

- Terrorism, can be defined as use of threat of violence by a group of people against a constituted authority or state to create fear and panic among the masses at large so that instability in the system is created.
- In the contemporary times due to changed nature & magnitude of terrorism it has acquired greater significance.
- Due to lack of consensual definition, numerous words are interchangeably used for terrorism.
- These words are – civil war, guerrilla warfare, insurgency, insurrection, liberation struggle, low intensity conflict, proxy war, rebellion, revolt, counter-revolution, riots, sabotage, secession, edition, treason etc.
- Terrorism today has acquired importance due to its serious consequences and scope.
- Simultaneously it can be considered as a very complex concept, which is very difficult to define.
- Multidimensional implications attached to this phenomenon & difficult to be handled by a single and straight forward strategy.
- It is an act of violence which seeks to instill terror in the minds of people & the ruling establishments.
- The methods applied by the terrorists are in the form of murder, threat to murder, bombing, kidnapping, ransom, extortion, hijacking, attacking passengers of bus or train, looting of banks, devastating railway tracks, demoralising people, police, judiciary, investigating agencies etc
- It is not a direct war, but rather a new kind of warfare waged by small groups of people against the innocent or neutral persons working in the system.
- The very purposes of such terrorists are to create instability in the system and finally to get the publicity of their message to larger audience which was not possible otherwise.
- Hence in a way through the cult of violence they want to get their so called wrongs righted.
- According to, Baylis and Smith,
- Agreement on what constitute terrorism continues to be difficult given the range of potential acts involving violence.
- Terrorism, by sub-state groups, has been separated from criminal acts on the basis of the purpose for which violence is applied, namely political change.
- Terrorist groups succeed when their motivations are perceived to be legitimate by a wider audience.
- Disproportionate responses by states to acts of terrorism serve to legitimize terrorist groups.

- The definition of terrorism is open to subjective interpretations but the technologies associated with this have improved terrorist capabilities.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

- Terrorism, in the sense of motivated organised violence, is not new.
- Numerous examples of different types of violence can be found in ancient and medieval times.
- The earliest examples of terrorism could be found in the first century A.D. when Jewish groups like the Sicari and the Zealots killed Roman government officials with the ultimate motive to bring an end to Roman occupation in Palestine.
- Followers of other religions also resorted to methods of terrorism
- In the eleventh century, 'Assassins' an offshoot of a Shia Muslim sect known as the Nizari Ismailis, killed politicians and government officials who refused to convert to the assassins version of Islam.
- In 1793-94, a new French Revolutionary Republic, led by Maximilien Robespierre, used terrorism to deal with 'subversive forces — considered as the first example of modern state terrorism.
- During the period of American Civil War (1865-1900) also a group called Ku Klux Klan (K3) used violence against the blacks in the country.
- In the 1930s, Hitler's Nazi Government resorted to state terrorism when thousands of Jews were brutally assassinated.
- The atrocities of Mussolini's fascism and Stalin's communism can be placed in the category of large scale violence.
- In the 1960s the large scale violence in Italy and West Germany to a great extent resembles earlier activities.
- In the 1980s a new dimensions of terrorism originated in the name of Islamic fundamentalism or Jehadi Terrorism which has its centre of activities in Afghanistan and Pakistan.
- The prominent among such groups is Al Qaeda that worked under the leadership of Osama Bin Laden.

CAUSES OF TERRORISM

DOMESTIC CAUSES

- Alienation from the Political System
- Existing Problem of Poverty, Illiteracy and Development
- Religious Sectarianism in the Plural Societies
- Secessionist Tendencies Existing in Plural Systems
- Instability of Political System

EXTERNAL FACTORS

- Role of External Powers
- Proxy War
- Narcotic Drug Trafficking

- Religious Fundamentalism
- Negative Consequences of Globalisation

CHARACTERISTICS

- The contemporary terrorism is neither limited to small scale violence nor is restricted in terms of time and space
- It has far-reaching consequence affecting people at global level.
- It has acquired very high-tech nature.
- It has the capacity even to face regular state armed forces

LARGE SCALE VIOLENCE

- The terrorist organisation resorts to large scale violence and panic among civilians or common masses so that credibility of political system is eroded.
- It also create instability in the political system – brings dethroning
- Weapons of mass destruction are generating threat
- High tech terrorism has spillover impacts beyond the boundaries of nation states.

GLOBAL ACCESS

- These transnational characters of terrorism restrict the working of government beyond some level.
- Besides, some terrorist-groups can take refuge in one's enemy territories.
- Moreover, legal actions cannot be pursued against them at all times.
- This nexus of one country's terrorist-organisation with other national groups makes them more aggressive and deadlier than before

ACQUISITION OF IDEOLOGICAL MOORINGS OF FUNDAMENTALISM

- The camouflaging of religious teaching provides them easy access to common people to devise affinity for their strategies
- It acts as a convincing tool for them to be associated with their actions.
- A study by Rand Corporation of USA has revealed that numbers of religious terrorist-organisation are increasing among the terrorist-organisations.
- For instance, in 1980 the total such groups were listed as 64 out of which only 2 were religious based, in later years share of such groups has enhanced with greater pace, i.e. in 1992-11 out of 48, 1994-16 out of 49, 1995-26 out of 1956 and in 1999-64 out of 996.

NON-STATE ACTORS FIGHTING WITH STATE ACTORS

- Terrorist-groups are non-state entities fighting against the recognised state actors at the international level.
- They are also making efforts towards the acquisition of such elements which are related to states.
- For instance, some groups like LTTE in Sri Lanka or Al Qaeda in Pakistan and Afghanistan, Islamic state in Syria are acquiring control over certain territories

and running parallel governments in their respective areas.

- They are maintaining regular armies to fight against the states.

LINED WITH NARCOTICS & DRUG TRAFFICKING

- It acquired serious dimension due to, its linkages with organised crime, smuggling of small weapons and funding of these activities by the earnings of narcotic drug trafficking
- The huge drug trafficking in two important regions in Asia, i.e. triangle of crescent and golden triangle, have provided solid economic support base for the running of terrorism in this region and at global levels.
- Simultaneously all kind of organised crime had joined hands with them to further enhance their deadly deals.
- Terrorism is fundamentally an attack on the state.
- It is different from insurgency or revolutionary / guerrilla warfare, as it is an overwhelmingly criminal act rather than merely a political offence

TYPES OF TERRORISM

- Terrorism can be classified in terms of its scope and dimension of its activities.
- The terrorist activities overlap both in terms of their working as well as consequences. So, it is very difficult to put those in specific categories
- In terms of its scope it is usually divided into following categories:
 - Religious Terrorism
 - Regional Terrorism
 - Political Terrorism
 - Ideological Terrorism
 - Urban Terrorism
 - International Terrorism
 - State Terrorism
- As per some critics working of old terrorist groups differs in terms of the magnitude & type of violence created by them.
- As a result they can broadly be classified into six categories:
 - 1) Civil disorder
 - 2) Political terrorism
 - 3) Non-Political terrorism
 - 4) Quasi-terrorism
 - 5) Limited political terrorism
 - 6) State sponsored terrorism
- The perpetrators of acts of terrorism can be individuals, groups, or states
- According to some definitions, clandestine or semi-clandestine state actors may also carry out terrorist acts outside the framework of a state of war.
- However, the most common image of terrorism is that it is carried out by small and secretive cells, highly motivated to serve a particular cause and most of the deadly operations in recent times have been executed by such groups.

GLOBAL IMPLICATIONS

THREAT OF NON-CONVENTIONAL NATURE

- It is very difficult to be identified and resolved.
- Due to transnational roots of terrorism its activities are found in different countries and even to some destinations beyond the imagination of the states.
- It poses threats of weapons of mass destruction & atomic warfare

BOOST TO FUNDAMENTALISM

- Contemporary linkages of terrorism with religious moorings have turned it into fundamentalism.
- This type of terrorism is manifested in the form of 'Jehad' and 'Fidayeen' attacks or Jew extremism in west Asia, which are very difficult to be controlled.
- They not only make the backward or lesser developed societies more vulnerable by recruiting people from them on the pretext of serving religious tenets, but also create cleavages among different societal groups to be divided on religious lines.

CLOSE NEXUS BETWEEN ORGANISED CRIME & TERRORISM

- It led to the erosion of state authorities in many part of the world.
- States sometimes are facing the problems even of parallel government being run by these groups.
- Now-a-days, the dangerous consequences are arising as they are being funded by the earnings through the smuggling of narcotic drugs.
- The funds raised through drug smuggling activities have made it possible for the terrorist groups to acquire latest and highly lethal category of arms in huge quantity.

INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS

- The UN has focused on two way solution for the problem of terrorism i.e. legal and political solutions.
- In legal sphere, UNO and its special agencies have developed a network of international agreement, which concentrates on preparing fundamental legal documents to curb organised terrorism
- These specialised agencies like: Civil Aviation Organisation I.A.E.A. and others are making efforts in this direction.
- The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime has collated the 12 Universal conventions (international agreements) and protocols against terrorism signed since 1963.

IMPORTANT AGREEMENTS TO CREATE FUNDAMENTAL LEGAL FRAMEWORK

- "Tokyo Convention", 1963, Aviation Safety – Convention on offences and certain other Acts Committed on Board Aircraft.
- "Hague Convention", 1970, Aircraft Hijacking – Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft.
- "Montreal Convention" 1971, Aviation Sabotage – Convention for Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation.

- New York, 1973, Outlaws Attacks on Government Officials and Diplomats – Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crime against Internationally Protected Persons.
- New York, 1979, Hostages Convention – International Convention against the taking of Hostages.
- Nuclear Materials Convention, 1980 – Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials.
- Rome, 1988, Terrorism on Ships – Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation.
- Rome, 1988, Terrorism of fixed offshore platforms – Protocol for the Suppression of unlawful Acts against the safety of fixed platforms located on the Continental Shelf.
- "Montreal Convention", 1991, Facilitating Detection of Plastic Explosive – Convention on the marking of Plastic Explosives for the purposes of Identification.
- UN General Assembly Resolution, 1997, Terrorist bombing – International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorists Bombings.
- UN General Assembly Resolution, 2000, Terrorist Financing – International Convention for the Suppression of the financing of Terrorism
- In terms of political solution, the UN General Assembly tried to present the first text to curb terrorism on 18th December, 1972 – supported by the then Soviet Union and its allies, but was opposed by the USA-led group.
- Thus, no exact definition was agreed upon. Later in 1973 UN established an 'Ad Hoc Committee on International Terrorism' along with three separate sub-committees.
- This committee gave seven draft proposals to this effect but no agreement was reached.
- However, in 1986 an important step in this direction was the 'Convention against Recruitment, Use, Finance and Training of Mercenaries' which can be considered as the first step to curb international terrorism as this convention got approval of the UN in 1989 December.
- After this another mile stone has been declaration of 9th December, 1999 which provided for taking measures to eliminate terrorism.
- Thus, UN has only set the agenda and innumerable prescriptions for the elimination of terrorism but no solution has been provided to stop terrorism

REMEDIES

- Terrorism is a battle of mind than a physical might, hence there is need to resolve it through the efforts towards change of mindset along with strong media policy to propagate against this menace.
- Government should not fall prey to the designs of the terrorists to retaliate against their actions, because that will serve the very purpose of those groups.

- There is need to enhance democratic culture both at national and international levels so that marginalised groups can find space for themselves.
 - This problem should not be resolved through the use of force; rather an effort should be made to resolve through political processes of dialogue and diplomacy.
 - Government should make effort to eliminate the deep rooted causes of alienation prevalent in the society. The problem- like poverty, illiteracy, non-development and fundamentalism must be curbed at the very grass root level.
 - A cooperative strategy, addressing the existing pluralities should be prevalent at both domestic and international levels.
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