

INTERNATIONAL TERROR

Intentions & Perceptions

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INTRODUCTION –

No man ever is born to be a terrorist or a saint. The common ideology of people is that terrorist murder people for their religion, and this is how they want to portray it, but this is far from the reality. Most of the terrorism is politically inspired. There are those select heads who actually realise their evil deed and those are the leaders of terror groups. Most of the attackers don't know that they are doing something wrong as they have been bred to think like they are contributing to a holy cause, and not realise that they are destroying their own lives to fill the pockets and power ambitions of their leaders. Through this research work I want to make people understand what actually happens in the terror world, how they get their labour, how they manage their funding and what happens in the post effects of terror attacks

DISCLAIMER -

It goes without saying that no matter how the contents of my research come across to different individuals, I don't support or tolerate any forms of terrorism/violence. I highly condemn these acts

“The first hijacked plane struck the 93rd floor.”

On September 11, 2001, at 8:45 a.m. on a clear Tuesday morning, an American Airlines Boeing 767 loaded with 20,000 gallons of jet fuel crashed into the north tower of the World Trade Center in New York City. Another plane struck the south tower after a couple minutes. A third plane just hit the pentagon in Arlington and a fourth failed its purpose by crashing into a field in Pennsylvania.

Between 26th and 29th November 2008 10 members of an Islamic terrorist group called Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) wreaked havoc on the streets of Mumbai, India. The terrorists split up into multiple groups and attacked popular tourist and local spots which included the Chhatrapati Shivaji terminus, the popular Leopold Café, the infamous Taj hotel, two hospitals, and a theatre.

Not so long ago we saw the retreat of the American armed forces from Afghanistan, which created an opportunity and paved the way for the Taliban to again take control of a country which was once liberated from them and allowed them to again subdue the innocents, protect those who won't speak and murder those with a voice.

There will be many more stories from around the world where a mere handful of people have destroyed the lives of many fathers and grandfathers and mothers and grandmothers and countless children who have been orphaned.

Some people would argue that the number of terrorist attacks have decreased. And yes they have, but the face of terrorism has changed. Nowadays terror is homegrown; you don't need a masked man with a gun to instill a fear in your heart.

Of the 18,814 deaths caused by terrorists around the world last year, well over half were due to the actions of just four groups: Islamic State, the Taliban, Al-Shabaab and Boko Haram.

According to Global Terrorism Index 2018, compiled by the Institute for Economics & Peace (IEP), these four organisations were responsible for 10,632 deaths in 2017.

Over the past decade they have accounted for 44% of all terrorist deaths.

ISLAMIC STATE –

It is also known in the arab world as Daesh or by the acronyms ISIS,ISIL.

For the past couple of years this has been the largest and most powerful organization.it has been largely defeated in its home- Syria, Iraq – but remains capable of launching attacks in the Middle East. It has also inspired many people and affiliated organizations to stage attacks in other parts of the Middle East as well as Europe and Asia. Almost 70% of their attacks were bombings which in total killed 4,350 innocents.

For the past couple of years, however their powers have been on the wane, with a decrease in 22% in attacks and reduce of death toll to 4.9 people per attack from 8 people per attack.



TALIBAN –

Once the rulers of Afghanistan, they were defeated by the US and its allies in 2001, they have now again risen to power following the retreat of the American forces.

In the previous couple of years they killed almost 700 people. The deathrate has gone up to 5.1 from a previous of 4.2. The group has adjusted its tactics in recent years, switching its focus away from attacks on civilian targets and towards police and military personnel.



AL SHABAAB –

The extremist group AL SHABAAB emerged in 2006 and is an affiliate of AL QAEDA. While its main area of operation is Somalia, it has carried out attacks in Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia.

It was the deadliest group in sub-saharan Africa in 2017, being responsible for 1500 deaths – 93% rise. The worst incident was in October 2017, when 588 people were killed and 316 injured in an explosion outside the Safari Hotel in the Hodan area of the city.

Many of the countries worst affected by terrorism have seen a decline in the number of deaths over recent years, including Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Nigeria and Pakistan. Somalia, however, has been an unfortunate exception to that trend, due to the actions of Al-Shabaab. There have been almost 6,000 deaths from terrorism in the country since 2001.



BOKO HARAM –

The Nigerian terrorist group 'Boko Haram' also known as 'Jama'tu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati wal-Jihad' was once the deadliest terror group in the world but has started to decline since 2015. It recently split up into multiple factions, the largest of which being the Islamic state west African province (ISWAP).

It emerged in 2002 and spread to neighbouring countries mainly Chad, Cameroon and Niger. The group has also sworn allegiance to the Islamic State.

Most of the attacks were carried out in Nigeria with smaller numbers in Cameroon and Niger. The group has gained notoriety for mass hostage takings and extensive use of children and women as suicide bombers.



AN EXTREMIST MINDSET

- Why do people willingly join these terrorist groups?
 - How does a person go from an innocent child to a mass murderer?
 - Why after all this time people still associate themselves to these terror groups?
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1. One reason is because of **INJUSTICE**. How some people are treated like outcasts, like they don't belong anywhere. How they are left to die in the wild world with no one to help them
 2. One big reason is because of **IDENTITY CRISIS**. The sense of identity is considered to be a significant element of human existence. Terror groups take in unwanted people and make them feel welcome. This in return creates a respect for them in the people's minds.
 3. **RELIGION**. Most of the terrorist organizations currently are based on a religious fundamental. They argue that their leader is the supreme one, and if they control an area they rule as is written in their holy book.
 4. There are around 200 recognized states in the world with more than 3500 large nations – i.e only 55,56 nations have their own states. To own a **TERRITORY** is one aspect of animal nature in us humans and so to achieve that a man can go to enormous lengths.
 5. **MASS MIGRATIONS** and all their negative consequences contribute to a large amount of terrorism. The inflow/presence of huge immigrant communities is frequently taken advantage of by terrorist groups seeking new recruits, logistics or financial aid.
 6. **THE DOMINO EFFECT** also generates a hefty amount of terrorism. For example, an uprising in one part of the world may trigger an unrest somewhere else which in return could cause unrest in another place and so on.
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FUNDING –

- But if these groups are illegal, then how do they earn money?
 - How do they manage their expenses?
 - If so then, how much money do these people get?
1. funding is a necessity for any organization, be it a company or a business or these terrorist organizations. Money is of huge importance to them, and I say this because to even carry out a single attack, many different aspects have to be considered. Officials have to be bribed, food and stay has to be given to the assailants, their transports have to be arranged and not to mention even the general day to day activities of everyone have to be funded.
 2. Well then how do they get it? They get it from various sources. Some include basic kidnapping and extortion, drug and human trafficking, some include money laundering where under the names of charities and NGO's the money is moved to their accounts.
 3. Then one thing which currently only Da'esh (ISIS) is doing is participating in the oil trade. Oil trade is a very expensive one and with that very rewarding. A lot of money can be laundered through the oil trade. This does not mean that oil won't give good returns through legitimate business, in fact most of the legitimate sources of income for Da'esh is through the oil trade.
 4. The most important aspect of a kind of funding is political support. Some groups have favourable relations with some governments and use these to their advantage. Safe havens, protection from the law, cloaking of illegal activities is only possible with government backing. Failed states like Somalia also enable terrorist movements and create additional safe havens which ultimately boost terrorist activities.
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Post effects of attacks –

Terrorism has an impact on the societies that it affects or targets. While this impact can be one-off or limited, nowadays—with the terrorism of radical Islamic groups such as al-Qaeda and, more recently, ISIS—it tends to be heavy and long lasting, even if it does change over time.

Terrorism aims to create terror, a feeling of insecurity, and the idea that leaders can no longer protect those they lead. It leaves people stunned, and has an emotional impact that lives on through its political implications.

If the impact of terrorism is lasting, it becomes cultural: individuals change their habits and behaviors, learning, for example not to be passive in the event of a terrorist attack, and going about their daily lives keeping in the back of their minds the possibility that a terrorist attack could take place. They also consume differently, which has a number of effects, including considerable economic ones. Terrorism changes people's understanding of reality.

Terrorism affects some groups more than others, such as Jews and Muslims in societies in which they are the minority. It also dehumanizes or marginalizes minority groups (such as Muslims in Western countries), making the public believe that members of these groups are complicit in this terrorism and are therefore criminals.

Lastly, it also results in taking away of human rights. Potential suspects on the governments radar who could have allegedly executed or been a part of an attack or were a part of an illegal organization would be captured, detained in a black site, tortured – physically and mentally – and would be made to forcefully confess to crimes in ways that if would surface, they would destroy the government.

Marginalisation of communities –

With the rise of “religious terrorism” we have seen that some communities have been subjected to discrimination without any sense of right or wrong. Jews or Muslims have been the ones most affected in the regime of separation. For the purpose of simplicity I will write taking into accounts the problems faced by Muslims.

AL Qaeda, ISIS, AL Shabaab, all these are terrorists group which follow the Quran or we can say pray to Allah. Nowhere in the Quran is it written that a person can kill others In the name of god. No god anywhere requires us to harm or hurt another living being, yet these people kill in the name of Allah.

The brunt of this is faced by the innocents worldwide. At this point of time the term Muslim has been disregarded as a religion in the people’s minds and has become a symbol of terror. Let’s take a look at India, a country broken with religious communalism. Every day in India tens of Muslims are lynched to death and in many cities they can’t get an apartment to rent because of their religion.

This is not just the case in India. Worldwide Muslims are subjected to discrimination. At the airport they will always be suspected of doing something wrong and will be checked separately, they will always be the wrongdoers of the world.

Every muslim in the world will be linked to terrorism, every Quran will be associated with the mentality of a terrorist. So much hatred is now aimed towards them that they are not given a chance to prove their innocence.

We need to understand that terror is not supported by religion, any religion, it is just a tool to control people and justify evil acts for power, politics and money.

TIMELINE –

- Terrorist groups don't suddenly become big and powerful, they slowly make their marks and establish a stronghold in society.
 - I will explain this timeline taking Afghanistan as an example
1. **11 September 2001** - Al-Qaeda, led by Osama Bin Laden in Afghanistan, carries out the largest terror attack ever conducted on US soil.
 2. **7 October 2001** - A US-led coalition bombs Taliban and al-Qaeda facilities in Afghanistan.
 3. **13 November 2001** - The Northern Alliance, a group of anti-Taliban rebels backed by coalition forces, enters Kabul as the Taliban flee the city.
 4. **26 January 2004** - After protracted negotiations at a “loya jirga” or grand assembly, the new Afghan constitution is signed into law. Hamid Karzai becomes the president.
 5. **May 2006** – British troops arrive in Helmand province, a Taliban stronghold in the south of country
 6. **17 February 2009** – U.S president Barack Obama approves a major increase in the number of troops deployed in Afghanistan (140,000).
 7. **2 May 2011** – Osama bin Laden is killed in an assault by the U.S seals and his body is buried at sea.
 8. **23 April 2013** – Mullah Omar, the founder of Taliban dies in Pakistan. His death is kept secret for almost 2 years
 9. **28 December 2014** – NATO ends its combat operations in Afghanistan.
 10. **2015** - The Taliban launch a series of suicide attacks, car bombings and other assaults. The parliament building in Kabul, and the city of Kunduz are attacked. Islamic State militants begin operations in Afghanistan.
 11. **29 February 2020** - The US and the Taliban sign an “agreement for bringing peace” to Afghanistan, in Doha, Qatar. The US and Nato allies agree to withdraw all troops within 14 months if the militants uphold the deal.

12. **13 April 2021** - US president Joe Biden announces that all US troops will leave Afghanistan by 11 September 2021.
 13. **16 August 2021** - In just over a month, the Taliban sweep across Afghanistan, taking control of towns and cities all over the country, including Kabul. Afghan security forces collapse in the face of the Taliban advance.
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INTERVIEW –

- I held an interview with the channel head and senior executive producer of New Delhi Television (NDTV) - Vandana Chopra.
- These were her answers to the questions asked by me.

Q1) What is the reason for a person adopting the terror route or militancy?

While we are very quick to believe that the reason for this sort of aggression is purely religious or familial, it is very deep and multi faceted. Various factors like social and political deprivation, neglect of basic rights due to the person, racial or fascist discrimination against and individual or a group of people belonging to specific communities all culminate to drive one to choose such extreme alternatives. Additionally, several agencies run on utilizing and capitalizing these deprivations

Q.2) why do these terrorist organisations exist?

Purely a tool to satisfy large political goals. From the beginning of mankind, it is essential to divide society as branching a large group into small divisions weakens a society and makes it vulnerable to mould. Power to change things undemocratically and with muscle power, to bring upon anarchy, to hurt, injure or harm the common man and to cause chaos, mayhem and despair in general, can be beneficial to many, from small petty money-hungry goons, to large world organisations running on terror fuel

Q.3) do you think that political support is important for these groups to survive?

Absolutely, 100%. Terrorism is not cheap. It costs arms, ammunitions, weapons of various sorts, group mobilizations, access to country interiors, transport, fuel, with the list being endless. The money can never be individually funded and grows strength from strength. What we're looking at is millions of dollars to begin with and red tapeism and corruption within governments

Q.4) why do you think that the attack on 9/11 got the amount of attention it got?

The methodology behind the act was brutal and inhumane. It was sudden and unexpected and the way it hit the towers, the significance of intruding into the most powerful work centres, the suicide mission and the indication of upping the terror aggression, all culminated into making the 9/11 act an unforgettable event. The September 11 attacks in 2001 were followed by initial shocks causing global stock markets to drop sharply. The attacks themselves resulted in approximately \$40 billion in insurance losses, making it one of the largest insured events ever. And ever since, America has not been able to trust societies particularly from the Asian sub continent.

SUMMARY –

Understanding terror from basic numbers and data from the net is only the tip of the iceberg. The political world has taken democracy to new heights, evolved for human rights exposure and made every citizen a personal name. In all its fantastic achievements comes a flip side where a handful few, either get left behind, or political greed gets the better of them. They are born as reverse by-products of democratic revolution. With international peace bodies working hard to curtail and contain, many complex corners are still sitting confused on battling with this demon. My aim to do this project was to remove social prejudice, and pre conceived public opinion on generalising the dark group of terror. We need to balance, weigh and move together to tackle with such growing concerns.

“Everyone’s worried about stopping terrorism. Well, there’s really an easy way: Stop participating in it.” – Naom Chomsky

Yuvraj Dewan

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