

---

# UNIT 21 INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

---

## Structure

- 21.1 Introduction
- 21.2 International Terrorism Defined
  - 21.2.1 Meaning of Terrorism
  - 21.2.2 Cross-Border Terrorism
  - 21.2.3 International Terrorism
  - 21.2.4 Liberals, Conservatives and Realists on Terrorism
- 21.3 Motives and Methods of Terrorism
  - 21.3.1 Motives of Terrorist Groups
  - 21.3.2 Methods of Terrorists
  - 21.3.3 Suicide Squads
- 21.4 Terrorist Groups and Organisations
  - 21.4.1 Various Groups and their Objectives
  - 21.4.2 *Al Qaeda* and Its Network
- 21.5 State-sponsored Terrorism
- 21.6 Global Fight against Terrorism
  - 21.6.1 International Coalition against Terrorism
  - 21.6.2 UN and the Fight against Terrorism
- 21.7 Summary
- 21.8 Exercises

---

## 21.1 INTRODUCTION

---

The role of sovereign nation-state has been considerably curtailed, particularly since the end of Second World War. Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye Jr. edited, *Transnational Relations and World Politics* highlighted the growing importance and role of a number of non-state actors in international relations. As Coulombis and Wolfe comment: “[A] considerable body of literature has challenged the predominance of nation-states are nearing obsolescence despite their obstinacy.” The focus has shifted from nation-state to “non-state actors.” These actors include terrorist organisations, religious movements, ethnic groups and multi-national corporations. Of all these non-state actors, only the terrorist organisations have assumed a violent role and have become a serious threat to peace and nation-state system.

In this unit, an attempt is made to understand not only the meaning, nature and operations of terrorist groups within one or the other country, but also largely examine international dimensions of terrorist activities. These activities are conducted from one country against other countries or peoples of other faiths. Cross-border terrorism like the militancy and killings of innocent people in India by several groups trained in, and supported by authorities, across the border, in Pakistan, has become a threat to the stability of India. There are killings by certain Irish groups

in England or by terrorist groups from across the borders in Israel. The increasing terrorist activities have now spread their net all over the world. The unprecedented damage caused in the USA in September 2001 allegedly by *Al Qaeda*, an organisation that is based in Afghanistan aroused the international community to stop the menace for all times to come.

This unit discusses international terrorism in all its dimensions and manifestations. These include killings of innocent people by conventional weapons, use of human bombs, suicide squads, even the use or threat of use of chemical weapons, killer gases and use of aircrafts as missiles for terrorist attacks.

---

## **21.2 INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM DEFINED**

---

In order to understand international terrorism, the origins and expression of terrorism as a weapon of revenge will have to be clearly analysed and comprehended.

### **21.2.1 Meaning of Terrorism**

The term 'terrorism' is derived from Latin words '*terrere*' and '*deterre*'. The word *terrere* means to tremble, and the term *deterre* implies to frighten. Thus, terrorism means to harm people so that they are so frightened that they start trembling. It is a strategy to achieve avowed objectives through the systematic use of violence thereby undermining the lawful authority of a government or a state. In the past, violence was resorted to when the rulers failed to redress the grievances of the people, and they resorted to oppression and infringement of the rights of the people. Terrorism has political overtures, and violence is the means resorted by it.

The term terrorist clearly raises pejorative connotations. According to Coulombis and Wolfe, "a more detached, value-free definition of terrorist organisations would describe them as non-state actors employing unconventional as well as orthodox techniques of violence in order to attain certain political objectives." Actually, terrorism is the organised use of violence for political ends and is directed primarily at innocent people, or soft targets. Like war, terrorism involves the use of organised force in pursuit of political goals. As a political instrument, both oppressors and the oppressed have used terror. Normally, one's friends or allies are called "freedom fighters", and one's enemies or opponents are described as the terrorists.

Walter Laqueur defined terrorism as "the use or threats of violence, a method of combat or a strategy to achieve certain goals; that its aim is to induce a state of fear in the victim; that it is ruthless and does not conform to humanitarian norms, and that publicity is an essential factor in terrorist strategy." This definition is so clear that its careful analysis makes the learner fully understand this evil, this curse, and this scourge.

Thus, terrorism is a well thought out strategy, in which the terrorists make use of violence to create fear and terror among the people. The terrorist groups may or may not have a specific goal. Their goal may be quite vague at times. The Irish Republican Army wants the end of British rule in Northern Ireland and its merger with the Irish Republic. The People's War Group in Andhra Pradesh and Jharkhand in India are fighting against, what they allege, oppression by capitalist-controlled state. The Armed Islamic Group is an extremist group that seeks to overthrow the secular Algerian government and replace it with an Islamic state. The HAMAS, or Islamic Resistance Movement, emerged in 1987 from the Palestinian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood. It pursues the goal of the Palestinian State in place of Israel. The *Al Qaeda*, on the other hand, does not have any limited goal. It wants to destroy the Americans in

particular, and all alleged anti-Islamists in general. Its area of operations is worldwide.

The above definition by Laqueur highlights the point that terrorism has no human face and that it is ruthless. Its approach is far from humanitarian. Terrorists can kill any number of people, and destroy any amount of property, just to spread fear and terror. Nobility of means is not their concern. Lastly, terrorism believes in publicity. They seek to make themselves known as widely as possible by their acts of terror.

Terrorism is generally identified with attempts made by individuals or groups to destabilise or overthrow existing political institutions. At the global level terrorism has been used in anti-colonial conflicts whether by both the sides or by one side (Algeria and France); it has been used by groups of different religious denominations (Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland); in conflict between two national groups over possession of contested homeland (Palestinians and Israel) and also in disputes between revolutionary forces and established governments (Iran, Indonesia, Argentina, etc.).

### **21.2.2 Cross Border Terrorism**

In this sub-section, you will learn that terrorism that originates within one country and operates only there-Maoists in Nepal, Peoples War Group (PWG) in India, Irish Republican Army (IRA) in UK-is different from terrorism that has its roots in one country and it operates with the support of the country of its origin, but it uses violence to create terror in another country. This second type of terrorism is described as cross-border terrorism as its activists are sponsored and trained by a country other than its victims. The terrorism that India has been subjected to since 1980s has its origin, training and full support across the Indian borders in Pakistan or Pak-occupied Kashmir. There are large numbers of training camps across our borders where young men are taken after being misguided, and there they are motivated, trained, financed and equipped with armaments to indulge in violent activities in India. Thousands of innocent people have been killed in India as a result of this cross-border terrorism. Similarly, the terrorist acts against Israel are perpetrated from across its borders. Thus, while Chechen militancy in Russia is from within the country, terrorism against India is certainly of a cross-border nature.

### **21.2.3 International Terrorism**

There is only a technical difference between cross-border terrorism and international terrorism. While in the former, terrorists are trained in one country to operate in just one other country, the international terrorism has its victims in several countries. *Al Qaeda*, for example, is not limited to its victims in any one country or region. Its “enemies” are found worldwide, though its main targets may be a few countries. The *Al Qaeda* seeks the predominance of Islamist principles and all those who come in its way must be targeted. Thus the United States and the United Kingdom today are the general victims of international terrorism. India, Russia, Sri Lanka, Nepal and many other countries are also victims of terrorism. The difference between cross-border terrorism and international terrorism is rather indistinct. All terrorism involving two or more countries may be, broadly speaking, termed as international terrorism.

### **21.2.4 Liberals, Conservatives and Realists on Terrorism**

There are two main streams of thinking on the causes and remedies for terrorism-Liberal and Conservative. To these may be added the third, the Realist approach. We shall very briefly refer to the three views.

Liberals feel that terrorism is a response to economic, social and political deprivation as well as bad government. People who have a sense of grievance will turn to violence to dramatise their misery or to change the conditions that are responsible for it. Since in modern times the governments are generally held responsible for miseries of the people, it is against them that the rebellions are usually directed. Some of the governments may fail to provide basic amenities, and refuse or may be unable to correct social injustices. Governments may often dispossess people of their basic rights and may be corrupt and inefficient. Such governments often become targets of terrorist attacks.

Conservatives, on the other hand, attribute terrorism to the natural stresses and strains of nation-building. New systems of laws and institutions backed by a government often frighten some people. Classes, castes, religious and linguistic groups-all may find difficult to adjust under a new government, and new laws. The state tries to enforce its laws. Various groups may resent these attempts. The state may use force to check violence by resistant groups. A cycle of violence and counter-violence may then begin.

Realists see terrorism as arising out of competition between nation-states. States normally settle their disputes through the threat, or actual use of force. Realists consider terrorism as a consequence of competition among nation-states for increasing their powers. Realists, being total believers of power, attribute terrorism to the struggle for power, which as Morgenthau had said, is the essence of international politics.

In view of their different perspectives of terrorism, liberals, conservatives and the realists naturally have different responses to the curse. For liberals, the way out of terrorism is to improve the lot of the people, including those who might be seeking secession, and to provide better governance. Liberals, thus, feel that timely and imaginative social, economic, political and administrative engineering can redress the grievances of the people, and check terrorism.

The Conservatives, on the other hand, do not think that the remedy offered by liberals can be a solution. They feel that good governance is, in any case, the responsibility of every state. Conservatives argue that a responsible government must use violence to end terrorist violence. For conservatives, force is a reality, and it should not be used as a last resort. The state should use violence (force) as quickly and as firmly as possible. Pre-emptive violence will end terrorism and save innocent lives.

The prescription suggested by the Realists is closer to the views of the conservatives. The realists say that in the nation-state system that operates in the contemporary world, there is only one way of defending a state, and that is the use of force against the rivals, whether groups of terrorists or a state that threatens. The governments are fully justified in using force to stop the terrorists from harming one's interests. Realists argue that no amount of economic development and good governance will prevent a rival state (as Pakistan, in case of India) from instigating and sustaining violence. Only the threat or actual use of counter-violence can effectively defeat terrorism.

---

## **21.3 MOTIVES AND METHODS OF INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM**

---

### **21.3.1 Motives of Terrorist Groups**

Terrorism is a tactic of the powerless against the powerful. Thus, political or social minorities

sometimes engage in terrorism. Terrorist groups are difficult to identify because their motives, tactics, and membership differ widely. Terrorists are generally defined as the groups seeking through the threats or use of violence to further their political objectives, usually in opposition to the governments concerned.

Tracing the history of terrorism, Kegley Jr. & Wittkopf explain: “Terrorism was known in ancient times, as seen in the assassination of tyrants in ancient Greece and Rome, and by the Zealots of Palestine and the Hashashim of medieval Islam. In the 19th Century, terrorism became associated with the anarchist bombings and with murders and destruction of property by nationalist groups such as the Armenians and Turks.” The above-mentioned writers suggest that today terrorism flourishes as a tactic growing out of this history. They say: “The religious, ethnic or political movements and minorities now practising terrorism seek through violence to obtain the advantages of the majority, and to extract revenge and vengeance against those states and majority populations that the terrorist groups perceive as oppressors. Terrorist groups seek freedom, privilege and property-values they think, persecution has denied them.” However, it may be mentioned that their perception may not always be correct.

Whereas religious fanaticism was (in 1995) responsible for nearly 20 per cent of international terrorist incidents, the primary goals of most terrorist groups are independence and statehood. Many of the terrorists are supposed to be “international homeless”. But, it would be wrong to identify the goals or motives of all the groups as same. Although they share violent tactics often crossing national borders, terrorist movements are more diverse than their similarities.

There are numerous motives of the terrorists. For example, the Bodos in India are seeking a separate Bodoland-at least as a separate state within the Indian Union. There is a separatist Manipur People’s Army, or the People’s War Group in India seeking end to so-called oppression. Those seeking independence include the Liberation Tigers of Tamil *Eelam* (LTTE), who wanted a separate state by dividing Sri Lanka till they expressed their willingness for maximum autonomy early in 2002. Those seeking sovereign statehood also include the Basques in Spain, and Chechen rebels in Russia. Religion also sometimes rationalises terrorist activities, as, for example, was the case with the erstwhile separatist groups who were seeking an independent *Khalistan*. Since these groups were mainly sponsored from across the borders, and did not have much support from the Sikh community within the country, they could not succeed. The HAMAS tried to destabilise Israel in the name of religion, and in November 1995 right-wing Jewish fanatics in the Kach religious terrorist group killed the Israeli Prime minister Yitzhak Rabin.

In the industrialised countries, terrorism often occurs where discrepancies in income are severe, and where minority groups feel deprived of the political freedom and rights. But, as Kegley Jr. & Wittkopf suggest: “Consideration of terrorists motives often obscures the perception of terrorism as a disease. One person’s terrorist may be another person’s liberator. Ironically, both governments and counter-government movements claim to seek liberty”, and both are condemned by the others as terrorists.

Reference must also be made to hateful and vengeful terrorism as symbolised by the dreaded *Al Qaeda* outfit headed by Osama-bin-Laden. His organisation originally designed to help the Pakistan-trained Taliban fanatics in Afghanistan, turned its fire against the United States and its friends. The latter are perceived to be killers of Muslims and thus deserving punishment of being killed. A separate section is devoted to *Al Qaeda*.

### 21.3.2 Methods of Terrorists

Violence is the principal means of all terrorist groups. This assumes different manifestations, and different groups use different methods. The terrorist methods have gradually evolved from primitive means to the most modern sophisticated weapons and even killer gases. They used, and sometimes they still use, the simple weapons like country-made pistols or crude bombs. In the past the terrorists merely tried to seek publicity, and people were generally not killed, they were only frightened. Bombs were sometimes thrown only to attract attention, with the clear aim of not killing the innocent people. But, with the beginning of contemporary wave of terrorism in the West Asia since 1968, the terrorist groups have rapidly refined their methods and weapons.

The 20th Century brought about revolutionary changes in the techniques and use of terrorism. Technological upgradation gave the terrorists a new mobility and lethality. Political movement of all shades of the political spectrum began to use such tactics. In fact the totalitarian regimes of Nazi Germany under Adolf Hitler and the Soviet Union under Stalin virtually adopted terrorism as their state policy though they did not acknowledge it publicly. In these states techniques like torture and execution were carried out without legal restrictions to make people fearfully adhere to their policies and ideologies. Mao introduced a reign of terror on a much wider scale than Stalin. Iran too experienced a phase of terror and counter-terror during the regime of Khomeini when executions and mass murders were carried out on a large scale. Similarly Spain too experienced violence of numerous kinds of terrorists, leftists, state-sponsored and the like.

Depending on the goal and resources at the disposal of a terrorist group, it may select either soft targets or hard targets. In some cases indiscriminate firing is resorted to, in crowded places, like markets or places of worship. For example, during the *Khalistan* agitation, killing of individual opponents was a common feature. At times indiscriminate firing on groups of people, by modern weapons like AK 47 etc. resulted in murders of large number of innocent people.

Use of bombs has now become an important weapon of terrorism. For example, car bomb was used unsuccessfully in the parking area of World Trade Centre in 1993. It simply attracted the publicity desired by the terrorists. Serial bomb blasts, and the use of dreaded RDX in Bombay in 1993 killed hundreds of innocent people, and many times more wounded, almost simultaneously at different places in Bombay. The excuse was the destruction of disputed site at Ayodhya, which was claimed by some as ancient *Ram Mandir*, and by others as a mosque built by Emperor Babar. But, whatever the provocation may be, serial bombing was indeed an inhuman act of terror.

The assassination of president Anwar Sadat of Egypt for having agreed to the peace process with Israel at the Camp David Summit of 1978, by the opponents of the peace and normalisation process was an act of terror in which an individual was targeted. The assassinations of Rajiv Gandhi in 1991 or of Sri Lankan leader Premadasa, or of Lord Mountbatten by the Irish militants were some of the many examples of individual killings. Explosion of bombs kept in the cars, or auto rickshaws, or even the bicycles has become a common method of killing of large number of innocent people in crowded places. This is common in India, Israel and Sri Lanka, besides other countries.

Hijacking of aircrafts to make demands that cannot be easily met cause mental torture of the hostages. Sometimes individual passengers are killed, as was one in the case of Indian Airlines flight from Kathmandu that was hijacked in 1999. One passenger was killed, and the others

kept hostages for nearly a week by the hijackers who were Pakistanis. The plane remained parked at Kandahar in Afghanistan till India agreed to release three dreaded Pakistan-sponsored terrorists from Indian jails. The hijackers as well as released militants later freely moved about in Pakistan. Much earlier an Indian plane was hijacked, taken to Lahore, where it was blown off after the passengers were disembarked. Hijacking of aircrafts in different parts of the world is a very inhuman terrorist activity.

Lastly, the use of hijacked aircrafts to kill thousands of people on ground and destroy property worth billions of dollars became a new technique when World Trade Centre in New York, and part of Pentagon building in Washington DC were attacked by the American planes hijacked allegedly by *Al Qaeda* terrorists. This incident of 11 September 2001 was most gruesome. Later, a number of people were killed in a car bomb explosion outside Jammu and Kashmir Secretariat in October 2001. As if that was nothing, a daring attempt was made to attack the Indian Parliament in session on 13 December 2001. The attempt was foiled as five Pakistani terrorists were gunned down in a battle outside India's Parliament, in which over half a dozen brave Indian security persons lost their lives.

In a case of mistaken identity, thirty civilians were killed in November 2002 in Andhra Pradesh, when the People's War Group Naxalites blasted a road transport bus assuming that policemen were travelling in it. But, even if they were policemen, the militants have no mercy for all are human beings whether in uniform or not. In another incident, seven jawans of Central Reserve Police Force were killed by the Manipur People's Army which is an armed wing of separatist United National Liberation Front. This was the result of an ambush. Landmine blasts is another device followed by militants and terrorists not only in Jammu and Kashmir, but also elsewhere. Eight persons of Jharkhand Armed Police were killed when a landmine triggered by the People's War Group blew up their jeep. Earlier, in 2002 itself, a number of terrorists entered the *Akshardham* Temple in Gandhinagar in Gujarat and fired indiscriminately killing and injuring large number of devotees, though later the security forces overpowered them and they were also killed. In Jammu and Kashmir, it has happened several times that the terrorists enter a mosque and take shelter there, till security forces are able to kill them or arrest them. Their aim is to engage the police in cross fire so that the mosque may be damaged and they can call it communal act of Indian security forces.

### **21.3.3 Suicide Squads**

Highly motivated terrorists have adopted a unique method of eliminating their target by killing themselves in the attack. In 1991, during the election campaign for Lok Sabha, the former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated by a woman terrorist. She had allegedly tied powerful explosives round her waist, and as she proceeded to garland Rajiv Gandhi, she exploded herself killing both herself and Rajiv Gandhi. This technique of suicide killing had been repeated several times since then, both in India and abroad. The self-proclaimed *jihadis* have formed suicide squads, and they destroy themselves while eliminating the target. Its opponents have followed this practice late in 1990s and early 21st Century in Israel. The Islamist suicide militants, or *jihadis*, describe themselves as '*fidayeen*'.

One of the worst examples of suicide attacks was the terrorist destruction of the twin towers of the World Trade Centre in New York on 11 September 2001. Hijacked aircrafts were forced by the suicide terrorists to crash against the twin towers, thus killing themselves, all the crew and passengers of the aircrafts as well as thousands of innocent people then working in the Centre. Besides destruction of aircrafts, the suicide killers took thousands of lives with themselves.

Later in October 2001, a car was smashed into a portion of the Kashmir legislature building. It was full of RDX explosives, and caused loss of lives and property. In December 2001, five terrorists attempted an attack on India's Parliament in New Delhi. These foreign mercenaries failed to attack the Parliament, but our security forces killed them, and it was detected that at least one of them was carrying high-powered explosives on his body. Thus, terrorist methods include not only traditional weapons to kill and terrorise, but also many newer methods of mass killings.

In yet another example of suicide terrorists, a Palestinian suicide bomber was reported in November 2002, to have blown himself up in a crowded bus carrying many school children in Israeli capital Tel Aviv. In the suicide attack 11 persons were killed and over 45 were injured. Thus, the terrorists do not even hesitate in killing innocent children. In another case of *fidayeen* (suicide) attack two terrorists stormed into a CRPF camp in Srinagar in Kashmir. When challenged by a constable of Central Reserve Police Force, one of the terrorists detonated a grenade killing himself and the constable. The other '*fidayeen*' terrorist hurled grenades in the camp killing in all six jawans and injuring many others.

---

## **21.4 TERRORIST GROUPS AND ORGANISATIONS**

---

As mentioned earlier, terrorism has been prevalent throughout history, engulfing all regions of the globe. Use of terrorist techniques by factions against regimes is an age-old phenomenon. The first prominent instance of a movement resorting to terrorism as a major weapon was the Assassin Sect of the West Asia, which had sent its agents throughout the Muslim world to carry out a chain of murders during the 11th and 12th centuries. Significantly enough, the contemporary wave of global terrorism received a major boost in the late 1960s from the same area. Terror was openly sponsored during the French Revolution in order to instill a revolutionary fervour among the people. From 1865 to 1905 the scene of international terrorism was restricted to the countries where prime officials were killed by anarchists' guns or bombs.

With advancement in the means of communication and media, the public impact of any terrorist act gets wide coverage thereby bringing the event directly to millions of viewers worldwide who in turn become aware of the grievances or political goals of the terrorists. Modern day terrorism sometimes pursues unrealistic goals thereby losing popular support and alienating themselves from the political mainstream. As such, they resort to such violent acts like hijackings, bombings, kidnappings etc. The prominent terrorist groups of the latter 20th Century include the Baader-Meinhof Gang of Germany, Italy's Red Brigades, France's Direct Action, *al-Fatah* and other Palestinian organisations. International collaboration is an essential feature of modern day global terrorism. The terrorists operating on a global scale are today establishing linkages worldwide and their connections are based on religion, race or political ideology. Sometimes terrorist groups are trained, financed and equipped by agencies of countries other than those where they operate. The incidence of terrorism thus has grown alarmingly. Some countries are today using the instrument of terror and violence to pursue their foreign policy goals. Thus the main sponsors of global terrorism are those who have no regard for international frontiers, making terrorism a preventing phenomenon.

Today, terrorism has become a lethal weapon for initiating a process of destabilisation. It owes its origin to a few evil men who laid down the basic tenets for terrorist activities and initiated a trail of blood and violence. The most noted among them was Carlos who originally hailed from Venezuela. Also known as the Jackal, he is universally regarded as the chief protagonist of terrorists. He codified the aims of terrorists and the means of achieving them and enumerated

a test of skills to be acquired by terrorists. He posed a challenge to governments around the globe till he met his death. In the early 21st Century, Osama-bin-Laden emerged as the master terrorist heading the *Al Qaeda*.

### 21.4.1 Various Groups and Their Objectives

Mention has been made above of some of the past and present terrorist groups. In this sub-section their objectives will be briefly dealt with. The most powerful, *Al Qaeda* will be separately explained in the next sub-section.

According to the US State Department records (1994) some of the prominent terrorist groups were as under: (i) *Abu Nidal Organisations* (ANO) led by Sabri al-Banana, the ANO with its headquarters in Libya operates internationally to coordinate the activities of various Muslim terrorist groups; (ii) *Armed Islamic Group* seeks to overthrow the secular government of Algeria and replace it with Islamic regime; (iii) *Basque Fatherland and Liberty* founded in 1959, the group once committed to Marxism, now seeks the creation of an independent homeland in Spain's Basque region; (iv) *HAMAS* emerged in 1987 from the Palestinian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, it pursues the goal of an Islamic Palestine State in Israel; (v) *Hizballah* (Party of God) is a radical *Shia* religious group which seeks to establish an Iranian-style Islamic Republic in Lebanon; (vi) *Kach and Kahane Chai's* declared goal is to restore the biblical state of Israel and to halt the peace process in Palestine; an extremist member of this group had assassinated Israeli prime minister Rabin in November 1995 to stop his plans to withdraw Israeli troops from the West Bank; (vii) *Provisional Irish Republican Army* is a radical group formed in 1969 as the secret armed wing of Sinn Fein, the lawful political party seeking to remove British forces from Northern Ireland and to unite it with Ireland; and (viii) *Sendero Luminoso* (Shining Path) is a guerrilla group founded in late 1960s and has the goal of clearing Peru of foreign influences, destroying existing Peruvian institutions, and replacing them with a peasant revolutionary regime.

This list is by no means exhaustive. There has been a proliferation of terrorist groups in recent times. During the decade of 1980, India suffered foreign sponsored and financed terrorism in the name of creation of *Khalistan*, or the Sikh homeland. This was the game plan of anti-India forces mainly in Pakistan and some individuals in Canada who wanted to destabilise India. Fortunately, the foreign designs did not succeed, though the militancy took a heavy toll.

Pakistan has never reconciled itself to the accession of the state of Jammu and Kashmir to India. Having failed in its attempts through wars to get Kashmir, Pakistan has been training, financing and sponsoring several terrorists to terrorise the people of India in general and of Kashmir in particular. Since 1989, cross-border terrorism has continued unabated. Several thousand innocent lives have been lost, children orphaned, women widowed and property damaged in Kashmir by terrorist outfits like *Jaish-e-Mohammad*, *Lashkar-e-Taiba* and many others who keep on changing their names. There are hundreds of training camps in Pakistan to train, misguide and motivate youth to carry on killings of innocent people.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil *Eelam* have been carrying violent agitation in Sri Lanka for the creation of a homeland for Tamil minority living mainly in the northern and eastern parts of Sri Lanka. This movement, going on since 1980s, has also taken a heavy toll of lives. Its targets have been not only Sinhalese people and some of their leaders, but also some persons outside the country. Its aim of creating terror has caused misery for a long time. Even if its demands and grievances may have been genuine, yet resort to gun and suicide killers have taken the shape of terrorism. There were indications in 2002 of possible peace being returned to the

Island as the LTTE and the government began negotiations with Norwegian mediation.

In addition to the terrorist groups identified above, there are others that may be briefly mentioned here. These include *al-Fatah* operating in the West Asia; the Gray Wolves in Turkey; the Red Army Faction that operated in Germany; the Red Brigades in Italy; Omega 7 (anti-Castro Cubans) throughout North America; National Liberation Movement in Uruguay; and the *Contras* in Nicaragua. Like the United States, Canada has also banned a number of terrorist organisations. Canada added, in November 2002, to its existing list the following groups also: HAMAS (explained elsewhere), the Islamic Army of Aden, *Harkat-ul-Mujahideen*, the *Asbat Al-Ansar* (League of Palestinians), the Palestinian Islamic *Jihad*, and the *Jaish-e-Mohammed*. Writing in 1986, Coulombis and Wolfe had stated: “The methods of these encompass bombing in such crowded places as commercial centres; hijacking of aircrafts and ships and abductions and assassinations of prominent figures in government and public.” As new terrorist groups emerge (like “Army of Palestine”, first heard of in November 2002), some keep changing their names to confuse the victims. The terrorist organisations have continued to grow, though some of the above mentioned have ceased to be active and effective.

#### **21.4.2 Al Qaeda and Its Network**

Not many people had heard of an organisation called *Al Qaeda* till after the 11 September 2001 attack on World Trade Centre in New York. The United States then concluded that it was the act of *Al Qaeda* led by Saudi dissident Osama-bin-Laden who was operating from Afghanistan in collusion with the then fundamentalist rulers of that country called the Taliban. Once the United States decided to liquidate Osama and his *Al Qaeda*, the power situation changed, as Pakistan, the creator of Taliban, decided to join the US led coalition against *Al Qaeda* and entire international terrorism. However, Pakistan did not desist from promotions of terrorism against India.

Abdullah Azzam founded *Al Qaeda* al Sulbah in 1987 in order to create societies founded on strictest Islamist principles. Osama bin Laden, one of the 52 children of his father, was a trusted colleague of Azzam, but Osama allegedly got his mentor Azzam killed so that he could become the supreme leader of *Al Qaeda*. Earlier in 1984, the two men had jointly founded the *Maktab al Khidmat lil Mujahidin al Arab* (MAK), in Peshawar, Pakistan. The MAK network was spread in 35 countries, and it “housed, trained and financed the anti-Soviet Afghan *jihad*.” In a well-researched work *Inside Al Qaeda*, Rohan Gunaratna summed up the nature and activities of Osama bin Laden and the *Al Qaeda*. He says that the charismatic fanatic Osama bin Laden provides much of the brainpower and much of an inspiration behind *Al Qaeda*. He had his mentor and *Al Qaeda* founder Azzam assassinated in order to take over the organisation and the other *Al Qaeda* officers who stood in his way were also murdered. He says that, *Al Qaeda* had planned to destroy the British Parliament on 11 September 2001, and to use nerve gas on the European Parliament. The link between *Al Qaeda* and the Iran Hezbollah provided the knowledge required to conduct coordinated, simultaneous attacks on multiple targets, including failed plans to destroy Los Angeles international airport, US Ship *The Sullivans*, the Radison Hotel in Jordan and 11 US commercial airlines over the Pacific Ocean. These revelations are horrifying. According to Gunaratna, *Al Qaeda* infiltrates one-fifth of Islamic charities and NGOs. He feels that the US response is effective militarily only in short term but insufficient to counter *Al Qaeda*'s ideology and strategy in the long term. Finally, he argues that, for *Al Qaeda* to be destroyed or seriously weakened there needs to be a multipronged and multi-national response by the international community.

Today *Al Qaeda* appears to have become a symbol of terrorism and *jihad*. However, it is

believed that terrorism that is killing of non-combatant, innocents is forbidden in the Holy Koran, unless they fall in the category of conspirators. The religious scholar most quoted by Osama, Ibn Taymiyyah says: “As for those who cannot offer resistance or cannot fight, such as women, children, monks, old people, the blind, handicapped and their like they shall not be killed”. But, we find that this basic tenet is often forgotten.

*Al Qaeda* members are highly motivated to kill anybody or die themselves for the sake of Islam. *Al Qaeda* founding document had laid down rules. The first of these says, its volunteers must jump into the fire of the toughest tests and into the waves of fierce trials. Full loyalty and devotion is expected of them, and *Jihadis* are expected to know of the existence of anti-Islam machinations all over the world.

Although Afghanistan was *Al Qaeda*'s principal military training base, it also trained recruits in Sudan, Yemen, Chechnya, Tajikistan, Somalia and even Philippines. *Al Qaeda* has a vast network. According to Gunaratna: “*Al Qaeda* pursues its objectives through a network of cells, associate terrorist and guerrilla groups and other affiliated organisations. While *Al Qaeda* cells mostly operate in the West, its associate groups are more numerous in the South or developing world.” Some of the countries where *Al Qaeda* has its network include Britain, France, Netherlands, Belgium, Italy, Spain, Germany, Egypt, Algeria, Yemen, Iraq, Sudan and The Caucasus. Its new centres are now functioning in China, South East Asia, Indonesia, Thailand, Myanmar, Japan, Korea, Singapore, India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Thus, *Al Qaeda* is a worldwide network that can have its targets easily eliminated.

The 11 September 2001 attack in New York was an eye opener to all. Subsequent attacks on Indian Parliament and in 2002 in Bali in Indonesia are all directly or indirectly linked with the terrorist network. The United States-led coalition tried to finish *Al Qaeda* network, but its short-term success was limited only to Afghanistan. As late as November 2002 there were reports of possible use of poisonous gases of mass destruction likely to be used in underground trains in London. These are all threatening the civilised world.

---

## **21.5 STATE-SPONSORED TERRORISM**

---

There is a perception that terrorist activities are carried out by oppressed or disempowered groups of people to seek justice. In the process they resort to violence. However, in certain cases the state becomes involved directly or indirectly in supporting or even promoting terrorism. Terrorists' organised groups do function as non-state actors. But, as Kegley Jr. & Wittkopf assert: “State terrorism must also be included in any objective assessment, for some of the most ruthless acts of violent terrorism have been practiced by states' governments against those opposed to them.” Some of the earlier examples of state terrorism include the reign of terror by the French revolutionary government against the counter revolutionary opposition, or the violence practiced by Russian *Bolsheviks* after 1917 against its opponents, or the actions of genocide by the Nazi regime of Adolph Hitler in Germany killing millions of Jews.

Making a comparison between non-state actor terrorists and the state-terrorism, Kanti Bajpai wrote: “Both seek to frighten. Both can be bloody. Both may seek to shock and disrupt. Both may be defensive in nature, seeking to protect society against the oppression of the other. Both try to undermine the legitimacy of the other. Neither tolerates rivals-the state will not permit the instruments of violence in the hands of terrorists; the terrorist organisation will not permit other terrorist groups to flourish.” There can be similarities as well as differences.

Achin Vanaik has pointed out two key differences between terrorism and state terrorism.

Firstly, terrorist organisations usually take, even if they do not positively affirm, responsibility for their violence, for example, *Lashkar-e-Taiba* took responsibility for terrorist attack on *Raghunath* Temple in Jammu (2002), and a new outfit called “Army of Palestine” claimed responsibility for suicide bomb attack on a hotel at Mombasa in Kenya (November 2002), where many Israeli tourists were staying, though both Kenya and Israel quickly blamed *Al Qaeda* for the attack. States, on the other hand, are reluctant to acknowledge the use of violence to frighten and intimidate. Secondly, terrorist groups seek publicity for the outrage; but the state does not. In fact the two differences are related to each other, and Bajpai feels that even these differences are not inherent; “in the right circumstances, (even) the state might well admit to and advertise its use of violence.” Thus, conceptually speaking, terrorism and state terrorism are not very different in nature, though in form, they indeed are.

In contemporary period many states have been active in terrorist activities against other countries. Proxy war has been going on against India for a long time. The nature of militancy against India since 1980s has been praised by a foreign power as “freedom struggle”, but the whole world now knows that it is a war against Indian people in the form of militancy and terrorism in which several thousand innocent people of all communities have been killed. Our neighbouring country even described the occupation of Kargil heights in 1999 by its own fully armed men as the freedom struggle by the people of the state, which nobody believed.

The way Serbs carried out the so-called ethnic cleansing in Bosnia-Herzegovina killing large number of Bosnian Muslims and depriving them of their homes was certainly an act of state terrorism. Americans have been talking of certain countries, like Libya, which have been allegedly promoting state terrorism. India believes that Pakistan is a terrorist state.

---

## **21.6 GLOBAL FIGHT AGAINST TERRORISM**

---

Terrorism seeks to disrupt the smooth functioning of democratic societies by demonstrating that governments are not in a position to provide basic security measures. It is a normal human urge to oppose terrorism but on some occasions nothing productive can be done. Terrorists generally operate in a discreet manner and they use covers to protect themselves from being detected. As such another requirement for fighting terrorism is to bring about improvement in the technique of intelligence collection, infiltration and surveillance and the like. Through a concerted programme of public information and education, public assistance against terrorism should be sought for and people should be made more security conscious.

Freeing a hostage is a risky job. As such the main goal of the police should be to arrange the release of a hostage unharmed and to apprehend the offender. If apprehending the offender seems more important an attack may be launched. If release of the hostage seems very important and if demand cannot be met, the police should attempt to kill the offender. Thus hostage seizure is a complicated process. The Indian authorities faced uphill task in freeing more than 150 hostages from the hijackers of Indian Airlines plane in 1999, hijacked and parked at Kandahar, which was then controlled by the Taliban with whom India did not have diplomatic relations. In the bargain India had to set free certain hardcore terrorists from Indian jails. Different tactics may be followed for different incidents as each situation is an unique one. Freeing places of worship from the terrorists who hole them in is also often very difficult task.

With every passing generation new forms of terrorism are being thrown up. To meet the challenge, a more positive attitude towards peace making process should be developed so that people at large can be protected from terrorism. Technological development especially in the

detection of explosives, access control surveillance and intelligence should be relied upon as a means of preventing the terrorists from abusing people's civil liberties and in extreme cases taking their lives as well.

The growing incidence of terrorist violence has, over the years, engaged the attention of the entire global community. The US has taken a lead to promote international efforts to tackle their menace. Nations around the world have been taking serious steps to protect diplomats and embassies. This has lessened the incidence of embassy seizures. Similarly, the world has been seriously considering promoting air safety measures. But the most formidable obstacle hindering the prosecution of hijackers, thereby putting at stake the international attempts to foil illegal aircraft seizure attempts, is the asylum phenomenon. As the term 'political offence' remains unclarified, nations always find justification for granting asylum to political refugees or political groups. Giving shelter to the fugitives under the guise of political crimes poses a serious threat to international aviation because unlawful aircraft seizures involve many serious crimes.

Considering the seriousness of such cases, European countries have taken steps to curb terrorism. Their efforts, though primarily aimed at unlawful interference with civil aviation, also cover offences involving the use of bombs, grenades, rockets etc. An informal international agreement on hijacking between these countries (17 July 1978) have not only taken a decision to extradite or prosecute hijackers but also to boycott the airports and airlines of those countries which failed to do so.

One of the main aims of the terrorists is to make the legal system unoperative by intimidating witnesses and juries, thereby creating credible grounds for accusing the government of repression and torture. This calls for incentives to be given to informers for providing evidence and extending protection to them when required. If desired, and if feasible, adequate funds should also be made available to the informers to enable them to start a new life at a new place. It is but true that the costs involved in granting rewards and protection is negligible when compared to cost of damage inflicted by the terrorists. Still other forms of intimidation like demands for protection, money and racketeering should also be tackled firmly. The legal process should also be strengthened for exercising strict control on the possession and movements of explosives, armies and ammunition.

One of the biggest sponsors of terrorism and criminal violence in the world is the profit ensuing from narcotics trade. Drug trafficking not only generates illegal money but also encourages fraud, extortion and counterfeiting. Thus, narcotics consumption should not only be checked but the laundering of money from all these sources should also be tackled. To make these possible, banks should be legally obliged and willing to make customers' accounts available to the police and judiciary so that illegal money can be easily detected and seized. Governments, particularly in Western countries, should pass legislations to prevent their banks from undertaking transactions with foreign banks, which do not have proper records. Prevention of terrorism also requires improved technological research in some urgent areas like detection of explosives, developing anti-impersonation systems and equipments in aid of intelligence.

Over the years, the nature of weapons has not changed much. The hand-held missiles, which were recently made available to terrorists, were developed in 1984. However, one positive feature is that advancement in security technology has been far greater especially in explosive detection techniques. Nevertheless, the terrorists groups are always on the look out of possessing all kinds of weapons and explosives. But what is creating a dangerous situation is the fact that with the entry of criminals in the sphere of terrorism, the very nature of terrorism has changed from a politically motivated one to a criminally motivated terrorism.

### **21.6.1 International Coalition against Terrorism**

While India and some other countries have suffered at the hands or guns of the terrorists for quite some time, the United States experienced a massive onslaught on its mainland in September 2001. That shook the conscience of the world, as it proceeded to put together an international coalition to eliminate international terrorism. Writing in 1980s, Couloumbis and Wolfe had expressed the fear of much bigger disaster than what the world had till then suffered. They say: "A series of hijackings, letter-bomb explosions, and bloody airport incidents involving scores of casualties has mobilised many governments to seek international regulation of terrorist activity.... [What] has been perpetrated so far by various terrorists is not the real problem. What is at stake is the awesome and terrifying potential of terrorist activity in the decades to come." This prophecy indeed came true in Israel, India and finally in the United States.

India has received promise of full support in its fight against terrorism by several countries, including Britain, Russia, France, Vietnam and many more both before and after 11 September. Israel, a victim of terrorism, however, is willing to be part of a coalition to fight the menace, including terrorism in India. Russia suffering Chechen rebels now has been one with India in the fight against terrorism. After 11 September attack in the United States, the Bush Administration has adopted a very tough line against international terrorism, and put together a coalition to liquidate terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. But its remarkable success in clearing Afghanistan, in just two months, of *Al Qaeda* and the Talibans, did not complete the task. Neither the declared enemy of the US-Osama bin Laden-could be apprehended, nor apparently eliminated. Not only this, the evil has continued to haunt several countries. The periodic killings in India, taking of large number of hostages by Chechen militants in a Moscow theatre, in which hundreds of lives were lost, the terrorist killings of large number of foreign terrorists in Bali Island of Indonesia, and the alleged plot to attack London metro are some of the many examples of terror that has remained unabated even after US success in Afghanistan. Pakistan, which sided with the US in the international coalition, is known for being a major nursery of international terrorism. How can the United States win the war against terror to "save the civilised and democratic world" with the terror-promoting Pakistan as its ally? It was reported late in 2002 that there still existed number of Al-Qaeda training camps in Pakistan.

The threat to humanity posed by terrorism is now a concern of almost all parts of the globe. The ASEAN came forward late in 2002 to issue a declaration to underline its commitment to fight this menace. The ASEAN efforts were fully supported by China, Japan and South Korea. India indeed welcomed this commitment. Meanwhile, the countries of Asia-Pacific Rim extending from Japan to Australia, along with the United States have sounded a bugle to eliminate terrorism. Yet, it is not an easy task. Just to give one example, a Pakistani national Aimal Kansi who had gunned down two CIA detectives in the US in 1993, and who was finally executed by the US authorities in 2002 was treated as a hero by a section of Pakistani youth, just as the hijackers of Indian Airlines plane in December 1999 were allowed freely to move about in Pakistan and spread hatred against India.

### **21.6.2 UN and Fight against Terrorism**

The United Nations has been seriously concerned with the spread of international terrorism. The determination of the UN to defeat this evil was expressed in the Security Council Resolution No.1373 adopted in the wake of the attack on the World Trade Centre in September 2001. The resolution had called upon the international community to fight this scourge through international cooperation through political, diplomatic, financial and other means. Meanwhile, as many as 12 conventions have been authorised by the UN General Assembly to the humankind to unite and

fight the curse. However, the General Assembly was conscious of the fact that in the process of fighting terrorism, human rights violation must not be allowed to take place, though at times the reconciliation between the two may be a difficult problem.

The action that was initiated by a coalition led by the US in October 2001 against terrorist mastermind was in accordance with the authorisation done by the United Nations. Accepting the Nobel Prize for Peace, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan said in December 2001, that the UN General Assembly and the Security Council has provided a solid foundation for the struggle against terrorism. Kofi Annan said: "I would urge all Member States to sign the 12 conventions that have been authorised by the General Assembly." He urged, "Sign, ratify and implement them so that we all have common framework as we move forward."

However, it is not easy to have all the conventions signed and ratified as there are many elements in the world who still talk of the United States as the "killer" of people of a certain faith, who still declare moral support, and give material aid, to the so-called freedom fighters in Jammu and Kashmir, and those who consider the very existence of Israel as a curse. Besides, the over-enthusiastic supporters of human rights, even in case of terror creators are not easy to be convinced that rights of vast majority of civilised world, of innocent women, children and disabled must get precedence over the rights of the *fidayeens* and other terrorists.

---

## 21.7 SUMMARY

---

Terrorism has become a scourge to humankind in recent times. The objectives of terrorists can be varied and their goal may be political or simply to frighten people. It is generally identified with attempts to destabilise or overthrow existing political institutions or regimes. Its means are invariably violent. The terrorists may use traditional weapons, or go to the extent of abduction, indiscriminate killings by automatic weapons, hijacking of aircrafts, throwing bombs or exploding devices to kill people in crowded places. Lately, terrorists have used car bombs, and even used themselves as human bombs. Members of suicide squads or the *fidayeens* explode the human bombs.

It is not only groups of individuals who resort to terrorise people, sometimes a state may sponsor terrorist activities against their opponents. India has been subjected to this cross-border terrorism for a long time. Terror has become an international phenomenon. It has to be fought and finished by the international community to save democracy and the civilised world from the curse. The international coalition that was put together by the US in the aftermath of attack on WTC in New York was an attempt to end the curse. The United Nations called upon the civilised world to fight and defeat international terrorism. The General Assembly has adopted a number of conventions, which must be ratified by Member States and acted upon.

---

## 21.8 EXERCISES

---

1. Explain the nature and characteristics of international terrorism and differentiate it from cross-border terrorism.
2. Describe briefly the theoretical perspectives on terrorism.
3. Briefly explain the motives and the methods adopted by the terrorists to perpetrate violence and terror.