

South Asia Analysis Group

Published on *South Asia Analysis Group* (<http://www.southasiaanalysis.org>)

[Home](#) > Beijing Underlines PLA's Role in Western China

Beijing Underlines PLA's Role in Western China

Submitted by asiaadmin2 on Sun, 05/05/2013 - 10:36

Paper No. 5481 **Dated 5-May-2013**

By B.Raman

According to the Xinhua news agency, the Xinjiang authorities have arrested 11 more suspected terrorists in connection with the investigation of a violent incident on April 23, 2013, in a town in Kashgar's Bachu county, 1200 kms south-west of Urumqi, in which 21 persons allegedly belonging to different communities were killed.

2. Since the clash, 19 arrests have been made by the police from the Kashgar Prefecture, the Mongolian Autonomous Prefecture of Bayingolin and Urumqi.
3. The Xinjiang Police have blamed the clash on a new terrorist group headed by one Qasim Muhammat, which, according to them, was founded in September 2012.
4. The Police have alleged that since early December 2012, the members of this group used to gather at the house of one Muhanmetemin Barat, to undergo training with the help of video clips.
5. The Police further alleged that in March, they fabricated explosive devices and tested them. The clash occurred when the Police and some members of the local community co-operating with the police tried to arrest them.
6. The World Uighur Congress (WUC) based in Munich and the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples' Organisation (UNPO) based in Holland have strongly questioned the police version and called upon the European Parliament to urge an international enquiry into the incident.

7. The Chinese authorities are worried that despite frequent occurrence of violent incidents in different parts of Xinjiang, they have not been able to convince the international community that these incidents are due to terrorism sponsored from outside.

8. In an article contributed to the "Global Times" of the Communist Party of China, an associate research fellow of the Sociology Institute with the Xinjiang Academy of Social Sciences has stated: "The Bachu incident reflects the severe social conflicts within Xinjiang. In recent years, Xinjiang has achieved substantial progress in terms of economic development, the social insurance system and people's livelihoods. However, the social conflicts in Xinjiang remain complicated.

"While the policies made by local authorities are mainly to improve the economy, they are still inadequate in fully and timely responding to the political demands of ethnic groups. Social conflicts have been accumulating rather than being resolved.

"The Bachu incident has aroused international attention, and external observers mainly cast doubt on whether this violent attack was really terrorism.

"The nature of terrorist attacks in China is not very different with that in Western countries. They are, cruelly and inhumanely, targeted randomly at innocent civilians.

"What's different is that the terrorist attacks in Western countries can be traced to external input, while those in Xinjiang have shown a tendency to come from inside.

"There have been terrorist activities in Xinjiang, but so far there hasn't been enough evidence to show a concrete terrorist organization exists.

"A terrorist organization needs an explicit political doctrine, leading figures and a set of organizational bodies to raise funds, train its staff, purchase arms and support logistics. Judging from this, there is no terrorist organization in Xinjiang.

"The terrorist activities are committed mainly under the influence of terrorist thought and partly because of dissatisfaction with local governments and the Han people.

"In the long run, violent terrorism is likely to take place in Xinjiang again, and a terrorist organization in the real sense may emerge. But terrorism is preventable and its head can be lowered. It depends on whether we conduct solid work."

9.The PLA's concerns over the internal security situation in the peripheral regions inhabited by Tibetans and Uighurs were reflected at a meeting convened by the Central Military Commission at Beijing on May 2,2013, to underline the PLA's role in the economic development and internal stability of China's soft Western region.

10.According to Xinhua, addressing the meeting, Xu Qiliang, Vice-Chairman of the Central Military Commission, said the military should prioritize improving people's livelihoods and addressing issues that affect their most immediate interests, while participating in the development of western regions.

11.He asked the PLA to make utmost efforts to maintain border security, enhance solidarity between the military, local governments and the public, as well as to uphold ethnic solidarity.

12.Xinhua has quoted him as saying as follows: "The prosperity, development and stability of western regions are of strategic importance to national security and development. The military should be fully aware that helping develop the west boosts the military's capacity to carry out diversified tasks."

13. There are no indications that the meeting might have been triggered by the Indo-Chinese stand-off in Eastern Ladakh, but the PLA's inability to strengthen internal security in the Tibetan and Uighur areas and signs of continuing anti-Han alienation among the Tibetans and Uighurs is a factor that needs to be continuously monitored and assessed by Indian policy makers.

(The writer is Additional Secretary (retd), Cabinet Secretariat, Govt of India, New Delhi, and, presently, Director, Institute For Topical Studies, Chennai, and Associate of the Chennai Centre For China Studies. Twitter: @SORBONNE75)

Tags:

[Western china](#) ^[1]

[Xinjiang incidents](#) ^[2]

Category:

[Papers](#) ^[3]

Countries:

[China](#) ^[4]

Topics:

[Islamic Affairs](#) ^[5]

Copyright ©2012. All Rights are Reserved.

Source URL: <http://www.southasiaanalysis.org/node/1261>

Links

- [1] <http://www.southasiaanalysis.org/taxonomy/term/331>
- [2] <http://www.southasiaanalysis.org/taxonomy/term/332>
- [3] <http://www.southasiaanalysis.org/papers>
- [4] <http://www.southasiaanalysis.org/china>
- [5] <http://www.southasiaanalysis.org/islamic-affairs>