Terrorism and Combating Strategies

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The rising tide of terrorism in recent times has complicated the domestic security situation in many countries. During the last few decades, numerous political systems were almost paralysed and trouble were heightened to near disaster level by terrorist's ruthless , vicious and lawless actions. Over the years terrorism has found its niche in the political scene across the globe. International terrorism, though comparatively less in volume than the domestic variety, has crossed all limitations despite increased government efforts to combat it. Much blood if not ink has flowed since terrorists struck a shocking sequence of plane attacks and bombing at the World Trade Centre and Pentagon in the U.S. This followed by tremendous upsurge in terrorist activities across the globe. Condemnation should ring out loud and clear against the recent car bomb attack on the U.S consulate in Karachi that left 11 people dead and 40 injured. This is third international terrorist attack in succession within last couple of days. Earlier in a barbaric outrage at the military camp in Jammu the terrorist left 30 dead and a few days ago the suicide bomber strike killed twelve French submarine technicians in Karachi and the attack on the Indian Parliament last year by the modern terrorists have cast a long shadow over the security network. These attacks have not only exposed the pitfalls of the security and intelligence network but also robbed the confidence of modern nations in controlling the menace of terrorism. Whether terrorism is unleashed at local, regional national or international level it cannot survive for long without international support and collaboration. These days terrorists are more confident than ever before of their access to the vulnerable points before carrying out any of their attack and they plan their attack in a heroic manner for the justification and fulfillment of a cause which they think is just. Thus, they attempt, by their acts, to inspire and manipulate fear to achieve a variety of purposes. Therefore, jostling crowds, busy hotels, crowded trains, high-ways, country side an rural area are increasingly becoming targets of terrorism. There is an apprehension that with the availability of biological and chemical weapons the terrorists will start their campaign with renewed vigour and pursue their mission of destruction which will be virtually unstoppable. There are many terrorist groups operating across the globe and creating an atmosphere of fear and anxiety. In past there were revolutionary groups which had left oriented ideology, such as the Direct Action of France, the Japanese Red Army, the Baader Meinholf of West Germany, etc.

In India political violence has been the chief feature of terrorist activities as evident in the violence in Nagaland, Mizoram, Punjab and Jammu & Kashmir. Examination of terrorist incidents in various parts of India reveals a four-fold threat. First, the threat from Kashmiri militants who are demanding a separate state on the basis of historical, geographical and religious differences. Secondly, militant threat launched by the Khalistan supporters in Punjab during 1980's. Thirdly, terrorism has assumed a nightmarish proportion in the northeast. The proclaimed goal of over last three decades of secessionist campaign in the North-East has been to

get more autonomy. Militant outfits like, the United Liberation Front of Asam (ULFA), the Bodo Ultras, the Nationalist Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN), etc. are posing serous threat to the entire security apparatus. Lastly, the recent upsurge in serial bomb blasts has marked the beginning of the pernicious era of terrorism. The conflict between Tamils and Sinhalas has dominated the affairs of Sri Lanka. It has already caused enormous loss of life and posed serous threat to national security. The liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) led by Velupillai Prabhakaran, emerged as the strongest Tamil militant organisation demanding a Tamil homeland in the northern districts of Jaffna and the eastern districts.

Sometime, terrorism can be revolutionary. Revolutionary terrorists may also take over and replace existing structures of governance .Hitler was a revolutionary before he came to power and on the strength of the organisation he mobilised and manipulated the masses to form a strong base. Publicity plays an important role in the process and without it they cannot expand the field of influence. Targets are significant for revolutionary terrorists and are mainly selected as a means to spread messages to change or shape public attitudes and behaviour. There is a growing nexus between terrorists and internationally organised crime networks. Mr. Alison Jamieson, a British analyst on organised crime and political violence commented that a distinction between terrorism and organised crime has become very blurred recently. Italian organised crime expert Professor Ernesto says "the goal is different. The terrorist's goal is an ideological one, while organised crime's goal is financial, but the instrument is same. They both need money and arms". In Sri Lanka, the Tamil Tigers engage in drug trafficking to finance their struggle, in north-eastern India guerrillas kidnap tea planters and hold them to ransom to help fund their fight for independence. In Chechnaya, the secessionists were heavily involved in drug distribution.

In a situation where terrorist violence has assumed nightmarish proportions, the nations of the world should devise a new strategy encompassing all interests and ramifications. It is high time that various countries of the world devised a clear policy of Strategic coordination to combat this international menace.

A terrorist wants to be an example for others. Although his acts are criminal they become a sign of courage to be followed by the rest of the group's followers. Thus, jostling crowds, busy hotels, crowded trains, water highways, countryside, even small rural areas are increasingly becoming targets of modern terrorists. The meek nature of the general masses at large has prevented cognate efforts by security forces to identify terrorists immediately.

There is a need for the sophisticated security procedures which can go all the way from airport screening to the border area. Some kind of positive programmes which can replace the frustration of terrorists can prove effective. There is also a need to promote open institutions, including political institution to absorb the ethnic, religious and political pressure and allow them (the terrorists) to vent their feelings in a proper way. This will change their mind and thus encourage them to settle their differences in some peaceful way.

Since the present day terrorists are very well organised and more professional than their counterparts a decade ago, new conceptions of safety and security should arise. A vigilant and assertive police and paramilitary network should replace the old one. Many of the important

suggestions and recommendations of the various committees are not in tune with the exiting circumstances. There is an apprehension that with the availability of biological and chemical weapons the terrorists will start their campaign with renewed vigour and pursue their mission of destruction which will be virtually unstoppable

There is a smooth international network of collaboration among the various terrorist groups supported by a few countries throughout the world. For example, Pakistan's involvement in orchestrating terrorism in Kashmir and the Japanese Red Army's collaboration with Italy's Red Brigade. It is sometimes the wide converge by the media which provides the rationale for terrorism and increases the problem by stimulating it. This is a classic example of how astute media management can reduce the level of moral opposition to counter terrorism.

The rise of modern terrorism with frightening ramifications has resulted in a demand for strengthening the national law and order machinery. Of late, the pressure on the police and security agencies has been mounting. But the existing laws still pose many problems. The use of police and paramilitary forces for combating terrorism has created an apprehension that it might lead to the oppression of the general populace. Surprisingly, a proper legal definition of terrorism is yet to be found.

The widening gap between the various governments regarding evolving common strategy for suppression of terrorism needs to be viewed in the context of the potential for threat that it holds. Even the European convention on suppression of terrorism is restricted by Article 5 and Article 13, which refuse the extradition of a terrorist on many grounds. In an environment where terrorist violence is endemic and the world stands hopelessly divided on various laws, all countries should shun their national prerogatives for dealing with terrorism. Many efforts have been made by a number of nations to control state-sponsored terrorism, such as through economic sanctions, but so far they have not reached a consensus either at the national or international level. During the last two decades, the increasing drug smuggling and the obnoxious nexus between drug smugglers and terrorists have posed a serious problem to the internal state-security networks and compelled various nations to organise themselves and wage a relentless war against such a nexus. But mere implementation of vigorous drug laws cannot become effective unless the judicial procedure is modified for ensuring speedy trials.

The continuing uncertainties with regard to terrorism have encouraged various countries to launch psychological warfare against terrorism. In 1984, an international conference was organised in Washington by the Jonathan Institute. Some consensus began to emerge among the various scholars, politicians and decision-makers the world over. Some of the important suggestions were: the concept that one man's terrorist can be another man's freedom fighter must be done away with; local populace should cooperate with law enforcement machinery even at the cost of personal misery; prompt and strict decisions should be undertaken by various nations for controlling terrorist psychologically.

The London Economic Summit Conference organised by NATO States and Japan in 1984 proved to be another landmark for the eradication of terrorism which decided that unless we attack the roots of terrorism, only superficial relief could be seen but terrorism would increase in the total quantum of its impact. Creation of general awareness and organisation of public support

against terrorist acts could be of immense use. While it is desirable to allow police and the armed forces to employ better informed judgement about the local problems, there is of course a danger that this attempt of the government could dilute the benefits to those deemed deserving and, thus, any possibility of peace and negotiation.

Many governments across the world have formulated reform measures to improve the situation. But terrorists interpret these steps as a surrender by the state to international criticism. In such a situation, the role of the military and the security forces has become crucial because most of their operations in terrorist-affected areas require a multi-layered approach. Although military actions have normally been accorded the highest priority for the maintenance of security, sometimes such action damages the deep layers of social and individual interests. For example, the role of the security forces in tackling the problem of terrorism in Punjab, Kashmir and the North-East has opened a controversial debate. This creates a dilemma. Is this merely a work of simple Police and Paramilitary network or that of a special force trained for counter-terrorist activities? The deployment of special forces in countering terrorist activities has become a reality in many countries. In this regard, the experience of different countries can help. For Example the way the West German Police defeated terrorist faction, the way the French Army took measures to improve their anti-terrorist capabilities. The Italian Police too had to combat large-scale terrorist violence from new-fascist groups and the left wing challenges of the Red Brigades.

An idea of Unified command has been in the air for some time. Effective implementation of this can yield some positive results.

Role of Police and Intelligence Network

Although failures in the political and administrative dimensions are often unfairly blamed on India's police the fact is that the recent process of democratic decentralisation particularly after 1962 onwards, economic liberalisation from 1991 onwards do pose new challenges to the Indian police and paramilitary forces. Besides, the rapid increase in the number of terrorist and caste and class violence during recent years have made the job of maintaining law and order extremely difficult. For successful training of officials of the paramilitary and police forces it is important that certain parameters of pre-recruitment education, experience, proportion of insiders and outsiders, methods of recruitment, postings, Length of service are again reviewed in the light of modern Challenges. There is also need for more productive relationship between paramilitary forces, intelligence agencies, local police, the army, and the local populations. A study of the values, attitudes, commitment etc. of these services need thorough examination. It has been found that police officials feel more comfortable in working at Headquarters rather than in rural areas. The implications of this and its pernicious ramifications for internal security needs to be tackled. In this regard the rotation of officers between terrorist affected areas and peaceful areas needs to be appropriate. Similarly the deputation process to other services including the intelligence agencies needs to be properly examined.

For ensuring the neutrality of the police force the selection of its leaders is very crucial. With the formation of the National Human Rights Commission there is an urgent need to change the attitude of the police towards the general populace and this is possible only through the

inculcation of a humane approach and study of human rights legislation. In changing environment the police need to diversify its activities by bringing together technical and professional expertise based on many decades of experience in maintaining internal security. In this regard the following suggestions may be worth considering:

• Carefully examining important incidents and preparing detailed action oriented reports on insurgency affected areas.
•Building a sophisticated communication network as part of a wider moderisation drive which gives access to the latest technology.

•Better management of local contacts and sources of assistance.

•Developing new techniques of security and maintenance of secrecy.

•Talent transfer: the need for specialists in affected areas.

• The need for brief training even during the security operations with a particular emphasis on sensitising personnel to issues relating to human rights, civil liberties, prisoners rights, etc.

• The better management of security development programmes for different levels of police personnel..

• Police officers trained to provide active but neutral leadership to their units.

• Police officers can be trained to take the initiative in implementing development plans in consultation with experts from various branches.

•Developing capability to anticipate security needs. This is possible by conducting specialised courses for monitoring security situations.

To become more effective machinery, the police must attempt to expand its scope and bring about strategic mechanism with the help of general public, intelligence agencies and international security apparatus.