

In the Name of God, the Most Merciful, the Most Kind



November 24, 2018

Ideology Based Terrorism: How Terrorists Kill Everyone Indiscriminately

Fifty people were killed and 72 others injured in a blast which targeted a gathering that marked Eid Milad-u-Nabi (SAWS) in capital Kabul on Tuesday evening. Thus, it is not the first time the terrorists groups attack the civilians and kill them. However, killing the religious scholars on the Birthday of the Holy Prophet of Islam is one of the incidents that shocked different groups of the Afghan society. The angry reactions of the different groups of the society even made the Taliban spokesperson to deny the groups statement indicating that the Taliban members conducted the suicide bombing.

This incident and the alike has made social scholars to pose the question what drives a person to engage in abhorrent and extreme violence, apparently in the service of some ideology? In an effort to understand the choice to participate in political violence, we often speak of radicalization. At its most basic, radicalization is a process best summed up as what goes on before the bomb goes off. Radicalization is a process that (sometimes) culminates in an individual's participation in terrorism and is often associated with an extreme ideology.

Notably, despite this association, having extreme ideas is not a necessary precursor for involvement in political violence. Social scholars argue that one's motivation for involvement is complex, multi layered and oftentimes unknowable. While the notion of motivation itself is a relatively straightforward one - motivation refers to the drive or desire to behave a certain way - identifying an individual's motivation or more accurately motivations for any behavior is unfortunately often an exercise in speculation.

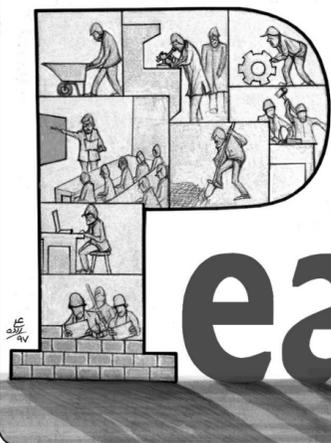
We can only know why people do what they do if they tell us. Understanding why people behave in a certain way is based on an individual's ability to participate in introspection - the process of reflecting on and interpreting one's own mental and emotional processes. Apart from introspection, understanding the drivers for our behavior is also reliant on social factors such as the perceived acceptability of our behavior, as well as how the passage of time impacts on our own reflections on that behavior.

Apart from all the complexity around understanding and interpreting motivation, when considering why people engage in terrorism and political violence, we need to reflect on how the reasons an individual joins a violent organization are very different from why an individual stays involved in a terrorist organization.

Anyway, remaining involved with a terrorist group often has little to do with those motivating factors that encouraged their initial participation. The power of the group becomes salient for an individual as they build relationships with other members and increase their commitment to the group itself. It is often the case that remaining involved with a terrorist group is linked to the interpersonal dynamics of the group and a creeping commitment to the organization, rather than any ideological reasons.

Despite the limited role of religious ideology in radicalization, the new recruits ultimately incorporate an extreme ideology into their own justification for participation in political violence after spending time on the ground interacting with jihadi group members. In effect, they use the ideology to retrospectively explain their motives for joining the terrorist organization.

Therefore, ideology is used as a justification means for the terrorists to justify their cruel acts. As a result one may conclude that, terrorism is political violence as a tool to ensure the interests of a group, organization country or alliance. Based on this, the terrorists kill different group of people by the means of ideology to ensure the political interests of a specific group. Thus, the motive behind killing and wounding tens of Islamic scholars by the Terrorist group of the Taliban was due to the pressures of the United States on our neighboring country due to lack of taking enough measures to destroy the safe heavens on the Taliban in its territory. As the Terrorist group of Taliban is a religious-political tool in the hands of certain countries, it only acts according to the orders it receives from its bosses and kill the people indiscriminately to ensure the interests of its founders.



The Khashoggi Crisis: (Re)Shaping US Politics As Well As Relations with Saudi Arabia

By: James M. Dorsey

The killers of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi may have gotten more than they bargained for.

The killing has sparked multiple battles that are likely in coming months to shape relationships ranging from that between the United States and Saudi Arabia to those between US President Donald J. Trump, his Republican party, the US Congress, and the country's intelligence community.

The fallout of the killing could also shape Mr. Trump's ability to pursue his policy goals in the Middle East, including forcing Iran to its knees and imposing a settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Rather than putting an end to differences over how to respond to Mr. Khashoggi's killing, Mr. Trump's decision to stand by Saudi Arabia and its crown prince, Mohammed bin Salman, irrespective of who may have been responsible for the murder, marks the opening of a new round in what prominent journalist Rami Khouri dubbed "a new era in the Khashoggi case."

The battles are likely to be fought on multiple fronts. One venue will be the Group of 20 (G-20) summit at the end of this month in Argentina with Prince Mohammed, whom the Central Intelligence Agency and many in the US Congress believe to be responsible for the killing, in attendance.

How Prince Mohammed is received at the summit is certain to indicate to what degree the crown prince's international standing has been tarnished and may constitute a reality check for him of the damage Saudi Arabia has suffered as a result of Mr. Khashoggi's killing.

It will also serve as one indication of how much of a battle Mr. Trump may have to fight in seeking to ensure that Prince Mohammed remains insulated from consequences of Mr. Khashoggi's death.

To be sure, Prince Mohammed decided to attend the G-20 summit prior to Mr. Trump's decision to take no further action against Saudi Arabia. Nonetheless, by attending the crown prince, emboldened by Mr. Trump's support, "is daring his international critics to put their rhetoric into action and betting that they won't," said Gulf scholar Kristian Ulrichsen.

The stakes for both Mr. Trump and Prince Mohammed are high.

In leaking his conclusion that Prince Mohammed was responsible for the killing, the CIA was sending two messages: its willingness to take on Mr. Trump against the backdrop of a long strained relationship between the president and the intelligence community and the suggestion that the agency does not believe that Prince Mohammed's survival as king-in-waiting is crucial to US national security or the stability of the kingdom.

Both messages feed into what potentially constitutes the first major policy confrontation between Mr. Trump, the Republican party and Congress. Anti-Saudi sentiment was mounting in Congress already before Mr. Khashoggi's killing because of Saudi conduct of its war in Yemen that has created the worst humanitarian crisis since World War Two. The killing appears to be propelling the Congress into action. The CIA's implicit challenging of Mr. Trump's assessment of the importance of Prince Mohammed was followed by a report by the Washington-based Center for International Policy that concluded that US arms sales to the kingdom accounted for fewer than 20,000 US jobs a year - a far cry from the hundreds of thousands of jobs asserted by the president.

Prince Mohammed's reception at the G-20 summit coupled with the outcome of the potential battle between Mr. Trump, the CIA and Congress could also shape developments in Saudi Arabia.

The kingdom has so far dug in its heels with King Salman relying on concepts of prestige and honour as well as patronage to signal full support for his son while

Prince Mohammed appears to be trying to show that Saudi Arabia is not wholly dependent on the United States.

Bolstering the Center for International Policy report, Reuters reported this week seeing a letter pre-dating the Khashoggi killing in which Prince Mohammed instructs the defence ministry to "focus on purchasing weapon systems and equipment in the most pressing fields" and get training on them, including the Russian S-400 surface-to-air missile system.

The letter takes on added significance with Germany this week imposing an arms embargo on Saudi Arabia and the US Congress potentially adopting similar measures.

The letter goes to the heart of debate in Washington that beyond issues of values is about the importance of the US-Saudi relationship. Members of Congress, and the intelligence and foreign policy community question the relationship's significance despite Mr. Trump's insistence on the value of Saudi arms purchases as well as the kingdom's importance in managing oil prices and supporting US policy in the Middle East.

"The real facts are: 1) the Saudis need US weapons and equipment more than we need to sell them, in part because they demonstrate the US security commitment to the kingdom; and 2) it would be very difficult and expensive for the Saudis to make good on their periodic threats to 'buy foreign' if they can't get what they want from the United States," said former US Middle East negotiator Aaron David Miller in an article for CNN co-authored by Richard Sokolsky.

Messrs. Miller and Sokolsky went on to question Saudi Arabia's importance in countering Iran and forging an Israeli-Palestinian peace settlement. "Saudi Arabia has proven to be too weak and incompetent to be a bulwark against Iran; on the contrary, it has been an enabler of Tehran's influence," the two men said.

They cautioned that "direct and under-the-table (Saudi) contacts (with Israel) are a far cry from open meetings or support for a US peace plan that on issues like Jerusalem and borders violates the Arab consensus and could hand Iran and Sunni Muslims a propaganda windfall."

Despite mounting criticism of the kingdom, most analysts argue that Prince Mohammed is likely to weather the Khashoggi crisis.

Saudi Arabia is, nevertheless, already feeling the fallout of the crisis not only internationally but also in terms of the prospects for Prince Mohammed's plans to reform and diversify the kingdom's economy.

The crisis was one reason why Aramco, the kingdom's giant national oil company, shelved plans to embark on a massive corporate-bond sale to fund a US\$70 billion stake in national petrochemical firm SABIC. The sale was considered after Saudi Arabia earlier suspended plans to take Aramco public in a move that Prince Mohammed had hoped would raise US\$100 billion.

Close ties with the United States have long been at the core of the ruling Al Saud family's survival strategy. They were also at the heart of the approach of Prince Mohammed who appeared determined to ensure at whatever cost US reengagement in the Middle East in alliance with the kingdom following former President Barack Obama's perceived pivot towards Asia and determination to bring Iran back into the international fold.

The rise of Mr. Trump appears to hold out that promise. Mr. Trump's decision to stand by Saudi Arabia and its rulers no matter what positions the president as the kind of friend the kingdom can rely on. The coming weeks and months are likely to be a litmus test of Mr. Trump's ability to keep his end of the bargain.

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CPEC emerging as a connectivity plug

By: Muhamamd Zamir Assadi

The announcement by China and Pakistan for inclusion of Afghanistan into China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) the flagship project of Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has signaled that Chinese connectivity initiative will finally connect the disconnected South Asian, East Asian and Central Asian regions.

The announcement came out following a recent successful visit of Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan to China where both countries adopted such strategic measures which will broaden the scope of CPEC.

While addressing to a trilateral dialogue between China, Pakistan and Afghanistan recently, Chinese ambassador Yao Jing urged Afghanistan to join the Belt & Road Initiative as well as the CPEC.

Addressing the opening session of the 4th Trilateral Dialogue between China, Pakistan and Afghanistan, the Chinese envoy said, "Kabul can also act as a bridge to help expand connectivity between East, South and Central Asian regions."

The new government of Pakistan established following the general elections held on July 25 has also formally invited Afghanistan to become a part of a great economic package.

It seems that Pakistan and China unanimously have adopted the same policy to expand scope of CPEC in the region for attaining greater prosperity and to develop a peace in war torn Afghanistan.

The significant strategic decision really opened the pathways for the international community to be a part of development scheme which on one side will connect China and South Asia with Middle East and Africa while on the other side it is aimed to connect with Central Asia, East Asia and West Asia.

These announcements show the strategic dynamics of CPEC is emerging as a connectivity plug between different regions. The corridor stepping up as an engine for economic and trade integration between China, Pakistan and Afghanistan and beyond that towards Central Asian region, Middle East and Africa.

By opening the doors for other countries, both states have shown to the world that the project is getting ahead on a fast track for smooth execution and now it will be transformed into a multilateral initiative.

The commitment of both nations has also dispelled the baseless rumors of western media about the suspension of CPEC projects for one year and the Chinese debt trap.

The broadening of CPEC projects by enhancing the scope is changing the geopolitics of South Asia which will establish conducive peaceful environment for the region. The extension of CPEC shows the intensions of China and Pakistan that both states wish peaceful and stable environment in its neighborhood.

This step will deepen the geo strategic relationship between China, Pakistan and Afghanistan and it will also help in increasing the trust for tackling challenges attached to the long lasting peace for the region.

The strategy has attracted the attention of international community that these efforts are aimed to overcome all the hurdles in restoring peace and stability in region as well as in Afghanistan.

Invitation for Afghanistan to become a part of CPEC is a clear message for other countries that it is an open and transparent initiative which is restructuring the outdated and obsolete infrastructure in Pakistan alongside building the gigantic power projects helpful in tackling worst energy crisis of the country.

The Sino-Pakistan economic corridor worth of \$60 billion whose construction is pushed forward by China is a "four in one" channel that covers road, railways, oil

and gas pipelines and cables from China's Xinjiang to Gwadar, a port in South Western Pakistan, and a trade network that covers industrial parks, free trade zones and so on.

If Afghanistan realizes the docking with Sino-Pakistan economic corridor, it will win opportunities to develop its traffic and trade and strengthen the regional radio active role of Sino-Pakistan economic corridor, which will benefit the westward advance of the entire Silk Road economic belt. Afghanistan mainly relies on Pakistan's port Karachi and Iran's port Bandar Abbas for sea transportation.

After the construction of port Gwadar is completed, it will become the nearest port for Afghanistan.

The recent visit of PM Imran Khan to China had also drawn productive conclusions and deepened the all-weather strategic friendship.

Economically, it has been agreed mutually that the two sides will step up development cooperation with focus on people's livelihood. China will give more assistance on a priority basis to such areas as agriculture, education, medical service and drinking water, delivering tangible benefits to more people.

The two sides will enhance the building of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, and decide the future development path and the course for cooperation through negotiations in light of Pakistan's next-stage socio-economic development priorities and the needs of its people.

China and Pakistan will prioritize the faster development of industrial cooperation and livelihood projects, gradually extend them to the western part of Pakistan and enable more Pakistanis to benefit from the CPEC.

The new interaction of both sides has re-energized the relationship between two states and helped them to introduce new schemes of social development in this economic package.

With the passage of the time, the relationship between two is transforming based on mutual and productive consultations yielding the results for the people on both sides. Pakistan being a very close neighbor and strategic partner has been honored to take maximum benefits from BRI as CPEC carries the investment package of more than \$60 billion.

By prioritizing CPEC projects in the national development strategy, Pakistan has already gained targets of socioeconomic and regional development under this unprecedented mega project. CPEC has pushed the economic growth of Pakistan to 2.5 % in the last three years which helped country's growth rate to touch 5.8 percent in 2017-2018, the highest figure in the past 13 years.

During the first phase of the CPEC, more than 70,000 Pakistani citizens have secured jobs on various projects currently under construction, while it is predicted that around 2 million jobs will be created for locals by the end of 2030, which means locals will gain access to a major slice of the job market.

The CPEC after creating a significant impact for the revival of energy and development of infrastructure is now entering into the next phase of industrialization. Under the framework 9 industrial zones will be built and the Chinese companies will be allowed to develop high-tech industries which will not be affecting local industry. It will again be a great opportunity for Pakistani industries to learn from modern high-tech industries which are the future for the revival of sluggish economy.

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