingdom. In these areas, there have been joint

statements, speeches, and press releases identified. The major source of cooperation on radicalisation and extremism has been found in press releases. Other areas of cooperation deal with the India-UK Joint Working Group (institutional and training cooperation) (4), maritime security (2) and terror financing (2). The joint working group has been mentioned in two joint statements and two press releases within the Indo-British counterterrorism. Whereas maritime security and anti-terror finance cooperation have been only mentioned within the press releases dealing with Indo-British counterterrorism cooperation.

### **6.4.3 Speech Analysis**

The 2002 and 2016 speeches delivered by the State leaders of India and the United Kingdom must be analysed to understand the trend of Indo-British counterterrorism cooperation within the diplomatic setting.

In 2002, former British Prime Minister Tony Blair delivered a strong powerful speech condemning global terrorism during the Indo-UK partnership summit. The speech was made in the period after the 2021 attack on the Indian Parliament and Jammu & Kashmir Legislative Assembly by Pakistan-based terrorists affiliated with *Jaish-e-Muhammed*.

A few excerpts from the 2002 speech will help to understand the dynamics of Indo-British counterterrorism relations during the 2000s.

*“There can indeed be no room in any civilized society for organizations such as Lashkar-e-Toiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed - groups banned by the British government some time ago. The appalling attacks on India's Parliament of 13 December and on the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly on 1 October demonstrate more clearly than ever*

*the threat such fanatics pose not just to your democracy, but to all our democracies - and to civilized values the world over” (Blair, 2022)*

The statement shows the strong position of the United Kingdom on the terror events that happened within India. This statement compares terrorists to fanatics drawing a binary comparison between democratic civilised space and radical violence. The second part of the speech makes a connection to Kashmir and terrorism.

*“Of course, there is much focus at the moment on the issue of Kashmir and the acts of terrorism connected with it. This will feature heavily in my discussions over the coming days here and in Pakistan. But one thing is clear. Only politics not terror can solve issues like this. And the starting point of any dialogue must be the total and absolute rejection of actions such as those of 1 October and 13 December. I view an attack on your Parliament with every bit as much outrage as I would an attack on the Parliament in which I sit. It was an attack on democracy itself” (Blair, 2022)*

The statement by the former British Prime Minister shows a clear opposition to terrorism in Kashmir. However, the statement on Pakistan about discussions has been quite diplomatic considering the large number of Pakistani British diaspora living in the United Kingdom. Overall, the speech reaffirms the immortality of democracy viewing these attacks from a critical lens.

Former British Prime Minister Tony Blair concludes the speech with the following statement.

*“I would like in my address to you to set even these events in a wider context: that is how Britain and India work together, with others, to confront terrorism; but also, how we build support for the policies and the values that promote peace and justice and mitigate against extremism and terror, in all nations everywhere.” (Blair, 2022)*

This statement shows the strong bond between India and the United Kingdom showing optimism that they can work together to combat extremism and terror and bring out the democratic values of peace and justice. Respondent three feels that the speeches of Tony Blair reflected a strong authoritarian approach towards mitigating terror giving more power and resources for policing. However, the respondent opposes the existing UK counterterrorism policy arguing that the policy is making the life of Muslims difficult in the United Kingdom. According to him, the UK counterterrorism policy has increased islamophobia, discrimination, and increased minority exclusion within the society.

After a break of 14 years, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi delivered a speech that dealt with Indo-British counterterrorism cooperation. The long break could have been due to the unstable governments, internal domestic politics, and diverging focus on Indo-British trade relations. The 2016 speech by Indian Prime Narendra Modi during the visit of UK Prime Minister Theresa May to India focussed on the importance of working on mitigating radicalisation and extremism.

*“I also discussed with Prime Minister May, ways to purposefully work together to combat the growing forces of radicalization and terrorism. We agreed that it is not a limited security challenge. Its arc of threat spreads across nations and regions. Terrorists move across borders with ease and endanger the entire humanity. I conveyed our deep concerns to Prime Minister May regarding cross-border terrorism and the need for the international community to take strong action against States that support and sponsor terrorism.” (Modi, 2016)*

This signals India's clear intention to work with the United Kingdom on countering radicalisation, extremism, and cross-border terrorism. After this speech, no responses have been issued from the United Kingdom's side. This shows a declining trend within India-UK counterterrorism

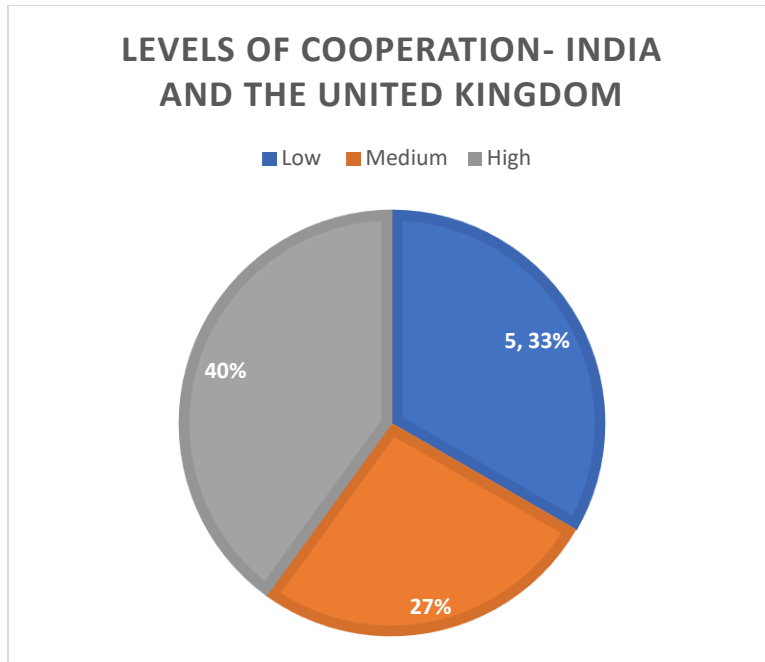
cooperation. However, mapping down the levels of cooperation will only help to rationally establish the declining trend of Indo-British counterterrorism cooperation.

#### **6.4.4 Levels of cooperation**

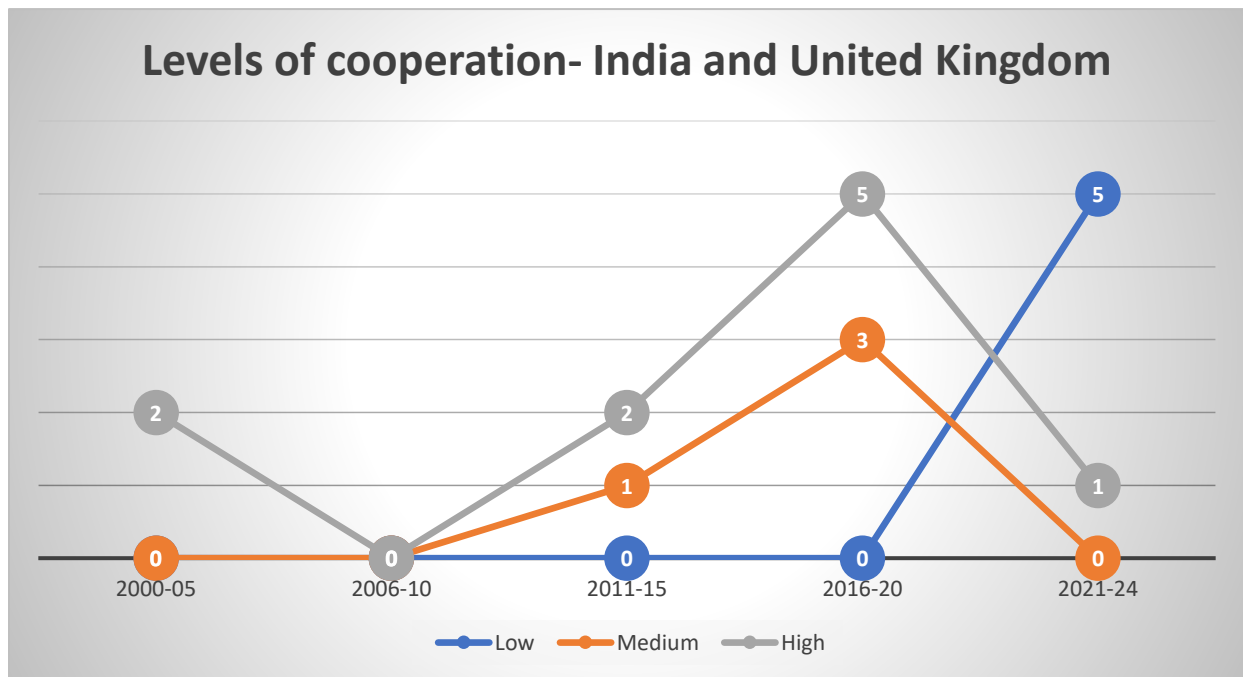
The statement of the 15 official documents including joint statements, speeches, and press releases has been categorised into low, medium, and high levels of cooperation.

- A. Low level of cooperation:** Documents that mention combating terrorism but do not reflect any significant actions from both sides.
- B. Medium level of cooperation:** Documents that condemn terrorism and discuss plans between India and France to counter global terrorism.
- C. High level of cooperation:** Documents that reflect strong engagement and actions between India and the United Kingdom in counterterrorism cooperation. These include documents that talk about joint collaborative efforts like the working group or other kind of closer policy engagement.

The total 15 documents consisting of joint statements, speeches, and press releases will be represented through a pie chart to understand the levels of cooperation in the Indo-British counterterrorism partnership.



*Figure 8 Levels of cooperation-Indo-British counterterrorism cooperation*



*Figure 9. Indo-British levels of cooperation- Line Graph*

Figure 8 shows the total number of low (33%), medium (27%), and high (40%) levels of cooperation between India and the United Kingdom. However, the timeline of the levels of the cooperation will only help to understand the pattern of the cooperation.

The line graph (Figure 9) will explain the levels of cooperation from 2000 to 2024 between India and the United Kingdom. The timeline has been divided into 2000-2005, 2006-2010, 2011-2015, 2016-2020, and 2021-24. During the 2000-05 period, the high level of cooperation (2) was very limited. During this period, zero medium and zero low levels of cooperation were recorded. Whereas the 2006-10 period witnessed zero low, zero medium, and zero high levels of cooperation between India and the United Kingdom. Further, the 2011-15 period saw high level (2) cooperation like the 2000-05 timeline. Only a single level of medium cooperation was observed during the 2011-15 period. Then, the high levels of cooperation increased from 2 (2011-15) to 5 (2016-20). From 2011 to 2020, zero low levels of cooperation were observed in the data. In 2021-24, a major dip in high-level cooperation from 5 to 1 has been recorded. At the same time, the low level of cooperation spiked from 0 to 5 during the 2020-24 period. Respondent One feels that India's strong vocal approach to terror (involving strong language and assassination of diaspora separatist leaders) has impacted its counterterrorism engagement with the United Kingdom. On the other hand, respondents one and three feel that India's rising economic position prevents strong reactions from the United Kingdom. The focus has shifted from counterterrorism to improving trade relations between India and the United Kingdom. Respondent three feels that the UK prefers India compared to Pakistan or Bangladesh due to the rising economic power position within the globe. Hence, the increasing pattern of low-level cooperation signals the declining levels of counterterrorism cooperation between India and the United Kingdom.



## 6.6 Diaspora activism

For the study, the South diaspora-led activism/resistance (2013-24) based in the United Kingdom has been mapped out using content analysis of online sources. The online sources include news (British, Indian, and international sources), diaspora websites, and Khalistan Monitor (extremism monitor website). Keywords like Anti-India Protest, Kashmir United Kingdom, Khalistan United Kingdom, and South Asian diaspora violence United Kingdom were used for identifying the activism/resistance. The collected data on resistance and activism were classified into the binary categories of peaceful and violent actions. To begin, the United Kingdom has observed 41 cases of South Asian diaspora-led violence and resistance from 2013 to 2024 (obtained through online sources). The table explains the major groups, number of observations, and nature of these diaspora-led activism and resistance.

<b>Activism/Resistance category</b>	<b>Number of observations</b>	<b>Peaceful</b>	<b>Violent</b>
Sikh diaspora	24	10	14
Kashmir diaspora	7	6	1
Kashmir + Pakistani diaspora	3	1	2
Kashmir+ Sikh diaspora	3	2	1
Indian diaspora	2	2	0
Pakistani diaspora	1	0	1
Pakistani + Kashmiri + Sikh diaspora	1	0	1
Total	41	22	21

*Table 8. Number and nature of diaspora activism.*

Within the United Kingdom, the Sikh diaspora is the most active group (24) involved in resistance and activism. Respondent one feels that the ideology of Khalistan (Sikh separatist movement) is very significant among the Sikh diaspora community. Out of the 24 incidents, the Sikh diaspora has been engaged in 14 violent and 10 peaceful actions within the United Kingdom. The next major diaspora group involved in resistance and activism is the Kashmir community (7). Respondent one and three feels that the third-generation Kashmiris within the United Kingdom choose not to be part of the diaspora resistance/activism. This could be the reason for the limited number of Kashmir protests in the United Kingdom. However, respondent two believes that the diaspora communities have increased identity crisis and generation trauma living in an abroad country. On the political side, respondent three mentioned about the ‘all-party working group on Kashmir’ within the United Kingdom. Personally, the respondent feels that Kashmir has been used as a political tool by UK politicians to win Muslim votes. The respondent says, “After the election, they don’t talk about Kashmir and human rights”. He also mentioned how Kashmir was used as a political tool for the UK local elections during the 1980s in certain parts with a large Kashmiri diaspora population. As per the table, the community has engaged in 6 peaceful and 1 violent action within the United Kingdom. The other major groups involved are the Indian (2) and Pakistani diaspora (1).

Cross-collaboration has been an interesting example observed within these groups. The Kashmir (both India and Pakistan sides) and Pakistani diaspora have organised 3 activism/resistance involving 2 violent and 1 peaceful action within the United Kingdom. Respondent two shares about the recent Sikh solidarity for the Palestinians who are also fighting for a separate state. Similarly, the Kashmiri and Pakistani diaspora collaborated in 3 activism/resistance involving 1 violent and 2 peaceful engagements within the United Kingdom.

### 6.7. 1 Nature of activism

In Table 9, the collected sources have been categorised into peaceful and violent actions. The peaceful actions involve protests, demonstrations, and solidarity held by the diaspora community. Whereas, the violent part of the protest disruption of law and order, attacks on public property, and other kinds of actions involving the use of force.

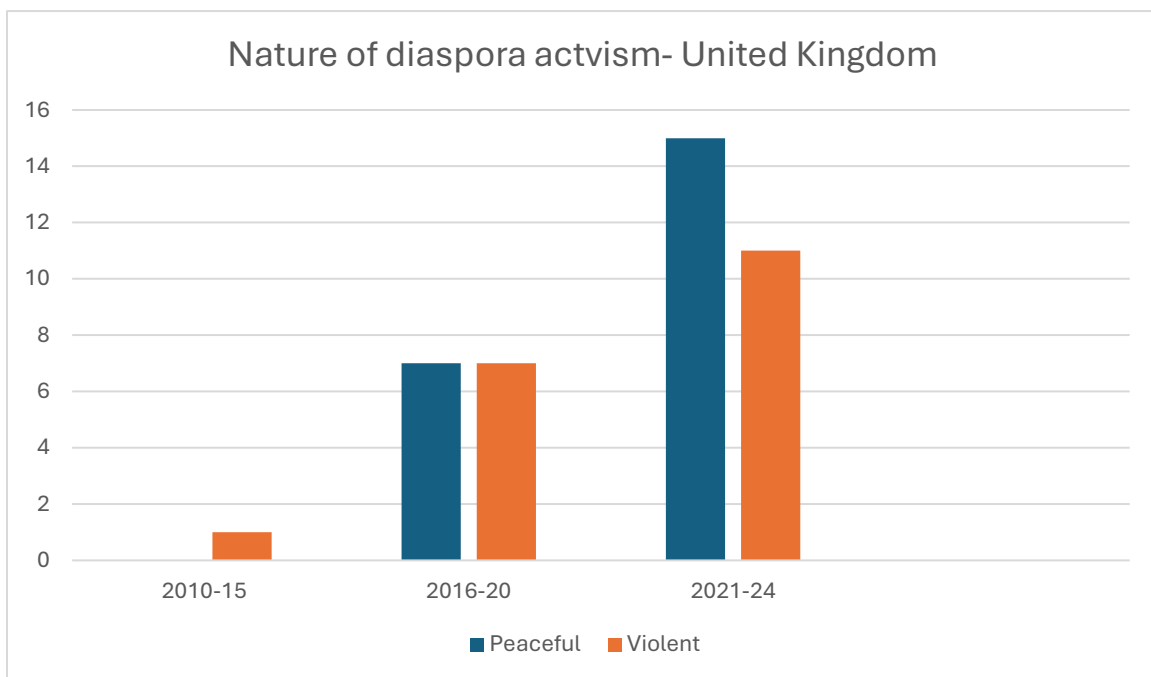
<b>Year</b>	<b>Group</b>	<b>Movement</b>	<b>Category</b>
2013 (December)	Sikh diaspora	Khalistan	Violent
2018 (April)	Sikh and Kashmir diaspora	Kashmir and Khalistan	Peaceful
2018 (April)	Sikh diaspora	Khalistan	Violent
2019 (January)	Sikh and Kashmir diaspora	Khalistan and Kashmir	Peaceful
2019 (July)	Sikh diaspora	Khalistan	Violent
2019 (August)	Sikh and Kashmiri diaspora	Khalistan and Kashmir	Violent
2019 (September)	Indian diaspora	Anti-Pakistan	Peaceful
2019 (September)	Kashmiri and Pakistani diaspora	Kashmir	Violent
2019 (September)	Kashmiri and Pakistani diaspora	Kashmir	Violent
2020 (January)	Kashmir diaspora	Kashmir	Violent
2020 (February)	Indian diaspora	Anti-Pakistan protest by Indian diaspora	Peaceful
2020 (March)	Pakistan and Kashmiri diaspora	Kashmir	Peaceful
2020 (May)	Pakistani diaspora	Pakistani diaspora	Violent
2020 (June)	Sikh diaspora	Khalistan	Peaceful
2020 (August)	Pakistan, Sikh and Kashmir diaspora	Kashmir	Peaceful
2021 (June)	Sikh diaspora	Khalistan	Violent
2021 (September)	Kashmiri diaspora	Kashmir	Peaceful

2021 (October)	Tehreek-e-Kashmir (TeK) UK (Kashmiri diaspora)	Kashmir	Peaceful
2022 (January)	Sikh diaspora	Khalistan	Peaceful
2022 (May)	Kashmiri diaspora	Kashmir	Peaceful
2022 (June)	Kashmiri diaspora	Kashmir	Peaceful
2023 (January)	Kashmiri diaspora	Kashmir	Peaceful
2023 (February)	Sikh diaspora	Khalistan	Violent
2023 (March)	Sikh diaspora	Khalistan.	Violent
2023 (March)	Sikh diaspora	Khalistan	Violent
2023 (March)	Sikh diaspora	Khalistan	Peaceful
2023 (May)	Sikh diaspora	Khalistan	Violent
2023 (July)	Sikh diaspora	Khalistan	Peaceful
2023 (July)	Sikh diaspora	Khalistan	Violent
July (2023)	Sikh diaspora	Khalistan	Peaceful
August (2023)	Sikh and Hindu diaspora	Khalistan and Indian diaspora fight	Violent
2023 (September)	Sikh diaspora	Khalistan	Peaceful
September (2023)	Sikh diaspora	Khalistan	Violent
2023 (September)	Sikh diaspora	Khalistan	Violent
2023 (October)	Sikh diaspora	Khalistan	Violent
2023 (October)	Sikh diaspora	Khalistan (Protesting against killing of Nijjar)	Peaceful
2023 (October)	Sikh diaspora	Khalistan (death of activist Avtar Singh Khanda)	Peaceful
2024 (January)	Sikh diaspora	Khalistan	Peaceful
2024	Kashmiri diaspora	Kashmir	Peaceful

(February)			
2024 (March)	Sikh diaspora	Khalistan	Peaceful
2024 (March)	Sikh diaspora	Khalistan	Violent

*Table 9. South Asian diaspora activism and resistance – United Kingdom*

The table shows the South Asian diaspora activism/resistance data collected through content analysis from 2013-24. The data has been classified based on year, group, movement, and nature of action (peaceful and violent). To begin, there have been 22 peaceful and 21 violent cases of activism/resistance identified within the South Asian diaspora of the United Kingdom. The data on the nature of activism (peaceful and violent) will be classified based on the nature of violence using the timeline of 2010-15, 2016-20, and 2021-24.



*Figure 10. Nature of diaspora activism- United Kingdom*

Only a single violent action was reported during 2010-15. The 2016-20 period witnessed a massive spike in the violent and peaceful nature of South Asian diaspora activism/resistance within the United Kingdom. The 2021-24 period records the highest number of activism/resistance (26) involving 15 peaceful and 11 violent actions among the South Asian diaspora of the United Kingdom. The assassination of the Khalistan leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar, rising anti-minority sentiments (within India), and the rise of Indian right-wing politics could be the potential reasons behind the large-scale diaspora-led activism within India. The increase from 7 (2016-20) to 11 (2021-24) violent actions raises security tensions for both India and the United Kingdom. Overall, the South Asian diaspora activism shows an increasing pattern of engagement with the rise of violent actions within the United Kingdom.

## **6.7 Conclusion**

The Indo-British counterterrorism cooperation chapter explored the colonial history, bilateral relations, and counterterrorism cooperation between India and Germany. A total of 15 documents (3 joint statements, 2 speeches, and 10 press releases) were identified within the Indo-British counterterrorism cooperation. The 15 documents were analysed based on the timeline, areas of cooperation, and levels of cooperation. The 15 documents reflect lower levels of Indo-British engagement. The line graph explains the trend of the levels of cooperation. From 2016-20 and 2021-24, the higher-level cooperation dropped from 5 to 1 and the medium-level cooperation declined from 3 to 0. Whereas the lower-level cooperation increased from 1 (2016-20) to 5 (2021-24) in the Indo-British counterterrorism engagements. Hence, the Indo-British counterterrorism cooperation reflects a pattern of lower levels of cooperation. At the same time, the South Asian diaspora-led activism/resistance (41) is higher in the United Kingdom. Out of the 41 cases, more than 50% belong to the Sikh diaspora-led activism and resistance. Also, 21 out of the 41 cases

have been violent nature of activism and resistance within the United Kingdom. Applying the theoretical framework, the higher levels of diaspora-led resistance/activism have resulted in lower levels of counterterrorism cooperation between the host (United Kingdom) and homeland country (India). To conclude, lower levels of counterterrorism (between India and the United Kingdom) and higher levels of South Asian-led diaspora and activism (22 peaceful and 21 violent) have been observed in the United Kingdom.

## **Chapter 7**

### **Conclusion**

#### **7.1 Introduction**

The study was an attempt to understand the relationship between South Asian diaspora-led activism/resistance on India's bilateral relations with France, Germany, and the United Kingdom. This section will focus on the findings and observations, study limitations, recommendations, and future areas for research that can be explored by the academic community.

#### **7.2 Findings**

The study conducted content analysis and semi-structured interviews to understand the relationship between diaspora-led resistance/activism and India's bilateral counterterrorism cooperation with France, Germany, and the United Kingdom. The content analysis involved mapping the levels of India's counterterrorism cooperation (with France, Germany, and the United Kingdom) and the nature of South-Asian diaspora-led resistance in these countries.

The levels of counterterrorism cooperation of India with the three countries were mapped out using joint statements, speeches, and press releases issued by the Indian Foreign Ministry. A total of 31 documents were identified between 2005 and 2024 dealing with Indo-French counterterrorism. Out of this, there were high (18), medium (8), and lower (5) levels of engagement. Hence, the Indo-French counterterrorism reflects higher levels of engagement. Also, the 13 cases of South Asian diaspora actions in France were peaceful illustrating lower levels of diaspora engagement within France.



In the case of Germany, 18 documents dealing with Indo-German counterterrorism cooperation were identified between 2005 and 2024. The cases reflected high (10), medium (7), and low (1) levels of engagement. Since the high (10) and medium (7) are close to each other, the levels of cooperation can be classified as medium to high. Also, all 16 cases of the South Asian diaspora have been peaceful showing a lower level of diaspora engagement.

The case of Indo-British relations has been quite different from Germany and France. The 15 documents on counterterrorism (2000-24) reflect lower levels of engagement between India and the United Kingdom. Both high and medium levels of engagement show a declining pattern from 2016-20 and 2021-24. The high levels of engagement declined from 5 (2016-20) to 1(2021-24). The medium levels of engagement dropped from 3 (2016-20) to 0 (2021-24). Whereas the lower levels of engagement spiked from 0 (2016-20) to 5 (2021-24). Also, the 41 diaspora-led resistance/activism involved 21 violent incidents. Compared to France (13) and Germany (16), the diaspora-led resistance is much higher in the United Kingdom (41).

In the case of France, higher levels of Indo-French counterterrorism cooperation have resulted in lower levels of peaceful diaspora-led activism and resistance. For Germany, the medium to high levels of Indo-German counterterrorism cooperation have resulted in lower levels of peaceful diaspora-led resistance and activism. However, the case of the UK shows the increasing trend of lower levels of cooperation leading to higher levels of South Asian diaspora-led resistance and activism within the United Kingdom. Hence, the three cases help to establish the core argument (theory) of the study that higher levels of diaspora activism/resistance result in lower levels of bilateral counterterrorism cooperation between the host and homeland country (vice versa).

### 7.3 Limitations

The study is a starting point towards investigating the relationship between diaspora-led activism/resistance on bilateral counterterrorism cooperation involving the homeland and the host countries. However, it becomes important to acknowledge certain limitations of the study.

- The study has primarily relied on content analysis from the website of the Indian Foreign Ministry (MEA). The initial plan involved the websites of the French, British, and German MFAs and diplomatic missions based in India. However, the excess amount gathered from the Indian side prevented further exploration by looking into the sources published by the respective European countries. At the same time, the sources obtained from the Indian Foreign Ministry involved speeches (of Western leaders) and joint statements issued by both countries. The content analysis of the German, French, and British sources could have brought areas to explore within the comparative research.
- The diaspora activism has been mapped out from the open-source information available on the internet. Many sources reporting about the same protest were omitted during the data collection by the researcher. Also, the political inclination of these websites is a concerning factor for the study. The study did not prepare a category for classifying the political inclination of these news sources. Finally, the study missed diaspora activism and resistance that has not been reported online.
- Along with the content analysis, the study conducted three unstructured interviews selected through expert sampling with terrorism studies researchers and policymakers. The interview insights help to understand the trend of diaspora activism and bilateral cooperation. However, the study lacked the perspectives and insights of the South Asian

diaspora involved in these actions. Interviews of diaspora communities involved in activism/resistance would have improved the study bringing the alternative perspectives.

#### **7.4 Policy recommendations**

The study has highlighted how diaspora-led resistance/activism can impact bilateral counterterrorism cooperation between the host and homeland country. This shows the importance of counterterrorism cooperation and engaging with the diaspora communities engaged in peaceful and violent resistance abroad. The following policy recommendations will help to improve counterterrorism cooperation and diaspora engagement.

- Community policing can be an effective strategy to deal with South Asian diaspora groups engaged in violence. The coercive and strong actions from the Indian government's side targeting the diaspora engaged in violent resistance will result in more polarisation and radicalisation. Instead of that, the Indian government should try to hold dialogues and engage with the South Asian diaspora engaged in activism and resistance. Often, the Indian government engages with the majority Hindu diaspora community through soft cultural diplomacy and fails to engage with other regional and religious communities. Holding meaningful dialogues rather than targeting diaspora leaders will bring a significant change in the situation. Hence, the Indian government should use the tool of diplomacy to engage and listen to the concerns of the diaspora community rather than labelling them directly as 'anti-national'.
- The respective host countries in Europe should engage by launching programs and initiatives to ensure the wellness of these diaspora groups. The European governments should work on inclusion, diversity, and basic public services for these diaspora groups.

This will help these diaspora communities to deal with their identity crisis and feel being a part of the host country helping to move away from radicalisation and violent actions.

- The European governments should provide more protection and security for the Indian diplomatic missions based in these countries. The major attack on the Indian High Commission in the United Kingdom by Sikh extremist groups was the failure of the inaction of the London Metropolitan Police. Hence, the European governments should work on ensuring the protection of the Indian diplomatic missions and their staffs.
- The study also pointed out the lack of focus between Indian and European countries on Extradition treaties. India should work on signing extradition treaties with the European countries that will help to bring the diaspora engaged in extremism to be tried under the Indian legal system. At the same time, the interviews highlighted the misuse of counterterrorism legislation like UAPA to target activists and academics working on critical areas. The Indian government should ensure that it uses the terror legislation to act against groups/individuals involved in violence. This will help to build the trust of European governments to sign an extradition treaty with India.

## **7.5 Future areas for research**

As mentioned earlier, this study is a starting point for understanding the relationship between diaspora-led activism and bilateral counterterrorism cooperation. The comparative study between Indo-French, Indo-German, and Indo-British helped to bring out the variation of this phenomenon under investigation between mainland Europe and the United Kingdom. This study has opened the potential for future studies focusing on the South Asian diaspora. A future study looking specifically at the Kashmiri and Sikh diaspora activism/resistance based in the United Kingdom

will help to draw interesting insights. Also, conducting in-depth interviews with these diaspora communities be beneficial to understanding their perceptions and ideas.

## **7.6 Conclusion**

The study was an attempt to understand the relationship between diaspora activism/resistance and bilateral counterterrorism cooperation. India has been instrumental in engaging with the western countries on counterterrorism. The ineffectiveness of India-EU counterterrorism prompted the sub-continent to engage in bilateral counterterrorism engagement with France, Germany, and the United Kingdom. Using content analysis, the study mapped the counterterrorism engagement between India and the European Member states (France, Germany, and the United Kingdom). Alongside this, a mapping of South Asian diaspora activism in these countries has been performed using content analysis. The content analysis data helped to understand the variation in India's engagement with France, Germany, and the United Kingdom. In France, high levels of counterterrorism cooperation (with India) and lower levels of South Asian diaspora activism/resistance have been observed. In Germany, medium to high levels of counterterrorism cooperation (with India) and lower levels of South Asian diaspora activism/resistance have been observed. Similarities have been observed in the two cases within mainland Europe. In the United Kingdom, lower levels of counterterrorism (with India) and higher levels of South Asian diaspora-led activism/resistance involving violence have been observed. Alongside, three interviews were conducted with the terrorism studies researchers and policymakers. Their inputs helped to explain the trends observed in the content analysis. Hence, the findings align with the theoretical framework of host-integration theory providing evidence for the impact of diaspora activism on the security relations between host and homeland country. Future studies involving large-scale datasets, diaspora communities, civil society, and government officials will help to discover the

nuances shaping the relationship between bilateral counterterrorism cooperation and diaspora-led resistance/activism.

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## **Appendix 2**

### **Interview Schedules**

#### **Semi-Structured Interview Schedule**

Topic: A comparative study on the impact of South Asian diaspora politics on India's bilateral counter-terrorism cooperation with France, Germany, and the United Kingdom.

#### **Respondent 1**

##### **A. Basic Demographic Details**

- Name:
- Designation:
- Affiliation:
- Country:

##### **B. Security cooperation between India and Europe**

1. In your understanding, what are the contemporary security challenges faced by Europe and India?
2. According to you, how much is terrorism a concerning challenge for Europe and India?
3. What are the similarities and differences in the terrorist concerns faced by India and Europe?
4. In the current context, how do you view the counterterrorism cooperation signed between India and the European Union?
5. How do you evaluate the functioning of the Multilateral (India-European) and Bilateral (United Kingdom, France, Germany) Counterterrorism working group?
6. In your article, you mentioned briefly about variations in India's bilateral CT working groups with France, Germany, and the United Kingdom. Why do you think there is a variation within engagement?

### **C. Diaspora**

**Note:** For the study, the South Asian diaspora refers to people from India and Pakistan.

7. According to you, what factors contributed to the rise of South Asian diaspora-led resistance and activism in Europe?
8. What are the security concerns raised by these Europe-based South-Asian diaspora violent groups for European countries and India?
9. Are the actions of these violent diaspora groups influencing the variation in India's counterterrorism cooperation with France, Germany, and the United Kingdom?

### **D. Policy response**

10. How are the European governments (UK, France, Germany) reacting to the Indian diaspora-led violent groups in Europe?
11. What are the steps taken by the Indian government to deal with the violent diaspora groups?
12. What are your policy recommendations for dealing with the Indian violent resistance group in Europe?

## **Respondent 2**

### **A. Basic Demographic Details**

- Name:
- Designation:
- Affiliation:
- Country:

## **B. Security cooperation between India and Europe**

1. In your understanding, what are the contemporary security challenges faced by Europe and India?
2. According to you, how much is terrorism a concerning challenge for Europe and India?
3. What are the similarities and differences in the terrorist concerns faced by India and Europe?

## **C. Diaspora**

**Note:** For the study, the South Asian diaspora refers to people from India and Pakistan.

4. According to you, what factors contributed to the rise of South Asian diaspora-led resistance and activism in Europe?
5. What are the positive and negative aspects of the South Asian diaspora led activism and resistance in Europe?
6. What are the security concerns raised by these Europe-based South-Asian diaspora violent groups for European countries and India?
7. How has the recent killing of the Canadian Sikh leader Nijjar impacted South Asian diaspora politics in Europe?

## **E. Legal perspective**

8. What are the provisions under International Law for diaspora led violence in respect to jurisdiction and law enforcement?
9. What are the challenges associated with extradition treaties in the context of diaspora led violent groups?

## **F. Policy response**

10. How are the European governments (UK, France, Germany) reacting to the Indian diaspora-led violent groups in Europe?
11. What are the steps taken by the Indian government to deal with the violent diaspora groups?
12. What are your policy recommendations for dealing with the Indian violent resistance groups in Europe?



**A. Basic Demographic Details**

- Name:
- Designation:
- Affiliation:
- Country:

**B. UK Counter-terrorism policy**

1. Can you explain the evolution of counter-terrorism policymaking in the United Kingdom?
2. What factors prompted the United Kingdom to focus on counter-terrorism policy?
3. How do you assess the successes and failures of the United Kingdom's counterterrorism policy?
4. On a diplomatic level, how has the United Kingdom engaged with former colonies' conflicts specifically on Kashmir?
5. How has the United Kingdom's official position on the Kashmir conflict impacted its cooperation with India and Pakistan on counter-terrorism efforts?

**C. Diaspora Politics and Security**

South Asian diaspora: In this study, the South Asian diaspora refers to the diaspora population with roots in India, Pakistan, and Kashmir.

6. Can you explain the role of South Asian diaspora politics (activism and resistance) in the United Kingdom?
7. How does the South Asian diaspora engage with homeland conflicts (Kashmir and Khalistan) within the United Kingdom?
8. How do you see radicalisation among the South Asian diaspora groups in the United Kingdom?
9. Are these South Asian diaspora groups raising security concerns for the United Kingdom?
10. Do the diaspora groups play an influential role in shaping the United Kingdom's security policies? (internal and external cooperation)

#### **D. Policymaking**

11. How has the United Kingdom responded to the actions of the violent South Asian diaspora groups?
12. Has the United Kingdom been successful in combating radicalisation and extremism among the diaspora population?
13. What are your policy recommendations for dealing with the violent South Asian diaspora groups in the United Kingdom?

#### **Appendix 3 – Codebook**

The interview and content analysis codebook files are large. Hence, the codebook can be accessed from the following Google Drive link.

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1CNHYEbchqfGsfUKsu4woD8b5SYu\\_Y9ZK/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=118231630094982369275&rtpof=true&sd=true](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1CNHYEbchqfGsfUKsu4woD8b5SYu_Y9ZK/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=118231630094982369275&rtpof=true&sd=true)