

**LESSONS FROM INDIA:
CONFRONTING THE
SOCIOLOGICAL CAUSES OF
TERRORISM**

AJAY GONDANE

Visiting Fellow,
The Henry L. Stimson Center and
Joint Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs
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The Henry L. Stimson Center
1111 19th Street, NW
12th Floor
Washington, DC 20036

Tel: 202-223-5956
Fax: 202-238-9604

www.stimson.org
email: info@stimson.org

INTRODUCTION¹

The Global War on Terror, as articulated in US policy, is a long war, without boundaries, against non-state actors. Terrorists, however, still reside in nation-states and their motivations and actions are shaped by their connections to particular societies and cultures. Terrorism is, therefore, not only a military and political problem but a societal problem as well. This study attempts to identify the sociological factors, in any society, that can lead to terrorism.

While executing the War on Terror, the United States has relied on cooperation from a number of global allies, including India. The world's largest democracy is a key political and economic partner for the United States, especially given the size of its economy and its geographic proximity to Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Central Asia. As relations between the United States and India strengthen under new nuclear and economic agreements, India's experience in dealing with terrorism in South Asia can provide important lessons for the United States that reach beyond military solutions. This paper expands upon the sociological causes of terrorism to examine critically why India's Muslims have not embraced terrorism as an expedient solution to societal disintegration. It concludes that India's unique history, democratic institutions, and social processes provide political and social solutions to alienation that might otherwise stimulate the development of terrorist networks. Finally, the paper concludes with suggestions for further cooperation between the United States and India in combating the terrorist phenomenon in a comprehensive manner: militarily, politically, and socially.

Terrorism, in intellectual analysis, has been axiomatically viewed as a 'law and order problem' in the local/national discourse and as a 'clash of civilization' in the global context. This is politically expedient; simplification of the imagery suits legal authorities as well as terrorists by chalking out the moral boundaries of the divide. This paper endeavors to examine terrorism as an emergent of the social disintegration; it links this analysis to the consistent refusal of Indian Muslims to contribute to the international *jehadi* terrorist movement.

The intellectual-political divide in defining terrorism as an analytical tool or policy-formation-abstract makes it a futile exercise to attempt a definition of terrorism in this study. The terrorist act, however, can be identified by the violent perpetrators and the organization or social group

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(states, religious, ethno, sub-national groups or ideologies) behind them, the violent acts, the victims, the message the actors want to convey and the locus of authority where the message is intended. Terrorist acts are not much different from crime and suicide: they are the resultants of a sense of estrangement from the social milieu. These acts are intended to convey the existence of problems through spectacular violence, as other methods to broadcast the message are deemed ineffective. Blood and gore are presumed repulsive enough to public sensitivities to extend the resonance of the message to a wider audience.

Terrorist acts are committed against citizens (because of their vulnerability) in the country of the terrorist, in a neighboring country or in the wider world, depending upon the audience. The assassination of leaders, politicians, decision-makers, opinion-formers and other high profile personalities, explosions (car bombs, IEDs, belt-bombers), massacres, hijackings, hostage taking, disruption of economic infrastructure, the destruction of high-value economic targets and attacks on a civilian populace are other examples of terrorism. The instruments of mega terror, with the diffusion of science and technology, are also accessible to terrorists. The danger of recourse to biological, chemical, radiological and nuclear weapons has made terrorism a threat to be dealt with swiftly in a coordinated manner.²

I. TERRORISM-A SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE:

Terrorist acts are not committed in a social vacuum. Terrorists are emergent of the social processes. A contextual, intuitive approach employing what was termed as ‘the sociological imagination’ by the redoubtable C. Wright Mills has been employed for this study. The level of abstraction has been extended from the individual to the interaction of two or more individuals, to larger social groups and ultimately to groups of nations.

Society is, in its simplest description, overlapping social groups composed of individuals with social roles, privileges and obligations implicit in their own cultural values and norms. Each social group undergoes the process of social integration and disintegration simultaneously. Social disintegration is the aggregate of personal disintegration. Disintegration causes three basic types of reactions: aggression, acquiescence or retreat. These reactions are not discrete and can combine in varying degrees in any covert or overt act. Terrorist acts are one such composite

² Stern, *The Ultimate Terrorists*, identifies biological and chemicals agents which could be used for terror purposes. She identifies shock as “the central consideration. Dread is the terrorist’s instrument for achieving influence.”

combination, as brought out in the following pages. Several factors, enumerated below, contribute to social disintegration

A) SOCIAL STRUCTURES, CHANGE AND REACTION:

Social groups either adapt to environmental changes or perish. Adaptation leads to social change, which is a tension-ridden process. Change can be absorbed to the extent that management mechanisms and the elasticity of the group are developed. Members who perceive that the burden of adjustment is disproportionate to advantages either take to acquiescence, withdrawal or rebellion, depending upon their genetics and socialization. Some such social processes are given below:

i) Socialization: Social structures evolve over time. The stabilized structures, jolted by newer values, can upset the pattern of social ranking. Incumbent members perceiving slippage in their prestige take to either role-defense or acquiescence. Achievement, where the actor does not fit into the milieu and has either to move up the social scale or is pushed up, is elating, but is also depersonalizing. The social traits of one class position may not be functional in another, causing social stress. This depersonalization, consequent to mismatch of orientation, position in the social hierarchy, and extant expectations in the new setting causes social anomie – the pervasive feeling to both internalize and rebel from the norm. This less than optimal participation in society can lead to the quest for some supra-mundane activity, fulfilling some deeper psychological need of recognition, security and relationship

ii) Hiatus Between Social Provisions and Individual Needs: Frustration is a natural product of mismatch of individual needs and social provisions. Those who are most deprived of need-satisfaction are also those most deprived of valued relationships that induce socially conforming behavior. Deviance and violence is a plaintive call for deliberate action by authoritative roles for fulfilling these needs. Burton brings out this dilemma saying “If an attempt is made to subordinate individual values to social values, then, because it is not possible to enforce social values that are inconsistent with individual values, there will be responses that are damaging both to the individual and through him, to the social system.”³ Individuals either singly or in groups act deviant, sometimes despite themselves, to register their disaffection with the social group. Recourse to terrorism may appear to some to be a way to vent this ‘structural conflict’ – the gap between needs and provisions-possibility.

³ Burton, *Deviance, Terrorism and War*.

iii) Manifest and Latent Functions of the Social Structure: Most social structures have both manifest functions and latent functions as brought out by Merton.⁴ Uprooting of such structures without social safety nets causes havoc (e.g. nuclear family efficient for social mobility displacing a joint family in rural India). This induces ambivalence towards both the new and old structures. Members displaced or dispossessed by this gap in fulfillment subconsciously take to social deviance.

iv) Mismatch Between Ideal and Reality: The social ideal is an emergent of the social dynamic. Authority positions are expected to lead in attaining that ideal. If the elite, who are supposed to uphold the ideal, instead debase it, the lower echelons find themselves looking for either redefining the ideal or reviewing the prestige that they proffer on the elite (e.g. decrying of the priestly class in a commercial setting). At the extreme stage of this skepticism comes the demand for removal of the elite or revolutionizing of the structure so that the power wheel is turned upside down. The distancing of reality and the ideal is a cause of frustration. Deviance and disorganization are its natural consequences.

v) Ideal of Success: Taking a cue from industrial societies, most developing societies now emphasize the ideal of success, forsaking the time-tested achievement of group goals. The pressures of modern production and consumption, underwritten by the rule of winner-take-all, create serious disequilibrium within societies, adjusting to the new industrial culture. The more intense the pressures of success, the greater number of demoralized individuals it creates.

vi) Marginalization: Societies in flux tend to produce greater proportion of marginal individuals than stabilized societies. Marginalization can be the resultant of diverse factors either by itself or in combination- genetic, environmental, faulty socialization, lack of positions commensurate with the socialization, intensity of competition for positions, etc. The flux in valued positions - due to changes in technology, levels of knowledge or rigors of training - leaves many newer entrants in each generation on the margins, unless newer opportunities open up, matching with the available social training. The modern labor-displacement technologies leave many seekers bereft of opportunities. The uprooting of some people, consequent to unsuitability for the new roles demanded by the milieu, throws them on the margins of acceptable behavioral patterns. This pool of marginalized people, under stress from the social group, but unable to adapt to newer

⁴ Merton, *Social Theory and Social Structure*.

structures, makes a fertile ground for the emergence of esoteric sub-groups. Terrorism fills this need for conspicuous action and recognition. The greater the numbers of marginal people in society, the greater the danger of such deviant acts (e.g. the train bombing network in Spain was established *sui generis* and composed entirely of deviants on the margins of Spanish society).⁵

vii) No Safety Valves: Each nation or social group has built-in safety valves for letting off stress. Religion, entertainment, expressive media, sports contests, gambling and prostitution are some of them. Authorities may have, at times, foreclosed these safety valves for some ulterior motive without taking into consideration the morale, habits and impulses of the people or without recognizing their latent functions. Since the recourse to illegitimate wealth and instruments of terrorism are necessarily a part of such operators of safety valves, terrorism becomes a proximate option (e.g. the involvement of film/drug mafia in Bombay blasts in 1993).

B) SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS AS INTEGRATIVE MECHANISMS:

i) Breakdown of Traditional Relationships: Intergenerational social relationships have been continually changing. The latter day rapid pace of change and social flux upsets stabilized relationships, whether patriarchal, feudal or kinship, in most developing societies. Role models change rapidly. The most energetic elements in this dialectic seek emancipation from the internalized obligations, resulting in inter-generational friction. They cut themselves off from their groups of orientation or are thrown out by the milieu, for they cannot adapt to the greater flux of urban anonymity, ruthlessness, and open arena of intense competition (e.g. most immigrants from N Africa into Europe). Such individuals and groups form a rich cache for future terrorists.

ii) Transitory relationships: By nature, the urban flux is depersonalizing and transitory vocations cannot substitute for organic kinship.⁶ Life for the social animal that man is, in its metaphysical sense, is relationships. This floating is very disintegrative in the short run; there is a quest for the new and there is pining for the old with the present befogged by both the future and the past. Some actors experience isolation for being far too above or below par of success in the given milieu. It is these individuals who gravitate towards delinquent gangs with their capability or inferiority pushing them to deviance. Most executors of terror acts come from this category of

⁵ Benjamin and Simon, *The Next Attack*.

⁶ Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks*.

deviants (e.g. Omar Sheikh, kidnapper of journalist Daniel Pearl in Karachi studied in London before taking to religiosity and terrorism).

C) POWER RELATIONS:

Power relations in a society are the result of past power struggles and social accommodations. However, the tendency of the incumbents at authoritative roles to freeze social negotiation and perpetuate their legitimacy is a consistent cause of social malintegration. The absence of mechanisms to de-freeze such a tendency forces recourse to deviance.

i) Social Differentiation: All societies have to move from the primitive mechanical solidarity, as in pre-literate societies, to organic solidarity with differentiation of functions, division of labor and prestige gradations in the modern world. Social differentiation is functional in case checks and balances are in place. In case accountability institutions are not available, authoritative roles can indulge in self-perpetuation causing social discontent, expressed in withdrawal of respect, privilege and subsequently aggressive acts to physically eliminate the deprived, devalued roles and the individuals holding them. Terrorism is one avenue to express this discontent.

ii) Relative Deprivation: Deprivation and poverty *per se* do not cause disintegration. It is only when some individuals and sub-groups perceive that the costs of change are being differentially apportioned and the allocation of resources are being inefficiently distributed that they experience relative deprivation even though they may be better-off from the *ex ante* position. Relative deprivation gradually coagulates into social resentment and loss of morale. It takes the form of regression, acquiescence or aggression, depending upon the strength of invidious experience.

iii) Creation of Power Positions: Developing societies generally create far too few positional goods than could assuage any significant number of entrants to the dynamic. Fewer power positions necessarily mean pride of ascension and its discretionary dispensation to favorites. The vicious circle of lack of empowerment leading to lack of morale and involvement, irresponsibility, malfeasance and sabotage, further concentrates power in fewer hands and operates with a vengeance in developing societies. Sabotage and malfeasance is social deviance.

iv) Legitimacy vs. External Support: The breakdown of colonial rule has given rise to structures which hold and exercise power but which are not seen as legitimate by the various sub-groups within the larger group - the nation. The lack of legitimacy is a potent source of dissent-suppression, frauds, opaque structures, nepotism and mis-governance. Depending upon the state

of openness and tolerance for opposition and dissent, such sub-groups either take to acquiescence, silent protests, strikes, demonstrations and even insurgencies. The lack of legitimacy is further exacerbated by wider power politics. Support to regimes patently illegitimate, partly representative or moving towards legitimacy evokes a sense of antipathy and resignation amongst the most vital of actors. The demoralization amongst such individuals or sub-groups leaves them flotsam in the power mart and they gravitate towards secretive, deviant organizations.

v) Opposition and Religious Institutions: The ambivalence of secular institutions (towards political participation by certain groups) hinders growth of functional opposition. This ambivalence opens a window for opposition groups that lack opportunities for expression, to channel their activities through the refuge of religion (e.g. Muslim Brotherhood, Islamic Jihad, etc). These groups lack available channels to disseminate their ideas and thus, in order to gain acceptance from the wider mass, consolidate through public, religious charities, playing on the vulnerability of the state. The impulse to push forward an alternative then coagulates into reactionary activities, completing the vicious circle. The connection of terrorists with religious outfits, which in their nature cannot be democratic (monotheist religions in patriarchal societies more so), allows the rise of religious autocracies - without dissent, discussions, compromise or consensus. Fundamentalism is a natural source of and only a step behind terrorism.

vi) Coercion as Major Form of Social Control: Dissent is a natural concomitant of a living society. Progressive societies encourage it, but regressive regimes take to regulatory deterrence as the major and sometimes only means of social control. This is expensive, with large collateral damage on the morale of both sides, resulting in more acute deviance in new ways (e.g. Muslim Brotherhood and Islamic Jihad in Egypt and much of Arabian lands, Salafis in Algeria and Morocco, Jama'at e Islami in Pakistan, ultra-leftist-Naxals in India). This circularity of skepticism, its intolerance, coercion to suppress, loss of morale, overt defiance, and further suppression can culminate in leagues and networks, both overt and covert, to defy authority and garner adherents – the malcontents of the social group. Alternatively, the progressively waning social morale could lead to cynicism towards life. Withdrawal and suicide are symptoms of this process. Suicide *per se*, as a moral statement, is terrorism.

D) MANAGEMENT OF ECONOMY

i) Alienation: Social alienation is a typical reaction of the mass production-consumption social matrix. Alienated individuals seek means of adaptation and social stabilization and to reach some

equilibrium, though at a great emotional cost. But some individuals invariably slip outside the margins of sociability.

Similarly, modern education is a cause of typical alienation amongst the young. Most of them somehow adapt to mixed gender classes, new curricula, and new infrastructure. Some, however, cannot find their bearings until they drop out. Education dropouts, in almost all cases, have to settle for lower prestige, marginalization and alienation, feeding the deviant networks.

Brutalization and training in deviant activities (e.g. drop-outs, returnees from jails convicted on minor offences) can lead to deviant networks. Ordinary criminality by such networks is sometimes transmuted into glorified deviance. Groups that start as criminals can transmute into social benefactors in case the milieu is willing to afford them legitimacy (Robin Hood type of gangs where the state has faltered). Such sub-groups equipped with resources, training, and ideologies are a potent source of challenges to authority positions.

ii) Developmental Pressures: Economic development, if not managed, causes social disruption. Development causes a strain on the physical environment, resulting in unforeseen sicknesses and disruptive absenteeism. Developmental pressures invariably give rise to centripetal forces. Sabotage, crime, rebellions, insurgencies are some common concomitants of developmental stress, especially if it is rapid and intense.

iii) Sectoral Grievances: Social homogeneity is a matter of degree. Since the diverse actors vie for scarce resources, positions and need-filling mechanisms, there is competition amongst the contending sub-groups. Sectoral grievances are expressed in the language of exploitation and can lead to non-cooperation, withholding of consent, strikes, mobilization, rebellion and insurgencies.

E) CULTURE:

i) Delinquency Subculture: Most societies harbor a spectrum of social sanctions to outwit deviance. The allowance given to ideas (and their cultural manifestations - songs, dance, films, dress, body care, and general style of life) from the West in traditional societies wreaks havoc with the social morale there. This allows the growth of a delinquent subculture where the social signposts become blurred and ideals crumble to the warm, pink winds.

Successful individuals become the target of the masses (Foreign/American returned people in the local milieu in developing societies face derision if they vaunt the liberating values of the West and remain ever on the defensive; the expectation that people educated/employed in the West would be bridges is misplaced). They either give-in, remaining maladapted and half-hearted social discontents, or openly defy the old order and perforce take to alien arenas. In either case it is a loss for the native milieu. The resultant anomie is a great source of deviance, often culminating into acceptance of questionable ideologies and ideal-constructs.

ii) Intensity of Communication: The new technology ingress amidst traditional production, consumption and power relations, gives rise to the amorphous ubiquity of communication. Events, episodes, persons, ideals – totally alien in form and content, come to be internalized by distant and near actors. Symbols, whether suicide bombs or crashing planes, get embedded in the social ether. The communication mechanisms which are legitimately heralded as liberating influences can also become means of control, disinformation and coagulation of malcontents. Such mass dissemination, being impersonal, is generally out of the local context, and most of the times alienating. The skewed distribution of communications makes it a one-way affair, representing ‘techniques of moral brokerage and encouragement to journalists to work on behalf of the established order.’⁷ As Ericson says “it is the organization of news, not events in the world that creates news.” Terrorism is one way of communicating the reverse.

iii) Simplification of Reality: In a society where anomie is pervasive, where relations and positions are in flux, intellectual leaders and opinion makers are atrophied with constricted imagination and intellectual sclerosis and the stage is set for the emergence of some normative patterns, intelligible to the anomic populace. Surrogates arise and propose simplification of reality into a series of pictures, images, and symbols, striking a chord amongst lethargic society - fatigued by the incessant flux of ideas and ideologies. These surrogates are essentially simple, impressionable people like children who lie and thereafter believe in the lies. They offer flimsy anchorage when the waters are choppy. Formation of cults is a logical progression in this simplification which gives meaning and content to lives made hollow otherwise.

The failure of the intellectual leadership to adopt and channel the popular impulses into creative, productive and stabilizing institutions is the sure sign of some messiah to emerge, some Moses bringing manna and the quest of the promised land. This is but the penultimate stage of social disintegration.

⁷ Oliverio and Lauderdale, *The State of Terror*.

iv) Sub-culture of Violence: Cultural traditions control behavior patterns of individual members. Some sub-groups emphasize violence (e.g. hunter groups) while others give acquiescence (e.g. agricultural societies) more weight in socialization. The cultural traits of the sub-groups, if not utilized in constructive ways, lead to anomie and less than optimal utilization of their potential. Failure to recognize the potential of each sub-group can cause deviance and social dislocation resulting in violent protests.

v) Non-rational Factors: Non-rational factors play a great role in socialization. Totems, myths, legends, however, can become a focus of rallying against the extant authorities if case avenues for expression of pent up frustrations are not available. Myths and totems become theatrical, raising the vision of an unrealized promised land, of the supposed 'grandeur' and 'justice' of the past. Apocalyptic groups which are but social failures can procure adherents by reverting to such episodes, symbols and myths which can neither be proved by empirical testing nor disproved because they are present in the social subconscious.

F) EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT:

The pervasive availability of ideas and cultures, artifacts and technologies, goods and wares is intense in a globalized world and has unintended, consequences. Technology can be imported but its appropriation calls for sustained social effort, which may not be forthcoming.

Similarly, the integration mechanisms such as entertainment and media make insidious ingress in social groups not ready for absorption and assimilation. The superstructure makes local culture inefficacious by what Gramsci called cultural hegemony. This subconscious hegemony is but a precursor of ideas coagulating towards repulsion and closing in. The skewed nature of ownership allows only a few to dictate what should be heard and seen, imbibed and referenced, rejected and consigned. These vulnerabilities are sustainable rallying points for terrorists – those who see that their life is being weaned away from its mooring.

Material, intellectual and ideological aid, even if given with unadulterated benevolence, which is hardly the case with foreign aid anyway, can be a cause of demoralization and disintegration unless reassuring mechanisms and social confidence have developed enough to counter the social demoralization.

SUMMING UP

The inherent strength of societies and cultures allows them to absorb strain of social changes, external ingress, or environmental challenges without any precipitate dislocation. Societies without sufficient depth, but with inherent integrative fibers, take time, regroup and achieve equilibrium with minor damages to their structures. Others succumb to pressures and give in to sub-structural disorganization and find themselves in continuous flux, facing challenges to their very existence from social deviants, malintegrated individuals and sub-groups.

An underlying causal factor for terrorism is social disintegration, as previously described. The determining factors that stimulate terrorist acts are the switches: articulators and precipitate events. The intensity and extent of terrorists that a society creates vary directly with social anomie and availability of means for coagulation of disintegrated social roles and inversely with legitimacy, democratic openness, fulfillment of social needs, means of coercive reach of regulatory mechanisms and dynamic power relations.

II. TERRORISM IN SOUTH ASIA:

South Asia, home to a fourth of the global population, is beset with serious problems of insurgencies, rebellions, militancy and movements giving occasion to several terrorist incidents, not allowing legitimate authorities time for consolidation and appropriate political dynamic to evolve.⁸ Terrorists of various hues – leftists, rightists, ethnic, religious, sub-national are active in the region, symbolizing that the socio-political structures evolved during the past decades have not been able to satisfy major chunks of population.

Terrorism as brought out in the paper is a result of social disaffection, anomie and personal disintegration. Since the study focuses on Jihadi terrorism, and the role of Indian Muslims in it, other strains of terrorism – Buddhist, Hindu, Maoist, ultra-rightist, ethno-nationalist, etc. are taken as constants here.

⁸“The Failed States Index,” *Foreign Policy*, ranked 146 nations according to their viability, as per 12 criteria, including human flight and economic decline. Pakistan and Bangladesh have been placed at 9th and 19th respectively. Nepal, Sri Lanka and India have been placed at 20, 25, and 93 respectively. Even giving latitude to the credibility of the compilation, the region shows a generic tendency towards weakening of the State. Pakistan and Afghanistan sunk in their viability over 2005 in the current year.

A) FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO JIHADI TERRORISM IN SOUTH ASIA:

Jihad is a tenuous, perhaps expedient concept in Islamic theology.⁹ Muslim political ascendance during the seventh century called for *jihad* (righteous effort) and *fatah* (literally *opening* for the victory of the righteous). The cult of martyrs as the *shaheed* (witness, perhaps of God as he became the dearest of God) was for mass mobilization in the essentially trading society.¹⁰ Jihad as a tenet of Islam, is defined, reviewed and redefined as per the predilection of the beholder. In the post-colonial, post-cold war period, with rampant demoralization, Jihad transmuted from a guiding post to one of the pillars to the central pillar of Islam, and for some to be the basic of Islam, equal to the belief in Allah and his Prophet, with each Muslim obliged to do his duty to the religion and its dictates as interpreted by the pure and the learned (*ulema*). People in the sub-continent claim that though the Quoran descended in Arabia, it was interpreted in the sub-continent, decrying the Arabs as *jahils* (ignorant) and hailing the Deobandis as the rightful interpreters of Islam. This is hotly contested by the Arabs. Jihad came upon the sub-continent with a vengeance, with a combination of several socio-political factors. It is, however, a sociological puzzle that Indian Muslims did not find it expedient or even a teleological necessity to join the Jihadi movement, or even express solidarity with it.

i) Similarities - Cultural Continuity: The decadal census (2001) states that over 138 million citizens profess Muslim faith in India. Their growth rate of 2.93 percent over the decade 1991-2001 is comparable to growth rate in other parts of the Muslim world. Similarly the socio-economic data on Pakistan, Bangladesh and India also reveals no wide diversity or difference in income levels. The per capita in dollar terms and PPP of the three countries, the HDI indexes and trends on economic growth and demographic profiles are roughly approximate. In addition, there

⁹Esposito, *Unholy War: Terror in the Name of Islam*, "Centrality of Jihad for Muslims has become a defining concept; depending on the circumstances in which one lives: it can mean fighting injustice and oppression, spreading and defending Islam and creating a just society through preaching, teaching and if necessary armed struggle or holy war quoting a well known prophetic tradition with Mohammed telling his followers, 'we return from the lesser jihad to the greater jihad' the greater jihad is more difficult and more important struggle against one's ego, selfishness, greed and evil. For Maududi in Pakistan, the decline in Muslim fortune in South Asia was due to British colonialism and rise of Hindu secular nationalism, replacing universal pan Islamic ideal of solidarity. Mawdudi's early rejection of nationalism and democracy as unislamic was influenced more by his opposition to westernization and secularization than by religion. Mohd Farag of the Islamic Jihad articulated his ideology in *The Neglected Duty* and emphasized that Jihad was the sixth pillar of Islam, forgotten or obscured by majority of *Ulemas* and Muslims.

¹⁰ Ibid., 8, the Quoran has many passages that support the notion of martyrdom "were you to be killed or to die in the way of god, forgiveness and mercy from god are far better than what they amass' (3:169) and "Never think that those who are killed in the way of god are dead. They are alive with their lord, well provided for" (03:169).

are kinship ties among the Muslims across the borders in the sub-continent. The history of Islamic ingress and the adoption of Islam by the people at a certain socio-economic level are common to all three peoples. All three countries share a common political background in terms of Arab-Turk-Mughal and colonial history. They also have commonality of languages (Urdu, Punjabi, Bengali are common to the three countries; Arabic remains the language of religious orientation) and culture. Similarly the climate and topography, with regional variations, are similar. All three countries swear by democracy and tried to develop Westminster style of government.

ii) Differences in Political Evolution: Muslims in India remain a significant minority, even if their relative percentage to the overall population is rather low – 12.8 percent (a solid unitary group with a distinct identity, as opposed to the diffuse majority of Hindus as a residual category without any cohesive identity). Over 150 million Muslims today form the second biggest Muslim population in one single country after Indonesia. This bulk and influence can give Indian Muslims a significant say in the Islamic dynamic. But this has somehow not come about. Muslims in Bangladesh and Pakistan, in contrast, are the overwhelming majority and compose both the elite as well as masses.

This obvious difference, however, does not explain the indifference to the *Ummah* and the *Jihad*. If anything, the contrary effect is plausible with the minority (Muslims) seeking their inspiration from their land of orientation, the Arab world. This inspiration is evident in cultural manifestations like names, religious festivals, marriage rites or civil laws. Minorities have complexes bordering on paranoia - threats of assimilation, overt discrimination and social prejudice, even if not explicit in the political discourse, can be prefigured. Such complexes lead them to seek support and inspiration elsewhere. Hence, the endorsement of the supervening *Ummah* should be their first refuge in the expectation of political and moral aid and reassurance. The pressures of development, resource allocations and the invidious social and economic ascent could also be a source of frustration, forcing the minority to look beyond the immediate governance of the state.

Is it expedient acquiescence, what Turkish secularists deride as *takkiye*, from which most of the present Muslims trace their descent, or is it something deeper, a wider process? Social processes and social structures in India, their evolution and consolidation could possibly throw some light on the question under examination.

Pakistan, India and Bangladesh have a republican form of government with their constitutions swearing by democracy. But they all have taken different trajectories in their interpretation and ascent to democratic governance. This has given a peculiar hue to their form of State and the informing institutions. The plurality of institutions, their power, influence, independence and autonomy are a matter of degree. Some of them approximate the institutions established in developed countries while others are still in their infancy in the countries. Similarly, the reach and depth of the State vary.

B) POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS OF INDIA:

i) Strong State: The Indian State has progressively reached all corners of the land and has accomplished depth not visible in other countries – by way of accommodations, legitimization, representation and co-option. Contra-movements have been dealt with politically rather than as law and order problems. Successive governments have engaged various insurgent groups, in attrition, in dialogue and in resolution. Similarly, the constitutional obligation to hold elections for installing popular, constitutional governments obtained legitimacy for the State. This accommodative depth has allowed India to focus on the developmental needs of its vast and ever-growing population. Democracy, even with all its imperfections, is seeped in the individual consciousness and there is a characteristic allergy to order, discipline, and diktat from outside of India. Chaos is preferred to discipline from without.

ii) Institution Building: Institution building, even if inexpedient and causing tremendous strain on the paltry resources of time and material, is *sui generis* in India. The legislature, judiciary and the media being afforded unrestricted freedom to evolve their traditions, culture and functional ethics, expanded their space, even at the cost of the Executive. Any encroachment or transgressions has built-in resistance.

iii) Pluralism: As institutions consolidate, newer institutions representing civil society emerge. The increasing civil society intervention in spheres affecting both public life and private interests is firmly embedded in social governance. Several institutions developed along the way: in economic management, cultural organizations, environmental groups, rights protection societies, clubs, fraternities, professional organizations and trade unions. The public space expanded to incorporate several overlooked individuals and groups, marginal outfits and peripheral constituencies. This expansion increased integration for the State and achieved strategic depth to contain all centripetal tendencies and forces. Pluralism was firmly established. Religion receded

into the background with other mechanisms that have a lead role in frustration venting. Religion was progressively confined into the personal rather than the public domain.

iv) Military under Civilian Rule in India: The military is only one of the several pillars of self-defense in India. The clear delineation of the privileges, role expectations, powers and chain of command is traceable directly to the President, who is advised by the Prime Minister. The military has a clear sphere of activity. It has never attempted to advice on governance, unlike in other countries where the military has actually assumed power. The strain of governance and defense duties generally contorts the military in these countries, insulating the institution from the currents of national life, and making it bureaucratic, bent on preserving itself and its privileges rather than serving the purpose it was established for or the responsibilities it took upon itself. People demoralized by military action take recourse to non-rational and sometimes irrational means and ends whereby - God and God's-Just-World become social aspirations with the individual self becomes an ephemeral, transitory reality. India has been spared of this anathema.

v) Channels of Communication: Communication is a *sine qua non* of development and empowerment. Representative institutions in India draw out the essence from the masses for national consideration. Violence is a reaction to indifference and maladaptation. Communication is a safe way to pre-empt it. Indian democracy has mature communicating channels. Dissent smothered by power instruments could hardly cover the social malaise. One of the best known Pakistani poets expressed it in a couplet.¹¹ Aspirations and dissent never got channeled into the pulpits and mosques in India. Secular institutions, even in their stumbling way, fulfilled this role.

vi) Political Parties: Political parties in India are omnibus organizations without explicit polarization on religious lines. All parties solicit Muslim support since they have a swing-potential in elections. To give representation to this constituency is a prime electoral necessity for all parties. The structural necessity of omnibus coalitions of various religions, castes, and interests groups pre-empts polarization. Compromises and negotiations in coalition building have given a stable equilibrium to the linguistic, religious, and ethnic minorities in addition to peripheral geographical groups. There is no disconnect between the polity and the state, no void of proscribed parties to be filled by unrepresentative interests.

¹¹ Ahmed Nadeem Qassimi, (symposium, Dubai, 1983), "Agar chup rahegi zabane Khanjar, Lahoo pukarega aashthin ka," (Even if my sharp tongue made a shroud, the blood spill of my arms will speak aloud).

C) SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

i) Conception of Ideal Society: The clear definition of an ideal society has been enshrined in the Preamble of the Indian Constitution with equality, liberty, freedom, equity and justice as its cornerstones. The gap between the reality and the ideal is very wide and could be a cause of infinite strain. This has, however, not taken place since each day closes the gap, even if in the infinitesimal degree. The hope generated by this process disallows kicking the pail by most agents of rebellion. The all-inclusive process, with some reward for everybody, has created a superstructure of constituencies for strain management. The potential elements of disruption either get assimilated in this vortex of hope and effort or become sidelined to be taken care of by social control mechanisms of family and kinship groups, or by the policing agencies of the state. The areas where the writ of law is not applicable are progressively attenuating, providing greater scope for tension management mechanisms.

ii) Elite Vs Masses: The ascriptive distribution of authority positions has been progressively de-emphasized and achievement has become the benchmark of elitism in modern Indian society. Channels hitherto closed to various groups based on religion, caste, creed or sex was opened up to ability and achievement. The elite have undergone a metamorphic change. Similarly, the circulation of the elite in rural areas, where feudalism ruled, also came without any bloody revolution. The emphasis on rule of law, despite its choppy implementation and various negative collaterals, gave a mental framework for social mobility unto all individuals. The expanding space at the top saved discontent of the extant elite, as very few actually came down the social scale while many climbed up, bringing with them the vitality to rejuvenate ever changing Indian society. The strain of this circulatory process was absorbed and managed by the elastic democratic institutions. Other countries in the region, projecting inorganic, brittle institutions like the military still suffer from the elite-mass divide, rife with exclusion and the blocking of channels for circulation of the elite. Jihadis present themselves as alternatives, role-models of a purer kind, more in tune with the dictates of the religious texts which naturally add to their fundamentalist ranks. India was saved this dysgenic process.

iii) Empowerment of Masses: Rapid expansion of the power base and oversight and accountability institutions, in the form of rural representative bodies, civic bodies, state and federal legislatures, has empowered the powerless. The several-tiered representative institutions created a large cadre of legislative talent, informing the impulses of the masses into self-governance. Each political tier had its own economic development agenda. Business and

enterprise, while slow to develop, got engaged in solving the existential problems. Hope is ever present for a better life in all stratas and groups. This has averted the problem of mass demoralization and meta-deviance in society. Somehow, the principle of equality, when enjoined to religion, becomes “equality in the eyes of God” and subconsciously becomes a rationale for inequality in the imperfect, real world. Classes and hierarchies have retained their flux and openness in India vis `a vis in other countries.¹² Religion has not become the last refuge of the hopeless. Muslims have regrouped their social life after the trauma of partition.

iv) Co-opting Mechanisms: By way of affirmative action, institutions in India, not only allow but encourage co-opting of the most energetic elements of society at various levels, facilitating participation by Muslims in the national process. Open competition for all positions, factors and resources on a level-playing field are established ideals. Disadvantaged groups have positive discriminations institutionalized in their favor to undo their handicap. This has fostered a climate of hope and allowed the co-opting of the best individuals, pre-empting their potential for disruption, deviance, violence and terrorism. Muslims have *suo moto* refrained from giving religious hues to their grievances. Jihad has been scoffed at and ridiculed in the popular consciousness.¹³

v) Education as Empowerment: Education, as an article of faith enshrined in the constitution, is fully state funded and has a secular orientation, with proper checks and balances in both curricula formation and the delivery of educational service. Separate laws, in view of their sensitivity and special needs, govern minority institutions. Scientific training, rational outlook and logical thinking are encouraged in the schools, while non-rational cosmologies, ideals, etc. are de-emphasized. This has given the children an orientation to solve the problem of the ‘here and the now,’ rather than to strive for supra-mundane constructs of *jihad* and *ummah*. The madrasa institutions, while functional, are mostly funded by the State rather than the munificence of the religionists. This has allowed supervision, monitoring and purposive education, in addition to ecclesiastical learning. Indian authorities have de-emphasized funding from the charitable

¹² Cohen, *America’s Role in Asia-American View*, “Behind Musharraf is the large civil and military oligarch, dubbed the ‘Establishment’ by Pakistanis. This 800-1000 strong group includes senior army commanders, bureaucrats, media leaders, politicians and even some Islamists.”

¹³Shabana Azmi, Social Activist, MP and former popular actress ridiculed the exhortation of the Shahi Imam of Delhi, about the topmost Muslim religious leader in India for participating in Jihad in Afghanistan. She ridiculed him publicly that Govt of India should charter a plane and air drop the Shahi Imam to fight there; it would solve both his and “our” problem. The recent bomb explosion in the holy city of Varanasi called for a *fatwa* (religious edict) from the ulema (clerics) against terrorism, explosions, etc., Shabana Azmi, “VHP action a political conspiracy, says Bukhari,” *Hindu*, October 19th 2001, <http://www.hinduonnet.com/2001/10/20/stories/02200005.htm> (accessed July 31, 2006).

impulses of the international community unlike other countries in the region where funding for madrasas education brought Wahabi ideas of a closed, simple world divided into black and white.¹⁴

vi) *Strength of Identity*: Muslims in India did not find it expedient to look up to or align themselves with their Arabic co-religionists for their economic development. Even the Indian Diaspora - mostly Muslims in the Arabic countries, has maintained its Indian identity, without loss of prestige or opportunity. The majority of Indians are otherwise divided into several compartments of caste, class and professional achievements. Muslims are co-sharers of all these groupings. In addition, Muslims form the single biggest monolithic constituency in the Indian polity. Their peculiar civil laws and distinct culture gives them an identity not available to majority religionists. It is to the credit of Muslim leadership, with the indulgence of national leaders, that they have retained and even expanded much of their rights over minority institutions. They have also carved out their space in economic stakes with their entrepreneurship, initiative and skill. Their stakes in the national priorities continue to increase and the overly prejudicial view of victimization has not touched them. Their increased stake within the country has foreclosed any orientation towards Arabic/Islamic countries, as happened with other countries (e.g. Azim Premji, the richest Indian is a Muslim; one of the biggest Industrialist in Mumbai is grandson of Pakistan's founder MA Jinnah). In the political realm, Muslims do not experience any overt discrimination; there is a general complaint that political parties are extra indulgent towards Muslims because of their block voting potential. Except for the position of Prime Minister, so far Muslims have occupied all positions of importance in India. Similarly positions of eminence in the bureaucracy, military, art and culture have been theirs. In fact Bombay Film Industry, popularly known as Bollywood and the biggest entertainer in the sub-continent, is dominated by Muslims. The idea of Jihad replacing the existential concerns is far from this dynamic.

¹⁴ Evans, *Foreign Affairs*, Pakistan has from four hundred thousand to 1.7 million students enrolled with some funding from abroad, especially from radical Islamists in the Gulf region. The largest madrasah receives over 1.5 million dollars a year but many smaller ones exist on a few hundred dollars a year, more of which comes from local funding. The Indian Government allows under article 30 (1) the right to establish minority institutions, but it can invoke laws against incitement to violence. Pakistan has attempted reforms by ordering foreigners to leave by July 2005, requiring registration for schools, and by establishing financial controls; Bergen, *Washington Quarterly*, quoted Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's question "Are we capturing, killing or deterring and dissuading more terrorist every day than the Madrasas and the radical clerics are recruiting, training and deploying against us?" and illuminated that none of the Sept 11 attackers, London bombings were products of madrasas and that madrasas are a social necessity. Fair, *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, brings out the difference between the madrasa and secular students in attitude towards jihad and Kashmir. She brings out government statistics on madrasas and the difficulty in corroborating them in the field studies.

The “curse of oil” - syndrome of subsidizing the populace with bounty earnings, as seen in the oil rich Islamic countries, making them unresponsive to national endeavors, has not been the fate of India’s Muslims. The nervous fatigue and social ennui, experienced in oil rich countries, which gives rise to social deviance, has been progressively attenuated in India.

D) SOCIAL CONTROL MECHANISMS:

Social control in India is mostly endogenous through family, kinship, school, neighborhood and community. Various mechanisms have pre-empted social frustrations from reaching their boiling point. Some of them are given below:

i) Secularism in India: India rejected the theory that a people following one religion constitute a nation, as is propagated in Pakistan. The ideal of a uniform civil code for all citizens, given a prominent place in the Directive Principles of the India Constitution though implementation of this article is suspended due to the sensitivities and vulnerability of the minority religions. Unless the minority community is ready for such a uniform code and willingly disposes itself to such change, it will not be brought into effect. The accommodation shown has tempered the fear psychosis in the minds of minorities. The freedom of practicing and propagating religion has been guaranteed by the Constitution. It has successfully pre-empted a potential source of discontent and violence. In addition to foreclosing dissent and perpetual friction, this has given the Muslims a sense of reassurance about their future within the Indian nation – irrespective of the denomination to which they belong - Sunni, Shia, Ahmedi, Sufi or Bohri. This freedom has also been emphasized for Christians and Parsis. Freedom guaranteed by the constitution and enforced both by social dictates and law and order mechanisms has resulted in the withdrawal of religion into the personal domain, prevented polarization on religious lines and split the monolithic religious traditions into several localized sects. Religion, confined to the personal domain, has become an effective tool for socialization and social control. This cannot be said of other countries in the region, where religion occupies public-political space.

ii) Counter-ideologies: Indian culture is catholic and eclecticism is the predominant reality in matters of faith - no book is considered definitive to guide social conduct or explain cosmologies. All creeds are fused in this ‘melting pot’: from atheism to pantheism and strict monotheism. In such a diverse and pluralistic cultural flux, no particular ideology can reach an overarching position. The dialectic is not only tolerated but also encouraged. Puritanism is considered a public nuisance. It is this spirit of eclecticism which gives rise to innumerable practices and within

which fundamentalism is scoffed at, derided, and ostracized. Indian society recognizes the impossibility of converting terrorist impulses into productive and creative channels (e.g. into fighting elections and defeating the war of ideas) making it difficult to sustain terrorism within the state. Developing institutions in India have the obligation of co-opting diverse values and opinions into their functioning, thus blunting the edge of deviance. This has not been, unfortunately the case in other countries, where heterodox traditions, have been proscribed, with accompanying state or group violence.

iii) Open Channels for Dissent: The right to freedom of expression and association has been vigorously exercised for organizing groups and venting frustrations. Even if the disruptive potential of active dissent and protest movements borders on violent, the sinister nature of it brewing towards a dangerous eruption is pre-empted. Lack of channels for expression of dissent in other countries has fomented pressures, without curing any of the problems, and resulted in social dislocation and the retardation of desirable social structures.

iv) Jihadism Usurped by Criminal Underworld: Jihadism was pre-empted in its works by constitutional guarantees. The desideratum of fundamentalist elements, who continued with the pan-Islamic identity and proclivity to align themselves to the wider Islamic currents, did not find fertile ground in India. Social friction over material resources such as land, water, resource allocation and regional prejudice continue however, taking at times the communal color. Clashes continue sporadically between Muslim and Hindu communities at the local level. This dialectic, however, is not oriented by Arabic influences. The Muslim leadership is already well entrenched in the Indian political system with privileged positions. The fallout of the Babri Mosque demolition was catastrophic and communal riots were ubiquitous. However, the drift towards the Ummah was not seen even during the height of these clashes. Frustrated elements, which saw some “ethnological defeat” in this apathy, transmuted their rage, with the help of criminals and mafia dons in Bombay, into high blown bomb blasts in 1993. This criminalization of what could have been an ideological rallying point was taken care of by law and order agencies (e.g. Dawood Ibrahim, Chota Shaqeel, etc and were given refuge in Pakistan). Criminals-on-the-run who take up the mantle of ideological purity enshrined in the *Ummah or Jihad* made it repulsive for ordinarily religious Muslims to follow suit.

Islamist terrorist events in India, even if occurring with regularity, invariably have the footprints of external support, instigation or execution, even if there is voluble denial. It follows from the

ideological basis of a low-cost, covert war to 'complete the unfinished agenda' of partition.¹⁵ The native Muslims find it repulsive to identify and align themselves with Pakistan and its actions. Support to Kashmiri nationalism by Pakistan is considered an excuse to divert the Jihad-turned-upon-itself after finding no outlet following the Afghan war.¹⁶ This insurgency suits the oligarchy in Pakistan to both vindicate its *raison d'être* as well as to deflect the Jihadi energy from challenging the position and privileges of the establishment. The partition of the country is considered in India to be a manipulation of historical currents for personal ambition and a sense of failure of leadership is pervasive amidst the Muslims in India, in hindsight.

d) Effect of External Influences: India has been the recipient of aid for some decades but its social and economic depth, its inward-looking orientation and its emphasis on self-sufficiency has never allowed external factors to play any major, determining role. Its political process was determined by its genius and neither the dictates of cold war nor the 'clash of civilizations' had any perceptible influence. What emerged in India was a broad moral consensus within which all processes and ideas had the space to play, consolidate, and eliminate the dysfunctional. Foreign influences always remained peripheral. Jihad, which is a foreign ideology, did not strike a chord within the Muslim community. This cannot be said of other countries where aid penetrated deeper into the popular psyche – through madrasa schools, civic projects or religious fraternities. Demoralization by external aid-effort is less apparent in India and Muslims remained insulated from the external, fundamentalist currents.

SUMMING UP

Indian Muslims have kept away from Jihadist movements because of democratic inclusiveness, enforceable constitutional rights and privileges, open channels of social and geographical mobility, eclectic socialization, communication, employment of their impulses by authority positions and a secular framework decrying religious bigotry. Sensitivity in handling Muslim

¹⁵Terror evolved as a politico-military strategy in pursuit of perceived national interests of Pakistan. General Zia ul-Haq as the head of state and the army encouraged such efforts. Brigadier S. K. Malik, then a serving officer, in a perverse interpretation concluded that the Holy Quoran enjoins upon the believers to use terror as a weapon of war, Malik, *The Quranic Concept of War*, argued that the Holy Quoran teaches that terror must be struck during the preparatory stage, in the run up to war, during war, and for war termination. "Once a condition of terror into the opponent's heart is obtained, hardly anything is left to be achieved. It is the point where the means and the ends meet and merge." Later army chief General Aslam Beg and other army leaders inevitably quoted these conclusions to exhort military officers and soldiers when addressing an increasingly Islamised military, especially at the leadership training establishments; Cohen, *The Pakistan Army*, stated that Pakistani military officers on courses in the United States were more interested in studying guerrilla warfare from the perspective of waging it unlike the American officers who studied it to learn how to combat it.

¹⁶ Pervez Musharraf, (widely televised speech, Islamabad, Pakistan, January 12, 2002)
<http://www.nytimes.com/2002/01/12/international/12WIRE-TEXT.html?ex=1154491200&en=bbbaad39a3dd1f17&ei=5070> (accessed July 31, 2006).

aspirations facilitated their integration and encouraged participation in national effort towards consolidation of democracy, in tandem with other religious groups.

III. POSSIBLE WAYS FOR INDIA AND THE US TO COOPERATE IN COUNTERING TERRORISM

Terrorism is causing tremendous strain on the developmental process in the sub-continent, and elsewhere, resulting in the curbing of freedoms otherwise taken for granted. Since terrorism transcends boundaries, international cooperation is an imperative. Terrorism has to be countered simultaneously at four levels: global, regional, national, and local. In the short run, terrorism should be tackled through a convergent approach using instruments of power, diplomacy, pre-emptive intelligence and covert action to pre-empt terrorist acts. This approach, however, cannot eliminate terrorism. A terrorist cannot be defeated but only made irrelevant. A divergent, holistic approach is therefore necessary to relegate terrorism to redundancy. Intensive cooperation between India and the United States in the following ways could help in addressing this problem.

A) At the international level, India and US could work closely to secure final agreement on a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism, which endeavors to close gaps in international laws to counter terrorism. Similarly, the tightening of controls on financial operations, without dislocating legitimate financial transfers, is an imperative where functional cooperation is possible and desirable. Cooperation in controlling narcotics and arms running, which together finance much of terrorism, may be prove decisive in curbing terrorism in the short run.

B) At the regional level, where US and Indian interests coalesce, cooperation could be intensified (e.g. stability and development of the region). The ambivalence displayed towards Jihadism earlier has periled the region. The US can, with its influence, steer the regional dynamics away from terrorism. Ambivalence towards terrorism, in the name of ‘moral support’ to ‘freedom fighters,’ should be progressively nailed by diplomatic pressure. Military/Police cooperation could be tried to over-reach the ‘minimum satisfier’ type of actions in Afghanistan.¹⁷ Similarly, the emerging fundamentalist nurseries in Bangladesh need to be eliminated through moral and diplomatic pressures and cooperative action.

¹⁷ Cohen, *Pakistan Army*, terms President Musharraf as a “minimal satisfier.”

C) The Indian State has depth to counter its national and local terrorism with both accommodation and pre-emption by political and policing means respectively. Interference by foreign powers would heighten national sensitivity. However, cooperation in capacity building like training, equipment, etc. could be helpful.

D) Indo-US cooperation to combat terrorism, crime and trafficking is covered under the Indo-U.S. Joint Working Group on Terrorism, the Extradition Treaty and the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty. The Defense Framework Agreement, *inter alia* sets out cooperation in “areas of common interest of both countries in maintaining security and stability, defeating terrorism and violent religious extremism, protecting the free flow of commerce via land, air and sea lanes and preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction and associated materials, data and technologies.” Other legal instruments to combat new challenges like proliferation of nuclear and chemical weapons, delivery vehicles to non-state actors, digital and bio-piracy, maritime piracy, cyber crime, money laundering, etc. could be negotiated to counter emerging terrorist threats.

E) Functional co-operation of the intelligence agencies is an imperative. All ways should be explored to intensify cooperation and exchange in information sharing and identification of: trends in terrorism, terrorist infrastructure, cadres, nurseries, new recruits, and returnees from areas affected by insurgencies to prevent their rejoining terrorist nets. Joint development of anti-terrorist equipment such as devices for intrusion-detection, x-ray screening, alarms, non-lethal weapons, body-armor, explosive detection portals and developing software and hardware for integrating data on terrorism and forensic facilities may be some areas to focus on. Joint training on tactical combat skills for urban warfare, post-terrorist-attack disaster management, etc. could also be fruitful areas for cooperation. US technological intelligence could be combined with Indian human intelligence for optimal results.

F) A divergent, all-inclusive, heuristic approach, focused on problem solving, in addition to the convergent approach of the intelligence agencies, is indispensable to eliminate this threat in the long run. As Singer says: ‘some systematic research which can simultaneously think big and think small and which embraces in a rigorous synthesis both the lone individual and all of mankind,’ is necessary. The problem needs to be addressed by the civil society – academics, social scientists, bureaucrats, development planners, writers, journalists, politicians and public personalities. Exchanges at various levels, both structured and unstructured, can fill the gap and should be encouraged. The disintegrating factors need to be examined with all thoroughness and

dexterity available in the non-ideological, secular and intellectual universe. Extensive, interdisciplinary work needs to be carried out for chalking out relevant strategies. It is necessary to examine socialization, social control, and social morale and tension management sub-systems in the region. Comparative analysis on the causes of democratic attenuation or expansion in countries of the same region, ambivalence of states towards religious fanaticism, and ways and means to de-legitimize 'non-state actors' in popular perceptions could also be helpful. The negative role of media and information technology in facilitating terrorism needs extensive examination. Broadening the mechanisms for dialogue between governments, academics and think tanks should be encouraged. There is a necessity to create more social space for various tiers of society. It is not impossible to create this space with accommodations, adjustments and negotiations. At the same time, it is necessary that geographic space (state sponsors of terrorism, failing states, ungoverned areas where terrorists can train and organize) and cyberspace (internet-based means for communication, planning, resource transfer and intelligence collection) available to the terrorists is constricted and eliminated.

G) The United States as the oldest democracy and India as the largest democracy, both with their peculiarities, can work towards creation of an irreversible broad framework of democratization, not only as a principle but also as an expedient. The South Asian region is on the cusp and needs very mature consideration. It has to be steered towards a course that guarantees security, development and recognition of the native genius. The US could, with its unlimited power and influence in the region, adopt policy initiatives similar to the EU's policies towards Turkey. India, with its civilizational linkage, political insight and as a social-intellectual repository of the region, can be of great help in this endeavor. This coalescence of interests could be built upon.

H) US power in the global context and Indian power in the regional context plays on the negative psychology of peoples. They derive vicarious sense of empowerment in opposition. US and Indian soft-power, films, media spread, academia, and digital depth, could be cooperatively utilized to create reassurance for the region in an inclusive manner, working in tandem with the comfort levels acceptable to the various countries. Joint projects in some high visible areas like film and print media, with the active involvement of local genius could be tried.

I) Regional economic consolidation is desirable and almost imperative in co-opting the forces which give rise to terrorism. India as a regional economic engine and the US as a global engine can help steer the region to greater exchange, towards the building of linkages and the

development of cooperative constituencies. India cannot afford to move ahead with weak states surrounding it, for it will cause an unavoidable demographic strain on her development. It needs to develop all of its neighbours along the way and this endeavor requires assistance. India's intellectual and political depth has generated the capability to absorb help from external sources without denting morale. Exploitation of regional synergy could help in the development of organic linkages within the region. The United States, as the largest market for products from the region, could assist India. Increased regional economic interaction through institutional arrangements with SAFTA could be attempted. Business constituencies, having a vested interest in stability, could reduce dislocation by engendering maximum employment opportunities.

J) The development of Jihadist ideologies and their accompanying movements can only be countered by coherent alternative ideologies.¹⁸ Unorthodox but tried ideologies in the region – Pacifist, Gandhian Non-Violence, Buddhist Tempering, etc. - though outdated could be encouraged to revive and update their relevance to present conditions. Paucity of intellectual efforts should not be allowed to give space to simplifiers of reality. This will reduce the ideological space of terrorists.

CONCLUSION

Terrorism is a global problem that transcends national boundaries, but does not emerge from a social vacuum. It is influenced, encouraged, and caused by interaction between the individual, society, and the state. Social disintegration can alienate individuals and groups to such an extent that terrorism is seen as an available and expedient recourse to address their grievances. For this reason, terrorism cannot be addressed exclusively as a military or political problem, but rather must be confronted on a societal level as well. Indian society, shaped by India's unique history and commitment to democracy, has succeeded in deterring its Muslim population from turning towards the Islamic jihadist movement, unlike many of its regional neighbors. This success, while tenuous, should be seized upon as a lesson for other states combating terrorism. India and the United States, in particular, can enhance their already blossoming relationship by capitalizing on India's success and cooperating with one another to combat terrorism.

¹⁸ Mahubani, *Beyond the Age of Innocence*, quotes Dawkins seminal work, *The Selfish Gene*, and the self-replicating cluster of ideas called *meme*. He feels that Islamist meme subordinating and dominating traditional (clans, tribal, eclectic traditions) and modern (liberal, democratic, pluralistic) trends can be counteracted. The fundamental unit of the Islamist meme being injustice, this self-replicating cluster can be contained and reversed by focusing on creation of "a just society."

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