Countering Terror in South Asia: Beyong Statist Approaches

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While social and communal factors influence motivations, less attention is often paid to the environment in which individuals are either radicalized or deradicalized and the role that families and communities might play in this regard. The question of communities tends to come into the equation of strategies to counter terrorism, violent extremism and radicalization under two different lenses: One secrutiny, based on a negative narrative, focuses on how the community creates conditions for its members to become radicalized. These often happen in places where members of religious communities where unforgiving versions of religion is being taught including places like prisons which are notorious hotbeds of radicalization through exchanges among prisoners; and even within families which help recruit brothers, wives etc. into so-called Jihad, such as is often the case in Central Asia. This paper will focus on certain misconceptions of Islam.

Key words: Islam, radicalism, deradicalization, tolerance, security, jihad, terrorism

Introduction

When it comes to the spectre of terror or insecurity few could match the dystopias put forward by two well-known novelists, one incidentally from the last century while the other from this century. The first one refers to the insecurity arising from the fear of 'Big Brother is Watching You,' so insightfully depicted by George Orwell in his novel, 1984. The novel was published at the end of World War II in 1949. Critics in the beginning thought that Orwell was reflecting on 'socialism,' the totalitarian regime of the Soviet Union under Joseph Stalin, or the British Labour Party, but 'he was not (West,1985).' Following the discovery of an extraordinary cache of Orwell material in the archives of the BBC, coincidentally in 1984, it became clear that Orwell got the idea while working at the BBC during wartime (August 1941-November 1943). Indeed, it is at the BBC where Orwell felt that the 'Big Brother - 'the state' - was always watching him. As W.J. West in his introduction to George Orwell's Lost Writings noted, "The totalitarian atmosphere of Nineteen Eighty-Four – of universal censorship that alters the past as well as the present and even attempts to alter the mind – was the ultimate development of Orwell's experience of censorship at the BBC at the hands of the MOI (Ministry of Information) (West, 1985, p.21)." West further commented, "The fact that the lowest rank of censor, 'delegate censors', were not from the Ministry of Information but colleagues within the BBC, indeed, within one's own

department, could make life tense in the sort of situation in which people like Orwell often found themselves….In effect everyone could be seen as checking on everyone else, just as Orwell describes Comrade Tillotson in Nineteen Eighty-Four doing the same task as Winston Smith (West, 1985, p.280)."

The victory over the Nazis and the end of World War II otherwise gave way not so much to the freedom of the individual as much to an Orwellian dystopia. The 'Big Brother' soon got engaged in the task of watching and securing the life and living of the humans and busied itself in creating weapons of enormous power, indeed, on such a frightful scale that it could now collectively destroy the earth not once, as the divine prophesied, but nine times. I am, of course, referring to the thousands of nuclear weapons in kilotons and megatons that are now in possession of the 'state' of various types - from liberal, authoritarian, totalitarian to 'capi-communist' (Napoleoni, 2011, p11) - and spreading across three continents. But this is only one side of the matter.

The 'Big Brother' is also watching the citizens more closely and frequently than ever. In fact, the average urban Briton is caught on camera up to 300 times a day, often without the person's knowledge. As Jessica Williams highlights the chilling development of the science of monitoring now at the service of the state:

Researchers estimate that in a single day, a citizen of London could expect to be filmed by more than 300 cameras on more than 30 separate CCTV systems…. Far from seeking to protect privacy, the British government has been expanding the ways in which it can watch its citizens. The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) gave the Home Secretary power to issue warrants for the interception of communications, and public authorities were given the power to access communications data without a warrant…. In the US, the 'Patriot Act' authorised the use of telephone wire-taps and internet monitoring software, granted the power to conduct 'sneak and peek' searches without letting the target know, and required libraries, bookstores and other organisations to provide records of their customers….There is a danger that we may be modelling our society in the image of something we once feared – the controlling and all-seeing State, monitoring our every move (Williams, 2004).

The Orwellian dystopia, with the state overly armed and increasingly watching the activities of each and every individual, is now a living fear. But humans proved far more menacing and this resulted in the creative reproduction of newer dystopias. Indeed, another novelist, this time of the twenty-first century, came up with yet another equally frightening dystopia, interestingly not by challenging Orwell but by taking a cue from him.

Having lived through the Orwellian world, Haruki Murakami (born in Kyoto in 1949) comes up with a startling, somewhat terrifying, dystopia in his trilogy titled 1Q84, published in 2009-2010. Murakami ingeniously turns Orwell's dystopia into an open-ended one by inserting the letter 'Q' in place of '9,' now that the year 1984 is no more. It may be mentioned that the number '9' in the Japanese is pronounced as 'cue' or 'Q,' and so Murakami, in the

light of the changing circumstances, reproduces the spectre of a newer dystopia without displacing or belittling the Orwellian one. And there lies his brilliance. Indeed, taking cue from Orwell, Murakami now warns us that the 'Little People,' creeping out from the chrysalis in the dark hours of the night, spread and menace the world. The spectre of the terrifying 'Little People' got added to the Orwellian spectre of the terrifying 'Big Brother.' Even Aomame, otherwise a decent astute woman, although soon to be haunted by the more insidious 'Little People,' managed to get away after killing the woman-abuser, Mr. Miyama, with an ice pick-like needle, which she "had designed and made it herself" (Murakami, 2012). Like the 'Big Brother,' the 'Little People' are also 'overly armed' and are watching us constantly. This double-layered dystopia is what is now haunting us in the name of security threats.

In South Asia, as it would be the case in other parts of the world, the 'Big Brother' combines with the 'Little People' in complex, contradictory ways, creating havoc in the life and living of the humans. I will limit myself to three cases, all from South Asia.

Case I
Terrorism in the name of heaven
Questions could easily be raised, what made the Sufis come to South Asia and how could they so easily settle in an alien land? Or, for that matter, what made the Hanafi mazhab (school of thought) so prominent in South Asia? Answers to such queries varied. Some scholars sought the answers in the five hundred years of Muslim rule and the migration of the Muslims - Arabs, Turks, Persians and Afghans. This could have been a factor but it still does not tell us as to why the locals would accept the aliens, the migratory Muslims, without much conflict, since it is argued that, save in the north-west, the scale of violence had been negligible, for instance, in Bengal, which soon found itself with a sizeable number of Muslims. Voluntary conversion of the lower caste Hindus was another answer. This too remains unconvincing because if it was such a case why would it be limited to northern India and Bengal and not include other areas of South Asia, which too included immensely disempowered lower caste Hindus, like the Dalits, for instance, in Bihar and central India.

The answer probably lies in the tradition of public reasoning in South Asia. In fact, a cue can be taken from Rabindranath Tagore who summed it up in one his very popular songs: "We are all Kings in the kingdom of our King. / Were it not so, how could we hope in our heart to meet him." This refers to the presence of a precise public reasoning in South Asia that has allowed tolerance and proto democratic norms to thrive culturally, with state politics and governance remaining largely insulated from this; indeed, as some would argue, on account of alien invasions and colonial imposition of things (Nandy, 1998). The merit of this argument lies in the fact that throughout its age-old civilizational quest South Asia had invited all kinds of social and religious discourses, including Brahmanism, Buddhism, Vashnavism, Janism, Hinduism, Tantricism, Sufism and Islam, and allowed even the Catholics and Protestants to settle down. Amartya Sen too alludes to this when he perceptively points out that "the tradition of public reasoning is closely related to the roots of

democracy across the globe (Sen, 2005)." In fact, when it comes to South Asia, the Sufi saints could easily impress upon the people with their message of love and brotherhood and settle down both near the shore and deep inside the land not because such messages were new but rather because South Asia had cultivated a public reasoning of tolerance for centuries. No one knows why this is so but the vagaries of the weather could certainly have contributed to it.

Not so different were the reasons for the relatively tolerant Hanafi mazhab to have a lasting impact on the Muslims of South Asia. Apart from the fact that both the Afghans and later the Mughals (the latter is the Persian name for Mongols who were Chagatai Turks) were Hanafis, the mazhab itself had been more tolerant and this allowed for its proliferation in South Asia. Such tolerance stretched from praying at the Sufi shrines by members of all religious communities, providing rights to women in matters relating to marriage, divorce and ownership of property, guaranteeing rights to other religious communities.

At the same time and in the earlier period of Muslim history, tolerance and proto-democratic norms prevailed in the relationship between different mazhabs. For instance, when Ibn Batuta, the famous Maliki traveller from Morocco, came to India, the infamous Mohammad bin Tughlaq, who was a Hanafi, had no problem in telling him to open a Maliki court and adjudicate the Malikis in matters relating to personal law, like, family property, marriage and divorce. Similar was the case with re-marriage, directing the women to visit the Maliki court, which followed a nine month waiting period, rather than seek resolution in the Hanafi court, which then followed a waiting period of ninety years, that is, till the cessation of menstruation 'by reason of age'(Zaman, 1961). Such tolerance was also there in other Muslim domains. In fact, research on the Ottoman Empire has shown that "Ottoman Hanafi judges occasionally transferred their own jurisdiction on a given matter to Shafi'i or Maliki judge if those schools were more likely to guard the interests of the plaintiffs than the Hanafi school (Tucker, 1998)." One must quickly point out, however, that no such flexibility could be found amongst the Hanbalis or their successors, the Salafis or Wahhabis, in their doctrinal dispute or differences with other Islamic schools. I will have more to say about this shortly.

What changed all this? Or, more specifically, why is there so much intolerance in the name of Islam in South Asia now? Two factors could easily be cited. Firstly, the rise of petrodollars and the Salafization or Wahhabization of Islam. Never in the history of Islamic civilization did we find the Salafi or Wahhabi creed making an impact to the level it has done in recent times. Even on its home soil, Saudi Arabia, it has always remained a minority compared to the devotees of other Sunni schools. Critics see the skyrocketing of crude oil prices from around USD 3 per barrel in 1970 to more than USD 35 in 1980 and now USD 94 contributing to Saudi wealth and having it boldly utilized in the business of globally proselytizing the Saudi strain of Wahhabi Islam (Abukhalil, 2004).

Secondly, South Asian diaspora and puritanism. The post-national South Asian diaspora in the Middle East could not help but be attracted to a puritan

version of Islam and in turn help promote the Wahhabization of Islam in South Asia. If London and New York are considered as the citadels of modernity then Saudi Arabia with two holy cities of Mecca and Medina remains for many a Muslim believer the bastion of authentic Islam. Whatever goes there becomes the marker of Islamic identity, the export of which to the homeland on the part of the diaspora turns into an Islamic responsibility. Members of the diaspora, for instance, send money back home, but often with a call to maintain a strict religious code in the family, including the dress to be worn in public. At the same time, given the non-commercialization of Zakat and little or no knowledge of Islamic banking opportunities, coupled with the factor of doing something noble for the homeland, the diaspora also end up sending money to mosques and madrasahs, often without keeping a track of who is doing what with the money. In fact, there is no guarantee that part of the financial support would not end up funding the militant outfits. And this becomes more deadly when one particular mazhab wants to impose its interpretation of Islam on the followers of other mazhabs. Much of the intolerance and violence arise from inter- and intra-mazhab contestations. And it is here that the 'Big Brother,' often to promote its own narrow interests, if not for reasons of mazhabi zeal, allows the 'Little People' to flourish.

Pakistan would be a good example. Table 1 is a classical case of 'Muslims killing Muslims (Roberts, 2008).' In fact, a cursory look at Table 1 will show that Pakistan is in the midst of a conflict not only between the Shias and the Sunnis but also between the Salafis and the Hanafis, on the one hand, and between the Deobandis and the Barelwis, on the other. Although the latter two are both Hanafis but lately the Deobandis have become infected with Salafi rituals and ideas (Allen, 2006), and this has contributed to the rise not only of inter-mazhab but also of intra-mazhab conflicts.

Table 1
Timeline of suicide bomb attacks in Pakistan: 2007-2011

Date	Place	Number of People Killed
1 April 2011	Sufi shrine in Dera Ghazi Khan district	41
5 November 2010	Attack on the mosque at Darra Adam Khel	68
October 2010	Sufi Shrine in Punjab province	25
10 July 2010	Kakaghund in Northwest Pakistan	102
1 January 2010	Volleyball game, Bannu, Northwest Pakistan	88
28 December 2009	Shia procession in Karachi	43
24 October 2009	Near the Pakistan-Afghan frontier	39
12 October 2009	Northwest Pakistan	41
9 October 2009	Peshawar	125

Date	Place	Number of People Killed
18 September 2009	Shia-owned hotel in Northwest Pakistan	33
5 June 2009	Attack on the mosque, Upper Dir, Swat valley	40
27 March 2009	Attack on the mosque in Peshawar-Torkham	83
10 October 2008	Tribal area	85
20 September 2008	Marriott Hotel in Islamabad	60
16 February 2008	Parachinar	47
10 January 2008	High Court in Lahore	22
21 December 2007	Attack on the mosque, Eid Day, Northwest Pakistan	41
19 October 2007	Benazir Bhutto's motorcade in Karachi	139
4 September 2007	Rawalpindi	25

In fact, once the mind becomes intolerant then recourse to violence becomes difficult to stop. It may be pointed out that the suicide bomber who blew himself up in the busy market in northwest Pakistan, killing 41 people, on 12 October 2009 was only 12 years old (Roberts, 2011). Indeed, hordes of 'Little People,' ideologically-motivated and increasingly intolerant, and no doubt with some form of blessings from the 'Big Brother,' have come to menace the world. And this has created the spectre of fear in the life and living of the ordinary humans.

Table 2

Firing and Death in Indo-Bangladesh Border 2006-2010 (till 31 October)

Year	Incident of Firing	Deaths in firing	
		Bangladheisi killed	Indians Killed
2006	688	97	49
2007	791	81	56
2008	572	46	37
2009	598	48	39
2010	218	22	18

Case II

Cow smuggling and the state of insecurity

The issue of security with India has taken a different turn for Bangladesh in recent times, particularly in the backdrop of BSF (Border Security Force of India) firing in the border area. In fact, over the past 10 years BSF killed

over 1,000 people, mostly Bangladeshis, turning the border area into, as one reporter commented, "a South Asian killing fields (Adams, 2011)." BSF, however, contends that criminal elements, mainly smugglers, were shot at and killed in the border area, and back this up by providing figures of both Bangladeshis and Indians killed as a result of BSF firing (Table 2).

Border Guards of Bangladesh (BGB), however, provide a higher death figure of the number of Bangladeshis killed from BSF firing. According to BGB, 1154 Bangladeshi civilians and 16 BGB personnel were killed by the BSF in the period between 1972 and September 2010. BGB incidentally do not keep a tally of Indians killed as a result of BSF firing. Two things emerge very clearly from the above set of statistics. Firstly, all incidents of firing have taken place on the Indian territory. And secondly, most incidents of firing relate to cattle smuggling. This requires further exposition.

1.5 million cows worth USD 500 million are smuggled from India into Bangladesh each year, according to one report (Rahman, 2012). Some findings have even higher figures, but the question that merits attention is why are the cows smuggled? Why the cows cannot cross over to Bangladesh from India legally? When such questions were raised in one of the Indo-Bangladesh Track Two dialogues, held in Dhaka on 16 July 2011, the Indian delegation mentioned that live cattle cannot be exported legally because of religion. Since cow is sacred to the Hindus any attempt to de-smugglize the animal would face resistance from the Hindu fundamentalists, including the main opposition party in India, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). And this no political party in India, including the publicly proclaimed secular Congress, would be willing to do.

But then how valid is this contention? Frankly, shrouded in a mystery. This is because India does export live bovine animals, including cattle, and Nepal over the years has been the leading market for Indian live animals (Science Tech Entrepreneur, 2012). Export Policy of the Government of India, however, mentions that export of live cattle and buffaloes are "restricted," that is, "permitted under license" while export of beef of cows, oxen and calf are "prohibited (Government of India, 2012)." But then Ritambhara Singh in the 2010 Annual Report on India's Livestock and Products points out:

Buffalo cows, particularly those which have completed their lactation cycles, are predominantly used for meat. There are about 3,900 licensed slaughter houses in the country authorized by local bodies. In addition, there are around 26,000 unauthorized slaughter houses. However, there are now 13 export-oriented, modern, integrated abattoirs or meat processing plants registered with the Agricultural and Processed Food Export Development Authority (APEDA). There are also 24 meat processing and packaging units, which receive dressed carcasses from approved municipal slaughter houses for the export of meat. It is likely that other export plants will be developed in the future given India's export focus (Singh, 2012).

And this despite the fact of having anti-cow slaughter legislation in several Indian states, although Paschim Banga, from where the bulk of the cattle enter illegally into Bangladesh, is not one of them. Beef, it must be pointed out, is consumed in Paschim Banga as well. Why the restriction in exporting cattle to Bangladesh then? The most likely reason is that the profit from cattle-smuggling is so hefty that few in the power are in a position to stop it. It may be pointed out that a cow in Jharkhand in India can be bought for USD 100, but when this cow enters Bangladesh its price can become as high as USD 350 to 900 (Rahman, 2009). Another estimate showed that BSF captured 70,000 Indian cows worth USD 62 million in Bangladesh in 2008 (Rahman, 2009). In fact, according to a survey carried out in 2002, 43 percent of the total value of illegal trade, which now stands to the tune of USD 2.7 billion annually in favour of India, is live cows and buffaloes (The World Bank, 2006). And it is this lucrative profit which is making policymakers at the highest level in Delhi unable to stop not only cow smuggling but also BSF firing.

Indeed, the 'Little People,' here in the guise of smugglers, women traffickers, money launderers, small arms dealers, and the like, are now heavily involved in all such lucrative businesses, no doubt in connivance with some of the members of the 'Big Brother' (security agencies, custom officials, elected representatives, even members of the judiciary) on both sides of the border. And this has given rise to newer forms of insecurity, complicating the state of relationship between India and Bangladesh. In fact, even after getting assurance from the top leaders of the government of both India and Bangladesh, whether on the issue of putting an end to the BSF firing on unarmed Bangladeshis or stopping the cow smugglers from unlawfully crossing the borders into India, the 'Little People,' indeed, with the complicity of the 'Big Brother,' continue to thrive and jeopardize the state of security between the two countries.

Case III
The decline of the 'Big Brother' and the rise of the 'Little People'
South Asians are not good at building institutions, more particularly state institutions. In fact, when it comes to identifying the oldest continuing institutions in South Asia one can at best point out to the 'sweet shops' (going back to the days of great-great-grand parents) and not governmental or state institutions. Protracted foreign invasions, including colonialism, could be responsible for this, but more important, I believe, is the precise manner in which the South Asians have dealt with the state (rashtra) and society (samaj), something which Rabindranath Tagore too went on to highlight. South Asians have civilizationally remained linked to their samaj, almost to the point of being negligent towards the rashtra, the state. As Tagore pointed out,

Through all the fights and intrigues and deceptions of her earlier history India had remained aloof. Because her homes, her fields, her temples of worship, her schools, where her teachers and students lived together in the atmosphere of simplicity and devotion and learning, her village self-government with its simple laws and peaceful administration—all these truly belonged to her. But her thrones were not her concern. They passed over her head like clouds, now

tinged with purple gorgeousness, now black with the threat of thunder. Often they brought devastations in their wake, but they were like catastrophes of nature whose traces are soon forgotten (Tagore, 1918, p7).

But then colonialism brought an end to all this, as Tagore reminded us,
But this time it was different. It was not a mere drift over her surface of life,—drift of cavalry and foot soldiers, richly caparisoned elephants, white tents and canopies, strings of patient camels bearing the loads of royalty, bands of kettle-drums and flutes, marble domes of mosques, palaces and tombs, like the bubbles of the foaming wine of extravagance; stories of treachery and loyal devotion, of changes of fortune, of dramatic surprises of fate. This time it was the Nation of the West driving its tentacles of machinery deep down into the soil....
We had known the hordes of Moghals and Pathans who invaded India, but we had known them as human races, with their own religions and customs, likes and dislikes,—we had never known them as a nation. We loved and hated them as occasions arose; we fought for them and against them, talked with them in a language which was theirs as well as our own, and guided the destiny of the Empire in which we had our active share. But this time we had to deal, not with kings, not with human races, but with a nation—we, who are no nation ourselves.

Now let us from our own experience answer the question, What is this Nation? A nation, in the sense of the political and economic union of a people, is that aspect which a whole population assumes when organized for a mechanical purpose (Tagore, 1918, p9).

And it is this mechanical organization of the 'nation,' at times in the name of religion, at times language or ethnicity, that contributed to the breakdown of age-old institutions reproducing diversity and non-conformism, as it had been with samaj in pre-colonial times, indeed, to a point that led to the partition of colonial India into 'nation-states,' first, modern India and Pakistan in 1947, and then Bangladesh in 1971. As a result of this breakdown, institutions in post-colonial South Asia either remained weak or could not develop at all, and this included state institutions as well.

The vacuum came to be filled up mainly by a political-bureaucratic-business nexus, reproducing, if anything, misgovernance. In the case of India, for instance, Gurcharan Das in his book, The Difficulty of Being Good, published in 2009, pointed out that 1 out of 5 members elected in the Indian Parliament in 2004 had criminal charges against him. Equally shockingly, 1 out of every 4 teachers in government primary schools remains absent. But that is not all. 2 out of 5 doctors do not show up at state primary health centres while 69% of their medicines are stolen. Given the high-profile corruption scandals in recent times, one after another, there is every reason to believe that when it comes to governance things are getting from bad to worse in India. Pakistan's case is even more dismal. National election in 2013 was historic, mainly because of the fact that Pakistan for the first time ever since it achieved its independence

in 1947 had a national election after the end of five-year tenure of an elected regime. It can safely be said that state institutions promoting democracy and good governance in Pakistan are at a rudimentary stage.

Bangladesh's case is even more dismal. An overwhelming majority of the parliamentarians in Bangladesh have business links and about 30% of them own ready-made garment (RMG) factories. More specifically, in the last parliament the ruling Awami League (AL) had 235 members with 120 self-declared businessmen while the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), the main opposition party, had only 30 parliamentarians with 18 of them self-declared businessmen. Why so many businessmen in politics? One quick answer would be that in Bangladesh business thrives through underhand dealings with politicians and government officials. Business houses are able to flout all rules and regulations, from getting licenses, acquiring land, building the infrastructures to ignoring safety measures. Following a recent building collapse near Dhaka, which housed several RMG factories and killed more than 1100 workers, Charles Kernaghan, the executive director of the Institute for Global Labour and Human Rights, said: "You can't trust many buildings in Bangladesh. It's so corrupt that you can buy off anybody and there won't be any retribution (Independent 2013)." Since no one was brought to justice in earlier instances of similar kind, Kernaghan has good reasons to remain sceptic about the rule of law in Bangladesh. The owners of such buildings can easily get away from any kind of retribution largely because of their connections with the ruling party, be it AL or BNP. And it is this connection that the business houses tend to cultivate with the political party, either AL or BNP, hoping to take advantage once the party of choice is in power. The party, of course, benefits from the donation, more illegal than legal on account of non-transparency, from the businesses.

The political-bureaucratic nexus is no better. In fact, incumbent bureaucrats get promotion through political blessings. Both AL and BNP have used their powers while in office to politicize the civil bureaucracy by making it a means of patronage. This has bred pressures among civil bureaucrats to remain close to one party or the other in order to secure good postings and promotions. One figure indicates that in 2008-2009 after the AL-led government assumed office, as many as 276 officials of the civil bureaucracy (six secretaries, 30 additional secretaries, 162 joint secretaries and 78 deputy secretaries) were made officers on special duty (OSDs), while 285 officials (presumably AL sympathizers) of the civil administration were recruited on the basis of contracts. On the other hand, during the first 20 months of the BNP-led government in 2001-2006, 300 officers of the civil administration were made OSDs and 144 (presumably pro-BNP) officers of the civil administration were recruited. It may be mentioned that in Bangladesh the OSD has the stigma of being called the "officer on sleeping duty", as they have a reputation for ending up in the corridors of the administrative building, often without a room, doing nothing. As a result, the machinery of government and the civil administration itself have become a means of serving the narrow interests of the ruling party. The civil bureaucracy otherwise remains highly partisan and is devoid of professionalism.

It is worth pointing out here that in Bangladesh, save the military, and that again probably for structural compulsions (the military personnel has to face live ammunitions) there is a dearth of professionalism in almost all the institutions, whether civil bureaucracy, business houses, academic institutions, media agencies, even political parties. In fact, when it comes to professionalism political parties are the least professional; the top brass in almost all of them come to hold their position through kinship and patrimonialism. And this creates space for the 'Little People' to thrive as they become indispensable in reproducing authoritarian and corrupt practices both within and outside the party. This has become deadlier in the age of globalization now that the 'Little People' have easier access to illicit arms (Ahmed 2009). The seizure of 10 truckloads of illicit arms in Bangladesh in April 2004, which included a total of 4,930 different types of sophisticated firearms; 27,020 grenades; 840 rocket launchers, 300 rockets, 2,000 grenade launching tubes; 6,392 magazines; and 11,40,520 bullets, is a good example in this context (Wikipedia, 2013). Weak state institutions not only contribute to the decline of the 'Big Brother' but also for the want of newer structures and creative replacement of the existing ones tend to empower the terrifying 'Little People.' And that's the fear that has come to haunt us all.

Conclusion

Ensuring security in contemporary times
A combination of two approaches is required. The first one could be called the statist, and for the sake of remembering the various components it could be summed up as the 4 I's. These include:

1.   Incarceration. This has been the traditional task of the state, policing and imprisoning the citizens for breaking the laws. But as it is now evident this task alone is not enough to contain the current security threats, particularly those emanating from the 'Little People' – the street thugs, smugglers, women and child traffickers, money-launderers, narco-dealers, terrorists, and the like. Moreover, since the policy of incarceration can only be 'reactive' the latter always remains one step behind the menacing deeds of the 'Little People.' Given the world that we are now in, with intolerant minds nurturing demonic ideas and in possession of deadly weapons, what is required is the simultaneous nurturing of 'proactive' policies for containing the terror.

2.   Intelligence reforms. Intelligence agencies established in the 19th and 20th centuries, with the requirements of the Westphalian modern state in mind, cannot effectively deal with the non-state elements in the age of globalization. This became even clearer when the US with a trillion-dollar military budget could not stop 19 non-state 'Little People' from carrying out the demonic feat, killing 3000 residents and causing an instant financial loss of USD 60 billion. Not surprisingly, the US too came up with a new structure, the Homeland Security. Although it is too early to say whether the inclusion of

a new security structure in addition to the 1,271 government organizations and 1,931 private companies working in 10,000 locations in the United States on counterterrorism, homeland security and intelligence would make a difference to the security threats facing the US (Priest and Arkin, 2010), but it does suggest that the existing ones are not sufficient. Keeping the 'Little People' in perspective it can be said without hesitation that a greater involvement of the humans is required. But then if the latter remains dissatisfied and disempowered expecting credible support from them could be nothing more than wishful thinking. I will return to this shortly.

3.   Intellectual intervention. There is a certain truism in the statement that "Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed (Unesco, 2013)." Put differently, the intolerant mind has to be addressed and the fresh ones contained. Since with respect to the Islamic militancy, for instance, there is so much inter- and intra-mazhab contestations, indeed, on the top of Shia-Sunni conflicts, there is a dire need for an intellectual investment in the Islamic scholarship. And this requires an international effort where a tolerant understanding of Islam could be codified and disseminated across the globe.

4.   Institutional investment. Fighting insecurity and terrorism or the "Little People' are no longer possible on an ad hoc basis. A protracted institutional investment is required with stakeholders from all sectors, including security agencies, academicians, researchers, media, feminist groups, business people, and the like, multidisciplinary at the same time, researching and participating in understanding, analysing and predicting the security threats, and suggesting ways to contain them. Since the 'Little People' are increasingly becoming creative in carrying out demonic activities, an equally creative if not more is required to contain them.

But then since the 4 I's are statist in nature and the state or the 'Big Brother' is equally to be blamed for the state of insecurity there is an urgent need for carrying out a non-statist or human-centered approach to contain terrorism. And this brings us back to Rabindranath Tagore who in one of his last writings pointed out: "Manusher proti biswas harano paap, shey biswas shesh porjonto rakkha korbo (I shall not commit the grievous sin of losing faith in humans) (Tagore, 1996, 764)." It is after all humans that can lift us from the current state of insecurity, and therefore the focus ought to be on the humans, but then considering them not as universalized but rather multiversed beings. I will limit myself to five areas.

Homo politicus
Aristotle probably was the first one to proclaim that each and every human is a 'political being' - homo politicus - and therefore has certain inherent political rights (Kesby, 2012). The republican conception of politics is what Aristotle was advocating, indeed, at a time when the monarch was blessed with 'divine rights.' But then in the light of the colonial legacy and the reproduction of the over-developed state in contemporary times, how far have we succeeded

in safeguarding the political rights of each and every human in South Asia? Certainly there has been some progress, but in the backdrop of militancy in the Swat Valley, Northeast India, the alienation of the Hill people in Bangladesh, imprisonment of dissenters, policing of the civil society and incidents like Jaffna, Gujarat and Ramu and the bashing of the minorities few will deny that the scenario is hardly conducive to being homo politicus. Indeed, the state of insecurity would continue unless and until the inherent political rights of each and every person are guaranteed.

Homo economicus
Humans are also homo economicus or economic beings, as John Stuart Mill and Karl Marx have emphasised. That is, humans have inherent 'rights' to engage in economic activities for sustaining life and achieving economic prosperity. As Marx had said, 'humans are commodity-producers and profit-seekers.' This too has its limits in South Asia. Apart from the system of caste and class, which has 'disciplined' many a community in resigning to fate or divine justice, factors like geography and environment have consistently played out unfavourably with the marginalized and the disempowered, with the latter often ironically remaining 'grateful' with two-meal a day, a piece of cloth and a shelter to reside. Even Noble Laureate Muhammad Yunus' oft-quoted statement that 'all humans are entrepreneurs' saw its limits when micro-credit-worthy Bangladeshi women, largely because of patriarchy, found themselves unable to move beyond micro business while the government, far from aiding the latter, made a hurried call to 'shun' the Nobel Laureate and limit the power of the non-governmental sector (Kristof, 2011). Insecurity to humans could arise from not being able to live a life as homo economicus.

Homo culturicus
The strength of South Asians, however, lies not in their being as homo politicus or homo economicus but in their being as homo culturicus or cultural beings. South Asians, in fact, have not fared well politically, the 'democratic culture' has been marred by violence and divisiveness, or even economically, as the region is the home of the largest number of poverty stricken people in the world, but when it comes to 'cultural democracy' they have fared much better than many of the developed democratic societies of the world. Lalon, Ghalib and Tagore are living testimonies, so are Lata Mangeshkar, Monisha Koirala and Muttiah Muralitharan. If this be the case then it is important to mainstream culture and make use of it in containing the state of insecurity. But this would require a pool of talents whose concern for the marginalized and the disempowered may not be forthcoming for reasons of corporate sponsorship or state censorship, making the task no less challenging than the subject of security itself.

Homo technologicus
Human are also homo technologicus or technological beings. The productive use of newer technology in large numbers is what had contributed to human development for centuries. This is precisely what Gandhi had in mind when calling upon the people to use the charka (spinning-wheel). As Gandhi pointed out:

A wise man…will mean by the spinning-wheel not an article made of wood but any type of work which provides employment to all people (Gandhi, 2007).

Technology otherwise must be brought down to the level of the masses, only then it would cease to be an instrument of oppression. A case in point would be 'the mobilisation of talk, of communication, of information' (mobile phones, facebook, twitter, internet, television channels, and the like) (Myerson, 2001, p 61) so creatively used during the Arab Spring. Indeed, equipped with new technology, the people first came out one by one and then in hundreds and then in millions and after assembling at the Tahrir or Freedom Square in Cairo for eighteen days they finally succeeded in displacing Hosni Mubarak and restoring the dignity of the Egyptians. The movement itself was free from known political leadership and without a 'centre,' making it no less post-modern or post-archical in nature. South Asians can certainly take lessons from this, using newer technology in the task of organizing and mobilizing the humans for containing the state of insecurity reproduced by the 'Big Brother' and the 'Little People.'

Homo psycholigicus
Finally, humans are homo psycholigicus or psychological beings. Without a change in the 'mind-set' no people centred counter-terrorism, whether local, national or regional, could be undertaken. The task, however, is much more challenging at the regional level because the mind of the adult is already tuned to the national state, the 'Big Brother,' and often remains blinded by the latter. The merit of the plight of the cow smuggler, for instance, stops at the border. Humans must therefore engage in discourses of post-territoriality and post-nationality if counter-terrorism is to be made meaningful in South Asia. But this would require a creative mobilization of minds not only of the adults but also of the children of South Asia. The current state of technology could certainly prove handy in this regard.

Countering terrorism in contemporary times requires fresh insights and creative efforts, anything less would create space for the double-layered dystopias to play havoc in the minds and activities of the humans. This is as much a problem of Mumbai, Delhi, Dhaka, Karachi, Kabul, Jaffna, Islamabad, Shillong, and Kathmandu as it is of the world.

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