

It's the Bloody Politics

For decades the Government of India has been testing the theory that the best way to end terrorism is by vigorously pursuing counter-terrorism. But conventional wisdom about terrorism, religious or otherwise, from Afghanistan to Iraq tells a different story : that there is no military solution. For more than 30 years the government has been locked in a bloody battle with the 'terrorists' (or separatists) of North-East with no military solution in sight. The same is true of Jammu and Kashmir where 'terrorism' has become a way of life for thousands of militants who have no faith in civil administration. Ironically the security establishment is reluctant to end terrorism otherwise it will lose extra-privileges it enjoys in the name of curbing terrorism. For all practical purposes terrorism has come to stay in India's political culture and, the persons in authority are not afraid of it though ordinary people pay the price. The recent blasts in Jaipur where the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) rules, have once again brought to fore the grim reality of global and local political scenario. In a short span of time close to one hundred innocent lives were lost. What was heartwarming was the calm with which the society handled this grim tragedy.

But political parties are what they are, taking advantage of such tragedies to bake their political breads. The BJP leadership was quick enough to say that the blasts are taking place as the central government is weak, the withdrawal of POTA has given rise to a situation where terrorists can make merry.

Most such criticism is aimed at scoring brownie points, forgetting that during BJP-led NDA regime with POTA in operation, the attacks on Parliament, Red fort and many other acts of terror were very much there. Despite Advani's lie that he did not know about foreign minister accompanying the terrorists to Kandhar, there were acts of terror aplenty when he was the Home/deputy prime minister and was trying to cultivate the image of an iron man. Also the argument that BJP ruled states with glorious strength are free from terrorist acts also comes to a naught with the Jaipur tragedy.

Petty political thinking apart, the world today is gripped by this insane phenomenon, which like a cancer has spread over a period of last two decades. The Al Qaeda was used as a proxy for American army to fight against Russian army in Afghanistan. Here the indoctrination of Muslim youth was done through the syllabus developed in Washington. The goal of course was control over oil wells in the region. They did these insane activities in the name of religion.

Similarly the indoctrinated Bajrang Dal workers, who died while making bombs in Nanded April 2006, also were indoctrinated in the RSS ideology prepared to lay down their lives presumably for their religion.

The second major cause of terrorism is a spontaneous response to injustices done to a group of people, generally in places where the democratic norms are compromised. Recently (December 2007) the acts of terror done by Adivasi National Liberation Front resulting in blast in the Guwahati Rajdhani express exemplifies this. This blast was in the wake of a group of Adivasis being beaten and their female companion being molested. This was the triggering point for the acts of terror being done by that group. Similarly the Mumbai blasts in 1993 and

in 2002 were in the aftermath of Mumbai riots and Gujarat carnage after which some Muslims played in the hands of elements out to do such acts as a revenge, in the name of their religion. They forget that no religion worth its spirituality teaches to kill the innocent. Here the feeling of frustration, the feeling of taking revenge is paramount in the minds of these terrorists. The third major factor leading to acts of terror relate to the injustices done in the name of nationalism, the suppression of ethnic, regional aspirations, Khalisthani, Kashmir, North East (ULFA etc...) LTTE and Irish Republican army fall in this category.

The domination of poor countries by the more powerful ones has assumed different languages during last several centuries. Initially when the Britain, Portugal and France etc. went on to colonise the World for their material gains, they projected this exploitation of colonies as the 'White man's burden to civilize the barbarians'. Then came the era when national liberation movements were being undertaken by different colonies, many of which were influenced by socialist ideas. This period of history was dominated by two superpowers, US and Russia. US led camp tried to retain its hegemony on colonies or as a continuation, adopted policies to exploit these colonies through other economic mechanisms. To prevent the colonies becoming economically autonomous major sources tried to brutalise global politics and the language used by them was, 'defence of freedom and democracy'! With demise of socialist states the language being used is the one related to civilisation.

This clash of civilisations theory is operative worldwide. In India the problem is further compounded due to the rise of communal politics, politics around issues of religious identity, which has changed the language of social discourse and has worsened the situation further.

While these acts of terror are acting as the divisive factor, in a way they are playing the same type of role which communal violence has played so far, polarising the communities. Despite the fact that communities are responding with amity, somewhere deep down the demonisation of minorities is worsening. The investigation pattern so far has been to link the acts of terror to the Pakistan based groups, now Bangla Desh based groups. The main pattern has been the arrest of a huge number of innocent youth. The social hysteria against them has been so bad that sometimes lawyers, in violation of their professional ethic refuse to take up their cases.

Tragically enough, even the political left in India would like to subscribe to the official version of bomb-blasts, conforming to the global propaganda led by America, about terrorism. They are not interested in politically countering the possibility of communal polarisation after every 'bomb-blast'. And they have done precious little after the Jaipur blasts last month. □□□ *[contributed]*