

Neighborhood Watch"- A New Role of Community in Managing Terrorism in India

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Increased sensitivity to terrorism has changed vulnerability map of each state in India, specifically Gujarat, Maharashtra, Andhra, Tamilnadu, Kerala, Orissa and Goa. These states already have undue share of natural hazards and suffered maximum compared to any other state in India.

The current situation demands extensive intelligence information on "suspected elements" from everywhere in the state as a "preventive measure". Although state and central agencies has their intelligence gathering system, but such systems suffers from physical limitation and cannot cover each and every corner of state geography. We need to cover one and all at this point for identification and early interception of unwanted and, typically in Indian conditions; this can be done neither by increasing police forces nor by putting thousands of surveillance equipment.

As a patriotic citizen and knowledge expert clandestine operations, (physical safety, security and emergency management) – I consider it my duty and feel obliged to submit my thoughts and perception of the current situation, as given below. Each State should announce / notify state wide "Neighborhood watch" Involving "community" is the only way for gathering information from each street in any city / town and I submit that – state wide announcement / notification should be made requesting one and all to start "neighborhood watch" and report unusual activity / movement of unknown person in their respective area to the "District fusion center" on given numbers. In addition to radio and TV announcement for "neighborhood watch" – posters should also be pasted in street corners for "neighborhood watch" and instructions.

Establish "District Fusion center" All district police control should also work as "district fusion center" with a toll free number or even they can use exiting number 100 for reporting unusual activity or person seen in neighborhood. Based on the size and complexity of district geography – the competent authority may plan and establish a "validation mechanism (intelligence acquisition, analysis, decision and dissemination)" for all incoming calls. The "State fusion center" at capital HQ should get all incoming calls through a mirrored recording system from all district. The state fusion center should also have "hot line (no dialing)" connection with the districts fusion centers. Enforce "Enhanced Check Post Surveillance" Strict boarder securities and surveillance is the first step for intercepting unwanted elements early. Check post surveillance is easy

to enforce and manage and perhaps the best way to ensure safety and security of people and property in the state.

My suggestion would be that – video surveillance system with programmed analytic application be installed at all strategic points connected with district fusion centers. This is important that effective information validation mechanism is planned and put in place concurrently so as credentials can be “checked and cleared” quickly at entry points and do not feel harassed.

State wide – “Neighborhood watch program” will not only enhance and improve overall resiliency of the state, but will provide an opportunity to a common man to inculcate much needed awareness on the subject of terrorism. Police force, video surveillance and ATS (anti terrorist squads) are necessary but not adequate to address these issues with Indian diversities which are unparallel.

Government needs to improvise new ways for managing terrorism and community participation will prove productive. Public participation will be the key for enhancing overall resilience in the country. Diversified threats can only be attended by the diversified resources (like local people in each corner of the country). The neighborhood program should be planned and implemented by each state in a controlled manner under national guidelines.