



## BIOTERRORISM: NAV YUGAM NAV YUDDHAM

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### ABSTRACT

“Bacteria’s don’t respect borders” very well embodies the dilemma of the present era. The Nations today are so immense in their personal development and economic race that they seem to forget that like humans bacteria does not respect the divisions that are made in this world. That the problem we are facing is not some personal affair of any nation but a global situation which requires efforts on national as well as global level. It tends to forget that the science which helps us in our development can also be the reason behind our doom. This past decades were all for Medical science, as many major inventions and development were seen. The diseases which were considered incurable are now easily cured. Development of new vaccines and their ease of availability was main objective. All of which seem to be achievable today, but as the saying goes “if there is honey the bees will come from nine mountains away” it seems that all these facilities has allured some uninvited guests one of which is what we are discussing further, also known as Bioterrorism. The incidences of same has been recorded in past, but what will be the aftermaths of such attack in this globally connected world with no obligations? Medical preparedness is basic necessity, but what are global efforts against these inhumane practices? And what else should be prepared? Are some questions discussed in the paper.

### INTRODUCTION

As the title goes Nav Yugam Nav Yuddham. In this striving sphere of all the new achievements and tremendous establishments of mankind along with comes the dark side or we can say improved dark side cause terrorism is a problem which this world has faced from far many decades and is still facing but an updated version famously know to all as Bioterrorism. This is a kind of terror which can be spread through various forms in different means and most importantly is hard to detect. It has all the features which were lacking in the older version. Thus we can say, in this era along with advance technologies and innovated inventions we have invented a newer and improved version of terror.

In Hindu mythology it is believed that **Shrimad Bhagwat Geeta** has the solutions to all the problems of human kind. Looking at the current scenario a popular verse of Geeta strucked down my mind which we have all grew up listening to....

“यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति भारतः ।  
अभ्युत्थानमधर्मस्य तदात्मानं सृजाम्यहम् ॥  
परित्राणाय साधूनाम् विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम् ।  
धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय सम्भवामि युगे युगे ॥”<sup>1</sup>

I think they always knew that human kind will lead themselves to the path of self-destruction where they themselves will be the reason for destruction of their kind, there have been numerous methods but the one main cause of concern today is BIOTERRORISM. The reason behind this being main cause of concern is, in the present years where we are facing the consequences of decades of our negligence in terms of

<sup>1</sup> Bhagwat Geeta, chapter 4 verse 7-8



extreme natural disasters. Mankind itself is trying to create an epidemic catastrophe which the world is not ready to face. Yet for the fulfilment of their diminutive ambition of satisfying their evil motives or to parch their desire to see fear, pain and terror among the society. The traces of such incidences can also be seen in the history when microbial species outbreak against homosapiens has killed far more people than war. In the primal time from Greeks in 300 BC when they befouled the well and drinking water supplies of their rivals from animal corpse to the recents in world war I and II when Germans and Japanese used various infected pathogens and fleas against Europe and China to cause germ warfare in former and plague outbreak in later also in this decade when post mails infected with anthrax were used in Washington, 2001 after one week of September terrorist attack.

The idea behind stating all these incidences was to draw your attention to this unmasked demon of terror. Because we are very well versed with the term terrorism which is always related with the incidences like suicide bombers, plane hijack, quashing famous buildings, which has created fear among all. But unaware with the fact that how this advancement of technological development has also gifted us with this upgraded unmasked demon of terrorism known as bioterrorism. This is that uncovered face of terror which will horrify the people and the nation with the inimical consequences of it.

But the question which emerges is what exactly is Bioterrorism? As it is mentioned above bioterrorism in an advanced form of

terrorism where instead of using technologies of weapons, biotechnology and nanotechnology are used to create such viruses which once infected are hard to conquer. Or in adroit terms has been defined as "Intentional use of Pathogen or biological product to cause harm to human, animal, plant or environment, or to intimidate a society or influence the conduct of a government"<sup>2</sup>. The use of such products as weapons by a nation against other or by undermining group within nation is called bio warfare while use of such kind of weapons for a terrorist activity is known as bioterrorism. For instance we are all well aware with the HIV virus which is dangerous to our health because the primary functions which it does is it destroys the alarm cells of the immune system which prepares our body to fight against any disease and because of the damage caused to these cells the immune system of our body becomes weak and thus get attacked by any disease which result in death of the person. In the same manner this weapon can be used to ruin the functioning of the country. The people, trade, business, economy etc. are considered as the immune system of the country which being attacked by the bacteria's can demolish the nation. This biotechnology is just like a termite which eats the wood from inside and mould it to be hollow. It has become a pertinent to understand and make a dent in its progress. Bioterrorism is a futuristic aspect with historical traces. In earlier times it was use to win war against enemy monarch or country and in present time its resourcefulness to create immense hysteria and incomprehensible fear has always enchanted terrorist. If we take a look at past incidences, from the middle ages when diseased cadaver

<sup>2</sup> Shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in



and bodies were precipitated over enemies walls in attempt to induce sickness to the French and Indian war where small pox infected blankets were provided by britishers to Indians. Even in World War II biological weapons were experimented on prisoners by Japanese unit 731 in Manchuria. In modern times, there was a suspicious outbreak of scrub typhus in North-eastern Indian during Indo-Pakistan war 1965, as well as in 1995 after the gulf war when Iraq was found developing aircrafts and bombs containing Bacillus anthracis and botulinum toxin. But the US anthrax mail incident should be considered as tip off iceberg to reignite biological warfare research and preparedness. In the current highly technological and connected world the results of such attack can be more severe. To fathom the degree of destruction it may cause we can take a look into the present scenario in Wuhan, China. Where the 2019-nCoV virus also known as novel coronavirus was identified. The mortality rate in the province has gone up to 3.16 % in comparison to the rest of china's 0.16%. The capital Hubei of population around 60 million in province Wuhan is landlocked. Not only this but china has faced loss of around \$62 billion in growth just in weeks of virus being identified due to; lack in tourism this Lunar New Year, shutting down of various international retail centres. International sale of Chinese products is diminishing due to fear of its transfection. China has a major role in integrated international supply chain which is a major cause of concern for international trade. If happened such kind of pandemic not only impacts the attacked country or region but globally. As we can see this virus has affected almost all the nations around the world and the increasing number of death rates are terrorising the people all over the world. This

type of hysteria is what terrorist look out for. Whereas if we take a look at the impact of a terrorist attack though it is disastrous but cannot cause such a large scale mortality and morbidity in large population and create civil disruption in shortest time possible. Also the fact that these agents are highly infectious, easy to disperse and are accessible without a hitch due to their use in development of vaccines and anti-biotic is just a cherry on the cake for terrorist groups. We live in age where we prepare to protect ourselves from the fear of unknown. The reason behind discussing the impact of 2019 n-CoV was to give an abstraction of a bioterrorist attack aftermath and to raise the concern of conscience towards this fear. Furthermore the World Health Organisation based on scientific calculation has also given estimation of probable causalities through an experiment, that if around 110 pounds of dried anthrax powder is released in atmosphere by aerosolisation for around 120 minutes in a city of half a million inhabitants which resulted in death of around 19% of total population with 25% of population being incapacitated. It also says that the tremendous strain on resources for providing medical facilities, anti-biotic, and disposing of death bodies will lead to rapid breakdown in medical and civil infrastructure. During such time vigilance in medical preparedness for surveillance, diagnosis and implementation of treatment is essential but the intriguing question is what is the advancement of law in this scientific or more specifically biotechnological dilemma?

There is a thriving organisation of international law which provides a platform on a global level to combat against bioterrorism. The different approaches have been done in various dimensions to overcome



the fear of this attack. The international law specifically covers the law regarding the criminal attacks against the humanity in the world where public interest is hindered at large. The acts of bioterrorism is such heinous that it should be criminalise by imposing heavy punishment on a global level. With the intention to work on the implementation of law relating bioterrorism they came up with a treaty of Geneva Protocol which was signed in 1925 which prohibited the avail of deleterious gases and use of bacteriological tactics of warfare in international armed conflicts which had 38 signatories. The first multilateral disarmament treaty signed by 170 nations is Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention 1972 whose agenda was to impede the use of certain class of weapons which has no justification for vigilant or tranquil use. This treaty restricts the nations from accumulation, stockpile, production or transposition of biological agents and toxins. As we move forward in 2001, the terrorist attack by Al-Qaeda on September 11 which involved hijacking and crashing of passenger jet airline due to which 2996 people were killed. After this incident US legislature by amending their public health laws introduced “*Model State Emergency Health Powers Act (Model Act)*” and “*USA PATRIOT ACT*” the former to control epidemics and respond to bioterrorism and the latter to substantiate US by providing appropriate tools required to intercept and obstruct such attacks. In March 2007 the Indian National Crisis Management Committee approved a model of standard operating procedures for prohibiting and responding to bioterrorism attack. In 2002 “*Public Health Security and Bioterrorism preparedness and response act*” was introduced. In 2004 project *BIOSHIELD* was also passed by the US government. The

United Nation Organisation on a global level combat laws on terrorism. The role which an international organisation like the United Nations play is very significant and extensive in such matters. As it mandates and is ingenious in various aspects of security, development and international cooperation. The agenda which it propagates is to maintain the harmony and peace in the nations at global level by enacting different laws and regulations in relation to terrorism. The UN has signed a number of treaties, protocols and conventions related to terrorism that obliged state to criminalize specific declaration of terrorism at the international level. The penal code at international level provide with some sections which deals with the offences related to terrorism activities in chapter 18.

#### CONCLUSION

“यदि न प्रणयेद् राजा दण्डं दण्ड्येष्वतन्द्रितः ।  
शूले मत्स्यानिवापक्ष्यन् दुर्बलान् बलवत्तराः ॥”

If the person deserving punishment are not punished than the stronger will boast the weaker section in the society just like fish on the spit. Grams for gram biological weapons are most destructive weapons mankind has ever made. Criminalizing such activities on the global level should be the first step. The number of times when countries were alleged using biological weapons even after Geneva protocol were astonishing and eye opening for the UN to make some rigid system against such practices and it introduced BWC biological warfare convention in 1971 and is still in action after all these years. But for bioterrorism there are no such laws or conventions. Which is real threatening. There is a list of blacklisted countries which do not follow the rules against terrorist financing and activities known as FATF BLACKLIST introduced by OECD. This increase the threat of future happening of such biological



intelligence attack. And in the earlier hypothesis of coronavirus it was seen that even the second largest economy like China whose basic administration system is socialist is unable to combat the aftermaths of such outbreak on the citizens and the economy than what will the underdeveloped countries do. The preparedness against such attacks can be distributed in two level. First the global level and second on national level. To deal with problems which affects us on ecumenical level there always has been formation of regional groups from petroleum to trade routes so why not in epidemic crisis. Formation of groups of nation with unified rules against bioterrorist activities will increase the efficiency to whiff out such operations can strengthen new allies and reduce the threat of such attacks. On ecumenical level a committee should be form to keep a close eye on the blacklisted countries and the terrorist groups like Al QAEDA, ISISI whose interest lies in such conveyance. Just like the concept of international laws internationally unified, licensing laws and restrictions on vending and obtaining of biological agents should be enforced on all three categories listed by CDS. Universally recognised committees like WHO, UNICEF should be encouraged to establish conversational programs to ensure the delivery of accurate information. Nations on domestic level should build a two way system in public administration for coordination and Cooperation between the medical and legal department. Both of which plays important role during and after such onslaught. Just like the US enforcement of acts and laws like BIOSHEILD and PATRIOT for empowerment and protection from such intrusions after 2001 other nations should also authorise laws for the same. Enhanced bioterrorism related education and

training for health care professionals should be facilitated.

With the developing era we are indulging ourselves in creating such an atmosphere were not only the human beings are effected but the influence is on the surrounding and resources too. This unmasked demon is leading its footprint in each and every aspect of life and society. It has become a powerful instrument of destruction which can be easily used by anyone to destroy the harmony among the people globally. This is our society and we only have to take steps towards its protection and it's high time that we owe to our responsibilities towards the mankind.

***“Strong people stand for themselves, but stronger people stand-up for the others”***

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