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Political Science

TERRORISM AS A GLOBAL THREAT: A BRIEF ANALYSIS

KEY WORDS: *Terrorism, Threat, Development, Security*

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ABSTRACT

Terrorism is the gravest human security problem of 21st century. Today, it is not the problem of one country, rather the whole world is witnessing the menace of terrorism in one way or the other. It has spread its tentacles to almost all the countries and has posed a great threat to the world. It has not only the killed people, but has also annihilated social and economic systems various countries. It has broken the civilized world order that took millennia to form. Militancy, insurgency, cross-border terrorism, state terrorism, international terrorism are few words which are interchangeably used as different expressions of terrorism, though they are conceptually different from each other. Thus, in this paper an attempt has been made to make a brief analysis of different forms of terrorism which have posed a great threat to the entire world. Further, in this paper an endeavor has been made to offer suggestive measures for solutions to the prolonged problem of terrorism.

Meaning of terrorism

In contemporary world, international terrorism has become a significant threat for almost all the countries around the world, including those, which are most powerful and most developed. Terrorism is not a recent phenomenon. It was present in the world since ancient times in varied forms and manifestations. Therefore, people throughout history have witnessed the threat of terrorism. However, nowadays due to globalization and revolution in international tele communication technology, the reach of the terrorists now is worldwide. Consequently, international community is facing new forms of terrorism, which are more powerful, well organized, and deeply ideological.

The word "terrorism" has originated from the French word "terrorisme" which is derived the Latin verb "terrere" meaning to frighten to or to cause tremble. Actually, it was used originally to describe state terror i.e. the reign of terror, which existed in France in the post-revolutionary period. However, the meaning and application of the word terrorism has undergone numerous transformation. Terrorism in modern era has perpetrated and prospered more under the patronage of politicians. The fact, which nobody can deny, that there has been a tremendous increase in the role of money and muscle power in our politics and particularly in elections. Moreover, the intensity of repression and terrorism is a measure of the fear of the Government. From here originates the other concept of State-induced-terrorism, which means that every government reactionary and revolutionary, alien or swadeshi, when it fears for its own existence, then these governments indulge in terrorism. The reactionary government does so on behalf of some privileged people and against the masses but the revolutionary government does so on behalf of the masses and against the privileged few and also it has a little deceit. The reactionary government on the other hand lives in the atmosphere of deception, it talks of liberty and do what is pleases. It talks to justice and means by it the perpetuation of the existing order under which it flourishes through other perish. And under the grab of law and order, it kills, shoot gags, imprisons and does every illegal and disorderly think.

Forms of Terrorism:

International Terrorism:-

When two neighboring states are involved in terrorist activities across the border directly or indirectly, it is called cross-border terrorism and when third state is also involved or when terrorist acts are abetted in a third country, terrorism becomes international. Thus international terrorism includes those acts where two or more states are involved, i.e. where the perpetrators and victims are, citizens of different states or where the act is performed in whole or in part in more than one state.

State Terrorism:-

When a state is involved in the terrorist activities directly or indirectly against its own citizens is called state terrorism or a state that takes oppressive measures against its people by sheer use of force is called as a terrorist state. State terrorism involves intimidation of people by the authorities. The methods adopted have been torture and other cruel and inhumane treatment of individuals.

State-Sponsored Terrorism:-

State sponsored terrorism means terrorism which is sponsored by one state against the another state for the satisfaction of its selfish ends. The main aim of the state sponsored terrorism is to terrorize the people of the state, to destabilize the government and to enforce their obedience to the regime and to strengthen its authority over them. State, which sponsors the terrorism, may directly or indirectly involve at the individual level. Terrorism in Punjab in the 1980s and Kashmir Valley since 1980 till now is a classic example of state sponsored terrorism by Pakistan.

Narco-Terrorism

Terrorism linked to narcotics is a lethal combination which threatens international peace and security. Drug lords illegally cultivate narcotics and include in drug smuggling which brings in big money. The money in turns is used to purchase arms and ammunitions to be used against states and country. It has become a great and strange menace or phenomenon in the world where the drug lords not only run their own governments within state but also outside the state and they set their own laws and orders which they ruthlessly enforce. Narco-Terrorism has taken new form and technique of revolution to remain in power. Cocaine, Heroin and poppy husk have become so much pervasive in South Asia and America that they threaten the sovereignty and security of the nations.

Domestic Terrorism

The main objective of it is to terrorize a specific class of the population. Domestic terrorism may be committed by private persons, either individually or in an organized group or groups with a prime aim to create the terror or fear in the mind of a specific group or class or in the section of population of a given nation for purposes of striking or overthrowing an established regime against a certain state. It is Domestic terrorism.

Political Terrorism

Political power has been considered to lead to this form of terrorism in recent years. Political ambitions of parties and party leaders thrive on creating an atmosphere of hatred between different groups in the society. Many attempts are being made at rigging of polls or attempts made at rigging the polls, to capture booths and frighten opposing electorate,

at the different stages of elections. It may call Political Terrorism.

Suicidal Terrorism

Suicidal terrorism means a committed group which is ready to sacrifice his own assignment. It is a simple and low cost operation, requiring no escape routes or complicated rescue operations. Suicidal terrorism guarantees mass casualties and extensive damages. There is no fear that interrogated terrorists will surrender an important information, which may cause an immense impact on the public and the media. The most popular form of terrorism in times has been Suicidal Terrorism.

Chemical and Biological Terrorism

Chemical and Biological Terrorism are a massive destructive threat to the international society and represent such potential widespread and profound suffering as to cause significant consequences. International as well as national organizations are deeply engaged to detect, defeat, prevent and proliferation weapons of mass destruction terrorism. Chemical and Biological terrorism are of particular concern because of their unique combination of lethal effect on the whole society and world. Both raise critical issues between civilian and military sectors, state and local authorities and domestic and international affairs.

Nuclear Terrorism

Today the threat of nuclear terrorism has become a greater concern, along with the use of chemical and biological weapons by terrorists, all over the world. Nuclear Terrorism is yet another important and latest development in international relations. The ever-increasing proliferation of nuclear weapons and materials makes the threat of this is to be stolen by or supplied to terrorists.

Cyber Terrorism

Cyber terrorism is the use of the internet to conduct violent acts that result in or threaten loss of life or significant bodily harm, in order to achieve political or ideological gains through threat or intimidation.

Effects of Terrorism:

Terrorism produces harmful effects and it may be diverse in nature. Terrorism is disastrous for all countries, both rich and poor, and their people. The normal life is disturbed and peace and tranquility in social life are affected adversely. The atmosphere of uncertainty develops and everything seem to be coming to a halt. The smoke of devastation hovers all around and fear psychosis among the common masses prevails. It breaks down the social, economic, political and legal structure of the affected countries and the entire process of development comes to a halt. The economies of the affected countries get shattered miserably. The maintenance of the rule of the law and human rights become almost impossible. The developmental processes of the country are terminated. Terrorism perpetrates violence, degrades morality and destroys the fabric of democratic societies.

For the purposes of study, the adverse effects of terrorism are as follows-

(I) Political Effects

Terrorism has far-reaching and dangerous effects on the political situation of the affected countries. The normal political activities are completely halted and disrupted. It produces instability, hindrances to the growth of democracy and threatens administrative authority. The normal political activities come to a standstill and democratic institutions come under heavy strain. The people's aspiration for a better living gets a severe setback. Administrators find it difficult to exercise their authority freely move over developmental funds get diverted to tackle terrorism. The routine works come under strain and facilitating services get utterly disrupted.

(ii) Economic Effects

The normal business and economics of the country suffer heavy setback. Investment falls and the investors wary of their investment. The processes of growth come under the heavy strain and pace of change slows down. Terrorism derails the economy of the affected countries.

(iii) Social Effects

Terrorism also disrupts the social activities of the people. Hundreds of educational institutions get destroyed or remain closed. Other social institutions hardly do any meaningful work owing to fear and uncertainty. The growth of social culture gets under heavy strain.

Solution to the menace of terrorism

There is an urgent need for formulating and evolving comprehensive definition of international terrorism. A globally agreed upon definition of terrorism would protect the state and deliberative politics, differentiate public and private violence, and ensure international peace and security. Anti terrorism cooperation and counter terrorism coordination is obstructed by the lack of common or universal definition of terrorism. There are numerous definitions of terrorism given in several international and regional treaties and convention on international terrorism but reaching an accurate and comprehensive definition is urgently required to provide an international legal framework for effective prevention of international terrorism and for prosecution of international terrorists.

As terrorism has become a matter of global concern there is a need of global cooperation to handle it. Each state has right to seek international cooperation. Because of the diversity of interests at the global and regional level, bilateral cooperation has proved to be the best method of international cooperation. The most significant instrument of bilateral cooperation is extradition. Every state has the duty to cooperate individually as well as collectively to combat terrorism at the international level. Sharing intelligence on terrorist activities is one of the most effective means of bilateral cooperation. Efforts should be made to organize symposiums and researches on the subject of terrorism so that there is exchange of information between participating countries.

Education is considered as the key to open the minds of people as well to polish and refine human beings and their personalities. It gives them conscience and makes them capable to understand and differentiate between the right and wrong path. Lack of education is also one of the big reasons for getting attracted towards terrorism. Education is the most reliable resource for preparing the youth for initiating dialogue. Patience, time and tolerance are required to play expected significant role in bringing harmony and peace in the world. Education should teach the young minds to tolerate differences of opinion and desire to comprehend different points of view.

Poverty is also one of the important causes for growth of terrorism. When the economic conditions of poor people become worse, this may affect their capability to fulfill both their biological as well as basic psychological needs. They feel less secure about their future, less effective, and less able to control their lives, and so on. They might lead people to turn to ideologies, visions of better life that help them deal with the psychological impact of their experience. These ideologies may be religious, nationalistic or something else.

Fast track courts should be established for the fast trial of terrorist. Delays in terrorist's case will lead to obscurity which will help them to take the benefit of doubt so there is a urgent need to dispose of the terrorists cases as soon possible if a country wants to control the threat of terrorism.

Terrorism has very deep roots, Therefore it has to be tackled with strong determination and stringent laws. Such type of laws should be framed which allow to combat terrorism by using sophisticated surveillance and weapons technology, space based surveillance system etc.

In every country there must be special skilled forces to meet the challenges of terrorism. Such type of forces should be given special training to handle the emergency conditions like that of 9/11. Such forces should deal only with the cases of terrorism and they should be placed only in those areas where terrorism is on rise. They must be equipped with latest technological weapons to face the challenges.

CONCLUSION

Terrorism is a dynamic and not a static concept. It is very difficult to generalize things when one is dealing with a sensitive issue like terrorism. Enough has been said and written in the contemporary literature on terrorism regarding its definitional problem. But these definitional problems cannot change the fact that terrorism is one of the greatest dangers that mankind is facing today. Apart from the definitional problems, the strategies and the tactics of terrorist violence are enough to suggest that it is a crime not only against the state apparatus, but also against the innocent population. Moreover, modern democracies all over the world, more or less, believe in the principles of persuasion, consensus and negotiation; consider terrorism as a threat to their national security and hence put terrorism under the legal framework of national security.

Nowadays, no one seems to be safe in the world. Terrorism, an ugly development which has compelled the world leaders as well as public figures to spend millions of dollars for their security has become a global threat. Amidst this seemingly tight security and threat, thousands of innocent souls have lost their lives to the annihilation called terrorism.

Terrorism has become the center of attention and a threat to international peace and security after the end of the Cold War. More specifically after the deadly attacks of September 11, 2001 on the United States, it has become the focus of worldwide attention. This attack enabled the United States to declare War on Terror. Sufferings from the scourge of terrorism made all the People and all the nations around the world to express their concern, especially those who are seekers of peace, security and stability. It is a fight which no nation can win alone. Since the nature of terrorism has changed and it has global dimension, it is necessary that all the nation come together to share information adopt joint strategies, plug loophole in the legal system, block financing of terrorists and their operations. Only then, the war against terror can succeed.

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