

Date: _____

One man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter.

Day: _____

1.0) Introduction.

2.0) The concept of terrorism and Freedom fighters.

3.0) One man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter because:

3.1) Ideological affinity and cultural relations.

3.2) Inclination to divert attention from one's own internal conundrums.

3.3) Perchant to use it as a bargaining chip to pursue one's own objectives.

3.4) A desire to create chaos in one's home

3.5) A proclivity to undermine one's image.

3.6) To present oneself as peaceful and responsible entity.

4.0). To address these challenges, one should take certain steps;

4.1) Complement Kinetic measures with non-kinetic measures

4.2) Continue to underscore its struggle as a legitimate by seeking international help

4.3). Isolate terrorist elements from society by boosting development.

4.4). Preventing the spread of extremism and misinformation.

4.5). Promoting pluralism and granting political autonomy.

Conclusion.

~~IN THE~~

With the end of Cold war, the concept of state being a unitary actor in international system got challenged with the rise of ethnic conflicts, proxy wars and terrorism. Samuel Huntington referred to it as "the clash of civilizations." Since the concept of security has evolved to encompass both traditional and non-traditional threats, non-traditional threats became a stamping ground to play cards for rival powers. Consequently, states got inclined to pursue their objectives by exploiting other states' Achilles heel. Hence, they view terrorism in one state as a freedom struggle owing to various factors. These mainly encompass their cultural and ideological affinity, to use them as a bargaining chip, to divert attention from one's own internal dynamics, to create chaos in another's affairs, to undermine other's image and to present oneself as a peaceful actor. To address these challenges, the state should put its own house on order by taking various steps that mainly encompass international cooperation, focusing on human development, carrot and stick policy and maintaining law and order situation. Hence, political and economic measures are necessary to prevent terrorism from being viewed as freedom struggle.

Although terrorism does not encompass any definite explanation, it tends to involve the act of spreading terror among masses. This has blurred the difference between terrorism and freedom struggle.

Consequently, states are exploiting it to pursue their relative power and objectives as international system is anarchic. This has fostered environment of mistrust and rivalries while paving the way for arms race. To win over others, they present terrorism as a freedom struggle owing to various factors that are explored below;

States view the terrorism as a freedom struggle in another state owing to their cultural and ideological affinity. For instance, India defines Kashmir struggle for right of self-determination as terrorism fueled by external actors. However, Pakistan projects Kashmir struggle as a legitimate struggle owing to Pakistan's ideological and cultural affinity. This is demonstrated by the fact that the founder of Pakistan, Quid-e-Azam defined Kashmir as a "juglar vein of Pakistan." Secondly, Kashmir holds 80% of Muslim majority. Since the third June Plan divided states between India and Pakistan based on geographical proximity and religious affinity, Kashmir should have been allowed to amalgamate with Pakistan. However, while putting aside the legitimate rights of people of Kashmir, India annexed Kashmir based on the approval of Hindu raja of Kashmir. Ergo, Pakistan advocates for resolving the dispute in accordance with the wishes of people of Kashmir. Hence, religious, and ideological affinity play a significant role in defining freedom struggle as terrorism or a legitimate struggle for rights.

Besides cultural and ideological affinity, other states

also view one state's terrorism as a freedom struggle to divert attention from one's internal conundrum. This probably happens when two states are entangled in complex power struggles and rivalries. For instance, India often highlights the terrorist-based organizations like BLA and BLE as the legitimate political actors in Balochistan. It also provides training and funding to these organizations while projecting them as freedom fighters. It does this to divert the attention from its own human rights violations in Kashmir. As per World Freedom Report, thousands of Indian military forces are stationed in Kashmir. Secondly, the ongoing Khalistan independence movement and India's alleged involvement in the assassinations of Sikh leaders have raised concerns regarding the sovereignty of India. Hence, the internal dynamics of the states also compel them to project struggle in any state as terrorism or legitimate struggle to avoid scrutiny.

Besides for diverting attention from one's own internal dynamics, states also project terrorism as a freedom struggle to use it as a bargaining chip to pursue their interests. For instance, Afghan Taliban views Fitna Al-Khawarji as political actors struggling to enforce their political ideology in Pakistan. For this purpose, they continue to compel Pakistan to engage in negotiations with them. On the other hand, Pakistan has declared Fitna-al-Khawarji as a terrorist entity owing to its violent actions for creating chaos in the country. Afghan Taliban refuses to crack down on TTP because they want to claim whole Pushtoonization— by

amalgamating KPK with Afghanistan. Secondly, since they are being challenged by various factions in Afghanistan and are striving for legitimacy, they have kept TIP as a backup option to consolidate their regime against rivals such as TSKP. Consequently, they use TIP as a bargaining chip to pursue their objectives regarding legitimacy while also causing Pakistan to yield to their demands that may involve the control over tribal regions of Pakistan. Hence, the freedom struggles and terrorism are exploited as bargaining chip to pursue political interests.

Along with using terrorism as a bargaining chip, states are inclined to create chaos in other states.

This usually happens through proxy wars—where two actors continue to fund other actors to pursue their objectives. For instance, in pre-WWI era, the Serbian nationalism started gaining momentum owing to the spread of nationalism all across Europe and Balkan region. The Ottomans tried to muzzle the dissent by assassinating the Serbs in the region. Consequently, Russia, being entangled in power rivalry with Ottomans to exert its dominance, started aiding Serbs nationalists. The purpose was to weaken Ottoman Empire that would pave the way for disintegration of the empire. While the Ottomans declared Serbs nationalists as terrorists, Russia projected them as freedom fighters while asking for assistance from the European Powers—Britain, France and Russia. Besides this, the Asad era in Syria also depicted the similar scenario. While the country was entangled in civil

Date: _____

Day: _____

war, external actors like Iran and Russia continued to provide support to the belligerent rule of Bashar-ul-Asad to maintain stranglehold. However, Israel continued to aid the terrorist organizations like ISIS to create chaos to achieve its objectives of "Greater Israel." This would help him to expand its influence in Syria to capitalize on predicament to consolidate its emperor while fizzling out Iran from the region. This clearly demonstrates the debate of terrorism and freedom struggle is often exploited to create disorder in the region.

Besides creating disorder, states also view one's terrorism as freedom struggle to undermine one's international image. For instance, Pakistan is often allegedly portrayed as a "failed state" by India to undermine Pakistan's international image. It often underscores the militant casualties as human rights violations. Consequently, Pakistan remained in the greylist of FATF for many years. Along with this, the US also projects the struggle of Uyghurs in China as a freedom struggle. During the era of Bill Clinton, he advocated for sanctioning China for human rights violations in Xinjiang region. The purpose was to undermine China's peaceful struggle for economic development. This is also demonstratable by the fact that the US also depict China's control and claims over Taiwan as aggression. The purpose is to deter other countries from bandwagoning into China's BRI policy while deterring China from annexing Taiwan. Hence, states capitalize on the debate of terrorism and freedom struggle to

achieve relag relative political and economic gains.

Besides undermining one's international image, states also project oneself as a peaceful and responsible entity by capitalizing on terrorism and freedom struggle debate. Since this helps them to divert attention and avoid scrutiny for their internal dilemmas, they seem more peaceful to other actors. This allows them to advocate for international norms and liberal principles to find a solution to the crisis. For instance, by revoking Article 370, India tried to portray the normalization in Kashmir. To avoid international scrutiny, it continues to fund militant organizations like BIA and BLF for creating militancy in Balochistan. When the state of Pakistan resorts to the kinetic options, India portrays Pakistan as safe heaven for terrorists. For this purpose, it also refused to allow its cricket team to visit Pakistan for matches. This not only diverted attention from its alleged normalization claims but also allowed itself as a peaceful democratic country. Consequently, various countries deem India the best destination for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) while subject Pakistan to scrutiny owing to security concerns. Hence, the portrayal of one's terrorism also provides an opportunity for depicting one's own state as a responsible entity.

The aforementioned factors clearly illustrate why the terrorism in one state is depicted as freedom struggle by another. To avoid the challenges emanating from the portrayal of Terrorism as a freedom struggle owing to geopolitical concern, states must take certain steps that mainly encompass;

Date: _____

Day: _____

Firstly, states should complement Kinetic measures with non-Kinetic measures. The Kinetic measures should tend to stifle the militancy that challenges the writ of the state by creating chaos and disorder. For instance, terrorist organizations like BLA, BIF, Al-Qaeda, TIP should be dealt with iron hand if they are more inclined towards creating predicament rather than disarmament. Conversely, other political factions, who are ready to disarm themselves, should be provided rehabilitation and made part of mainstream society.

Secondly, states should also seek international help to address concerns regarding terrorism. This will foster the environment of understanding and cooperation. Additionally, it will also assist in resolving the debate regarding Terrorism and Freedom struggle. By doing so, international scrutiny will help in addressing legitimate grievances of the parties concerned. Besides this, states will work together to curb increasing regional and global terrorism that continue to wreak havoc on international peace and security.

Thirdly, terrorist factions should be isolated from other factions of the society. For this purpose, states should invest in human resource development. Sometimes, terrorism exploit political and economic grievances of people. Consequently, people also resort to joining such organizations. If their grievances are addressed through political means, they will remain apprised of agendas of such organizations. Consequently, no other actor will be able to portray terrorism as a freedom

struggle for its own objectives.

Fourthly, states should focus on curbing the spread of extremism and misinformation. The social media has become a significant tool in the hands of terrorist and extremist organization to disseminate the misinformation campaigns. For this purpose, the concept of "thick description"—promoting tolerance and harmony among various religious and cultural factions—should be encouraged. Secondly, people should be given education through media and press regarding misinformation to breed narrative building.

Fifthly, states should also adopt inclusive approach towards people. For this purpose, it should grant political autonomy to those regions who advocate for determining their fate through political means. The right of self-determination must be ensured to resolve the debate regarding terrorism and freedom struggle. This will promote peace and stability in not only one's country but also regions—fostering the environment of cooperation and trust.

In a nutshell, one's man terrorism is viewed as freedom struggle for another man for political, economic and cultural reasons. Usually, states capitalize on this debate for their geo-political reasons while fostering an environment of mistrust. To address these challenges, both domestic and external steps are needed to be taken to avoid states from being subjected to illegitimate scrutiny and to promote political rights of communities subjected to violence and grievances. This will also foster the environment of peace and stability in the region.