
Ugly Face of Terror

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The first decade of the 21st century has witnessed horrendous incidents of terror. While its beginning witnessed the attack on the twin trade towers in New York, towards its end another horrible attack occurred in the Indian commercial centre Mumbai. The attack further reinforced that terrorism has no religion, terrorists are not humans, and the terror acts surpass human comprehension. The barbaric terror attack in Mumbai in November 2008 killed about 200 people including women, children and patients. Many foreign nationals including citizens of the US, UK and Israel too were killed and many others were injured. In a sense, the incident not only fortified the global nature of terrorism but also brought into stark picture the barbarity and the degradation of human mind at its peak.

India since the beginning of the 21st century has become one of the worst victims of terrorism. As per a report by the US National Counter-Terrorism Centre (NCTC), India's casualties within the years 2004-2007 have become the highest than all of North America, South America, Central America, Europe and Eurasia put together. As per its estimates India has lost 3684 lives in the above period while for others combined it was 3280. In the year 2008 alone India suffered many terror attacks in some of its major cities including Delhi, Jaipur, Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Guwahati and Hyderabad. Terror strike in another Indian city, Surat also known as the diamond hub could be avoided in last minute due to prior information, and timely defuse of live bombs, lying in public parks, garbage and hanged even on tree-branches. The 21 serial bomb blasts in Ahmedabad killed 56 people and seven blasts in Bangalore killed 6 people, besides injuring hundreds. For the first time in India, the terrorists, among other places, targeted a hospital, killing not only doctors and nurses, but also patients, pregnant women and children.

On the evening of 26 November 2008 the terrorists in a well orchestrated manner, after duping the Indian marine police, coast guard and Mumbai police reached Mumbai, got

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divided into groups and continued the carnage for about 72 hours at different places. One group comprising two terrorists attacked the Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminal railway station and killed the passengers who were waiting for trains. After that indiscriminate firing they turned to nearby Cama hospital and killed patients including old, women and children. This group later killed three senior police officials and some junior ranks and injured many others before they were countered at Girgam Chowpatty (sea beach) by a team of Mumbai police officials. While one of them got killed the other injured terrorist was captured alive. The CCTV footages of the terrorist firing indiscriminately at the railway station and people running chaotically to save their lives were shown repeatedly in television channels, thus providing a horrifying picture of the reality. Another group attacked the Nariman House owned and mostly housed by Jews and held hostage the residents. They later killed the hostages before being killed by the Indian security forces. Other two groups targeted the posh hotels Taj Palace and Oberoi-Trident. After killing people in the entrance and lobby they held hostage other occupants including the foreign nationals. The attack and its live broadcast in twenty four hours news channels horrified the people of Mumbai; in fact the incident took the whole city to ransom, bringing the buzzing city to a standstill.

Reportedly the terror accomplices were already staying in the area and they had concrete plans to carry out the attacks. In modern era use of modern equipments has made the terror strikes more precise and target oriented. The terrorists in Mumbai attack used GPRS system, mobile phones, mapping technology to perpetrate their inhuman acts. They underwent sophisticated training in Pakistan to carry out the attack. Despite the differences in investigations between New Delhi and Islamabad, Pakistan has admitted the terrorists sailed off from its Arabian sea coast. Pakistan has also accepted that the lone captured terrorist is its citizen. The terrorist had hijacked an Indian trawler IVM Kuber to reach Mumbai. The terrorist attack was funded by the super profits generated from the drug trafficking in Afghanistan. It is well known about 90 per cent of poppy cultivation in the world takes place in Afghanistan, the land now known as a hot bed of terrorism and religious

