### Human Rights & Terrorism

**Extract from my book**

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Terrorism and Human Rights often point to a plethora of issues that one keeps finding accosting academia as well as policy-making. However, the grey areas within policy-making and academia that is appropriated by policy-makers/policy-making (an old recognition and honest policy-making is considered as much a myth as is honest academia. The conjunctions of the issues of terrorism with real politik & real politik with policy-makers present issues and difficulties of “not that politics is the last resort of the scoundrel and then finding yourself to be a scoundrel of sorts – having voted at least some of them in those positions” but rather the issue of the very basis of academia & policy-making when they apparently coalesce into those epistemic communities that are said to be nothing more than brothels run by the triad of the industrial complex-arms industry-politicians (and not politics). The issue of the very basis since it is your money that pays both academia largely as well as the politician including the said notorious triad that academia prostitutes in the brothel of. The issue of academia as a prostitute and academics as prostitutes aren’t very far off, leave alone the long line of command & control chain that they all represent. And yet the issue of terrorism is sought to occupy as much of public attention as is their money & lives when combating an issue that is well – blended in most cases with medieval real politik based upon crusade that Christianity is carrying on as is Islam and Judaism with Islam said to be fighting it and failingly as states though succeeding within the internal situations and cases of states that are hoisting the crusade upon them or are said to do so. Human Rights & Terrorism often are sought to be blended in well to garner more public money even as political elites make their millions and beggars increase on their streets including serious issues of mal-governance sought to be passed off as complexities of a world the policy-makers work well to ensure and network. Yet Human Rights & Terrorism do not present much of a problem as issues, when policy-making & academia are not hapless prostitutes in the brothels of the triad that runs states more than anything else – with policy-makers urged to make their small millions and vanish, till the next crops up to find their millions or already are well-socialized in the rituals of the brothel they can choose to be part of or run. Most choose to run them and we are back again at Human Rights & Terrorism as issue that are simple when not served by prostitutes & pimps.
Amidst the volumes dedicated to the subject and topic of Human Rights, the inalienable assertion of Human Rights can be made as the Right to Life with dignity (with the right of the individual to decide its meaning(s) under conditions of multiple choices including the crucial: none of the above). Factsheet No. 32 issued by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights entitled Human Rights, Terrorism and Counter-terrorism looks at terrorism as a political and/or ideological activity, while it asserts the interdependent and indivisible nature of the Human Rights that fall broadly as involving the “respect for, and protection and fulfilment of, civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights, as well as the right to development. Human rights are universal — in other words, they belong inherently to all human beings — and are interdependent and indivisible.” The assertion of Human Rights as made above reaffirms the UN position while solving to a large extent the definitional/semantic problems of each of the categories mentioned.

Between discussions of ‘Human Rights’ and issues that come across as that of ‘terrorism’ as well as ‘poverty’ encases one between many areas of discussions within academia. The deeper issues that keeps academia alive (of hair-splitting exercises of intellectual timidity while the subject continues being discussed and debated without being solved) point to a the classical problem that scientific myopia often misses and it happens to the most erudite of scholars and scientists (the perils of being human and assuming otherwise in one’s prisonership of yet another human invention that so baffles and confounds academia: specialization): Getting the basics straight. Now what would that be here?

The questions many like throwing up are those assumed by many to be central to a few bread & butter exercises in academia. Namely, the most profound of questions (for many): What is Terrorism? Secondly, What is Poverty? Even if the latter question is rarely ventured into by the same enthusiasts of moral discussions within academia, it is equally important, within the same rules of the game that encourages the asking of the first question - over terrorism. Namely, the normative underpinnings that originally
were meant and still are meant to solve the problem of the issue of Human Rights, Terrorism & Poverty (material poverty, if one has to be precise for the present concern – with the cognitive-emotive poverty via socialization as its failures counting as important indicators when we look at the psycho-cultural factors/markers).

The inalienable assertion of Human Rights by itself solves and answers the various questions that the issue of terrorism and poverty are assumed to be throwing up as we shall see in this paragraph. When one looks at the assertion of Human Rights as noted here, one can follow the necessity of those conditions that would enable the adherence – in both letter and spirit – of Human Rights. Those conditions and their delineation into specific bullet-point parameters that can have legalistic as well as juridical teeth also help serve as a marker for societies/states and their classifications or ordering/ranking.

The issue of violence immediately comes up the moment we speak of Human Rights juxtaposed with Terrorism & poverty. The notion of the First Principle becomes imperative – in laying down that what would constitute violence (both direct as well as indirect – amidst the notion of the Weberian state and its (legitimate) monopoly of violence – where legitimate arises from the concern of defending the Human Rights from its violators.) as well as where in the spectrum would one put terrorism as well as poverty – amidst concerns over how does one look at the issue of poverty. The linkages between poverty and terrorism – within the realm of South Asia and more specifically India indicate a plethora of issues while acknowledging India’s rather shoddy performances as a Human Rights positive state in the classificatory rankings of successful states.

The moment such implications of classificatory rankings come up, one can always expect a deluge of arguments to come forth from states and societies that fall in the lower order of the classificatory order. One can also expect failed voices from the successful states either re-assert an arrogance of achievement or lend voice and support to the arguments of the less successful states. These are issues that do form the quagmire of global real-politik as well as mark the intransigence of many regional security complexes.
– more notably that of South Asia while its socialization process(es) that come under scrutiny amidst the actors there and their objectives vis-a-vis Human Rights and adherences to it. The notion of the Human Rights as a state responsibility assumes the functional state – where functional means a state that is able to discharge its duties and responsibilities. Secondly, the notion of looking at state-mediated violences comes across as a common concern for Human Rights when one speaks of a state, since the ‘weberian’ state is a dominant state model in most cases and where violence is a state monopoly and is expected to be successfully implemented even where the notions of justice and its dispensations (where violations occur) are again state responsibility. One has to keep in one’s cognizance the, thus, necessity for First Principles and thus the need for a classificatory scheme for states when one speaks of Human Rights. Poverty – in a functional state would count as the failure of the state.

The structural (socio-economic-political) markers are often to be found intertwined with the psycho-cultural ones and that again opens up another plethora of literature within the Social Sciences seeking to answer, defend or offer lame-duck excuses for failures. The lame-duck excuse variants of arguments usually pertain to failures in socialization as well as responsibility that comes with authority and the delegation/execution of power (that accrues from authority), and pose the larger threat. Unless they should equate poverty with crime; crime with terrorism; terrorism with nationalism, etc., with the failed voices from the more successful states lending in either their ill-deserved arrogance or ill-deserved sympathies. The juxtaposition of global processes and state-societal failures as natural corollaries do not explain the more successful states and their rankings since unlike the annual Fiscal Reports of companies, Human Rights and its qualifying markers that come from the Human Development Indices (where the qualitative markers are more important than the quantitative markers) are rather different. The difference is where we enter into the causal factors of poverty and that makes it necessary to take into account the structural as well as psycho-cultural markers on an equal weightage.
It would be prudent to mention that taking the psycho-cultural factors into account does not result in the confession of a wooden-leg syndrome excusability (for example a pick-pocket citing his/her propensity and socialization as an excuse for his/her activities) nor does it condone such behaviour. The psycho-cultural factors are useful indicators to enable structural reforms/changes that can take care of such problems (including the issue area of crime and its other extreme of violence – terrorism). Taking the psycho-cultural markers into account becomes useful (if done correctly and where both the qualitative and quantitative markers are useful indicators with the recognition that is true with statistics – they merely are indicators) to also separate the wheat from the chaff – i.e. the healthy from the unhealthy. In more dramatic terms, the value of a healthy arm is often felt more acutely when the other arm has been diagnosed as cancerous or lost to other misfortunes/accidents. Psycho-cultural markers (if done correctly) helps augment and improve the structural performances. It also helps save the healthy arm in such situations, and in states like India – this need is much more acute given its steadfast shoddy rankings vis-a-vis the more successful states of the world.

Within the context of the inalienable assertion of Human Rights as made here, the notion of what is healthy and what is not becomes self-descriptive and self-evident and also does help in warding off the noises of diseases (xenophobia, crime, terrorism, corruption, etc.) while encouraging the growth of the healthy body politic and a healthy society at large.

It is with interest that one notes the problem of Justice in certain discussions. The notion of justice can never be established without first establishing the parameters of a just and ideal society and conditions, contra Amartya Sen in his book The Idea of Justice. The second problem that arises lies in determining where to place societies and states vis-à-vis the ideal conditions (negative freedom & positive peace) – in the determination of what would be justice and when one posits Justice vis-à-vis Human Rights and as adherence to Human Rights.
The notion of where to place individuals is never a problem since it is those ideal conditions that form the foundational basis for deriving notions and ideals for and of justice. Since the limitations are of the human ability (monitoring, determination & the necessary separation of the individual from the society – a society socialized in violence like the Taleban or the mafiosi can not have its members expected to be set free and with honour and a financial aid package of a few million dollars for the wooden leg syndrome. Just like a rapist can not be expected to be let off for having a wooden leg syndrome. A wooden leg syndrome is a rapist’s problem and he or she would need to find a man/woman who likes being raped – where his/her enjoyment in being raped may be his/her wooden leg syndrome. When these two conditions meet, it becomes consensual. This notion of consensus is crucial to democracies and talks and discussions over justice, etc. An individual who arises out from such a society and is in conformity to the commonly acceptable normative standards vis-à-vis Human Rights, becomes much more important and heroic than an average person from a society that allows for a socialization that encourages and defends Human Rights), it is always prudent to first set the ideal conditions and their inviolability as the parameters for the determination of the notion of justice for individuals, in the first place or what are also known as the First Principles. Or as mentioned before and despite the fears of being repetitive - where would be the foundations from which the notion of justice and Human Rights is to be derived?

This discussion brings us to another area where many terrorists push forth for the notions of a “just” society as the platform from where to justify their acts of terror as a political act. Having already noted earlier the patent anti-political nature of terrorism, the notions of a “just” society continues to be a political aim and objective for many. Within the ambit of the developing states and nations, the notions of a “just” society often finds one espousing social democracy or socialism as an ideological platform and
which again does not condone terrorism as an act. Nor does it condone the usage of violence – both direct as well as indirect.

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