

Report on the Lecture: "Terrorism and Its Financing: A Focus on Kashmir"

Introduction

On September 13, 2024, an insightful lecture titled "Terrorism and Its Financing: A Focus on Kashmir" was delivered by Dr. Abhinav Pandya at the Jindal School of International Affairs. The speaker, a leading expert in the field of counter-terrorism, focused on the origins and evolution of terrorism, with a specific emphasis on case studies in Kashmir. He also introduced his newly published book with Routledge, titled "Terror Financing in Kashmir," which offers an in-depth analysis of the financial networks sustaining terrorist activities in the region.

The event was coordinated by Prof. Gitanjali, the Director at the PKJCSS, who introduced the guest speaker. The lecture was also attended by the other two directors of PKJCSS, Prof. Shashank Ranjan and Prof. Pooja Bhatt.

Lecture about Terrorism and its Financing

The lecture began with a comprehensive exploration of the historical roots of terrorism, where Dr. Pandya articulated that terrorism is far from a modern phenomenon. He explained that it has evolved through various socio-political contexts and highlighted how political grievances, social injustices, and economic inequalities have historically fueled terrorist ideologies and activities. The speaker emphasized the importance of understanding these origins to address contemporary terrorist threats effectively.

Moving on to the evolution of terrorism, he noted significant shifts in tactics and strategies over the years. He discussed the transformation from traditional warfare to asymmetric warfare, where non-state actors employ guerrilla tactics and acts of terrorism to achieve political objectives. The rise of technology, particularly the internet, was identified as a major factor in enabling recruitment, propaganda, and financing for terrorist organizations. These changes, he argued, require a rethinking of counter-terrorism strategies to better address the modern landscape of terrorism.

The heart of the lecture centred on case studies of terrorist attacks in Kashmir, where Dr. Pandya provided a detailed analysis of key incidents, including the 1989 insurgency, which triggered an intense wave of violence in the region. He emphasized the complex interplay of local grievances, external influences, and global geopolitical factors, stressing that a localized

understanding of terrorism in Kashmir is essential. Viewing the issue solely through a global lens would fail to capture the intricate dynamics fueling regional conflicts.

In parallel with these case studies, the speaker introduced his latest book, "Terror Financing in Kashmir." He explained that the book aims to uncover the financial networks that sustain terrorism in the region. Dr. Pandya described how various sources, including state sponsorship, illicit trade, and local donations, enable terrorist groups to operate effectively. He argued that disrupting these financial networks is critical for any successful counter-terrorism strategy and shared recommendations from his book on how policymakers could address these challenges.

During the Q&A session, the audience engaged actively, raising questions about the role of international actors in Kashmir and the implications of the speaker's findings for global counter-terrorism efforts. Dr. Pandya's responses highlighted the necessity for collaborative approaches that take into account local contexts while tackling the broader global implications of terrorism.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the lecture was not only informative but also thought-provoking, offering valuable insights into the complexities of terrorism and its financing in Kashmir. The speaker's expertise, combined with his new book, provided a deeper understanding of the issue. As terrorism continues to evolve, ongoing research and dialogue on the topic remain critical for developing effective prevention and intervention strategies.