



THE GLOBAL JIHAD: RADICAL ISLAMIST TERROR – GENESIS, CURRENT STATUS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR INDIA

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Dissertation submitted to Panjab University, Chandigarh
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for award of the
Degree of M.Phil in Social Sciences

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42nd Advanced Professional Programme in Public Administration
2016 – 2017

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1. If the World Wars I and II, the Cold War and regional wars had characterized the manifestation of human conflict in the 20th Century, **Radical Islamist Terror** is shaping the conflict paradigm of the 21st Century. There is a fear psychosis in the world, particularly in the West, created by this phenomenon, which has resulted in responses, which are perhaps counterproductive in addressing the root causes of the problem.

2. Islam is a great religion, which predominantly preaches peace and spiritual goodness, like all religions. A few radical elements in Islam, like in all religions, have cherry-picked a few references out of the religious scriptures and used them without reference to their original context, so many centuries after they had been written for selfish motives, which has resulted in the current wave of terrorism all over the world, referred euphemistically as 'Radical Islamist Terrorism', or 'the Global Jihad'. This is a global threat of serious proportions, which needs to be countered effectively.

3. While the genesis of radicalisation of Islam can be traced back to a many centuries, its manifestation as terrorism and pervasive spread as a global security threat began in the late 20th Century. The watershed moment in the Global Jihad arrived with the Osama bin Laden led terrorist attacks by Al Qaeda on United States of America on 11 September 2001, which united the world in launching the '**Global War on Terrorism**' (**GWOT**) against such terror. Today, 15 years after the launch of GWOT, despite many reverses, the Global Jihad does not seem to have diminished in its potential to threaten global peace. On the contrary, its geographic spread and intensity of violence have increased significantly. In the 21st Century, the Global Jihad has begun to gain political power and control of territory, however small and fragile, giving rise to the dream of a caliphate governed by Sharia law, amongst its perpetrators.

4. The critical need of the hour is, therefore, to review the global strategy adopted to counter the Global Jihad with a view to firstly ***identify the root causes of the problem, deduce and examine the strategic shortcomings of the ongoing GWOT, study the implications on the world at large and India in particular and thereafter evolve and recommend strategies and midcourse corrections for the world and India to adopt*** to make the global response to Global Jihad more effective and better targeted against the root causes of the problem. This research is a small step in this regard.

5. In order to address the above critical need, all relevant issues elucidated in the succeeding paragraphs were deliberated upon in detail in this dissertation and a comprehensive range of recommendations at the strategic level for the world and India to adopt has been evolved to address the Global Jihad more effectively than hitherto fore.

6. **Genesis and Evolution Radical Islamist Terror.** This research attempts a strategic investigation of Islam to arrive at the origins of its radicalisation and its evolution till present times. The research proves, after detailed analysis and with reasonable justification that the ***Islamic religion does not provide the justification or inspiration for a believer to indulge in jihadi violence and those indulging in it are simply using religious scriptures quoted selectively and out of context as a pretext for their selfish political motives.***

7. **The Global Jihad: Concepts, Root Causes and Main Constituents.** The research makes an attempt to answer the questions, *“If religion is not the reason for certain people to become terrorists, where else does the motivation come from? Why do people flock to join the jihad against infidels? What are the root causes of Global Jihad?”* The end result is an elucidation of the root causes of Global Jihad. In addition, the origins, ideologies, activities and

current status of the main constituents of Global Jihad; Taliban, ISIS and Al Qaeda are discussed.

8. **Indian Context of the Global Jihad: Implications and Challenges.**

With this backdrop, the research proceeds to analyse the Indian context. The reasons why Indian Muslims, despite being a large group, which has its own deprivations and grievances have been able to stand up firmly against attempts to radicalize them and the lessons they hold for the world at large are discussed. Thereafter, the threat to India from ISIS, the predominant global jihadist group, as well as its current presence, plans and recruitment efforts in India are deliberated upon. Radicalization in J&K has been separately discussed in view of its obvious importance. Finally, Pakistan supported Islamist terror activities in J&K have been briefly touched upon.

9. **Strategic Shortcomings of Global War on Terror and Recommended Strategies for the World and India.**

The next progressive focus of the research is the identification of the strategic shortcomings of GWOT, based on which a number of strategies have been recommended for the world and India. Some of the major strategic shortcomings of GWOT and major strategies recommended by this research for the world at large and specifically for India, which are discussed in detail in this dissertation, are listed below for reference:-

(a) **Strategic Shortcomings of GWOT.**

- (i) Exaggerated threat perception of Global Jihad as an existential threat.
- (ii) Failure to correctly discern the root causes of Global Jihad.
- (iii) Lack of unity in international efforts to include support rendered by some States to terror groups.
- (iv) Sectarian politics by Governments of Islamic States.

- (v) Duplicity in stands of some governments.
- (vi) Failure to choke finances of terrorist organisations.
- (vii) Failure in post conflict management with specific reference to Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya.
- (viii) Failure to counter ISIS propaganda.
- (ix) Under-estimation of Al Qaeda, while focusing on ISIS.

(b) **Recommended Strategies for the World.**

- (i) Unification of all GWOT efforts under the United Nations.
- (ii) Setting Up of an International Terrorism Court.
- (iii) Adoption of Comprehensive UN Convention on Terrorism.
- (iv) Moving towards democracy in Islamic States and separation of State and religion.
- (v) Strong actions against States that support terror.
- (vi) Restricting international military efforts to air and drone campaigns and avoidance of international troops being deployed on ground operations in Syria and Iraq.
- (vii) Effective and well thought out post conflict management in Syria and Iraq.
- (viii) Strategies to target both Al Qaeda and Taliban in Afghanistan and Pakistan and dismantling terror infrastructure in Afghanistan and Pakistan.
- (ix) Recommendations to choke off finances to terrorist groups in general and ISIS in particular and implementation of recommendations of Financial Actions Task Force.
- (x) Recommendations to choke off export of ideas by terrorist groups and countering their propaganda.
- (xi) Reforms urgently required in the United Nations.
- (xii) Adopting different strategies to counter different terrorist groups.

(xiii) Eradication of terror cells in various countries by concerted actions.

(b) **Additional Specific Recommendations for India.**

(i) Engaging Indian Muslim community and improving their socio-economic conditions.

(ii) Setting Up of a separate Ministry for Internal Security.

(iii) Establishment of National Counter Terrorism Centre, a National Intelligence Grid and special anti terrorism courts.

(iv) Keeping Fundamentalist Organisations under physical and electronic vigil.

(v) Developing relevant cyber capabilities and monitoring and control on social media.

(vi) Check on the rise of Madrassas.

(vii) Counter-radicalisation programmes to include awareness programmes against terror groups.

(viii) Strategies to protect Indian diaspora and prevent their radicalisation.

(ix) Signing of Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT) with countries like Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries where the Indian diaspora is large.

(x) Cooperation with Friendly Foreign Countries, particularly Western countries affected by 'lone wolf' attacks.

(xi) Specific recommendations to counter radicalisation in J&K.