



Lone Wolf Attacks - Australian Prespective

What is the issue?

\n\n

\n

- Terror operatives have increasingly promoted decentralised 'Lone wolf' attacks across cities.
- Australia has been advocating to perceive the new trend as a psychological crime - which calls for a radically different approach.

\n

\n\n

How are lone-wolfs different?

\n\n

\n

- The common thread among all such attacks was that all these people acted on their own without any command from elsewhere.
- Most lone-wolfs get indoctrinated online out of own volition without any direct contact with radical propagators.
- Notably, objects of common use - like trucks, axes, knives are innovatively used as deadly weapons.
- These features of lone-wolf attacks helps in effectively skiping the conventional surveillance radars.

\n

\n\n

\n

- This strand of terrorism is not akin to conventional war that can have definitive beginning and end.

\n

- It is rather closer to crime, which can best understood through, and handled by, the tools of law enforcement.

\n

\n\n

\n

- Therefore, the security challenge is to be more efficient when it comes to preventing indoctrination than the actual act.

\n

\n\n

How should investigations proceed?

\n\n

\n

- Structured operations of conventional terrorism called for a targeted nuanced policing coupled with tough physical action at times.

\n

- On the contrary, the lone wolf strand is practically untraceable by the security radar.

\n

- Hence, this stresses the need for enhancing security dialogue to a massive population in a non-targetive way to trace for specifics.

\n

- Also, in most cases till now, a family member or a friend noticed a significant change in the activities of the would-be attacker.

\n

- But he/she wasn't sure of reporting it due to lack of substantiation and the fear of an excessively muscled police interventions.

\n

- While in most cases behavioural aberrations might just be innocent changes, tracking them would help enhancing security.

\n

- Softening the tone of police responses would enhance reporting and thereby increase tracability of lone-wolfers.

\n

\n\n

Is it related to Psychological health?

\n\n

\n

- Australia had constituted many 'Fixated Threat Assessment Centers' in 2006.

\n

- That center was created to find people with obsessive, stalker-like fixations (not terrorists) on public figures and celebrities.
\n
- Such people were overwhelmingly found to suffer from some form of mental illness, particularly psychosis.
\n
- These centers has partnership with the health department to council these people and enhance their social cognition.
\n
- **Terror prespective** - Research to find patterns in the personalities of conventional terrorists have proven futile.
\n
- But preperators of lone-wolf terrorism, have been found to exhibit a higher level of psychological disturbance and depression.
\n
- Hence, expanding the scope of operations of such centers would in fact screen out lone-wolfers.
\n
- The mental illness angle would also redefine remedial programs and rehabilitation for lone-wolfers.
\n

\n\n

\n\n

Source: New York Times

\n



IAS PARLIAMENT
Information is Empowering
A Shankar IAS Academy Initiative