

## The Global Phenomenon of Terrorism: A sociological Interpretation

*Dr. Anant Vijaya Soni\**

India has remained a victim of terrorism and suffered a lot in terms of life and property. The communal forces slowly and gradually formed armed groups in the name of different organizations with the sole aim of terrorizing the people in the name of Jihad. The main motto behind this is to destabilize the sovereignty of the nation and interfere in the civil and strategic set up by acts of terror. This is sort of war and indirect attack because direct attack now a days on a powerful nation is not easy and condemnable as such. India has suffered more casualties from terror attacks than any other country. The different types of groups which are present in India, can be divided into three groups that is separatist, secessionist and religious extremist. Most of these groups are funded and supported by neighboring countries and unfortunately the porous borders between India and neighboring countries have proved to be a boon for the inimical forces.

Till the 1970s, terrorism in India was mostly confined to north eastern regions where the sections of tribal population raised banner against the Indian Government. This movement, however, was localized and these people were targeting the armed forces only. Civilians also sometimes became the unfortunate victims. The major challenge however was witnessed during 1980s.

When a peculiar type of fanaticism was witnessed in the state of Punjab by a group of Sikhs who raised banner for a separate state in the name and style of Khalistan. Besides this political ambition, the methodology chosen by them was condemnable. They started humiliating and terrorizing the Hindu population and floated an idea that the Hindu should be driven out form Punjab. They started damaging properties of the government of India in Punjab. The situation slowly and

\*Asst. Prof. Sociology, SS Jain Subodh PG (Autonomous), College, Jaipur

gradually became out of control. These fundamentalist groups were receiving funds from a group of Sikhs settled in Canada and other countries. Unfortunately, the country had to pay heavy price to counter this menace. Thousands of innocent lives were lost, and Indian passenger aircraft Kanishka was brought down by terrorists killing 329 innocent people. The government of India had to attack the holy shrine of the Sikhs'- Golden Temple in order to control the situation. It however, proved to be very costly and entire country had to pay a heavy price by killing of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and chief minister of Punjab Shri Beant Singh. Then came the era of Pakistan sponsored terrorism. After losing all the wars with India, a new chapter in the terrorism was added when Pakistan started pumping the terrorists into the territory of India in the name of Jihad ever since 1989. This practice has been continuing ever since.

Sponsored terrorism launched by Pakistan basically remains an attempt to weaken India. Smuggling of arms and explosives and subversion of the industrial infrastructure are some of the other instruments for destabilizing India. A multi-pronged offensive on socio-economic and political institutions can prove dangerous for the security and integrity of India. Pakistan- based terrorist groups changed their targets and areas of activities regularly, so they have generally stayed a step ahead of the counter-terrorist forces. The increasing political sway of religious extremists in Pakistan and the close association of certain segments of the military establishments with the international terrorist network increased the possibility of terrorists acquiring weapons of mass destruction. If Pakistan-based terrorist groups acquire the capability to use chemical, radiation and biological weapons..

Currently, Pakistan has been following a dual policy of continuing dialogue with India while supporting terrorist activities against it; some policy makers in Pakistan still seem to believe that if pressure is maintained on India by terrorist attacks it would be in a better frame of mind to settle the Kashmir problem. These jihadi groups have, however, now become an independent source of terrorism over which even the Pakistan government does not have full control. Though the terror landscape has changed with abrogation of Art 370 of the Constitution of India and declaring J&K as a Union Territory. Average life of a terrorist has reduced to few months but, new crop continues to grow with help of Pakistan.

The most unfortunate part in the Indian sub-continent is the rise and growth of terrorist organization under the pretext of Islam. They are having their base in Pakistan and operate from the remote areas of

Pakistan and Pak-Afghan border. These fundamentalist forces have created havoc throughout the globe. The modus operandi is to terrorize the masses in the name of jihad and they believe in violence and more violence to effect the targeted killings. They have defied all the norms of civil society.

The US State Department has listed the LeT and Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM), and earlier, the Harkat-ul-Mujahideen, as foreign terrorist organizations. Pakistan has banned these groups, but they continue their nefarious activities by assuming new identities; Al Qanoon or Lashkar-e-Omar, Khuddam-ul-Islam, Jamaat-ul-Furqana and Jamaat-ul-Dawa are some of the names adopted by JeM, LeT and other Pakistan-based terrorist groups since the ban. The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) has listed Jamaat-ud-Dawa as an alias of LeT and the UNSC has since listed the Al Akhtar Trust as a financier of LeT. Hafiz Saeed, accused by India for orchestrating the Mumbai 2008 attacks, has been listed as the leader of LeT, while other senior members of LeT listed by the UNSC include Zaki-ur-Rehman Lakhvi, Hazi Mohammad Ashraf and Mahmood Mohammad Ahmed Bahaziq. Lakhvi is the terror group's chief of operations and Ashraf is the chief of finance. Bahaziq, a Saudi national who served as the leader of LeT in Saudi Arabia, is a senior financier.

The main targets of terrorist attacks as well as their objectives can be divided in the following broad categories:

1. Political infrastructure and the people.
2. Industrial infrastructure, trade and industry.
3. Communication, transportation and other essential services
4. Policing and legal framework.
5. Intelligence and security establishments.
6. Spreading lawlessness in large areas to bring crucial economic and political activities to a standstill.
7. Creating civil disturbances and administrative chaos.
8. Disrupting trade and industry by attacking the country's financial institutions, banks and stock exchanges.
9. Assisting separatists and armed micro-political groups in escalating internal conflicts.
10. Engineering incidents to widen communal and ethnic divide.
11. Undermining national security by subversion of the country's administrative echelons and penetration of sensitive organizations.

In addition to this fundamental forces which are attacking from outside, India is fighting with the forces which are operating from inside. North eastern states have become problem children for the government. The area is extremely porous and vulnerable because its share more than 4000 KM. open border with China, Myanmar, Bhutan and Bangladesh. The reason is full of diverse tribal population. There are more than 100 communities who speak more than 350 dialects. The unrest is aggravated by the border countries who supply money and arms to these people. Hugely Profitable narcotics trade is also fueling this problem.

The maoist groups have also posed serious threat to the administrative set up. Some of the criminal groups are also operating under the banner of naxalism especially in the remote and backward areas where exploitation was much more by the people sitting in the government offices. It somehow left an impression that there is no remedy for the grievances of the poor and these organizations exploited the sentiments of the poor masses and got a hideout in the remote areas. Naxal problem by and large is a social problem it can be seen that it flourished in remote areas and was adopted by the people who were hand to mouth and as such economically and socially backward. When they approached the people in the helm of affairs, they were neglected and as such their demands were ignored. This situation was exploited by the naxal groups who extended their helping hand to this lowest strata of the society. Had it been related to law and order only, government would have crushed it by its strong machinery. Internally, the naxalites are searching their base throughout the country and the areas surrounded by hill and jungles. Social and economic reforms are required to combat the growth of this ideology. The criminal elements, however, flourishing under the banner of naxalism are to be identified and these elements are to be dealt with ruthlessly to start with. The sources of funding needs to be blocked because the major part of the money is spent on purchasing weapons and killing innocent.

In addition to above, domestic terrorism was further aggravated between 1993-1999 in the form of Al Ummah movement. The students Islamic Movement, subsequently came under the influence and control of the LeT and the Harkat-ul-Jihad al- Islami of Pakistan and took to terrorism. A new Islamic organization, though not yet fully identified, called the Indian Mujahideen announced its presence by taking responsibility for the 26/11 Mumbai attacks while emphatically denying any links with the ISI and Pakistani jihadi groups to prove its domestic credentials.

The Indian Mujahideen declared that it has taken recourse to terrorism because of violence against Muslims and anti-Muslim politics in India. The 26/11 Mumbai attacks could not have been planned and executed without local assistance, which was perhaps provided by an umbrella group like the Indian Mujahideen.

Abhinav Bharat, a little-known Hindu group, shot into prominence following the arrest of two of its activists including an ex-army major, for alleged involvement in the Malegaon blasts in a Muslim locality. Its spokesperson declared it will fight injustice against Hindus. –We do not support any kind of terrorism. But at the same time we want to make it clear that Hindus will not tolerate atrocities committed on them, if such anti-Hindu acts take place a reaction is only to be expected. Himani Savarkar, president of Abhinav Bharat, is reported to have said. Bhopal-based Samir Kulkarni and Pune-based Ramesh Upadhyaya were arrested by the anti-terrorist squad of the Maharashtra police on suspicion of complicity in blasts in Samjhauta Express, a train that operates between India and Pakistan under an agreement between the two countries.

The serial bomb blasts in 2008 targeting civilians in Jaipur (May), Bangalore (July), Ahmedabad (July), Delhi (September) and Malegaon, Ajmer and Hyderabad were the handiwork of some radical groups.

Indigenous terrorism cannot be controlled merely by search-and-destroy operations by security forces. Although the use of force will be necessary for ensuring security of the political and administrative infrastructure, the other important aspect of gaining the confidence of people should receive equal attention. Experience shows that socio-economic developmental programmes are far more effective in eroding the root causes of domestic terrorism. Studies conducted by the US-based think tank RAND Corporation suggest that developmental assistance could weaken local support and curb a number of terrorist activities, besides discouraging new recruits to join terrorist networks.

In worst of its kind which emerged are the suicidal groups. The emergence can be traced from Sri Lanka whether the LTTE fighting for a separate statehood raised a battalion of Suicidal Squad and ultimately we had to lose ex- Prime Minister Shri Rajeev Gandhi. It gave new dimension to terrorism and now plenty of such fanatics are available with Al Qaida and another terrorist group.

The Indian policeman is neither recruited nor trained or equipped to perform a counter-terrorism role. A police officer is supposed to be on duty twenty-four hours without any holiday. He lives away from his family because he has no sufficient living accommodation available near the place of work. He is expected to reach a crime scene in minutes even if he has not provided with transport facilities. In fact the First Police Commission in 1902 took a conscious decision to have a cheap police force. A constable was expected to perform only routine and unskilled duties. In contrast to the British bobby named after Robert Peel, the father of police reforms in Britain in 1829, the 1861 Police Act designed the Indian police as a cheap unskilled force performing only mechanical duties. The duties of the police officer were incorporated in section 23 of the Police Act: to obey and execute all orders and warrants lawfully issued to him by any competent authority. Nowhere does the act suggest giving service to the people and working closely with them to earn their trust. The new rulers have found it useful in manipulating the police for partisan and personal ends

By ignoring the word lawfully in actual practice, The Indian Penal Code enacted in 1860, the Criminal Procedure Code (Cr. PC) in 1862 and the Evidence Act in 1872 have given the semi-literate and ill-trained policemen enormous legal powers, but successive governments at the centre and the state have little enthusiasm for improving their living and working conditions. Even in metropolitan areas like Delhi and the Mumbai, many of them live in slum-like jhugis and their living conditions are no better than that of the poorest in the society. But the media paints them as villains, living a life of luxury.

The maximum police casualties take place in well-planned ambushes laid by the terrorists, and yet the police are not fully trained how to move in the terrorist-dominated areas in deep forests and hilly terrain. On more than one occasion, they have blindly walked into the trap without taking even minimum precautions. Each time a police party is ambushed in extremist-infested areas, we hear that the party did not take even the most elementary precautions that should have been done. But information about the movement of police parties is not kept secret. The massacre in 2008 of the Andhra Pradesh Grey Hound commandos in the bordering lake in Malkangiri, Orissa could have been avoided had the Orissa police not shared information with all and sundry about the movement of the Grey Hound party in a steamer. Police convoys moving on routine duties, like taking essential supplies or policemen going on leave, make easy and frequent targets.

Another great weakness is poor physical security of the police stations. The police stations and police posts in these areas are so badly protected that the policemen posted there are sitting ducks to extremist fire. Poor transport and communication systems are another cause for avoidable police casualties. Police vehicles are not able to negotiate poor roads in the forest area. The police deployed in terrorism-affected areas need both long and short-range weapons. The police infrastructure is so poor that they can easily be taken by surprise and overpowered by the terrorists. The Andhra Pradesh government has taken some practical steps to strengthen the infrastructure in the left- extremism affected areas, but much needs to be done in other states confronting left extremism.

A police force raised to meet the requirements of the colonial masters cannot be expected to meet the challenge of combating terrorism. The government has been appointing one commission after another, but their reports have been gathering dust in the government archives for the last fifty years. The National Police Commission (NPC) submitted its last report in 1981, but till today no central or state government has been willing to implement any of its major recommendations. Even the Supreme Court directives of September 2006, based on the NPC recommendations, have not found favour with the government. The Supreme Court gave six directions to the state governments and one to the Union government. These directives relate to important facets of the problem in the police: insulating them from undue political interference and giving them functional autonomy, making them accountable, separating areas, introducing transparency in the selection of the police chiefs and giving minimum tenure to officers posted in the field. The central government was also directed to constitute a national security commission to upgrade the effectiveness of the police forces and to improve their working condition.

The Indian military has so far mainly been in the role of victim in instances of militant attacks of both the conventional and suicide types, even though it has continued to be proactive and offensive in its prosecution of counter-insurgency operations in Jammu and Kashmir. The initiative has definitely been in the hands of the terrorist organizations that target the Indian security forces. While security measures of all kinds have undoubtedly been tightened, all the armed forces now need to get proactive on the counter-intelligence front. This is an area of weakness in the organizational ability of the Indian state and has, with depressing regularity, led to recurrent failures. Notable

examples are 1962 (the Chinese attack), 1965 (Pakistan-organized guerilla infiltration into Kashmir), 1987 (the lack of intelligence about the LTTE), 1993 (explosives and arms were smuggled into Mumbai by sea from Pakistan), 1999 (Pakistani intrusion across the LoC in Kargil) and November 2008 (the terrorist suicide raid on Mumbai).

A complete overhaul of the police forces is a primary requirement. Its various branches should be headed by experienced professionals and not by yes men. The time for treating security postings as political patronage is over. The terrorists are able to violate our borders by sea, air and land with impunity, but those given the responsibility to secure the borders are busy hiding their incompetence and putting the blame on each other. Only officers who have physical and moral courage and a proven track record should be posted to lead anti-terrorism task forces. The best practices and approaches to combat terrorism are founded on a range of actions, including apprehension and elimination of operatives and their leadership, destruction of infrastructure and sanctuaries as well as denial of material support and funding. The police have a key role in all this. The strengthening of the law enforcement at all levels is absolutely essential, because terrorist crimes are closely linked to criminal gangs. There is a pressing need to initiate new concepts, doctrines and training for the police tasked to combat terrorism in different environments.

In conclusion, it can be said that the police in India have done a remarkable job in thwarting the evil design of the various terrorist groups of all hues active in the country. If this country is still united in spite of all types of assaults on its unity and integrity, the major credit must go to the police. It is all the more creditable because they are neither trained nor equipped for this job. They have had to fight the battle against the terrorists at many places in the country with their hands tied behind their backs. Their I training and equipment need to be upgraded if they are to win the battle against terrorism. They need more resources and better equipment, and better training and more committed leadership. But most of all, they need to be freed from undue meddling by politicians in day-to-day functioning. Indian politicians should have no role in recruitment, postings, transfers and promotions of police officers. The police should be given functional autonomy to do their primary job of enforcing the rule of law and protecting life and property of all Indian citizens irrespective of religion, caste or creed. The paramilitary forces and the army should be deployed to assist the police and not to substitute them. The police role is best left to police officers.



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