*Adopted as a resolution in a Conference of the Nature-Human Centric Peoples Movement at Jaipur on 25-27 November 2005*

# Terrorism Today— An Evil Product Of Corporate Superpowerism

Terrorism today has become the buzz word, world over. The whole corporate capitalist political (i.e., nation-states), economic (i.e., business circles) and cultural institutions (i.e., all ethics-related bodies) have declared it as the number one enemy of the world people.

Yet, hardly anyone might have, before 9/11, heard about this furious ghost, now troubling the whole world. How such a wicked phenomenon remained hidden for over 200 years (during the lifetime of capitalism ) from the common people remains a mystery.

It was the present US President, George Bush, who, three days after the blasting of New York World Trade Centre announced that this attack was the handiwork of the terrorists and that Osama Bin Laden was the author of this dastardly act.

No such information had, earlier, been provided by the US secret services. Where from Bush got this highly secret information, no one still knows. Also no one has ever tried to know the reality of this event. However, the UN and other international institutions as well as all nation-states echoed George Bush's clarion call pronouncing terrorism as the main threat to the human community.

It is interesting to note that even four years after UN's pronouncing of terrorism as the principal enemy of the world people, the former had not thought it proper to define terrorism, nor it had, during past 60 years of its existence, deemed it necessary to make a conceptual clarity about the latter. Also neither the US nor any other nation-state has yet undertaken this task. This shows the level of their conceptual and convictional seriousness as well as their attitude towards their anti-thesis.

**A). History Of Terrorism**
**From A Stray To A Global Issue**

It is a well known fact that one cannot deal with any phenomenon effectively without adequately knowing its origin, defining characteristic, behavior and form.

Terrorism has suddenly captured the world's centre-stage. Before the dastardly terrorist attack of September 11, 2001, in New York and Washington (for which the entire world people expressed their sorrow and sympathy with the American people, particularly the bereaved families, and condemned the terrorists), the issue of terrorism used to figure in media occasionally. At no time, it had become a focus of public attention anywhere in the world. Whenever and wherever it came before the people, it was taken as a stray incident. Even the US had then hardly laid any stress on this issue. It had often used this word selectively from event to event.

However, a worth observing fact is that the US itself had been sponsoring and using various types of terrorist groups in its clandestine wars against its hostile regimes. Even the US named sponsors of 9/11 terrorist acts in New York and Washington, i.e., Osama Bin Laden and Mullah Omar, were, a decade earlier, the most favoured US leaders who, corresponding to US military strategy and necessary funds, led the Afghan "liberation war" against the then existing Soviet Union, an anti-US superpower at that time.

The post-1945 practice of US (when it became the chief world power after the victory in the 2nd world war under its leadership) shows that, in order to reshape the post-1945 world according to its own preferences, the former (i.e., US) did not try to spread even corporate type of democracy and the rule of law, but propped up some of the most corrupt, despotic, tyrannical and militaristic regimes in the world, like Mobutu of Zaire, Islamic fundamentalists, such as Raza Shah Pehlavi in Iran, Zionist chauvinists in Israel, apartheid fanatics in South Africa, military dictators in Pakistan, etc.

No other country, past or present, has played the boss as aggressively as US did by scoring a record of direct and indirect interventions all over the world. Beginning with the terrorisation of the world by its ruthless nuclear bombing of Nagasaki and Hiroshima, it continuously went on fomenting

troubles and interfering in the affairs of other countries, such as Iran and Central America in the 1950s, Brazil, Cuba, and Vietnam in the 1960s, Chile, South Africa, Nicaragua, EI-Salvador and Afghanistan in the 1970s, Panama, Haiti, Angola, direct targeting of Libya and provoking the Iran-Iraq war in the 1980 and Somalia, Yugoslavia, Kosovo, firing of cruise missiles on Sudan and Afghanistan in the 1990s.

It did not stop there, but further engaged in the toppling of some people-oriented governments, like Patrice Lumumba's government in Zaire in 1960's and Dr. Mosaddaq's government in Iran in 1970's.

In all the above said struggles, terrorism acted as US handmaid.

**B). Definition Of Terrorism**

There has not yet been a common definition of this word at the international or the regional levels. May be, this has been due to the existence of varying definitions of this word by different nation-states. Accordingly, there is a glut of different types of interpretations (such as Spain's Basque, Peru's Shining Star, Burma's Karens, Kurds of Iraq, Iran and Turkey, Red Indians and other natives in the two Americas, LTTE in Sri Lanka, IRA in Ireland, etc.) of this word, with each representing the interests of the country concerned. As an example, while the Indian concept characterises Jammu-Kashmir turmoil as a result of 'cross- border terrorism", the Pakistani one interprets the same turmoil as "freedom struggle" and its adherents as freedom fighters. Similar conflicting versions exist in the case of Arab/Isreal, Turkey/Greece, Russia/Turkey, Iran/Arab, Gulf states and a number of other countries. Obviously, the afore-mentioned chaotic situation all the more calls for an early but a common definition of terrorism. UN had for long remained unconcerned with this problem mainly due to the pressure of US and other big powers. But, today the matters have come to such a pass when the UN will perforce have to give priority to this question and try to sort out a consensus-based definition of terrorism.

In our view, terrorism, deriving its inspiration from the ancient and the medieval theories of "might is right" and "end justifies the means" denotes a concept that stands for terror to achieve its aim. Terror in fact, is an animal instinct and not human. Because animal is only a biological organism, while man has been a bio-social being. Historical evidence shows that terrorism did exist in the brutal, savage and barbaric stages of human development. Traces of terrorism have continued even up to this day. But now the process of the emerging global human society has socially made it fully undesirable.

Since terror does not represent a human urge, its concept lacks a human motivational value. Further, terrorism has no independent programme or agenda of its own, but generally exists as a handmaid of one of the different fundamentalist theories (such as religious, economic, political, ethnic, etc.); in this way, it has no exclusive objective of its own, but exists only as a methodology or technique of its concerned ideology.

In the present situation, terrorism exists in two forms: (a) terrorism as upheld by anti-government or non-government groups, and (b) state terrorism as practised by nation-states. Both varieties have the same human nature and behaviour, though the organisational forms are different. While the non-state terrorism is not bound by any rules or procedures, the state terrorism occurs when a given government resorts to terror beyond established national and international laws and conventions and violates the basic human rights as approved by the two 1966-UN conventions.

**C). World Terrorism: Its Essential Feature**

Viewing the shape, structure, agenda and practice of world terrorism, we find that over 95 percent of it comprises varying types of groups, each of which is country-specific. Nearly all of them are either religious, ethnic or linguistic minority groups. Organisationally, they have an underground structure. Their one-point agenda is secession from the concerned majoritarian nation-state or to secure some from of political-constitutional recognition of their respective identities. Their argument is that they are being discriminated against at the hands of their respective majority-dominated governments. They further add that, having exhausted all peaceful routes, the armed struggle is their last resort. Almost all the above struggles are confined to multi-religious or multi-ethnic countries. It is worth remembering that there are over 5,000 big or small social identities in the present day world.

The distinguishing feature of the remaining 5 percent terrorists is that they have an international agenda (with varying shades), but no base area; operate as individual fighters; and lend their services free to the ideologically identical national groups.

From the above, it follows that the majoritarian nationalism of each multi-coloured country has much to do in the generation of terrorism in that country.

However, the most inhuman crime of nation-state terrorism (comprising all countries in the world) consists in its destroying and harming of our planet's environmental resources for financial considerations (whether relating to the state or the ruling group). The environmental terrorism, which creates a threat even to the entire bio-life on this earth is more heinous than anti-human terrorism. Retrospectively, if one looks back at the past environmental record of some nation-states, particularly the present developed and the former colonial powers, one finds that the nation-state environmental terrorism had, during its over 200 year rule, created a serious ecological imbalance, now looking the human community in the face.

**D). Reasons Behind Terrorism**

Taking up the question of basic (or long-term) cause of terrorism, it lies in the existing nation-based social system and its chief human motivational factor, i.e., self -interest. Both the social system and its human motivational factor have, during their over 200 year long national rule, brought forth an environmentally unsustainable, unjust and inequalitarian order where the mighty ride roughshod over the backs of the weak and the haves dominate the have-nots with money and power constituting the accepted norms of justice and truth.

This assertion is fully obvious from the following points:

(a) The worsening state of environment, deteriorating condition of its resources—air, water, land, forests, bio-diversity, etc.

(b) The over-lordship over the security council and UN by five militarily most powerful nuclear weapons owning countries, holding permanent seats and the veto powers in the decision-making body.

(c) The domination in the IMF and WB of few economically most powerful states, enjoying voting strength on the basis of their economic weightage in the two institutions.

(d) The virtual nuclear monopoly of the five big nuclear powers as guaranteed under the CTBT.

(e) The control of over 80 percent of the world economic and financial resources by a handful of countries (having about 15 percent of the world population), while about 85 percent of the world people (living in about 130 developing countries) subsisting on less than 20 percent of the world resources.

(f) High inequality in every nation-state between the rich and the poor, especially in the developing countries where one-third of their total population lives below the poverty line.

(g) The democratic or parliamentary system in every country dominated by corrupt and authoritarian parties based on money and muscle-power—thus depriving the majority of the common people any say in the governance.

(h) The national system's human motivational factor of self-interest, emerging from Adam Smith's theory of man as selfish by nature, has pushed its counterpart social interest to the background.

In fact, self-interest is the basic instinct of the animal sphere, while man has, since his evolution as homo-sapien, become bio-social by nature. The characteristic of being half-social is the only quality that distinguishes human species from the animal ones. When man becomes devoid of social aspect, he turns out just like an animal in his lifestyle.

Since, the attainment of money and power represents the maximisation of one's (or self) interest, the whole world is chasing after these two life-extending elixirs. This money and power-hunting business (by bringing in the most unsustainable environmental order and a highly unjust and inequitable human system) has now led the world to the brink of a serious environmental and human disaster.

As regards the short-term cause of terrorism, it rests with the social system's operational agency or the government. Oriented by the self-interest, the leaders of the national governments (based on the party system in every country), are mainly devoted to the maximisation of their own wealth and

holding of power by fair means or foul. Their standard stock in trade is to "say one thing and do the other."

In this alarming situation, while saner people are concerned with finding an appropriate and rational wayout, the champions of the fatalist, mystic, super naturalist and mythical doctrines are trying to push the people into a deep sea from where they could never emerge again. One of these varieties is terrorism (i.e., an effect with its cause residing in the nation-states or their governments).

**E). An Immediate Response To Terrorism**

Coming to the issue of immediate response to terrorism, the proper course for the human community is to get the challenge of terrorism dealt through its present international agency, i.e., the UN. The latter, despite having many serious weaknesses, may, with the help of big and small superpowers (all of whom have a shared interest to defeat terrorism) and also other nation-states, be able, in accordance with given conditions, to resolve the problem somewhere through compromise and at some places by other means.

For this, it is necessary that the UN attends to the following two inter-related points and chalks out a proper strategy to accomplish its aim.

Firstly, it should address to the basic cause of terrorism, local as well as global, which is none else than the prevailing social injustice and inequality, the world over.

Secondly, it should formulate a viable and just agenda and its action-plan to establish a New World Order, based on equality, democracy, transparency, productivity and environmental-sustainability.

**A Humanitarian-Environmental Agenda**

In our view, the strategic answer to all varieties of terrorism is the restructuring and updating of existing nation-based system on a realistic and rational basis at the global level. This restructuring and updating should—in order to address to the existing two fundamental social realities, i.e., unsustainable environment and unjust and inequalitarian human relation—adopt a pro-nature and pro-human agenda that also meets the demands of the newly-emerged social process of globalisation.

Nature-human based agenda upholds the vision of "One World" in contrast to the vision of UN charter which presents the present world as a union of nations. One World" vision serves the peoples interests, on the one hand, and takes care of environmental conservation, on the other.

Nature-human based agenda demands a new type of social management and development model that stands for a five-fold priority, i.e., environmental sustainability, social equality (with 1:5 difference in incomes and social security as a fundamental right to all), productivity, democracy (empowerment of the people in all matters) and transparency. This five-fold priority corresponds with the bio-social nature of humankind, i.e., it co-ordinates the man's self interest with his social interest.

Nature-human based agenda represents its new concept of social development and progress in contrast to the two traditional national systems. While both the corporate market- led and the corporate government-directed one (often called the communist model) single out profitability, productivity or the growth rate as the only measure of social development and progress, nature-human based agenda totally rejects the concept of money or capital as the supreme thing in society and holds that only the environmental promotion and the whole peoples betterment represent the only supreme thing in society. Money or capital represents only a medium of exchange and beyond that it has no value.

Nature-human based agenda, first of all, needs a stable and durable peace and security. To establish such a peace, it is necessary that the politics of domination, privilege and special powers be discarded, mode of confrontation and military solution be ended by total disarmament and vesting the full control of nuclear weapons in the UN, political, economic and cultural inequalities be done away with and the development gap between the developed and the developing countries be removed.

Second, it requires a social system that is based on fully democratic principles, functioning. and structure. Such a social system necessitates the ending of the rule of special veto-powers in UN system and the restructuring of the nation-state management in the light of the principle ensuring the maximum possible empowerment of the people in decision making corresponding to the necessary dilution of the party centralised power.

Third, it demands a rational and realistic economics whose concepts, laws and rules are required to be framed in the light of former's two top priorities (i.e., humankind and environment) and five development principles (i.e., environmental sustainability, equity, productivity, democracy and transparency). In view of human's bio-social nature, both Adam Smith's basic economic principle of "self-interest" and Marxian basic economic rule of state nationalisation of everything are one-sided.

Fourth, it calls for a way of life (or lifestyle) that is embedded in basic human and environmental values and promotes rational, humanist and environmentalist thinking, behaviour and organisation among the people.

Fifth, it stands for scientific realism which studies and interprets natural phenomena in the light of scientific facts and social objects on the basis of authentic information and data.

Lastly, it is necessary that, in any restructuring and updating process of the old social system, the entire constitutional-legal framework be based on the bio-social nature of man, i.e., on the coordination of human self-interest with social interest—thus bringing in a realistic human psychology conditioning or motivational factor to accelerate social process.

In sum, capturing or killing Osama and Mullah Omer or destroying AIQaeda terrorist camps cannot solve the problem. Because, evil cannot be ended by doing more evil. If humanity is to be rid of the menace of terrorism, then its (i.e., terrorism's) root cause need to be identified and eradicated by administering a realistic social prescription. 20-11-2005