



# TERRORISM

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# Introduction:

- Terrorism has emerged as a global problem and a cause of concern for international community only in the later part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- The process of globalization has also globalized terrorism.
- The specter of terrorism, trans-border has shaken the world with panic & scare as never before after Sept. 11, 2001.

# Introduction .....

- It is a threat to international peace and security no less grave than the nuke terror.
- Today, terrorism is not just confined within the territorial limit of a nation but world-wide and its networking is global and targets can be anywhere & at any time.
- It is a process which is employed by a large number of groups in order to realize their objectives.
- Often terrorism is used as a synonym for insurgency, civil war, revolution, guerilla war, intimidation and extremism.

# Definitions of terrorism:

- The term terrorism is known by different meanings and has no internationally accepted definition.
- In common usage terrorism meant as use of force, creating terror or fear, intimidating methods, especially to secure political ends, liquidating resistance, stifling dissent, guerilla warfare, etc.
- According to Encyclopedia of Social Sciences, it is a method whereby an organized group or party seeks to achieve its avowed aims chiefly through a systematic use of violence.

# Definitions .....

- According to Hoffman, it is a “cost effective way of waging war covertly, through the use of surrogate warriors or guns for hire.”
- It is a “premeditated, politically motivated violence, perpetrated against non-combatants targets, by sub national groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience.” US State Department.
- Terrorism is thus, a violent behaviour intended to generate fear in the community for political purposes.
- Terrorism in politics is a weapon of blackmail, coercion & imposition of minority will against a majority decision.

# Features of Terrorism:

- Some of its features are –
  1. It intends to create fear in the minds of the people.
  2. It has primary targets who are usually the innocent people.
  3. It uses violence.
  4. This violence causes death, damage & destruction of property.
  5. Terrorism has a political purpose.

# Features .....

6. It is illegal and unlawful.
7. It leads to the feeling of helplessness on the part of the masses.
8. It is irrational.
9. It is against the state or community.
10. It selects the target for violence at random.

# Difference between terrorism & other forms of violence:

- It is very important for differentiate terrorism from other forms of violence.
  - Of course threat of violence is an important element, yet all kinds of violence do not involve political terrorism.
1. Unlike violence, the effectiveness of terrorism rests mainly on the element of surprise and fear.
  2. Terrorism differs from other crimes in the sense that the terrorist always claim to be acting for a cause other than this personal benefit. A terrorist's first loyalty is not himself but to his cause other than their personal benefit.



## Differences between terrorism ...

3. hence, terrorists are generally willing to take greater risks than the criminals, whose concern is their own safety.
4. Terrorism is the violent act which is symbolic of the larger message or challenge, e.g. the attack on WTC is seen as a symbolic attack on American might.
5. Terrorism is entirely different from other forms of violence in the sense that it does not make a difference between the population & the state in its target.

# Differences ....

6. Terrorists do not respect the law of the land and kill innocent people.
7. Terrorists target the heads of the state to create distrust in the government., etc.

# Bases or types of terrorism:

- It may be classified as follows –
  1. Religion based terrorism,
  2. State sponsored terrorism,
  3. Ideological terrorism,
  4. Suicide terrorism,
  5. Nuclear terrorism,
  6. Cyber-terrorism,
  7. Bio-terrorism,
  8. Complex terrorism
  9. Local, National or International Terrorism, etc.

# I. Religion based terrorism:

- International terrorism over the last two decades indicates the resurgence & proliferation of terrorist groups motivated by religion.
- According to the US State Department, religiously motivated and sectarian terrorism will continue to grow in the near future.
- This brand of terrorism regards violence as a divine duty.
- And this is not restricted to a particular religion alone.

# Religion based terrorism .....

- White Supremacist in the US, the radical Jewish groups in Israel, radical Sikh Fundamentalists, Conservative Hindu Elements in India, Islamic Fundamentalist groups all over the world come under this category.
- The September 11, 2001 revealed the existence of AL-Qaida of Osama Bin Laden is a sizeable global terrorist network with cells in perhaps 40 countries and with expertise and resources to attempt well planned simultaneous attacks.
- The four major religious extremist organizations of the contemporary world are – Al-Qaida, Hizbul Mujahedeen, Lashkar-e-Toiba & Jash-e-Mohamad.

## 2. State sponsored terrorism:

- Some governments secretly support terrorist groups by providing weapons, training and money for attacks in other countries which is termed as 'state sponsored terrorism'.
- This type of terrorism is being encouraged by nations with their neighboring states since two decades.
- USA in the past financed, supplied arms and provided military training to some nations in its fight against the erstwhile Soviet Union.

# State sponsored terrorism .....

- Recently South Asia, has emerged as a hub for international terrorism with Pakistan & Afghanistan being the major sponsors.
- Terrorist organizations like Harkat-ul-Mujahideen, Harkat-e-Toiba, etc. from Pakistan and Taliban from Afghanistan enjoyed the patronage of their respective governments.

### 3. Ideological Terrorism:

- Ideologically terrorism may be extreme right and extreme left.
- Naxalite insurgency prevalent in Indian states or Maoist insurgency in Nepal are the latest examples of leftist terrorism.
- Maoist in Nepal are fighting for the establishment of the rule of the proletariat.
- The violent tussle between the government forces and communist groups in Nepal since 2001 has taken more than thousands of lives.



## 4. Suicide Terrorism:

- It is a new phenomenon in the sphere of international terrorism.
- Suicide strikes by organizations like ' Hamas' and Palestine Islamic Jihad in Israel, the Hezbollah in Lebanon, the LTTE in Sri Lanka, are some outfits which use suicide terrorism.
- The threat of suicide bombings of West Asia & South Asia is slowly spreading to other regions of the world.
- This kind of terrorism is driven not only by religious groups but also by ethnic nationalistic groups.

## 5. Nuclear Terrorism:

- Of all forms of terrorism in the contemporary world, the nuclear terrorism has become a major threat to the very existence of the human beings.
- The emergence of nuclear, biological, chemical and cyber-terrorism is directly linked to the technological progress.
- The ever increasing proliferation of nuclear weapons and materials makes the threat of their being stolen by or supplied to terrorists.

# Nuclear terrorism .....

- The main worry for nations is that nuclear terrorism need not be carried by criminals alone, but even by the disgruntled groups within a particular government.
- Terrorism is often said to be the weapon of the weak against strong. And nuclear terrorism is a means to humble even the strongest.

## 6. Cyber-terrorism:

- It is another recent form of terrorism.
- Barry Collin, a senior research fellow at the institute for security and intelligence in California, coined this term in 1980s.
- The concept is composed of two elements – cyber space & terrorism.
- Cyber space according to Collin, is understood as that place in which computer programmes function and data moves.

# Cyber terrorism .....

- Cyber terrorism is the 'premeditated, politically motivated attacks by sub-national groups or clandestine agents against information, computer systems, computer programmes, and data that result in violence against non-combatant targets.
- Thus, cyber terrorism is an act of terrorism that uses information system or computer technology either as a weapon or target (Information terrorism).
- In 2002, 33 terrorist organizations have an on line presence.

## 7. Bio-terrorism:

- It is a silent reprisal by a faceless enemy through biological and chemical attacks in order to cause mass death.
- There are so many instances of using bio-weapons for killings.
- They have been deployed by the Vietnamese in Laos, South African forces in Angola, Soviet troops in Afghanistan, the CIA in Cuba, Iraqis in Iran, Syrian troops on their civilians & rebels, etc.

## 8. Complex Terrorism:

- In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, terrorist attacks have become more destructive due to the impact of communication technologies.
- Homer Dixon, refers it as 'Complex terrorism' or some other called it as 'Super terrorism'.
- It includes all forms of nuclear, chemical, biological attacks except small chemical poisoning.
- It also includes cyber crimes, designed to knock-out security, economic & emergency systems.

## 9. Local, National & International Terrorisms:

- Local terrorism is always confined to a region, area, or province of a country.
- Range and targets of terrorist activities are limited to a particular region or province to get their political & economic demands accepted.
- Terrorism prevalent in north-eastern states in India such as Assam, Mizoram, etc. fall under this category.
- When a whole nation suffers from terrorist activities, it is called national terrorism.
- Its targets, range, sphere of activity and net work of terrorist groups spread through-out a country.



# Local, national & International terrorisms .....

- The emergence of trans-national terrorism involving terrorists of different nationalities planning, training and executing acts of political terrorism has culminated into the phenomenon of international terrorism.

# EFFECTS OF TERRORISM:

- Effects of terrorism may be listed as –
  1. New era in international relations,
  2. New types of security threats,
  3. Instrument of foreign policy,
  4. Spoiled relations between nations,
  5. International coalition,
  6. Counter terrorism measures,
  7. Change of regimes in Afghanistan & Iraq,
  8. Impact on the UN,
  9. Change in the foreign policy of nations,
  10. Adverse economic impact,
  11. Mounting American dominance,
  12. Erodes the authority of the state, etc.

# I. New era in international relations:

- International terrorism has a new era in international relations.
- The September 11, attack on WTC has created a special kind of alarm bell for international relations.
- September 11 attacks also fundamentally altered the nature of international relations and foreign policy of several nations and especially of the US.

## 2. New type of security threat:

- It has created a security threat which is more covert, sudden, undeclared and dangerous than the conventional wars.
- This new threat is aimed at cities, busy business centers & markets, government offices and buildings, political leaders and bureaucrats, civilian population and police and military personnel.
- No one can predict the possible scenarios for future terrorist attacks.

### 3. Instrument of foreign policy:

- Now, terrorism has been used as an instrument of state policy by nations such as Pakistan, Afghanistan, Libya, etc.
- With the use of terrorism as a state policy lead to phenomenon & concepts like proxy war, surrogate warfare, international civil war, low intensity conflicts, etc.
- The government supports terrorism in other countries through money, diplomatic facilities, passports, sanctuaries, experts, training camps, weapons, explosives and justifying ideologies.
- In recent times, Pakistan is a classical example of using terrorism as a state policy.

## 4. Spoiled relations between nations:

- As a result of terrorism relations between several nations were either spoiled or further deteriorated.
- For example, the bitterness and misunderstanding were heightened due to terrorism in the relations between Israel and Arab nations, India and Pakistan, the US and some Islamic nations, etc.

## 5. International coalitions:

- After the September 11, attacks, the entire world became conscious of curse of terrorism in the world.
- President Bush announced the start of a 'war on terror' in 2001.
- Almost every country in the world, supported the international coalition to fight terrorism led by the USA for throwing the Taliban regime out of Afghanistan & executing Osama Bin Laden.
- The International coalition which played the role of providing moral support to Washington in legitimizing the US actions against terrorism.

## 6. Counter terrorism measures:

- In the recent past several counter terrorism steps have been taken by different countries of the world so as to contain terrorism.
- Some such steps are – tightening of immigration rules, passing of terrorism prevention acts like POTA 2002 by India, the Patriot Act by the US in 2001, banning of terrorist organizations and freezing their assets, increased border vigilance, more intelligence sharing, diplomatic consultations, more defense & strategic cooperation, extradition treaties, etc.
- In addition to these, the UN has also taken several measures against terrorism.



# 7. Impact on the UN:

- The UN's response to tackle terrorism came rather very late.
- Two major anti-terrorism conventions were held under the UN.
- The 1997 Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist bombings and the 1999 Convention for the suppression of the financing of terrorism.
- After the September 11, attacks on the US, the UN issued statements denouncing terrorist attacks, passed resolutions condemning attacks, global anti-terrorism coalitions forged, sanctions against Taliban imposed, anti-terrorism conventions organized, etc.

## 8. Change of regime in Afghanistan & Iraq:

- Taliban regime in Afghanistan ended and installed a elected government headed by Hamid Karzai in June, 2002.
- Likewise, Saddam Hussein regime in Iraq was ended as result of the US war on terrorism in 2003.

## 9. Change in the Foreign policy of nations:

- It has brought about a substantial change in the foreign policies of all major nations of the world.
- For instance the US foreign policy under-went changes like militarily intervening in Afghanistan & Iraq, undertaken unprecedented intelligence collaborations and embraced new allies, etc.
- Cooperation between major powers like US, Russia, China, European countries in intelligence sharing, unearthing terrorist finance mechanisms, etc. achieved.
- Sino-US rivalry was sidelined, etc.

## 10. Adverse economic impact:

- It has adverse affect on economic growth and public finance.
- Higher military spending due to terrorism can reduce out-lays for education, health care and other productive activities.
- It has also indirectly affected trade, tourism, business and weakened country's fiscal position & hurt economic growth.

# 11. Erodes the authority of the state:

- Majority of the terrorists have international linkages and the effects of terrorist attacks are worse than conventional wars.
- Some times states becomes vulnerable to terrorist attacks & fails to control terrorism and thus there is the erosion of the authority of the state.

## 12. Mounting American dominance:

- In the post-cold war, after the collapse of Soviet Union the US remained the sole super power.
- Once again its success in Afghanistan & Iraq in the war against terrorism, further enhanced its super power image.
- Terrorism provided the US the opportunity to lead and prove its military might.
- Through its fight against terrorism the US got justification to enhance its supremacy and dominance in the world.

# Conclusion:

- Terrorism is basically a political problem faced by the international community which requires a global political solution.
- It is proved beyond doubt that there is a need for evolving a common strategy for suppressing terrorism on the part of all the nations of the world.
- Many efforts have been made by a number of nations to control state-sponsored terrorism, through economic sanctions, but so far they have not reached a consensus either at the national or international level.