

Islam, International Law and Security in France

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Islamic Theology of Counter Terrorism

اسلام کے تھیولوجی آف کاؤنٹر ٹیرورازم

Introduction

"Allahu Akbar,"(God is greatest) is a word which has changed the perception of many about Islam in Europe, as an alert of jihadist attacks. Migration and refugee status are strategic aspect to be reviewed by European nations, as it constitutes a major menace to the community as well as the European press. The United Nations' (UN) Global study on smuggling of migrants revealed that in 2016 about 375, 000 persons took smuggling routes across the Mediterranean to Europe and that about 480, 000 persons as well transited from sub-Saharan countries to North Africa. The Europol report reveals that an estimated 90% of migrants transit through the Mediterranean were facilitated by smugglers. There exist several international treaties and conventions to combat the emerging threat to human security. The 2000 UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime and its protocols, with a major Protocol the Prevention, Suppression and Punishment Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, and the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air (also referred to as the Palermo Protocols).

Profiling the Attacks in France

Within the past two years, France counter terrorism agency has been challenged by jihadist attacks, appealing for an attack on their religion and Prophet Muhammed. Recent attacks in France have been perpetrated by youths aged 18 years to 21, migrants, who are trained by online, equipped and accompanied by their 'teacher' to perpetrate attacks.

Abdoulakh Anzorov (October 16, 2020 attack)

Abdoulakh Anzorov (18 years old) was a French immigrant of Chechen origin. He moved to France from Russia with his family in 2008 at the age of six after seeking asylum. Anzorov was born in Moscow to Chechen parents, critical enough to understand the raise of extremist torts from a visit to Chechnya. According to Russian journalists' perspective, radicalization for Anzorov is linked to Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov, a vocal opponent of illustrations of the Islamic prophet. Kadyrov was the brain behind a protest against the publication of Muhammad's cartoons after the attack on Charlie Hebdo on January 2015. As such, Anzorov's beheaded a history teacher Samuel Paty in Paris suburb on October 16, 2020, was an act of revenge against Paty showing caricatures of Islam's Prophet Muhammad in his class. The incident can be linked to Anzorov's half-sister affiliation to ISIS in Syria in 2014 (doctrine, he might have received by watching online videos, training tactics how to murder someone and avoiding security attention). Ramzan Kadyrov chastised France over social media for its "unacceptable attitude to Islamic values", for Paty had shown Muhammad cartoons in his class, which France is recognized for democratic principles and freedom of speech.

Brahim Aouissaoui (October 29, 2020 attack)

Brahim Aouissaoui, (21-year-old) Tunisian jihadist, who migrated from Lampedusa on 20 September, after 14 days on a quarantine on the Italian port city of Bari on 9 October before travelling to Paris. Brahim Aouissaoui, used a knife to kill three people in a church in Nice on France's Côte D'Azur. The three victims were church warden Vincent Loques (55-year-old); Nadine Devillers (60 years old); and Brazilian-born Simone Barreto Silva (44 years old), a mother of three, migrated to France to join her sister's dance group, and worked in elder care. French security discovered that Aouissaoui had no

identity papers on him, but found a document giving his name from the Italian Red Cross. He had made no attempt for political asylum in France. The case is similar to that of Abdulmutallam Farouk of the December failed attack in U.S, who had travelled several countries and used Sudanese refugee free ticket to gain access to his target.

Described as "Islamist terrorist attack" by President Emmanuel Macron, the threat is not over. As several individuals arrive from Tunisia seeking their way to different European countries by passing through Italy, who often delayed means repatriation procedures, but issue exit slip to Tunisians, requiring them to leave Italy within seven days, demurs a major menace. Aouissaoui considered to have travelled illegally to France after he received such order, as several others.

Europol attested earlier this year that there were no signs of systematic use of “irregular migration” by terrorist organizations. Yet, Tunisian suspect arrived in the city the night before the attack, as well as Abdoulakh Anzorov, who entered the territory following intelligence lapses. The French interior minister said more militant attacks were likely to occur, "We need to understand that there have been and will be other events such as these terrible attacks," said Gerald Darmanin. "We're at war against an ideology, Islamist ideology."

Religious Narrative

The 19th century remains historical period for religious development, particularly with Islam, with the concept of jihad. Considered to be a ‘Holy War’ for educational revival, based on religious principles, was an example of the Sokoto Caliphate in Nigeria. Jihad has taken a different shift from its initial motive, as jihadists or extremists misinterpret the holy Quran, engage in suicide attacks, recruitment of youths for violence and religious extremism, based on fundamentalist ideology. Islam condemns all barbaric tendencies in the holy Quran.

Suicide is prohibited in Islam (4:29), as it is considered as an abuse of the divine gift of life. As such, anyone who commits suicide in the struggle to establish an Islamic caliphate is a criminal.

Islam does not subscribe to the assertion ‘end justify the means’, as a peaceful religion, ‘end cannot justify means.’ Most extremists or jihadists have the tendencies of using the phrase ‘end justify the means’, which is a criminal narrative for a peaceful religion, now criminalize by some states due to fanatics and religious extremists. Islam enunciates that ‘Good and bad are not equal. Replace evil with good’ (holy Quran 41:34).

Secularism in Islam, destroys the transcendence of all moral values. In the holy Quran ‘those who forget God eventually forget themselves’ (59:19) and their individual and corporate personality disintegrate.

Islam is a religion of moderation. The holy Quran defines Muslims as the well-balanced middle nation model for others (2:143) and advices them not to follow extremism in religious interpretation (4:171, 5:77, 22:78).

Legal Framework

France is one of the major European nation which respect freedom of speech and religion, though within the past years, the nation has been under the attacks of religious extremists. Article 10 of the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen reads as follows: ‘No one shall be disquieted on account of his opinions, including his religious views, provided their manifestation does not disturb the public

order established by law.’ This provision is found in many Constitutions in Europe: The preamble always states the fundamental right of freedom to worship, religion with less limitations relating to such rights. Article 19 of the Italian Constitution states that: ‘Everyone has the right to profess freely their religious faith in any form, individually or in association, to disseminate it and to worship in private or public, provided that the religious rites are not contrary to public morality’), and the Constitutions of Belgium (Article 19) and Luxembourg (Article 19), among others.

Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief, Proclaimed by General Assembly resolution 36/55 of 25 November 1981; Considering that the disregard and infringement of human rights and fundamental freedoms, in particular of the right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion or whatever belief, have brought, directly or indirectly, wars and great suffering to mankind, especially where they serve as a mean of foreign interference in the internal affairs of other States and amount to kindling hatred between peoples and nations.

Article 1

1. Everyone shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. This right shall include freedom to have a religion or whatever belief of his choice, and freedom, either individually or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in worship, observance, practice and teaching.
2. No one shall be subject to coercion which would impair his freedom to have a religion or belief of his choice.
3. Freedom to manifest one's religion or belief may be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary to protect public safety, order, health or morals or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others.

Article 5

1. The parents or, as the case may be, the legal guardians of the child have the right to organize the life within the family in accordance with their religion or belief and bearing in mind the moral education in which they believe the child should be brought up.
2. Every child shall enjoy the right to have access to education in the matter of religion or belief in accordance with the wishes of his parents or, as the case may be, legal guardians, and shall not be compelled to receive teaching on religion or belief against the wishes of his parents or legal guardians, the best interests of the child being the guiding principle.
3. The child shall be protected from any form of discrimination on the ground of religion or belief. He shall be brought up in a spirit of understanding, tolerance, friendship among peoples, peace and universal brotherhood, respect for freedom of religion or belief of others, and in full consciousness that his energy and talents should be devoted to the service of his fellow men.
4. In the case of a child who is not under the care either of his parents or of legal guardians, due account shall be taken of their expressed wishes or of any other proof of their wishes in the matter of religion or belief, the best interests of the child being the guiding principle.
5. Practices of a religion or belief in which a child is brought up must not be injurious to his physical or mental health or to his full development, taking into account article 1, paragraph 3, of the present Declaration.

Conclusion

The status of Imam is a most respectable title in Islam. An Imam uses the Holy Quran as source of Islam to preach in the mosques (Islamic places of worship) and in Muslim communities. Just like Christianity, there are different Islamic cultures, which the spiritual leader's powers surpass that of the political leader. One of the recent developments of the Islamic Theology of Counter Terrorism (ITCT), is the creation of a course for Imams, training them on how to counter terrorism through religious teachings and cooperation for a better world with peace.

Religious extremists continue to challenge regional and national security in Europe. Several questions remain unanswered as to the counter terrorism approach of France, the level of security cooperation, with Interpol and Europol, how can France secure her borders from illegal immigration. Security protocol need to be reviewed, and immigration, refugee status and asylum seekers investigated, because Europe is an emerging terrorism spot.

ITCT does not necessarily endorse any or all views expressed by the author in the article.

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