# Beyond the Blasts

**N Divakar writes :**

The Mumbai blasts of '7/11' has opened a new chapter in the independent Indian history. The spread of terrorism across the nation, with threats of Bomb blasts hovering over the public every moment, be it in the Air or on a Train or on the foot path, has almost created a panic situation amongst the ruling circles. A recent survey about the state of the nation conducted by CNN-IBN and *The Hindu* with the help of CSDS, has revealed the startling fact that a majority of Indians, more than 60 percent do not consider terrorism as a major threat. This does not and need not mean, the masses are unaware of the menace of terrorism, as more than 50% even in rural areas are aware of Terrorism and heard of Bin Laden, the chief weapon of Media sensationalism.

But the people of Mumbai deserve accolades for the bravery and resilience shown in the aftermath of the Blasts, though some may call it cowardice or cynical. Not withstanding the looming threat of Terrorist attacks the people of Mumbai had, by their resilience, posed a veiled resistance to the perpetrators of the crime. Of course they had a precedent in Varanasi, which also had experienced a blast in the Sankat-mochan temple on 7th March. While the blasts at Varanasi had an ulterior motive of creating vicious atmosphere of communal strife, the Mumbai attacks had a wider canvas of disturbing the very social fabric of the nation.

The most revered and sacred pilgrimage centre, Varanasi, which boasts of Kashi Vishwanath temple and the Gjanvyapi mosque existing side by side, has stood out as a symbol of Indian pluralistic culture and secular society. Except during the Ayodhya riots, when the whole country was in the grip of communal strife, this holy city has never seen any communal disturbances. The ulterior motives of the terrorists who carried out the bombings of Sankat-mochan temple were defeated by the kind of unity and strength exhibited by the people of Varanasi.

Ironically, while saner voices were being heard in Mumbai and Varanasi, the epicentre of suffering and mayhem, one could hear a subtle voice of obscurantism and mischief in the Economic capital of the country, about how to tackle terrorism and "Save the Nation".

A section of the media is still more vociferous in inciting passions when it says "Softening stand on terrorism in the guise of communal harmony would only strengthen the resolve of the locals who are behind the terrorist groups. Communal harmony is a symbol of the weakness of the government. Let us take the matter to its logical end".
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