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Title

**TERRORISM - SOCIAL CAUSES, ECONOMIC IMPACT IN INDIA
AND POSSIBLE CONTROL MEASURES WITH SPECIAL
REFERENCE TO TECHNOLOGY-DRIVEN AVENUES**

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Abstract:

Terrorism is one of the major threats faced by many a nation across the world, big or small, rich or poor and developed or developing. The term terrorism is linked directly or indirectly to the socio-economic set-up of the affected region. The frequent terrorist attacks not only hamper the growth of the country, it eats into the very fabric of the civilized society. World peace at large seems to be in tatters. This article traces the varying facets of terrorism, viz the nature and causes, types, psycho-social influence of terrorism and the impact of terrorism. In addition to discussing the role of the civil society and police in confronting terrorism an attempt is made to focus the possibility of employing the technology-driven avenues such as GPS, VoIP, GPRS, WiFi, Face Recognition, City Surveillance System and Natural Language Processing in combating terrorism. The article concludes that apart from resorting to all the state-of-the-art Hi-Fi gadgets/ facilities, there must be a sincere and co-ordinated attempt to improve functioning of democracy, responsiveness to public grievances, effective policing and economic development which go a long way to serve as anti-dote to terrorism.

Key words: Terrorism, Face Recognition, Natural Language Processing, VoIP, GPS, GPRS, Google earth, CCTV

Introduction:

Today, one of the major challenges being faced by the entire World is terrorism. The act of terrorism is visible everywhere in the world. India has had its share of terrorist attacks and is learning to live with it. During the last six years more than 600 people have been killed and hundreds maimed and devastated in terror strikes in India. In India, not only Mumbai and Delhi are high on the hit list of terrorists but hi-tech hubs like Bangalore and Hyderabad have already begun to beep on the terrorists' radar. The entire World was shocked after the recent Mumbai attack. It was considered as one of the deadliest attacks after 9/11. In recent days the terrorists have become tech-savvy. They know how to attack the places where it would hurt the most. In most of the cases the terrorists go scot-free due to so many reasons. India is a peace loving nation with different religious groups. It is one of the fast growing economies with a growth rate

9 per cent for the last few years. It is fast developing in education, becoming self sufficient in agriculture and emerging as a leading information technology software power of the region. It is one among the few countries which had remarkable success in space technology. Since 1950's India has been the victim of terrorism sponsored by the neighbouring countries. Our neighbour has been the main source of arms, ammunition and training for religious terrorist groups which operated in Punjab in the past and presently in Jammu Kashmir and other parts of India. In spite of threats from Jihadis to disturb the election process, a successful election was held in Jammu Kashmir recently with high participation of voters. India believes in genuine and well-functioning democracy.

After the 26/11 Mumbai attack the phenomenon of terrorism has drastically changed the socio-economic scenario of India. It has shaken the social fabric and peace. The ultimate sufferers of the terrorism are the innocent people who are actually nothing to do with it. Today, terrorism has become one of the major problems in India. The terrorism upsets humanity and creates unrest in the society.

Terrorism and Causes:

There is no clear definition for terrorism. Terror, terrorism, terrorist – the dictionary tells that the words are rooted in fear. Briefly it can be said that terrorism is a state of mind rather than activity. The word violence is inter-connected with terrorism. Violence is a word derived from Latin violare, which means to violate or to go against the socially accepted norms or to misuse it. The basic idea of terrorism is to impose one's own interpretations of religious teachings, politico-economic and socio-cultural values and norms through violence in the society. The ultimate objective of terrorism is to create a state of fear through the act of violence.

Terrorism is a complex phenomenon. Several reasons such as political, religious, social and economic causes contribute to terrorist activities [5, 8]. The causes that lead to terrorism vary from society to society. Some of the causes are explained briefly for better understanding.

a) Political and economic deprivation

Political and Economic deprivations are the main root-cause of terrorism. When the political and economic rights of certain group are denied it chooses the path of terrorism to exhibit their anger. A good number of terrorists is from the politically and economically deprived societies.

b) Poverty and economic exploitation

When there is economic disparity, hunger, and illiteracy in society terrorism flourishes. It can be said that poverty is the mother of terrorism. There are many countries in the world which face abject poverty. Poverty-stricken society becomes an easy prey for the terrorist groups to identify the disgruntled persons and into the terrorist organizations.

c) Helplessness and Hopelessness

Helplessness which leads to hopelessness is the psychological state that enhances terrorism in society. When the aspirations of the people are set aside and their genuine grievances are not heeded, people turn violent and run into the trap of terrorism.

d) Religious Extremism

Religious terrorism has become the major cause of terrorism in the recent days. Most of the terrorist out-fits have a predominant religious character or influence. Some of them believe that their religion gives moral justification to involve in terrorism. Today the entire world is facing terrorism form different religious extremists.

e) Easy access to weapons and modern technology

Even though there are very stringent rules in country like India to possess weapons, there are many countries where an individual can hold dangerous weapons without much difficulty. Internet, which contains vast amount of information about arms manufacturing methods, has made it easier for the terrorists to have easy access to sophisticated weaponry.

f) Influence of communist regimes

The influence of communist regimes inspired by Marxist and Leninist theories made a cause of escalation of terrorism in the different parts of world.

g) Dictatorship and lack of democracy

Dictatorship and autocracy at high level create fear among the opponents. Fear of leaders/government drive the oppressed to terrorism.

Types of Terrorism:

a) Cyber terrorism

In today's digital world 'The terror on Internet' is a great concern for everyone. Recently the website CBI was hacked by neighboring country Cyber Army is a good example of cybercrime. The attack aimed at computers, network and the information base is termed as cyber terrorism. The main objective of such attack is to spread fear among the decision-makers. Cyber terrorism [9] is normally carried out by small groups who are politically motivated and premeditated. Cyber terrorists are called as online attackers. These online attackers function from a remote place and disrupt and destroy information technology. They could even hijack control systems, disrupt financial market and even cause collision of air planes. There is vast chance of stealing classified documents also.

b) Narco Terrorism

Narco terrorism is a form of terrorism carried out by groups who are directly or indirectly involved in cultivating, processing, distributing or transporting narcotics. In addition to spoiling the society, particularly the younger generation, through drug-addiction, the terrorists mobilize enormous funds through drug-trafficking.

c) Bio-Terrorism

The use of biological weapons such as germs is known as bio-terrorism. Many developed countries face such kind of terrorism. The terrorist induce some sort of fear-psychosis through contaminating food sources, water supply and even the atmospheric air with bio-agents.

d) Religious Motivated Terrorism

Religious terrorists are those fundamentalist elements who use violence to further what they perceive as divinely ordained or commanded. Today, the entire world is fighting hard to overcome religious terrorism. Al-Qaeda is a good example of religious terrorist group.

e) Political or Nationalist terrorism

The goal of the nationalist group is to seek political independent state. Usually this group does not indulge in serious violence as they are worried that too much violence could backfire. Nationalist terrorism is milder in action; of course there are certain violent groups (Ireland).

f) Suicide terrorism

The terrorist of this kind are more specific about their target. According to Martha Crenshaw, a terrorism expert from Wesleyan University, the terrorist see “self-sacrifice as a way of legitimizing a terrorist cause, inspiring imitation, and promising individual glory”. Normally the terrorists of this kind hate killing large number of innocent people.

g) International terrorism & Local terrorism

International terrorism is an act of violence which is carried out with the help of a foreign government or organization and diverted against foreign nationals. The recent Mumbai

attack is a good example of international terrorism. The terrorist targeted only the star hotels where the foreigners stay, they attacked one of the permanent settlements also (Israelis). State enemies in small groups who have grievances over local issues and disputes resort to local terrorism.

h) Right or neo-fascist terrorism

Neo-fascist terrorism is water-born terrorist assault on designated targets. The terrorist use the sea and water ways for surprise attacks on selected target.

i) Revolutionary Terrorism

Revolutionary terrorisms' main aim is to achieve certain political goals radically. The objective of revolutionary terrorism is to replace the existing political system with a new structure.

Terrorists' Goals and Priorities:

The terrorist select their targets depend on their goals and opportunities Terrorists may be expected to choose among six objectives given below:

1. Inflict extensive loss of human life ,where the terrorist normally target places which are dense in population such as market, railway station etc.
2. Destroy important, difficult-to-replace physical facilities such as power plants, refineries, bridges etc.
3. Exact severe economic damage for a persistent time by causes damages to infrastructures.
4. Disrupt the institutions of government
5. Attack the symbols of civil culture most detested by the terrorists
6. Boost the morale and enhance recruiting of terrorist groups

Terrorism in India:

India is a peace-loving nation sharing its terrestrial border with Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, China and Myanmar. In 1980s there was terrorist movement in Punjab which was controlled effectively. Terrorist outfits, directly or indirectly, supported by the neighboring countries is a big menace to India. The states like Andhra Pradesh, Orissa and Bihar also bear the brunt of terrorism by the local groups such as the PWG or the naxalites. Tamilnadu was also under terrorist attack in 1993 where Coimbatore witnessed serial bomb blast. It also faced the fallout of terrorism promoted by LTTE. There are three sets of terrorist actors in India. They are one purely foreign, the second, domestic groups with linkages to these foreign players, and the third wholly domestic. Table-I shows the major terrorist attacks in India during the year 2008 - 2010 and the number of deaths. Despite soaring apprehensions after Mumbai 26/11, no major foreign sponsored terrorist attack was witnessed at any urban centre outside Jammu and Kashmir.

For the last two decades the internal security of India has been badly affected by the Naxalite and Maoist related violence. Today, 40% of the top 50 mineral-rich districts in India are affected by Naxalite violence, with repeated attacks on any symbol of authority, both private and public, including mining sites. Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh are the worst-affected states.

Table-I: The major terrorist attacks in India during the year 2008 -2010

| S.No* | Date | Place | Number of deaths |
|-------|--------------------------------|--------|------------------|
| 1 | 26 - 29 th November | Mumbai | 195 |
| 2 | 30 th October | Assam | 84 |
| 3 | 21 st October | Imphal | 17 |
| 4 | 14 th October | Kanpur | 08 |

| | | | |
|----|----------------------------|----------------------|----|
| 5 | 29 th September | Malegoan, Maharastra | 06 |
| 6 | 29 th September | Modasa, Gujarat | 01 |
| 7 | 27 th September | New Delhi | 03 |
| 8 | 13 th September | New Delhi | 26 |
| 9 | 26 th July | Ahmedabad, Gujarat | 53 |
| 10 | 25 th July | Bangalore | 01 |
| 11 | 13 th May | Jaipur | 68 |
| 12 | 13 th February | Pune | 09 |

*S.No : 1 to 11 in 2008 & 12 in 2010

Psycho-Social effects of Terrorism:

In the last six years more than 600 lives were lost in terror-related violence in different parts of India. In most of the terrorist attacks the end sufferers are the innocent public. Terrorism not only affects the national economy but also the psycho-social repercussions which damage human personality and the society. The act of terrorism very much damages the mental growth of human being. Every terrorist attack creates fear in the mind of the people and put them into constant stressful situation. Nowadays, the wide coverage given by the media during terrorist attack could affect the minds of children to a large extent. The repeated terrorist attacks make the people to lose faith in the State.

After every terrorist attack a sense of helplessness prevails in the human minds. This further leads to hopelessness among the people regarding their personal and social well being. In most of the cases the people become anxious, aggrieved and feel deprived after every terrorist attack. The extra security followed by the terror attack could result in long waiting at airports, malls, hotels

etc which may lead to frustration and inconvenience, in particular to business people to whom time management is so important.

Mumbai attack and its impact on Indian Economy:

Mumbai, India's business capital, is the fifth highly populated metropolitan city in the world. It houses the Bombay Stock Exchange, Head Quarters of a number of MNCs and Reserve Bank of India in addition to the multitude of industries. It is one of the world's top 10 centres of commerce and contributes to about 5 per cent of India's GDP and accounts for 40 per cent of maritime trade, 25 per cent of the industrial output and 70 per cent of capital transactions of the economy. Its per-capita income is \$990, almost three times the national average. There were several terrorist attacks in Mumbai. The number of attacks in Mumbai and the consequences are presented in Table -II

| S.No | Date | Place | Number of deaths |
|------|---------------------|----------------------------------|------------------|
| 1 | 26-29 November 2008 | Number of Places | 195 |
| 2 | 11 July 2006 | Series of attack in trains | 209 |
| 3 | 25 August 2003 | Gateway of India & Zaveri Bazaar | 50 |
| 4 | 28 July 2003 | Ghatkopar | 04 |
| 5 | 14 March 2003 | Train in Mulund | 10 |
| 6 | 27 January 2003 | Vile Parle | 01 |
| 7 | 06 December 2002 | Ghatkopar | 02 |
| 8 | 12 March 1993 | Number of Places | 257 |

The 26/11 Mumbai attack came at a time when the economy was beginning to stall after years of growth and at the onset of global economy melt-down. Top hotels were targeted and foreigners were held hostages. The immediate fallout of the attack included the cancellations of many business conferences and tourist visits. The 26/11 attack caused fear among the investors. The Bombay Stock Exchange, the National Stock exchange and Commodity Exchanges temporarily closed their transaction. The loss could be around Rs. 4,000 crore to the financial capital of the country.

The first sector to feel the pain of the terrorist attack is tourism. Currently the gross earnings of foreign tourist are around 1 per cent of GDP. The marked slowdown in tourism activity may have a perceptible impact not only on the hospitality sector, but also on the overall economy. In the year 2007-2008 alone the tourism industry contributed \$11.66 billion to India's foreign exchange kitty. The industry estimated that the dip in India's in-bound tourism stands at 35-40 percent. Across the industry, almost 60-65 per cent of hotel rooms are used by business travelers. The occupancy level was down by 50-60 per cent after attack. Taj Mahal hotel was one the place which was badly hit by 26/11 attack in which thirty-one people died during the 60-hour siege. The 107-year old heritage wing of the Taj Mahal Palace and Tower hotel, which was subjected to terror attack, was reopened after of 18 months, after spending INR of 1.75 billion for renovation. The overall occupancy level in the hotel since the attack has been 70 per cent. Similarly, Oberoi hotel which was also badly hit by the terror attack was reopened in April 2010.

Many believed the attack on India's commercial activity could hamper India's growth to a large extent instead it was short lived. This is mainly because, Indian investors have been safeguarded by the country's relatively nascent financial market, where fewer investment options have resulted in savings accounts becoming the principal investment option for many consumers.

In recent past, World has witnessed several economies burning with disaster & crisis. Today every nation faces some or the other economic, social or communal unrest. Even though there was no great impact on economy due to terrorism in the past, there could be some consequences over a period of time if terrorism affects India. Following are the issues that could be major hindrance for Indian economic growth:

a) SHORT-TERM IMPACT:

1. **Loss of Human Capital:** India high growth rate in the recent past is due to the vast availability of high skilled labors. In past five year India has lost more than 4000 people and many were injured due to terrorist attack. In 26/11 Mumbai attack high profile individuals such as Shri Ashok Kapur, chairman of Yes Bank was killed.
2. **Investor Behavior:** A frequent attack on government and commercial institution shatters the confidence among the investors. During 2001 when Indian Parliament was attacked there was insecurity among the international investors (FII's & FDI's), obstructing the economic growth. The impact of the terrorist attack could be observed in our stock market that climbs down post any terrorist event.
3. **Short Term Financial Loss:** In short term the obstacles like loss suffered due to diversion of business away from the city to some other locations, lost earnings of public, drains out the productivity levels and could impact economy adversely. After Mumbai attack BCCI lost about INR120 by shifting the IPL match to some other locations. Another such example was Coimbatore serial bomb blast in the year 1991 which hit the economy severely especially the Textile and manufacturing industries that lost hundreds of crores.
4. **Retrenchment effect on Specific Industries:** In most of the terrorist attack there was immediate and concentrated impacts on a number of industries: most notably, travel, tourism , airlines, aerospace, , insurance, lodging, restaurants, recreation and related activities. Most of these industries suffered concentrated economic and job losses.

b) LONG-TERM IMPACT

1. **Political Instability:** In the past India lost two Ex-Prime Ministers due to terrorist attack which jolted Indian politics & economy at large extent.

2. **Global Implications:** Post Kargil and then attack on India's Parliament and the recent 26/11 Mumbai attack has lost millions of business as the trade between India and Pakistan were frozen during such period. This resulted in unemployment in these regions and there were other consequences. The 26/11 Mumbai attack which involved in foreign hostages lead to drop in foreign investment.
3. **Long-Term Financial Loss:** One of the ways to counter terrorism is to increase the cost of spending to fight terrorism. Currently India ranks on 9th position in the world for highest military expenditure (2009-10), which amount to sum total of USD 32,700,000,000. So large portion our economic resources will be directed towards security and diverted away from more productive private sector activity.

Combating Terrorism: Use of Technology driven avenues and challenges:

Today technology could play an important role in combating terrorism. Terrorism should be fought both at pre-conflict and post-conflict stages. It is necessary to put pressure on the terrorist movements before they cause any damages to the society. Unfortunately the modern terrorists are one step ahead in the technological aspect. The recent Mumbai attacks revealed the use of technology by the terrorists. The terrorists combined some simple technology like GPS, Google earth, VoIP, and Blackberry's to cause deadly effects and irreparable losses. Some of the devices to combat terrorism are:

a) Global Positioning System (GPS) and Google Earth.

Ironically terrorists used Global Positioning System (GPS) [12,14] and Google earth to navigate their way to Mumbai in the recent attack. GPS and Google earth are very powerful technologies on their own, but when combined, make an excellent planning tool. The GPS receiver will give the directions to the destinations whereas the Google earth shows how the place looks. There are about 32 satellites in the orbit which makes it easy to send and receive signals from the satellites. GPS is an important tool on aircraft, ships, transport vehicles, and now even cell phones. The biggest challenge for security

personnel is that the GPS device doesn't send any personal information to the satellites. Government can deploy these devices to track the movement of the suspected groups.

b) Voice over Internet Protocol.

VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) [6] is another technology which is used by the terrorists to get the orders from their handler. The VoIP uses internet connection to transit voice. The biggest challenges with VoIP are that phones can only be traced to the point where they get converted from regular voice data to internet data. Once the voice data enters the internet it goes around many servers before it reaches the destination. This makes more challenging and time-consuming process for security agencies to trace and trap the call.

c) Blackberry's

The use of blackberry's [10] by the terrorists to coordinate and track news via General Packet Radio Service (GPRS) is also a big challenge before the police. Blackberry's uses GPRS for communication. The voice signal travels much faster in GPRS. Since internet can be connected to Blackberry's devices it becomes very challenging to monitor the e-mail sent by this device. The Research in Motion's (RIM) pushes the mail (Push Mail) to the blackberry phones and keeps customer constantly in synchronization with their mailboxes. The incoming mails are encrypted by the Blackberry Enterprise Server (BSE) and push it on to the handheld device through the mobile telephony network. Therefore, the customer need not check "poll" the server for any new mail by checking the server periodically. Since the encryption is powerful enough the mail could not be read by the third parties, which is one of the great concerns of the law enforcement agencies.

d) Wi-Fi (Wireless Fidelity)

Wi-Fi [17] provides wireless access to the internet within certain range with the help of Wi-Fi hotspots. When there is Wi-Fi enabled laptop or mobile phones, the devices could

be easily connected to internet. Due to this convenience Wi-Fi technology are used in public places like airport lounge, educational institution etc. In the recent past the terrorists were able to crack the security and misuse Wi-Fi technology to send mail. Normally, when a mail is sent from a particular connection the trail leads to the postal address of the owner of the connection. In public places the users are required to send an SMS to get a user-ID, in which case the mobile number of the sender is recorded on the server. This helps in reducing abusive usage of the system by others. The password which could be changed frequently and by blocking the service set identifier (SSID) when not in use makes the Wi-Fi secured to some extent. The recent hacking of Wi-Fi system by terrorist in Mumbai pose many questions as to how safe is this system? Today the terrorists use Remailers to tell the media that they were responsible for the attack without being traceable.

e) **Face Recognition**

The terrorists know how to attack places where it would hurt the most. In most of the cases the terrorists carried these attacks and are not identified due to so many reasons. There is huge demand for robust and accurate identification of humans. There are many scientific approaches which have been investigated to identify individuals. One such technology is face recognition which will compare the image captured from a camera with the images available in database, to find any suspect. Face recognition [1,3] offers several advantages. The system captures faces of people in public areas, which minimizes legal concerns. Moreover, since faces can be captured from some distance away, facial recognition can be done without any physical proximity. In most cases the terrorists carry out attacks with the help of local people. Voter identification card, driving license, ration card and other documents in India are issued with photos of the persons. Having captured vast quantities of public imagery tracing the suspects against the database could be simpler.

f) **City Surveillance System**

In the recent years consequent to the availability of computer with large memory and high speed processors and CCTV city surveillance system has become a topic of considerable interest. WiMAX [11] network (Worldwide Interoperability for Microwave Access) is a technology that provides wireless transmission of data using variety of transmission modes. To plug the loose ends in metros CCTV with WiMAX could be installed to have better and effective city surveillance. This system could also be used to control the traffic movement and keep track of suspicious movement of people. Today, the surveillance systems are deployed in cities like London on a massive scale to tackle terrorism.

g) Raman spectroscopy -Laser-based optical technology

There is a great concern because of the recent terrorist attack to detect high explosives, with applications to screening of people, packages, luggage, and vehicles. Most of the airports and other important places are installed with X-Ray scanning system to scan the luggage's for any weapons, explosives etc. The current X-ray scanning systems are still insensitive to certain types of non-nitrate explosive material. The X-ray scanning system may be replaced with the laser-based optical technology [13] which could provide a viable and more foolproof alternative in identifying suspected articles.

h) Natural Language Processing

Nowadays, the terrorist use the easily available electronic technology to communicate with each other and go untraceable. It has become a big challenge for the security agencies world over to monitor the electronic environment that could help the security agencies to know the terrorists' plan. Natural Language Processing (NLP) [15, 16] could be one such technology to identify linguistic and location-specific features buried in unstructured text automatically. NLP system could process unknown text quickly and accurately determining both the language and encoding the incoming data. Rosette Language Identifier (RLI) is one such product developed by US based company Basis Technology Corporation.

The Role of Civil Society and Police in Combating Terrorism:

In addition to using technology to combat terrorism, community policing, better intelligence, strengthening police force and toughening the law demands adequate importance.

a) Community Policing.

The youth from poor economic strata of the society are more likely to fall into the hands of the bad elements. Today, there is a great need for a system that will ensure that the youth do not fall a prey to terrorism. One such measure is Community Policing. Community policing is a peace time policing effort wherein the police and public ensure a better and healthy interaction, which could come handy for effective maintenance of law and order and crime prevention. In Community policing the young ones are made to focus on useful ventures such as extra-curricular activities and vocational training. Participation in community policing plays a purposeful role in weaning the youth from negative thoughts.

b) Better intelligence

There are three intelligence agencies in India. The Intelligence Bureau (IB) looks after the internal intelligence, the Research and Analysis Wing(R&AW) concentrates in external intelligence and Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA), an independent intelligence agency takes care of defence intelligence. Since all the three are independent intelligence agencies there is no effective coordination among them. Even though Multi-Agency Co-ordinating Committee has been formed recently for a better coordination among the intelligence agencies there is little progress. There are about 25000 staff members working in various intelligence agencies; out of which only about 3500 members are deployed on the field to gather intelligence. For a population of 114.7 crores the number of field staff deployed is meager. There must be more field officers with effective co-ordination.

c) Strengthening the Policing Force

Internationally 222 police personnel are recommended for a population of one hundred thousand population during peace time. In India the number of police personnel per one hundred thousand of population is 142 police as per data compiled by the Bureau of Police Research and Development. In Italy, Mexico, Saudi Arabia and Belgium there are 559, 492, 387 and 367 respectively for every one hundred thousand population. Even though there is NSG, most of them are utilised for VIP protection rather than protecting the common people. Strengthening the police with specialization in handling terrorism and equipping them with the latest weaponry is the need of the hour.

d) Toughening the law

The USA introduced USA Patriot Act 2001 after 9/11 attack. Similarly, Australia introduced Security Legislation Amendment (Terrorism) Act 2002, and UK has Anti-Terrorism, crime & security Act 2001 to deal with terrorism. There have been some anti-terrorism laws in force in this country at different points of time. The Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act 1967 was the first law made in independent India to deal with terrorism and terrorist activities that came into force on 30 Dec 1967. Later Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act, 1987 (TADA) was introduced followed by POTA. The Maharashtra government introduced Control of Organised Crime Act, 1999 to deal with rising organized crime in Maharashtra and especially in Mumbai. India is politically divided on various anti-terrorism laws. A tough anti-terrorism law could be a major tool to fight terrorism. The law should have the provisions to deal with the terrorist-funding agencies and fast track courts to deal with terrorism cases and to freeze assets of the groups or the suspected sponsors.

Practical Approach to the Problem:

Technology is just a tool to tackle terrorism. As it is always prudent to diagnose the problem rather than prescribing solutions to suppress the symptoms, the root-cause of terrorism must be analyzed threadbare. Terrorism may rise its ugly head anytime and anywhere due to a number of known as well as unknown reasons, each requiring specific solution.

a) Economic Solution

A hungry stomach does not see reasons. It is the responsibility of the welfare governments to lift the people above the poverty line. Economically well-off individuals generally shun terrorism as everyone wants to live his/her life. Providing employment or creating avenues to make a decent living goes a long way in keeping terrorism at bay.

b) Social Solution

The age-old caste system as prevailing in India is another root-cause. Frequent clashes between upper-caste and lower-caste occurring across the nation does not augur well for a peace-loving population. The upper-caste strongmen with their money-power and muscle-power tend to suppress the growing clout of the lower-caste have-nots. Bolstered by political power the upper-caste has the advantage of side-lining the lower-caste. Apart from proclaiming over tree-tops for a class-less society, genuine and concerted efforts by the power-that-be are the need of the hour to uproot terrorism.

c) Religious Solution

As indoctrination of the poisonous seeds of religious intolerance is a major cause of terrorism in India, the voluntary social groups can play a major role. Frequent interaction with the youth at various social forums may bring the polluted minds to the main stream. The need for terrorism-free nation is to be emphasized after detoxification of the religious fundamentalism.

e) Cultural Solution

India has many ethnic cultures. The individual cultures are so strong that bridging them together will be a Herculean task. As India always boasts of 'Unity in diversity', a common platform is to be created to link all the cultures.

f) Political Solution

It is the strong antidote. But this requires a strong will-power without any ulterior motive or any political gains. The political leaders, without any reservation, must mobilize their strengths to take the bull by its horn. But India does not appear to possess the necessary political will to tackle terrorism due to many a hidden agenda.

g) Peace-force

All right-thinking, patriotic individuals should form “peace-forces” at village, panchayat, district and state level with a federation at national level to help the youth wean away from terrorist thoughts or activities. These groups may visit schools/colleges to sow the seeds of peace in the young minds. As terrorism is more related to thoughts rather than activities, mentoring of the young minds is likely to bring the desired results.

Conclusion:

Every terrorist attack not only affects the economy of the country it demoralizes the entire society. The ever growing Indian economy which is poised to become one of the largest economies in the world should not be dampened by the self-serving terrorist groups. It is unfortunate that the terrorists are one step ahead of the police in technological front. It is high time some serious steps are taken to avoid unpleasant repercussions later. The time has come where the civilized society can respond fighting technology with technology and hopefully staying one step ahead of the bad guys and keep our economy in a steady growth. In addition to the advanced technology a well functioning democracy, responsiveness to public grievances, effective policing and good economic development go a long way to act as antidotes to terrorism.

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