Broadening Boundaries of Terrorism

What is the issue?

- Acts of violence are widespread and increasingly being carried out in the name of religion, even by commoners and children.
- In this backdrop, here is a look at the prevalence of the ideas of religion and terrorism in the present age.

What is the worrying trend?

- Violence in the name of God is certainly not new.
- Terrorism existed, but it was a faraway, unpredictable event.
- For most people, terrorism was nothing but another piece of news.
- But, the worrying trend is that the wings of terrorism is spreading beyond terrorist groups and trained militias.
- Commoners and children are getting to be part of the mob now.
- Attacks are carried out across religions in the name of God.

What role is terrorism playing?

- Terrorism may never succeed in overthrowing the government, or in controlling large territories.
- However, it is becoming clear that terrorists have managed to implant the idea of violence and hatred in everyone.
- By all means, embracing the idea of violence and hatred does not make a person a terrorist or perpetrator of violence.
- Nevertheless, continuous expressions of hostility and contempt would have created something worse than terrorism itself.
- For instance, fear would no longer be a rare sentiment with a cyclical life, but a real and permanent feeling.
- In every corner of the world, “us” versus “them” has become the main discourse.
- It is no more the argument in a particular segment of the society.
- It has instead become the discourse at the grass roots as well.

How is the idea of religion transforming?

- The idea of religion as a peaceful path has been shattered.
- The idea that humanism will promote equality and union also lies in ruins.

- In all, the world is at a crossroads, where broader human values are being replaced by exclusive group values.
- Justice, equality, fairness, and peace are only being applied to groups.
- It is only about “us”, and never concerns “others”.

What is the paradoxical reality?

- Modern technology has been accelerating rapidly since the turn of the millennium.
- Consequently, automation and scientific discoveries are diluting the rigid boundaries among people.
- However, despite the possibility for closeness, people are not made citizens of the world.
- Instead, people tend to fortify themselves in a group that distinguishes itself from another.
- Freedom and democracy have certainly empowered individuals.
- However, on the other hand, in the name of freedom and democracy, radical ideas are being talked about.
- These radicals do not recognise that their ideas are anti-democratic and do not value freedom.
- In many cases, their attempts to force these ideas have ended in disturbance and assault.

How does the future look?

- In modern times, the collapse of a dictatorial regime in the time of the internet and digital revolution could lead to contradictory outcomes.
- It could trigger aspirations in one set of people, whereas a larger number of people could feel threatened.
- Those who feel threatened could act in self-defence.
- When people fortify themselves inside religion, they also embrace the idea of hatred spread by terrorist groups and action.
- This is when the “us” versus “them” discourse and the struggle in the name of God become one and the same.
- The world will continue to move forward; the same problems will repeat.
- Terror too may reappear in the name of country, God, power, or some other term.

Source: Indian Express



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