

COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY

Terrorism has emerged as one of the gravest threats to global peace and stability in the 21st century. Beyond the immediate destruction it causes through violence, loss of life, and disruption of normal life, terrorism breeds fear, mistrust, and division within societies. Eliminating the terror element is not merely the responsibility of law enforcement agencies; it requires a collective effort from governments, civil society, communities, and individuals. At the forefront of combating terrorism is the role of effective governance and strong security apparatus. Law enforcement agencies, intelligence networks, and counter-terrorism forces must operate with precision, vigilance, and coordination to dismantle terror networks, track down militants, and prevent attacks. Modern terrorism is increasingly sophisticated, often funded and coordinated across borders, making intelligence sharing and international cooperation critical. Governments must also ensure stringent legal frameworks that empower authorities to act swiftly while upholding human rights and due process. However, focusing solely on force is insufficient. Terrorism is often rooted in social, economic, and ideological vulnerabilities. Poverty, unemployment, lack of education, and social marginalization can make individuals susceptible to extremist ideologies. To eradicate terrorism, societies must address these underlying causes through inclusive development, access to quality education, and employment opportunities, particularly for youth who are most vulnerable to radicalization. Community engagement programs and awareness campaigns can further help counter extremist narratives and create resilient communities. Equally important is the role of technology and media. Social media platforms, while offering connectivity, have often been misused to spread extremist propaganda and recruit vulnerable individuals. Governments and civil society must work together to monitor, regulate, and counter online radicalization through digital literacy, ethical use of technology, and dissemination of positive, fact-based narratives. Education also plays a pivotal role in cultivating critical thinking, tolerance, and understanding across communities. Parents, educators, and community leaders must remain vigilant and proactive in guiding youth toward constructive engagement rather than destructive paths. Finally, the fight against terrorism demands international solidarity. Terrorism respects no borders, and collaborative efforts among nations in intelligence sharing, law enforcement training, and coordinated policy frameworks are crucial. Countries must also hold accountable those who finance, shelter, or propagate terrorism in any form. Eliminating the terror element in society is a multidimensional task that requires a balanced strategy of security enforcement, social development, education, and community engagement. It demands vigilance, unity, and resilience from all sections of society. While terror can shake our cities and instill fear, it is our collective determination, awareness, and proactive efforts that can truly eradicate this menace. A society united in its resolve against terrorism not only safeguards its present but also ensures a future of peace, harmony, and progress for generations to come.

A Wale up call from Red Fort: The Invisible Enemy Within

■ BAIKAL CHAWALGAMI

Delhi once again trembled under the shadow of terror after years of uneasy calm, as a devastating explosion rocked the national capital near the Red Fort Metro Station. The city, which had long enjoyed a deceptive sense of security, was jolted back into grim reality when a high-intensity bomb blast ripped through a moving Hyundai i20, instantly killing ten people and injuring twenty-five others. The inferno engulfed nearby vehicles, shattered glass across a wide radius, and plunged the bustling evening into chaos and horror. What should have been an ordinary evening in Delhi's historic heart turned into a scene of carnage, smoke, and wailing sirens. The blast, which obliterated the vehicle and killed all three occupants inside, also left a trail of destruction-damaging several parked cars, auto-rickshaws, and even injuring unsuspecting pedestrians caught in its fury. The magnitude of the explosion, however, belied the relatively limited number of casualties, given the density of people in the vicinity. Investigators later confirmed that the car had been parked in a nearby lot for over two hours before the blast, suggesting deliberate planning and careful timing by the perpetrators. Yet the nature of the explosion has baffled experts and security personnel alike. In the aftermath, forensic teams and bomb disposal experts swarmed the site but were perplexed by what they did not find. There was no crater, no metallic shrapnel, no typical remnants of conventional explosives-no detonator wires, no circuitry, no fragments of commonly used bombs. Instead, the evidence pointed toward an unconventional, possibly chemical or fuel-based ignition mechanism. Forensic scientists speculated that the explosion might have been triggered by volatile vapour under high pressure, or by an improvised chemical reaction rather than a standard explosive device. The ferocity of the blast, which produced an immense fireball visible for several hundred metres, indicated either a timer-based or remote-control mechanism. Yet the complete absence of electronic components has left investigators grappling

with more questions than answers. The car's registration number, HR 26CE 7674, led authorities to its original owner, Mohammad Salam, a resident of Gurugram in Haryana. Salam had purchased the vehicle in 2013, but records showed that the car had changed ownership at least four times since then, complicating the investigation. Initial reports hinted at the involvement of a Pulwama resident, identified as Dr. Umer, believed to be among those inside the ill-fated vehicle. The possibility that one or more of the occupants were suicide bombers cannot be ruled out, though experts noted that a fidayeen-style attack in a moving vehicle is exceptionally rare and difficult to execute. Adding to the mystery, only hours before the explosion, Haryana police had arrested a Kashmiri doctor from Faridabad, accused of plotting a major terrorist attack. In an alarming revelation, authorities recovered nearly 2,900 kilograms of explosives, twenty timers, multiple remote-control devices, a rifle, and live ammunition from the doctor's residence. Seven of his alleged accomplices were also detained. The timing of the arrests and the Delhi explosion suggests that both incidents could be part of a larger terror network operating under a single command structure-possibly orchestrated by Pakistan-based handlers. The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has now taken over the case, probing the blast as an act of terrorism. Early findings point toward the involvement of Lashkar-e-Taiba, the Pakistan-sponsored militant organization known for previous attacks in India. Intelligence sources suggest that the attack was meticulously planned to coincide with rush-hour traffic in one of Delhi's most crowded zones, magnifying both the psychological and symbolic impact. The choice of Red Fort, a national icon and a symbol of India's sovereignty, underscores the terrorists' intent to strike at the heart of the nation. This brutal and barbaric act has once again exposed the vulnerability of India's internal security mechanisms. The fact that such a high-profile attack could be executed in the capital, despite the presence of multiple security agencies, raises uncomfortable questions

about vigilance, preparedness, and coordination. It underscores a worrying pattern-Delhi Police and intelligence networks often appear reactive rather than proactive, awakening from slumber only after tragedy has struck. The complacency in security arrangements, particularly around sensitive locations like Red Fort, represents a lapse that cannot be brushed aside. Union Home Minister Amit Shah convened a high-level emergency meeting with senior officials from the NIA, Intelligence Bureau, and Delhi Police, assuring the public that the perpetrators would be apprehended and punished. He emphasized the need for heightened surveillance, especially in metropolitan areas, and ordered a comprehensive audit of all security protocols across the capital. The government's resolve, however, will be tested not in words but in the effectiveness of its response. This latest act of terror rekindles painful memories of previous attacks that have scarred Delhi over the past two decades. From the Parliament attack of 2001 to the serial blasts of 2008, and now this carnage of 2025, the capital continues to be a preferred target for those who seek to undermine India's peace and stability. The frequency and audacity of such strikes demonstrate that terrorism remains alive, adaptive, and disturbingly sophisticated. It also reveals the emergence of a chilling new trend-the rise of "white-collar terrorism." Increasingly, highly educated professionals such as doctors and engineers are being drawn into extremist networks, lending them technical expertise and legitimacy that make detection far more difficult. The arrest of medical practitioners like Dr. Umer and his associates has shed light on how terror outfits are infiltrating intellectual and professional circles. These individuals, outwardly respectable and well-qualified, operate beneath the radar, often exploiting their social standing to conceal radical affiliations. Their involvement marks a dangerous evolution in the nature of terrorism, transforming it from the realm of disenfranchised militants to that of educated conspirators driven by ideology or coercion.

For the citizens of Delhi, this incident has reignited fear and frustration. The sense of safety that had gradually returned to the capital has been shattered once more. Families of the victims are left grieving and bewildered, asking the same haunting question that echoes through the city's streets: When will this bloodshed end? How many more innocent lives must be lost before decisive action is taken? The recurring cycle of outrage, investigation, and eventual complacency cannot continue indefinitely. There is now an urgent need for a comprehensive overhaul of India's counter-terrorism architecture. Intelligence gathering must evolve beyond reactive mechanisms to predictive, data-driven surveillance. Coordination between central and state agencies needs to be seamless, not bureaucratic. Moreover, counter-radicalization initiatives must be strengthened to address the ideological roots of extremism-particularly among educated youth who may be susceptible to indoctrination under the guise of religious or political grievance. The attack on Delhi is not just a crime-it is an act of war against the nation's integrity and its people. It demands a firm and proportionate response. The time for restraint is over; the government must convey to Pakistan and its proxies that every act of aggression will invite retribution. Diplomacy must give way to deterrence. If required, crossing the Line of Control to dismantle terror infrastructure should not be off the table. In the final reckoning, this tragedy has served as a grim reminder of the persistent threat posed by terrorism and the cost of complacency. Delhi has been shaken, not merely by the force of the explosion, but by the realization that even in an age of heightened security and advanced surveillance, the enemies of humanity continue to strike at will. It is imperative that India rises to this challenge with unflinching resolve, ensuring that the sacrifice of the innocent is not in vain. Only through vigilance, unity, and an uncompromising pursuit of justice can the capital-and the nation-hope to reclaim its peace from the shadow of terror.

Historical Introduction of Our Forests

■ GL KHAJURIA



Nature has endowed the Indian sub-continent with luxuriant and plentiful forest wealth. The vast and varied climatic and geological conditions bore forests of different types and intensities ranging from dry thorny forests to wet evergreens. The coniferous forests of hilly region and the deciduous types along foot hills conglomerates many valuable species which serve for the use of construction of houses, bridges and score of other purposes. The original inhabitants of the country had great reverence for forests and a grove of trees around temples were of ample importance of these trees were considered as sacred as our Gods and Goddesses. And cutting or removal of any of such tree was considered a sin. Under some compelling conditions of a tree was removed, five to ten saplings were planted out to absolve oneself of the sin so committed. As such, the forests played a prominent part in the cultural and spiritual development of our generations. The Rishis and the Munis in search of salvation and attainment of wisdom had their Ashramas in the sylvan surroundings of these forests.

The Ramayana and the Mahabharata give an attractive description of forests like Dandakaranya and Nandavan. The wildlife consisting of varieties of mammals, birds and reptiles also received due attention for their protection and conservation. When Lord Rama told Laxman to fetch firewood for cooking by his consort Sita, He advised him to remove only dead-dried branches of tree. He forwarded him not to cut green branches. Even our Gods and Goddess were much conscious of forest whereas we human are always have become lusty and are hell bent to go to any extent to fill our ladder by injury to the vibrant lush green trees. It is dismaying, painful and ironical too. When we chop down those trees more for our greed than our need. Lord Buddha had messaged us as such; "the forest is a peculiar organism of unlimited and benevolence which sustains us by all means. It offers shade even to the axe man who falls it". Around 2000 BC, there is evidence of a flourishing Dravidian civilization existing in consonance with the forests that were then in such abundance. The early Aryans were pastoral people interested in the pursuance of agriculture but they also cleared forests only in the areas where they actually settled down, establishing habitations and institutions

in the beautiful surroundings of the forests. The records of Chinese pilgrims (600BC) refer to dense Indian forests even in the North-West regions where much depletion of forests has occurred now. Records relating to Alexander's invasion (327 BC) mention existence of dense forests. Babur, the first Mughal emperor to rule Indian in early sixteenth century is reported to have shot in these forests indicating existence of dense forests and wildlife in that period. The abundance of forests created an impression that resources were inexhaustible and thus there was no organized effort to conserve and maintain the forests. Casual instructions appear to have been issued by different ruler from time to time to regulate fallings and earn maximum revenue. During the reign of Chandra Gupta Murya (300 BC), a superintendent of forests was appointed to look after the forests. The protection of wildlife was also a part of his duty. Sometimes specified species of timber value were proclaimed by local rulers as "Royal Trees" felling of which was prohibited without permission otherwise the forests were open to all and the public obtained their requirement without restrictions. The Muslim rulers did not have much special interest in the conservation and organized management of forests.

Their main interest in forests was for hunting. Areas with good wildlife were declared as "Royal hunting reserves" and thus received some protection. But increase in population and need for extension for agriculture continued to make incursions on forest land and its produce. The increasing demands of land for expanding agriculture and demand of timber for Navy and other constructional purposes made considerable inroads on forests and forest wealth so much so that it was felt that the forests may not continue to meet the demands for timber unless some concrete steps were taken for their conservation and maintenance. In 1855, Lord Dalhousie, the Governor general issued a memorandum to the Government of India outlining policy of conservancy for the whole country. By that time, it was clearly recognized by the administration that if the forest were to be conserved, proper scientific management was necessary. In 1856, Lord Dalhousie, appointed District Brandis to take charge of the forest and after 22 years in 1878, the Government honoured Brandish with the title of companion Indian empire and he served a knight commandership in 1880 in recognition of the meritorious service he rendered during the peri-

od of 19 years. Brandis was truly the founder of Indian forestry and it was always befitting to commemorate his achievements. As soon as Brandis was appointed as Inspector General of Forests Cleghorn was appointed to assist him. They were responsible for methodical system of Management of forests in all states. A separate forest enactment as introduced that time. Moreover, with the passage of time, the demand of forest officer increased for the better control and Management of forest. While Forest Research Institute (FRI) came into existence in 1906, the status of forest school was raised to that of college. A separate two years course was started in 1912 at Dehra Dun to train science graduates for the provincial forest services of states. The cadre of these officers formed a link between Indian forest services and forest rangers. It was, however stopped in 1928. The forest research institute is located in a spacious campus called the New Forest. It has fine buildings and vast field research areas. It provides facilities for research in forestry and has received worldwide recognition. The institute is associated with professional training for the forest officers both in the superior as well as the junior levels. The trainings included trainings included within the college as well as outside in the field ion forest management and other allied field such as silviculture, survey and engineering. The colleges impact training to the forest officers on such pattern which make them physically and mentally fit which makes them adequately stout in the administrative and executive activities. With the passage of time, the Indian forest college was re-incarnated and named Indira Gandhi Forest College, Dehra Dun. A short administrative course is imparted at Lal Bahadur Shastri College on Public administration at Dalhousie. The Forest Research institute is overall looked by the Director of F.R.I. and colleges. The forest colleges are both for Indian Forest Officers and Forest Ranges officers under the overall control of the Principals. The FRI and colleges are of global fame where trainees from all Indian states including foreign countries are imparted trainings. With the passage of time, the Indian states opened rangers training college in their respective states. After a detailed imparting two years course, the trainees are awarded degrees to serve in their respective states. (The author is former Deputy Conservator of Forest, J&K)

The Bhairav Temple-where desire gets fulfilled and evil vanishes

■ RAVI ROHMETRA

The specialty of Jammu city is that with great respectfulness it is being called as a city of temples. Situated at Chowk Chabutra in the heart of city of temples in the preached Bhairav temple where Lord Kaal Bhairav is in the form of Natural Pindi. Batuk Bhairav Nath ji is the 5th Rudra of Lord Shiva. Several years ago when repair work was going on in Dhouthly Bazar, the debris was dumped near the temple where the pindi of Lord Kaal Bhairav was the labourers accidentally threw debris into the pond by mistake. The same night, Kaal Bhairav appeared in the contractor's searched out the pindi from the pond and restored to its original place. also, a temple was built there later. That is how Batuk Bhairav Nath Ji temple was built. At present, the temple is getting famous day to day and more people are connecting with this holy place. Presently, Mahant Rumil Sharma is the sole trustee of the Pracheen Shri Bhairav Mandir trust. All the progress and functions are being held under his supervision. The bhandara which was started first around two decades back, has new attained the form of the biggest Bhandara of Jammu. Thousands of people from different parts of the state come here every year to participate in the annual function and seek the blessings of Lord Kaal Bhairav Ji. This year Pooja and havan will be performed at the temple on Shri Kaal

Bhairav Adhtami, Chowk Chabutra and Dhouthly Bazar are colorfully decorated and illuminated. Lord Kaal Bhairav Ji is also the Kul Devta of around 52 Biradri's which include Dutta, Sooden, Anand, Khukhran, sasan etc. Mahant Rumil Sharma said lighting of an oil lamp at the house and shop's entrance, will keep the evil effects of unseen forces away, he has also called upon the people of Jammu irrespective of their caste, creed and colour to participate in Jammu the famous city of temples is a place with numerous spiritual places with fascinating histories. Today we take a religious trip to Bhairav Mandir, Chowk Chabutra, the only Bhairav temple in the city. The old history of the temple is depicted by the architecture and idols of the temple. Bhairav Mandir, Chowk Chabutra, Jammu is also termed as City of Temples for innumerable temples and shrines that are spread across the city crafting a beautiful sanctified ambience. Amongst all the temples, Bhairav Mandir is situated at Chowk Chabutra depicting the old tales to the devotees through its architecture and idols present inside the temples. The temple presents a great spiritual and historical importance for the people of Jammu. Read to know more about its history. History of the temple Bhairav Mandir comes under Shri Bhairav Mandir Trust and the temple is maintained by the sole trustee, Pandit Rumil Sharma who is also the head priest of the Bhairav temple, Chowk Chabutra. This temple is famous for worshipping Kaal Bhairava who is believed to reside in Bhrikuti (eyebrows) of Bhagwan Shiva. The twelve different forms of Bhairav are worshipped in this temple which includes Batuk Bhairav ji, Prachand Bhairav Ji, Swaran Akarshan Bhairav Ji, Kaal Bhairav Ji etc. One of the innumerable places dedicated to Bhakra Ji includes the most famous temple of Kaal Bhairav Ji which is in Ujjain and that particular form is worshipped here in Bhairav Mandir. The reason behind the name of the temple is that Kaal Bhairav Ji himself appeared at this place. As per traditional beliefs, it is said that the temple was constructed about 100 decades back. Since Kaal Bhairav Ji is believed to be the God of nine planets and all almost all Kul Devtas so people from different regions and castes through this temple in large numbers to seek blessings from Bhairavnath. As per prevalent legends, Bhairav nath is considered as the fifth Rudra avatar of Lord Shiva. The routine of worshipping and chanting hymns are done in a particular manner, firstly prayer is done for Lord Shiva and then for Lord Bhairava and as the priest quotes, "In Kalyug it is obligatory to worship Bhairavnath since he is solely responsible for helping us to keep us safe from all the troubles." The traditional folklores explain that Lord Shiva had himself said that Lord Bhairava will safeguard his devotees during the Kalyug. Visiting Hours Donations People who are willing make donations

are advised to buy essential items for the temple instead of paying in cash. The government departments participate and extend full support during the Bhandaras seeking blessings of the Almighty. Lord Bhairav, the fierce and protective manifestation of Lord Shiva, is venerated as the guardian of time and destroyer of evil. Chanting his 108 names invokes divine protection, wisdom, and liberation from fear. Each name reflects his boundless energy, strength, and compassion. Om Bhairavaaya Namaha, Om Bhuutanaathaaya Namaha, Om Bhritaatmane Namaha, Om Bhuutabhaavanaaya Namaha, Om Kshetrageyaaya Namaha, Om Kshetrapaalaaya Namaha, Om Kshetradaaya Namaha, Om Kshatriyaaya Namaha, Om Viraje Namaha, Om Shmashanavaasine Namaha, Om Maamsaashine Namaha, Om Kharvaroshine Namaha, Om Smarantakaaya Namaha, Om Raktapaaya Namaha, Om Paanayaaya Namaha, Om Siddhaaya Namaha, Om Siddhidaaya Namaha, Om Siddhivitaaya Namaha, Om Kankaalaaya Namaha, Om Kalaashmanaaya Namaha, Om Kalaakaashtaaya Namaha, Om Tanaya Namaha, Om Kavaye Namaha, Om Trinetraaya Namaha, Om Bahunetraaya Namaha, Om Pugalahaanaaya Namaha, Om Shuulapaanaya Namaha, Om Khadgapaanaye Namaha, Om Kapaaline Namaha, Om

Dhूमrालोचनाया Namaha, Om Abhirave Namaha, Om Bhauraviinaathaaya Namaha, Om Bhuutapaaya Namaha, Om Yogiinipataye Namaha, Om Dhanadaaya Namaha, Om Dhanahaarine Namaha, Om Dhanavate Namaha, Om Pritivardhanaaya Namaha, Om Naagahaaraaya Namaha, Om Naagaapaashaaya Namaha, Om Vyomakeshaaya Namaha, Om Kapaalabhrite Namaha, Om Kalaaya Namaha, Om Kapaalamaaline Namaha, Om Kamaniyaaya Namaha, Om Kalaanidhaye Namaha, Om Trilochanaaya Namaha, Om Jvalanetraaya Namaha, Om Trishikhine Namaha, Om Trilokashaaya Namaha, Om Trinetrataapaaya Namaha, Om Dibhaaya Namaha, Om Shaantaaya Namaha, Om Shaantajanapriyaaya Namaha, Om Batukaaya Namaha, Om Batuvashaaya Namaha, Om Khatvaangadhaarakaaya Namaha, Om Yanaadhyakshaaya Namaha, Om Pashupataye Namaha, Om Bhikshukaaya Namaha, Om Parichaarakaya Namaha, Om Dhuurtaaya Namaha, Om Digambaraaya Namaha, Om Shuuraaya Namaha, Om Harine Namaha, Om Paandulochanaaya Namaha, Om Prashaantaaya Namaha, Om Shaantidaaya Namaha, Om Siddhaaya Namaha, Om Shankarapriyabandhavaaya Namaha, Om Ashtamuurtaye Namaha, Om Nidhiishaaya Namaha,

Om Gyaanachakshushe Namaha, Om Tapomadaaya Namaha, Om Ashtaadhaaraya Namaha, Om Shadaadhaaraya Namaha, Om Sarpayuktaaya Namaha, Om Shikhisakhaaya Namaha, Om Bhuudharaaya Namaha, Om Bhuudharaadhiishaaya Namaha, Om Bhuupataye Namaha, Om Bhuudharaatmagyaaya Namaha, Om Kankaaladhaarine Namaha, Om Mundine Namaha, Om Naagayagyopavitavate Namaha, Om Jribhhanaya Namaha, Om Mohanaaya Namaha, Om Stambhine Namaha, Om Maranaaya Namaha, Om Kshobhanaaya Namaha, Om Shuddhanilaamjanaprakhyaya Namaha, Om Dvityaghe Namaha, Om Mundabhushitaaya Namaha, Om Balibhuje Namaha, Om Balibhunanathaaya Namaha, Om Baalaaya Namaha, Om Baalapaarakramaaya Namaha, Om Sarvaapattaraanaaya Namaha, Om Durgaya Namaha, Om Dushta Bhuutanishevitaaya Namaha, Om Kaamine Namaha, Om Kalaanidhaye Namaha, Om Kaantaaya Namaha, Om Kaaminivashakridvashine Namaha, Om Sarvasiddhipadaaya Namaha, Om Vaidyaaya Namaha, Om Prabhave Namaha, Om Vishnave Namaha. Chanting these 108 names with devotion helps the devotee connect with the divine essence of Lord Bhairav, invoking his protection, blessings, and guidance on the spiritual path. (The writer is a social worker)