



## Mumbai under Seige - Inside Story

History really repeats. At least for India. Every time, the two countries—India and Pakistan—come closer to each other, buses start crossing the border passing the Wagah border of Amritsar district of Punjab—something untoward takes place that rattles the polity of two neighbouring states, divided on the basis of religion. This happened, when Pakistani troop attacked Karghil in early new millennium – on November 26, this year.

Just within 24 hours of Indian army freeing the business capital, Mumbai, from Pakistani terrorists groups, a SMS is going around the nation—“Forgiving a terrorist is rest to God. But fixing their date with God is our responsibility”. The sender of this text is obviously the Indian Army. But how far this message will succeed awakening this nation that has a history of forgiving its enemy, is really not undoubted.

True, these terrorists act is a heinous crime against humanity, far more, as their target was pointed towards the Jewish population living in Nariman House, the Israeli delegates that came for a high-level dialogue regarding business deal and obviously the tourists who came from USA and UK to taste the beauty of Taj Mahal hotel, the Marine Drive.

Questions are also going round about the credibility and efficiency of the Research and Analytical Wing (RAW), the Indian intelligence network. If army intelligence sources are to be believe, Pakistan is no longer a threat for India, nor its intelligence system—the ISI—the number one target of the Indian politicians, after every blasts or mayhem. The greatest threat, which India is constantly ignoring, is Bangladesh—the country that tasted independence from Pakistan in 1971, courtesy India.

Be it Ahmedabad blast or the serial bomb blasts in New Delhi, on September 13 last, all men who were held, are from Bangladesh. The only difference is that they were trained in Pakistan.

A section of Rashtriya Sewam Sewak Sangh (RSS), the radical Hindu political organisation that runs the Bharatiya Janata Party, still blames the Indian Nationalist Congress (INC) for helping the Bangladesh getting liberated from Pakistani Army. Their reason is obviously religious—which the general Indian population always ignored. But the recent terrorists' strike on Mumbai, once again brought these Hindu radical forces in the mainstream.

The other political question, which is going around, was India's decision to befriend the Palestine Liberation Organisation and Indian politicians blind love for late PLO chief Yasser Arafat. Reason: The velocity of the recent Mumbai attack at east justify clear truth. This could never been a Pakistani or ISI mastermind. The attackers either belong to Al Qaida, or trained extensively by Hamas—the number one enemy of Israel and Jewish population living around the globe.

But why Al Qaida? India never stepped on the tails of the extremist organisation run by Osama Bin Laden—neither joint the US mission in its war against terrorism, nor helped the US army with its intelligence and army in getting hold of the much wanted man—Osama Bin Laden or his deputy Zawahiri. Excepting few regular skirmishes in the border, Indian Army didn't also attack the Pakistani soldiers, nor supported the Israeli cause against the Palestine people.

There might be three reasons, if there is really any involvement of Osama and his army of terrorists. First, obviously, Kashmir, which is always a part of Indian Territory, recently went to voting for bringing in peace. The Valley lost its beauty in bloodshed since 1997.

The second reason may be India is coming closer to Israel with Israeli companies and government started investing in Indian cities like Kolkata, especially in healthcare, biotechnology sector. The terrorists might have thought that



any attack on India's business capital would send a very clear message to the world that—India, too, like its neighbour, Pakistan, is not safe for foreign investors any more. There is no safety and security of foreigners and Indian intelligent system is a total flop show irrespective of tall claims made by respective Indian Prime Ministers on world forums.

And the last but not the least, Prime Minister, Dr Manmohan Singh's announcement of launching joint attacks on terrorists group with USA during his recent visit to Washington.

The Union Home Minister, Shivraj Patil, has resigned from his post, on Sunday, taking the moral responsibility of failed security arrangements. True, his resignation was much awaited. But will it help bringing the two countries closer once again? No. Rather, this political and socio-economical turmoil can any day give birth to another Godhra—the place in Gujarat where minority Muslim population were burnt alive by radical Hindu forces like Bajrang Sena and others. Its also true that the country which is waiting for its Parliamentary elections, scheduled to be held in April 2009, will give the ruling United Progressive Alliance (UPA), very little chance to get re-elected.

If anyone asks a political fortune-teller, which party will come to power in 2009? The answer will be very simple: The Bharatiya Janata Party-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA). But, if UPA has to lose power on security reasons, then why BJP, when the Indian Parliament, the most protected zone was attacked by Pakistani terrorists in 2001, when NDA was in power? The problem with the common Indians is only one—they are famous for their forgiveness. True, the common Indian electorate could forget that attack on Parliament and bring BJP in power, but will it end the terrorism and crisis arise therein because no Indian political leader—be it Shivraj Patil or the beleaguered Maharashtra Nav Nirman Sena (MNNS) chief Raj Thakarey—really care about the safety and security of common Indian population. It is true in case of the Congress and also true for the BJP or the Communists, which is ruling a state, West Bengal, for the past 31 years since 1977.

No civilized person, no ordinary human being, regardless of where they are from, what their culture or religion, can be anything but revolted and sickened by the terrorist attacks in Mumbai. They are horrifying both in their scale of carnage and the evident calm (and ease) with which the terrorists carried out their murderous spree.

This was the doing of a group of people who are totally depraved, without any moral compass. Whatever their political aims it is beyond understanding how anyone can go on such a spree, shooting indiscriminately at men, women and children, to the extent even of attacking a hospital and murdering people there and yet imagine that they do so in some great cause. No cause can ever gain anything from such evil — and this was evil at its most absolute. How many now dare repeat that easy and convenient lie that one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter?

In Mumbai, as in New York in 2001 and London in 2005, terrorism is seen in its real, unadulterated, murderous guise. The world has rallied to India's support. But the question today it is Mumbai where next tomorrow—remain unattended. So is the question—who really these terrorists are?

It is hard to determine the terrorist group's roots according to the limited information. The group may be members of a local terrorist organization, or an international terrorist organization that calls them the "Deccan Mujahedeen". The attackers may not belong to any organization but a group solely formed for this specific terrorist activity. However, the way that they conducted the operation gives us clues about particular characteristics of the group and group members. The bloodiest assault in Mumbai dates to 1993 when a criminal syndicate killed 257 people. This time the actual figure is varying from 193 to 200, with more than 350 people injured grievously.

First, the terrorists group consists of members that are associated with each other, highly organized and in concert. Second, they have depressive and narcissist characteristics. There is great resentment behind the terrorist activity resentment triggered with an accumulated hatred. Third, the group has a singular value system. They reject diversity, diverse values, and see the world in black-white terms. These are well-known characteristics of certain terrorist groups. These types of groups rely on resentment, denial and their biased black-white value system to conduct ruthless and bloody attacks.

The Pakistani English daily—Daily Times, recently carried an editorial on Mumbai Mayhem, with an effort to



revitalising the memory of Pakistani general mass about the Godhra incident. The editorial wrote—“ In the past, the reference was clearly inferred. Everything went back to the Muslim carnage in Gujarat in 2002 in which 1,100 men, women and children were killed and over 150,000 ousted from homes. At the local level, every time an act of terrorism was committed in India, Pakistan was somehow named. Ongoing investigations into some terrorist attacks that were alternately blamed on Indian Muslims and Pakistan have shown that they were actually carried out by a Hindu terrorist network. But facts aside, this is how the collective psyche of fear works. One credible event is remembered and then myths are attached to it. The same sort of thing happens on the Pakistani side. Taken together, this trend forms the brick-wall against which all efforts at normalising Indo-Pak relations come to a halt.”

The editor of the newspaper, probably doesn't know that the common Indian people, still today, never blamed the Pakistan for this, neither ISI is being blamed, its only a handful of Indian politicians who sprung into action to capitalise this issue politically for the upcoming Parliamentary elections.

Indians are too net-savvy. Much more than people living in any country in this region. Getting hold of this type of editorial is too easy for them to react, which could again fuel up another crisis. People of both the countries should understand one real truth—whether it is Marriott or Taj Mahal Hotel—these terrorists are same. We should fight together.

(Autor: Santanu Saraswati)