

The Scintillator



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Oil Tirades: Looking at Oil from a Sociological Lens

Oil has been a major bone of contention between nations since many decades. It is oil that drives your cars, powers your machines and runs your iPod. In a nutshell, 'black gold' fuels your lifestyle. Diminishing oil reserves and imports can easily put a massive roadblock in any country's path to development.

But this equation isn't as seemingly simple as that of imports and exports. The politicization of oil has shrunk the world into quarters, imbued neighbouring oil-producing and oil-exporting countries with tussles, and you wouldn't call it farsightedness if we say that the world is looking at an impending war on oil.

The US, which has been both a harbinger and forerunner in almost every domain, refuses to let its industrial and technological development suffer at the hands of oil paucity. After ceaselessly exploiting oil reserves in the Middle East under the garb of maintaining political security whilst sowing seeds of political turmoil in the region, it has now moved on to the African continent. As it slowly invades its way into Africa in the guise of peacekeeping forces, its implicit motives, possibly looking at cheaper oil

sources before tensions within the OPEC lead to fallout, aren't so hard to read after all. And if this story unfolds the way it is being hailed to be, the international oil dynamics would get further complicated as the African reaction would result in a lot of upheaval, spurring from the Africans' feelings of being betrayed and violated, earning the US a new set of radical enemies.

Oil extraction isn't devoid of the environmental flack either. While the rich countries go on pursuing oil extraction unabashedly, in the process causing severe environmental harm and climate change, the poor countries are left to fend for themselves as they fight the repercussions, dealing with the dire impact sans any foreign aid.

Recently, what has come to be known as 'environmental racism' is also abound. Toxic waste dumps are often located in neighbourhoods where racial/ethnic minorities are under-represented. A similar process takes place when poorer nations are conveniently asked to dispose of the toxic waste produced during oil extractions. White scientists might gloriously miscalculate and misinterpret data on the hazardousness, state influence and bias creeping into their analysis.

While it may seem oil-producing countries rake in huge amounts of revenue, it has actually given birth to anarchy, and has also worsened the condition of women in these countries.

During periods of conflict, the moral fibre of a society degenerates and women become the targets of the pent-up frustrations of men in their communities. Thus, in places such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, where conflict rages over the numerous mineral resources located in the land, incidences of rape and sexual violence have reached epidemic proportions.

A lot of oil-producing countries have also turned into destabilized democracies. Such states have little respect for the rights of its citizens let alone the rights of its female citizens. As a result, patriarchal relations between men and women are implicitly condoned by the state and little is done by way of the state to ensure gender justice.

The next time you watch a news discussion on oil prices, bear in mind that the cost of oil is much more than the dollars you shell out.

Geetika Ahuja

The American Legacy

The session of the Security Council on 16th March 2014 witnessed the delegate of China raising the pertinent issue of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) region of Pakistan. The delegate noted that FATA is the most critical area of Pakistan considering maximum infiltration to China and India takes place from this area. As claims that the United States of America's 'No Negotiation Policy' was blamed for terrorist activity and training in the FATA region, India and Israel chose to save their breath in order to preserve diplomatic ties.

The allegations against the United States government augmented as the delegate

of Syria attacked them for supplying the VSNAs of Afghan-Pak region with arms and monetary support in the garb of military expeditions in the area. The delegate of Chad Republic claimed that the USA had supplied arms to Afghan radicals in its agenda against the then-Soviet Union back in the 70s and 80s as well.

The delegate of USA seemed a little under pressure due to the severe allegations of self-driven policies on terrorism and the forming of the general consensus against the USA. The delegate yet again maintained that the US policy was basically in the interests and security of its citizens as seen in the drone

operations in Pakistan and the killing of Osama bin Laden in Abbottabad in response to the former Al-Qaida's chief's attack on USA's World Trade Centre in 2001. In order to defend himself from the mounting allegations, the delegate sought to blame other countries like Syria for supplying arms to Arab VNSAs in order to fuel the Gaza Strip crisis.

As the committee due to the closure, unspoken agreements and much reading between the lines seemed to have been the rule.

Sumedha Arya



Is there Hope for Afghanistan?

The United Nations Security Council with its ascribed jurisprudence of the maintenance of world peace and security explored the security climate of Afghanistan, its repercussions for the world community at large considering that the VNSA network spans several nations, and feasible solutions to rescue the nation, its citizens and the world from this pervasive threat. The delegate of China highlighted the grossly blatant money laundering to Saudi Arabia from the VNSA network in Afghanistan, taking President Hamid Karzai's Presidential Decree 62 of 17 August 2010 as the cornerstone. The decree, issued to counter the unchecked and arbitrary power in the Private Security

Councils (PSCs), oversaw its disbandment and timely establishment of the Afghan Public Protection Force (APPF) as a government affiliated security service provider intended to protect people, infrastructure, facilities and construction projects. Organized as a state owned enterprise, the APPF contracts with both domestic and international customers.'

Following up, the delegate of Syria expressed the crucial role of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) in the country with its peacekeeping operations, further suggesting a reformative extension of the aforementioned. Shedding light on other issue of immediate pertinence, the delegate

of Chad elucidated on the thriving opium trade in the country that serves as the focal point of illicit activity. Further, the delegate established positive correlation between violence and this trade, thence consolidating the importance of curbing it. Marked by asymmetric warfare, haphazard control that escapes several regions and rampant money laundering, Afghanistan is in dire need of foreign aid, said the delegate of Israel. With the globe's wellbeing left to the jurisprudence of the Security Council, pragmatic solutions for the Afghani scenario are expected.

Kartik Maini

USA Faces Heat as Countries Allege Violation of Policies



PHOTO: TUSHAR GUPTA

The delegates of UN Women cornered USA this morning in a verbal duel when UK alleged USA of not following their international policies. Algeria questioned him why rapes were continuing to take place in spite of legislations being formed at domestic and international levels. Continuing the inquiry, Thailand asked of the US penal policies in rape and molestation cases. The delegate of USA replied with information about their policy of providing monetary and non-monetary support to the rape victim. Also he said the perpetrator is either penalized according to their laws or is submitted to the domestic country, in cases where in the perpetrator was a US national and had committed the crime in a foreign country.

The delegate of UK cited the case of an Algerian woman who was raped by a US National in Algeria. In accordance with USA's policies, the perpetrator had to either

be submitted to the Algerian government or punished under US laws. UK pointed out that USA had failed to follow either of the options, going completely against its policies. Also, he stated that USA did not provide any direct monetary aid; it only provided compensation through various UN bodies.

Venezuela further purported US of double standards, stating its policy of not considering the case as rape, in case the victim happened to be pregnant as a result of the attack, in which the victim was considered to be equally responsible. The delegate of Venezuela also attacked USA instantiating its statement of not talking of 'rape culture'.

In its defense, USA stated that it did not have an extradition treaty with Algeria and snapped back at UK demanding for proof of the allegation. UK failed to provide any valid proof of its allegation.

Aishwarya Kaul

Causes of Rape Unveiled

The delegate of United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland stated, "Societies derive their perceptions of rape from beliefs that vary across cultures". This is where the United Nations Women started towards discussion of Rape Culture and Perceptions of Rape.

The delegate of Japan expressed how a male-dominant nature leads to a society that condones rape and said how blaming the victims equates to sexism. The delegate also raised a question about why women's outfits are inquired about and not the perpetrator's motive to commit the offence. To add to this, the delegate of Venezuela stated, "Mothers being women themselves tell their daughters that they shouldn't react when a man behaves inappropriately with them and men are never taught not to rape. This is what leads to a society tolerant to rapes." Mexico addressed the committee by referring to a general scenario where victims are seen as impure

and defective. The delegate of India suggests that not only laws but other provisions should also be implemented. The representative of Thailand said that less participation in administration leads to gender biased decisions and conflict of interests. However, United States of America blamed reservations for women and special law provisions for making men believe that 'female' is a weaker sex.

After the discussion of the above, the committee discussed how the culture can be changed and measures can be taken to achieve the same. The key solutions discussed to this problem were prevention of rapes and harassment by providing security at vulnerable places at critical hours and community involvement in patrolling and investigation. The aspect which wasn't considered was marital rape and incestuous rapes which take place in houses, and because of family involvement, reporting the incident is suppressed

Saahil Cuccria



PHOTO: TUSHAR GUPTA

Impossible to Merge Vastly Different Resolutions

It has been long acknowledged across all international forums, including the International Court of Justice, WTO and ITLOS, that morals and ethics are two aspects which vary from each member nation from time to time, depending on diverging systems and scales of prevailing values. Each state has its own sense of right and wrong, and seeks to use its influence over the international community to conform international law in its favour. This was highlighted time and again in the Ad Hoc Committee for banning of Reproductive Cloning of Human Beings, where in a twenty five member committee, three different draft resolutions emerged, each so different in ideology that even the

Executive Board acknowledged that merging was out of question. While China and Japan's resolution advocated banning the reproductive cloning only until perfected via research on other mammals, and encouraged other methods of cloning, Finland and Belgium took a blanket ban approach on reproductive cloning while promoting research and therapeutic cloning. USA and India, going further along the conservative scale, not only sought to ban reproductive cloning, but also to let therapeutic cloning be subject to national legislations, knowing that States currently have a very rigid approach to the issue. USA also sought to seek an alternative to cloning on its own, and wished to "preserve human dignity".

No negotiations and no compromises seemed to be reached. Public order refers to the preservation of the fundamental interests of a society, as reflected in public policy and law. These fundamental interests can relate, inter alia, to standards of morality, and that this committee could not reach a consensus on.



PHOTO: RITHIK SINGH

Neerja Gurnani

Delegates Brainstorm Alternatives to Cloning



PHOTO: RITHIK SINGH

The delegate of South Korea stated that "Human cloning is playing god. It's messing with human dignity." He supported the idea of human resource development and save billions in the form of investment. The delegate of Finland strongly agreed with views of the South Korean delegate. He stated that many of the countries present were not capable of developing methods of human cloning and lacked the ability to provide basic amenities to the people.

Another alternative was provided by the delegate of United Kingdom. He stated that instead of human cloning the countries should promote adoption as there are

plenty of orphans looking for homes. Allies also started to draft their resolutions. A resolution was submitted to the board by sponsors USA and India, signed by Iraq, South Africa, Egypt, Australia which had alternatives to cloning such as altered nuclear transfer, multi-potent adult progenitor cells etc.

A separate one was provided by Japan and China as sponsors discussed the different possibilities to human cloning such as adult stem cell cloning and skin cell cloning and stated that they supported research in all the forms

and not just therapeutical cloning.

Finally sponsors Finland, Belgium were working to a resolution, which provided alternatives like substitute implementation techniques to implant embryos, to cloning of humans.

Concluding the whole story neither of the resolutions have adjudicated a blanket ban on human cloning but have certainly provided different extent to bans on research and research related issues of human cloning. "They're all in a grey area," said Chairperson of the Ad Hoc committee.

Harsh Sinha

CTITF: Amidst a State of Conflict

After a heated intense proclamation by the representative of The Counter Terrorism Implementation Task Force office regarding the potential danger of the various kinds of weapons, the committee identified the relevance of mitigating the CBRN weapons and introduced measures to alleviate their theft and misuse, by the implementation of the Security Governance Programme under the purview of the UNICRI and WMD Working Group of CTITF. The idea of embedding radio frequency identification chips in each and every weapon worldwide was considered, however a consensus could not be reached owing to the feasibility and the reliability of the RFID chips on batteries (as in the case of active RFIDs) and readers (as in the case of passive RFIDs which are activated only through readers).

In order to facilitate exchange of intelligence and effectiveness of communication between prominent nations, the complete enactment

of Project AIRCOP on all major ports was also recommended. Application of the WCO SAFE framework was also suggested as a deterrent to international terrorism.

Following a revolutionary humanitarian approach, the committee chose to adopt a redemptive strategy by making provisions for rehabilitation and disengagement of former terrorists.

Even though a rigorous attempt was made to ensure that no stone was left unturned, what materializes is a series of repetitive solutions that aim to utilise existing measures rather than breaking out of the existing shards to bring something new to the table. In this process, several significant matters continue to be ignored. Contradicting the Officer from the United Nations Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights who said that, “The committee is blatantly side-lining several human rights treaties and intentionally not taking into account

the rights of terrorists captured on borders to protect them from the danger of torture and to ensure their Right Of Life isn't compromised.” the diplomat from the Centre of Technology and Entrepreneurship Development disagreed “It is more important to guard humans, rather than ‘human rights.’”

Another innate loophole in the Communiqué that the CTITF sought to pass was the lack of provision for establishment of an educational infrastructure for the guidance and training of both ex-terrorists and the proposed Integrated Border Task Force. Despite ardent reminders by the officer of the 1540 Committee Experts, the committee continued to turn a blind eye to this issue.

The committee that convened in the hopes of realizing the full potential of the existing technology and revolutionising border security worldwide seemed to stop short of their targets.

Arushi Walecha

PHOTO: AARZU KAUR SANDHU



The Hues of the Economic and Social Council

PHOTO: PRAKHAR RISHI



As the discussions and deliberations intensified, the Economic and Social Council engaged in high-

level brainstorming as they moved towards forming a resolution. While some clauses were vehemently opposed and deeply pondered upon, others were passed without being subject to much scrutiny.

The clauses were evidently driven from in-depth research and bore in mind the dynamics of different countries, distancing itself from a one-size-fits-all approach.

The core and highly debated clause of creation of an alternative currency with the help of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank was subject to much deliberation and questioning, especially from the delegate of the United States of America who looked rather pale as he saw the petrocurrency slipping away from its hands. The delegate further saw red light as a clause urging the United Nations Security Council to take stringent and coercive measures against humanitarian intervention.

The delegate of Sweden emerged as a sudden bolt from the blue as he caught Russia red-handed retaliating against its interventions in Ukraine.

As the interests of all countries were kept in mind while trying to develop a holistic vision, the developing countries found themselves in the black as the need for giving aid to all countries to possess access to low carbon and competitively priced energy resources was pressed.

After quelling the fears of the developing countries, the silver lining to the resolution came into view as much confidence was reposed in the International Energy Agency and the suggestion for communication with members on real-time basis was put forward. The committee convened with some realistic clauses coming into the fore which could go a long way in solving the oil-crisis which the world is looking at.

Geetika Ahuja

ECOSOC: Hunting For Solutions

The debate in the Economic and Social Council started off with general and broad-on solutions for the oil and price rises. The delegate of Ireland started the session by reiterating his views on strengthening technical and financial factors such as oil future contracts, condemning speculation and providing aid to smaller nations and economies that are heavily dependent on oil imports and commodity exchanges. The delegate concluded by drawing attention, again, to the drawbacks of using fossil fuels on the increasing the carbon footprint.

Cuba demanded that nations such

as Saudi Arabia manage their excess production as to avoid any erratic change in prices. Gabon took a strong stand by asserting the importance of production sharing contract. The delegate of India was in strong support of the use of water as source of energy and the use of bio-fuel such as the Jatropha. The delegate of China raised the point that collection and study of country specific data is very basic and still not well implemented.

Senegal urged the developed nations allot a portion of their profit aiding the research and technology for global growth.

Kuwait demanded the standardization of refineries and betterment of refinery capacity, storage and oil transport. The delegate of Russia (who happened to be unfashionably late) shot off by accusing the United States of America of the Middle East interventions. The delegate also pointed out at the dollar being an unsuccessful petrocurrency.

Suggestions of alternate currency and alternate fuel sources, as well as transparent management were favoured.

Nawnika Upadhyay

The Plight of the Asylum



PHOTO: PARITOSH ANAND

Xenophobia (n) : - intense or irrational dislike or fear of people from other countries. A much neglected issue raised by the delegate of Columbia was that of the criminal refugees. The Columbian delegation suggested that the criminals should be sent back to their native countries, only to be countered by the delegate of Cameroon who highlighted how the criminals face tragic fate, when sent back to their native countries.

Local integration and redistribution of the refugees from the underdeveloped nations to the developed nations is one way to combat this problem. Third party settlement was yet another proposition

that was made in the committee. A viable solution to this problem as proposed by the delegate of Denmark was the generation of adequate employment by the government, keeping in mind that it doesn't pose as a threat to the native residents. The Egyptian delegation fixated their speech on the collaboration with the UNHCR and adherence to the international norms regarding the issue is highly essential for this problem to be eradicated.

But the only obstacle to the accomplishment of all of these is a 'disease' called Xenophobia (refer to 1.)

And the only cure to this 'disease', as contemplated by the delegates, comes out

as a three stage treatment: - first, segregated settlement or targeted settlement to avoid internal conflict between the people; second, the establishment of economic policies that are in favour of their own people and that are latently beneficent to the asylum seekers; third, and most importantly, spreading awareness, be it by conducting awareness camps or by establishing youth empowering NGOs.

The debate headed to a fruitful direction on the second day and the session ended on a satisfactory note.

Dhwani Mohan

Life of a Refugee: Torn Apart and Fed Upon Voraciously

The UNHCR conference was in an utter chaos with back to back unmoderated caucuses perforated by un-strategically planned moderated sessions, the debate tore apart the life of a refugee, feeding on the various phases voraciously.

At entry points, as stressed (quite strongly) by the Chinese delegation, not all immigrants are innocent victims. Criminals and diseased people are the worrisome reasons, why recognition of refugees becomes tedious and vital for the security of the host country. But once in, necessary papers - Identity and travel documents, need to be provided by the host to save them from further exploitation and harassment.

At this point, Xenophobia can come as an obstacle. And it isn't entirely "un-justified".

As China pointed out, "We'd like to conduct medical examinations to restrict entry of people suffering from HIV AIDS or Syphilis" Well, the morality of refusing support to a diseased asylum seeker remains much like a mined-terrain that ought to be scaled, with no right or wrong direction, per se

However, It is understandable, if no host country wants to sign up for an open-ended liability, where it is hard-pressed to provide for the refugees, despite having its own internal mayhem to manage. But then again, non-adherence to international protocol leads to dampening of the spirit of United Nations as a whole. Where is that fabled "united" front?

Maybe, it lies somewhere in the "Sino-Russian refugee sharing treaty", that came as shock to the committee. It provided for

N Korean refugees entering PRC, to be transferred to Russia, with no "direct financial assistance" from China to the new host.

And this concern over "having to harbour" criminals veiled under the tag of refugees was shared by more than just a few. Sending them back was discussed vigorously along with redistribution and 3rd party settlements. And then again, there were those "better-equipped" big daddies parading around for the rights and assimilation of refugees.

Ultimately, Solutions and problems were played with, seasoned with plenty of accusations and clarifications. And the UNHCR council rose, debated and slept off, exhausted! Eavesdropper's delight : "Let's just Nuke them all" (PRC!)

Astha Thapar

Terrorism: An Economic Analysis

In this two part analysis, Pallav Kumar Singh analyses the cause and effect of an economical paradigm of terrorism for a better counter-terrorism and border management frame work.

Part-1- Causes

For microeconomic analyses, it is essential that we understand the causes of terrorism through individual behavior, e.g. by means of interviews of potential or captured terrorists. While such a micro-approach is surely helpful in understanding individual behavior (answering the question why an individual becomes a terrorist), a generalization of related results and their transfer to the macro level of analysis is difficult.

Krueger and Maleckova (2003) provide an analysis which focuses on the connections between poverty, education and terrorist activity in the Israeli-Palestine and Arab-Israeli conflict. In general, their findings suggest that on an individual level violent activity is correlated neither with poor economic conditions nor with low levels of education. By contrast, higher income and better education seem to promote participation in terrorist activity (as does a young age). Krueger and Maleckova (2003) argue that this is a consequence of an increased interest in politics that is associated with better education and a privileged background. Also, a better education of potential terrorists makes it more likely for them to be successful, making them attractive recruits for terrorist activity. This argumentation can also be found in Bueno de Mesquita (2005).

Berrebi (2007) argues that the positive link between education and terrorism on a micro level may

have to do more with the content of education (which is shown to often resemble indoctrination) than with the amount of education (e.g., years of schooling). A positive correlation between high education and high income may explain why poverty does not matter to terrorist recruitment on an individual level (given that individual abilities may lead to higher education, thus higher income and also a higher attractiveness for terrorist organizations). As we shall see later, the 'micro' findings are supported by some scholars with a 'macro view' of the issue of terrorism roots, where related studies also finds no strong links between education, poverty and terrorism. Considering the aforementioned schools of thought on terrorism roots (which have more strongly related to a 'macro view' of the issue) it is difficult to connect to the 'micro view' and its results. At best, it seems as if modernization which manifests itself in education (and in particular in educational content which conveys resentments against modernization) is connected to terrorist participation on individual levels.

In the macro economical perspective of transnational conflict, the focus either lies on the country of origin of the perpetrators of transnational terrorism or on its targets. Given that most datasets available only provide information on transnational terrorism, this kind of terrorism has been the center of interest. Empirical studies which investigate the origins of transnational terrorism center on the conditions in the

countries from which terrorists originate, regardless of the eventual targets of these terrorists. We review the existing evidence on the origins of transnational terrorism with regard to the aforementioned global hypotheses on terrorism roots that connect terrorism to economic factors (e.g., poverty or socio-economic modernization), politics and institutions, demography, political and economic globalization.

Similar to the origin of transnational terrorism, the evidence tells no convincing story as to whether economic or non-economic factors are more important to the attack patterns of transnational terrorism. On the one hand, there are studies which suggest that economic success (e.g., high income or growth rates) make a country a likelier target of terrorism (e.g., Tavares 2004; Bloomberg et al. 2004b; Bloomberg and Hess 2008a, 2008b; Krueger and Laitin 2008).

Conclusively, existing evidence is not uniform with respect to the determinants of transnational terrorist attacks. Similar to the origin of transnational terrorism, it is unclear whether economic factors are strong determinants or whether they are only closely related to the "true" determinants of such attacks (e.g., political instability, state failure, political proximity to the US) and therefore become insignificant once empirical studies also control for such "true" factors.

Part- 2- Effect/Impact

Before assessing the aggregate impacts at the macro-economic level, micro-economic processes which determine the overall macro-economic effects need to be considered. At the most basic, it is possible to differentiate between three main types of economic actors, namely households (or consumers), the private sector (or producers), and the public sector (or the government). As discussed before, depending on their involvement in a terrorist attack, economic agents may suffer from (i) direct impacts through losses in physical and human capital, and (ii) indirect impacts that emerge as a consequence of the distortion of the economy.

Some innovative approaches attempt to value the loss in life satisfaction and welfare that households experience due to the fear induced by acts of terrorism. Fear being highly subjective cannot be measured easily. Still, economic methods such

as contingent valuation (survey based) or a calculated market approach can be employed to estimate the “price” of fear. Frey and Luechinger (2005) and Frey et al. (2009) combine indicators of welfare with certain terror indicators to analyze the impacts of terrorism on micro-economic levels. Ultimately, psychological factors (such as fear as well as changes in life satisfaction and happiness) can impact economic behavior. That is, non-monetary effects of terrorist attacks may translate into significant monetary ones at household as well as on macroeconomic levels when the psychological impacts of fear change consumption behavior (Nair 2006).

Even sectors who are not directly implicated in a terrorist attack can suffer from the consequences of economic disruption. Especially attacks on the transport sector can lead to severe delays in the movement of goods and services which have been discussed as “supply chain disruptions”. The scale

of the impact and which sectors will be affected is determined by the nature of the attack and the target.

Intervention of the government in the insurance market, which under normal conditions counters liberal market philosophies, has therefore received much academic attention: the literature analyzing different government interventions in the insurance market across countries concludes that the case of terrorism may represent an instance where public intervention and even subsidies are necessary for maintaining some market forces, rather than using regulation to stifle the market for terror insurance (Brown 2002; Russell 2002; Brown et al. 2004; Chalk 2005).

The report on detailed impacts on ‘Security Economics’ by Friedrich Schneider, Tilman Brück, Daniel Meierrieks summarizes the impacts all around which the journalist tabulates here:-

Study	Scope	Main Results
Gaibullogy and Sandler (2008)	18 European Countries, 1971-2004	Domestic terrorism has a small effect on growth by mainly increasing (unproductive) government spending. Transnational terrorism more strongly reduces growth by crowding out investment.
Araz-Takay et al. (2009)	Turkey, Quarterly Data 1987-2004	Terror has a large and negative impact on economic activity. This impact is stronger in times of economic expansion.
Blomberg et al. (2004a)	Unbalanced Panel of 177 Countries, 1968-2000	Terrorism reduces growth, but the effect is relatively small (e.g. compared to external war). Terrorism may reduce growth by fostering government spending.
Crain and Crain (2006)	Panel Data for 147 Countries, 1968-2002	Terrorism reduces economic growth and per capita income. Potential channels from terror to growth are reduced investment and tourism
Tavares (2004)	Cross-Country Data, 1987-2001	Terrorism is not an important determinant of growth, once it is controlled for a number of factors (e.g. currency crises or natural disasters).
Eckstein and Tsiddon (2004)	Israel, Quarterly Data for 1980-2003	Terror reduces economic activity, e.g. by affecting consumption, investment and trade unfavorable

Her Safety Is a Question Mark (?)

Women are unsafe in India and almost everywhere else in the world. What could be the reason behind that? Well, maybe the heinous crimes that are being committed in broad day light. Isn't it shameful that rape has become a 'culture'? Wear a revealing dress and you'll have a hundred 'hungry' eyes staring at you. India is a rape tolerant society which is the reason why rape cases are on the rise. Even the much talked about 'Nirbhaya' rape case could not act as a deterrent.

In the 'Nirbhaya' rape case, out of the five found guilty, it was proved that the juvenile was the most brutal but trust our system to let go off him with just three years of imprisonment owing to the Juvenile Justice Act. Can anything justify the crime? Above all, should a 17 year old after admitting to have committed the crime be let off so easily?

Let's talk about the sexual assault

of a female employee at the hands of Tehelka editor-in-chief, Tarun Tejpal on November 7, 2013 in a Goa hotel. The employee was there for the THiNK Fest which is organized by Tehelka every year. The irony lies in the fact that Tehelka in the past, has not only been responsible for exposing the match fixing scandal in 2000 followed by Operation West End in 2001 but has also stood up, time and again, for an egalitarian society for women. Today, investigations are being held against the founder of this very 'investigative journalism' organization. Tejpal at least issued a letter of apology after the realization of the gravity of the offense dawned upon him. But would that apology lighten the scars entrenched in the mind and soul of the woman whose honor was violated?

So, whose fault is it? The women who were subjected to mental and physical trauma or the perpetrators of the crime? Or else,

the patriarchal society which has always seen women as objects of desire? Ironically, we are talking of the same society where murals of goddesses are worshipped by all and sundry at the onset of various festivals. In addition to this, the flaws of the judicial system like paucity of judges and not-so-concrete laws cannot be completely ignored.

It is appalling that monsters in the garb of humans loom large in the society. All efforts to raise a voice against them are dealt with contempt. Well, giving in to the ways of the unjust system isn't the solution. One needs to speak till heard and only then justice would be done.

We also need a strong revision of our judicial framework. Most importantly, the mindset of people towards women has to undergo a sea change and only then can we be sure of their safety.

Sahil Cuccria



Cloning in the Movies

Harsh Sinha



#4 Moon

An utterly beguiling quiet, intense and well crafted gem. Sam Rockwell gives a tour de force as astronaut Sam Bell, nearing the end of a three-year stint operating mineral extraction technology on the moon. His only company is computer GERTY voiced by Kevin Spacey. All is well, until a sudden physical deterioration strikes Rockwell and he makes a shocking discovery about his real purpose 238,855 miles from home. Directed by David Bowie's son Duncan Jones in his cinematic debut, and possible masterpiece.



#3 Never Let Me Go

Dystopian sci-fi adaptation of Kazuo Ishiguro's novel of the same name, Never Let Me Go is the tale of an alternative history of Britain where most killer diseases have been eradicated and the human lifespan has been extended beyond one hundred years. The problem for the protagonists, Kathy H (Carey Mulligan), Ruth (Keira Knightley) and Tommy (Andrew Garfield), is that this miracle has been achieved through the use of clones whose organs are harvested for the benefit of their originals. A moving, if distressing examination of what it means to be human, and the ethical problems of cloning.



#2 Gattaca

Ridley Scott's classic 1982 adaptation of the Phillip K. Dick novel 'Do Robots Dream of Electric Sheep?' features Harrison Ford as world-weary and burnt-out 'blade runner' Rick Deckard – a kind of marshal tasked with hunting down 'replicants' on earth. These replicants are genetically engineered organic robots whose use is banned on Earth: they are only allowed to be used on the off-world colonies. Scott's film is often regarded as one of the best examples of the neo-noir genre, and cited for its production design depicting a future 'prefabricated' world. The big question though is: is Deckard replicant or human? The internet is not a good place to go to find answers.



#1 Blade Runner

Andrew Niccol's 1997 sci-fi flick stars Ethan Hawke, Uma Thurman and Jude Law as characters in a world where advances in genetic engineering have made it possible to select and develop children with the best traits of their parents. Those born having gone through this process are known as "valids" make up the privileged social class of this society, with the best jobs, lives and prospects. Everyone else is an "in-valid", including Ethan Hawke, who happens to look quite like Jude Law, a crippled "valid". Using Law's identity, Hawke proves himself capable of achieving the same level of physical and intellectual fitness as the "valids" in the hope of making it to space, without being recognized by the authorities.

The Curious Case of Private Military



In human psychology, human behavior remains the precedent tenet. Even those interested in internal processes as those of cognition take behavior as their mainspring, as 'the journey within begins from outside.' However, human psyche is not wholly about behavior; it takes behavioral potential as its cornerstone. Simply put, we are who we are not only because of how we behave, but because of how we can behave. The term violence, in all practicality, evokes gory images of warfare and massive bloodshed. But is violence really all that is visible? Like behavioral potential, violence owes not so much to its pragmatic operation than to its potential - the very possession of weapons of mass violence and destruction. Realizing

the same, the contemporary milieu comprises careful checks and monitoring on the possession of arms and similar weapons of potent mass destruction, bestowing the militaristic responsibility on the state military.

Where there is solemn organization and order, there will always be those who oppose it. The dark underbelly of arms hence strikes root, springing from the existence of non-state military organizations. The global animosity towards armed organizations outside state structures notwithstanding, the author seeks to shed light on an unexplored facet - Private Military Contractors. (PMCs) Unlike state military, these organizations lie outside state structures and are not

practically involved in a state's militaristic operations. Unlike non-state military organizations, these organizations are largely controlled by the state, and exist not as a challenge but as a militaristic support. While PMCs often provide services to train or supplement official armed forces in service of governments, they can also be employed by private companies to provide bodyguards to key staff or protection of company premises, especially in hostile territories. Noteworthy examples comprise supplying bodyguards to state executive bodies and piloting reconnaissance airplanes and helicopters as a part of Plan Colombia. In fact, the PMC industry is said to be worth over \$100 billion a year.

Running amok the state and parallel to non-state militaries, history is scourged by instances of PMCs being used for the wrong purposes, taking form as mercenaries - organizations taking part in an armed conflict which is not a national or a party to the conflict and often driven to take part by desire for private gain. In opposition, the United Nations Mercenary Convention of 2001 prohibits the recruitment, training, use and financing of mercenaries. When seen from the ambiguous front of morality, PMCs fare conflicted in opinions. With its ambit and potent dangers, however, PMCs lay a pervasive threat and an able militaristic support to the world community at large.

Kartik Maini

Border Disputes in an Indian Solution Paradigm

There is a fixed pattern and a number of determinants that India has made part of effective governance. After achieving high developmental targets and pre-defined tenets of good governance, India applies its popular five-point-method to address the plight of its population in the proximity of disputed borders. Shedding light on the detailed approach:

The 'Royal Baby' Interview approach:

The Indian royal baby has been globally acknowledged for intellect and focus. With contemporary geo-political focus on women centric issues, I am sure we can all focus on the empowerment paradigm provided by him. Known for his detailed methods, he also enlists an 'information' protocol to obtain information. Sheer genius.

The Development Model approach:

A majority of border area extremism has been based on lack of infrastructural facilities. This entire perspective can be mitigated if we can just apply the Gujarat Model approach. I think we have all witnessed through saffron coloured glasses the brilliance of this approach. Though there have been rumours of the infrastructure created by a mortar of bodies and blood, but they are baseless. Jai Shri Ram.

The India TV approach:

Though we have delved in varied hypothesis and multi-dimensional aspects of the issue, we have not yet touched some facets. What if all this an alien conspiracy? What if religious figure found on the potato disapproves our

efforts? Clearly, the end is nigh.

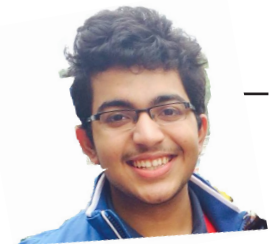
The Reality Show approach:

I guess if we can just provide the people with a national television vote appeal, it might prove highly effective. The upside, some of the misplaced citizens might also get to stay in a house and be constantly monitored. The downside, they might not be able to withstand the mental trauma caused.

The Facebook Approach:

If everything fails, we can like a Facebook picture and provide them with humanitarian aid. We have already solved the African food crisis and cyclone aftermaths by this approach.

Pallav Kumar Singh



On the Kouch with Kartik

What are MUNs today but fleeting exhibitions of beautified debate? While those veterans may find it easy to find their way through and maybe a bit more, how do anxious newbies seek answers to the unending dilemmas and complexities MUNs present? Worry not, mortals.

Q1. A seemingly attractive delegate asked for my number but the logistic gave it to another delegate. Now they're on a date and I am not. What do I do?
A1. Thank your stars! Being the fickle person he/she was, you would have been deserted even before the date began. I say you guilt the conference staff into submission and there! You have a date.

Q2. My mom said I shouldn't give out personal information to strangers but this insanely cute delegate is

asking for my number. Should I?
A2. Now, you listen, kid! When parents say something, you ought to get your hormonal head together and comply. So if mom told you not to share personal information, you must not. Did she say anything about giving out yourself, though? I say walk up to the delegate when the council breaks for lunch, and take things from there. Good luck!

Q3. I can't understand a thing of what these delegates are saying! The confession page said there's no point researching if I am friends with my Executive Board. Now I am sitting tightlipped as my best friend gives me angry looks from the dais. What do I do?

A3. Contrary to 'popular' belief, research IS important. But worry not! Don't exert yourself listening to

incomprehensible jargon; it won't do you any good. I say, look up the agenda on Wikipedia (Do ask your best friend not to gag you should you be caught) and read it out in your speeches with appropriate voice modulation and dramatic gestures. Should you be questioned, blame it on the opposition, on Obama, on the delegate, or the world itself. The ball's in your court.

Q4. My committee's journalist has been lampooning me in the newsletter since the first day! I don't know how to make him stop. Suggestions?

A4. Nasty creatures, aren't they? Must be shocking to your vain orator self to know of the damage the pen can do. I say go to the journalist and cry your way to his hardened heart like the little sissy you are inside. 'Any press is good press,' right?

Lament of a Chit

The joys and tribulations of a chit in Model United Nations conferences, as documented by Kartik Maini.

I am a chit, irrevocably so. Albeit just a piece of paper, my journey spans several hands, few minds and careless glances. My birth is from intellect, and so I lay, with spurring vanity and blistering intellect. I wear my descent like a crown. Lying dazed in my humble meditation, the transfer is stirringly perturbing. What must the fault of a little piece of paper be to be tossed around, lain in several hands, and not even find careful minds at receipt?

The other day, the delegate I was in possession of, in his unbecoming fury and vanity, hurried a contentious message to another. Does he not know how the sharp end of a pen he holds ever so carelessly hurts my insides, especially when he is audacious enough to be as ruthless as he can? Human relations shall always be an ever illusive mystery

to me, for I'd rather confront than vent my fury on a defenseless piece of paper. Thereon I was handed to a member of the logistics who had his hands already full, and I was carelessly dropped on the floor! I lay, silent, eyeing the careless nut with a reproaching glance. I was not seen! Can you believe it? And then came the stodgy footstep that slammed me till the depths of my existence. Just as I was about to endeavor to clean myself, I met a rough hand and so I was handed, to another delegate just as cruel and careless. When life comes to me, I shall take the sharpest of pens, etch the most ruthless of strokes and stomp with the dirtiest of feet on this puny species! This shall be my vengeance.

Having given them the liberty of my handling, it was so foolish of me to read what

was written. Theretofore, my life was a complacent dream of meaningful existence of transferring wisps of intellects from one mind to another. What agony I endured for this! And the chits just smashed my dream. On my body, there lay the flirtiest of pickup lines, the raunchiest of flirts, and the most useless of conversations. I am made from the severing of countless trees, and they deem it fit to waste me. What fools!

I don't think I should feel for my preposterous circumstances, for I function regardless. I shall be etched with the worst of things in the worst of ways whilst being handled in the worst of manners to be received in the most careless of ways. How underrated verbal communication is!

