

Full Length Research Paper

The print media coverage of the 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks: A study on the coverage of leading Indian newspapers and its impact on people

M. Neelamalar*, P. Chitra and Arun Darwin

Department of Media Sciences, Anna University Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India.

Accepted 23 October, 2009

Since its independence in 1947, India has been facing the problem of terrorism in different parts of the country. This research is an analysis of the media coverage of terrorists' attack on Mumbai (one of the busy metros of India and the business capital of the country) on 26 November 2008 (now the attack is popularly known as 26/11). The research is carried out to know the people's opinion about the media coverage, to find out how people responded to the newspaper coverage, whether the coverage was biased or sensationalizing, how people responded to the coverage, whether they gave a fair coverage to the incident and to find out whether they commercialized the issue.

Key words: Mumbai, terror attacks, media, coverage, impact.

INTRODUCTION

Since its independence in 1947, India has been facing the problem of terrorism in different parts of the country. India has faced terrorist movements in Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir, bordering Pakistan and northeast and also in certain states like Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa. The maximum number of terrorist incidents and deaths of innocent civilians have occurred due to religious terrorism. Bomb blasts, plane hijacks, kidnapping people etc., have become a regular story in Indian media these days.

Media play a major role in covering the terrorist activities. Margaret Thatcher once said that publicity is the oxygen for terrorism-this underlines the point that capturing public perception is a major terrorist target and the media are central in shaping it. Terrorists must get publicity in some form if they are to gain attention, inspire fear and respect and secure favorable understanding of their cause. Terrorist organizations seek media coverage to create panic, to spread fear, to facilitate economic loss and to make people lose faith in their government's ability to protect them. This research is an analysis of the media coverage of terrorists' attack on Mumbai (one of the busy metros of India and the business capital of the country) on 26 November 2008 (now the attack is popularly known

as 26/11).

The research is carried out to know the people's opinion about the media coverage, to find out how people responded to the newspaper coverage, whether the coverage was biased or sensationalizing, how people responded to the coverage, whether they gave a fair coverage to the incident and to find out whether they commercialized the issue. The general idea behind the research is to find the people's view of terrorism coverage by the media with Mumbai terror attack as the major incident. Mumbai incident was taken because it is a major terror incident which shocked the whole country and was covered fully by media, people especially youth responded strongly to the politician's inability to prevent terrorism and it affected to great extent the economy and tourism of the country. Media with its 24 h coverage of the incident with fear provoking headlines like 'Is India safe?' and full coverage of the rescue operation by the security forces, actually helped the terrorist achieve their goals.

2008 terror attacks in Mumbai

The 2008 Mumbai attacks were a series of coordinated terrorist attacks across Mumbai, India's financial capital and its largest city. The attacks, carried out by a Pakistan-based Islamic terrorist group using automatic

*Corresponding author. E-mail: nmalar@yahoo.com.

weapons and grenades, began on 26 November 2008 and ended on 29 November 2008. At least 173 people were killed and at least 308 were injured in the attacks.

Eight attacks occurred in South Mumbai: at Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus, the Oberoi Trident, the Taj Mahal Palace and Tower, Leopold Cafe, Cama Hospital, the Orthodox Jewish-owned Nariman House, the Metro Cinema and a lane behind the Times of India building behind St. Xavier's College. There was also an explosion at the Mazagaon docks in Mumbai's port area and a taxi blast at Vile Parle.

By the early morning of 28 November, all sites except the Taj Mahal Palace had been secured by Mumbai Police and security forces. An action by India's National Security Guards on 29 November ended the Taj Mahal Palace encounter, ending all fighting in the attacks.

Ajmal Amir Kasab, the only terrorist who was captured alive, disclosed that the attackers were members of Lashkar-e-Toiba, the Pakistan-based militant organization, considered a terrorist organization by India, the United States and the United Kingdom, among others. The Indian Government said that the attackers came from Pakistan and their controllers were in Pakistan. The attacks drew widespread condemnation across the world.

Preparation for the attack

The Mumbai attack is uniquely different from past terror strikes carried out by Islamic terrorists. Instead of one or more bombings at distinct sites, the Mumbai attackers struck throughout the city using military tactics. An attack of this nature requires planning, scouting, financing, training and a support network to aid the fighters. Initial reports indicate the attacks originated from Pakistan, the hub of jihadi (dedicated for religious cause and freedom) activity in South Asia. Few local terror groups had the capacity to pull off an attack such as this.

While the exact size of the assault force and the support cells is still not known, as per the police estimate about 25 gunmen were involved in the attack. The number of members of the supporting cells that provide financing, training, transportation and other services could be two to four times this number. Operational security for such a large unit, or grouping of cells, is difficult to maintain and requires organization and discipline.

To pull off an attack of this magnitude, it requires months of training, planning and on-site reconnaissance. Indian officials have stated that the terrorists set up "advance control rooms" at the Taj Mahal and Trident (Oberoi) hotels and conducted a significant amount of reconnaissance prior to executing the attack. If the news about the "control rooms" is accurate, these rooms may also have served as weapons and ammunition caches for the assault teams to replenish after conducting the first half of the operation.

The planners of the Mumbai attack appear to have

chosen able military-aged males. Witnesses have described the men as young and fit. Some of the gunmen appear to have been well trained; some have been credited with having good marksmanship and other military skills.

A witness who saw one of the teams land by sea described the gunmen as "in their 20s, fair-skinned and tall, clad in jeans and jackets." He saw "eight young men stepping out of the raft, two at a time. They jumped into the waters and picked up a haversack. They bent down again and came up carrying two more haversacks, one in each hand." An Indian official claimed the attackers used "sophisticated weapons," however this may be an overstatement. Reports indicate the gunmen used automatic rifles, hand grenades and some machineguns, as well as several car bombs. The terrorists did not have sophisticated weapons such as anti-aircraft missiles to attack helicopters supporting Indian counterterrorism forces.

End of attacks

By the morning of 27 November, the Indian army had secured the Jewish outreach center at Nariman House as well as the Oberoi Trident hotel and incorrectly believed that the Taj Mahal Palace and Towers had also been cleared of terrorists. The fires were out and soldiers were leading hostages and holed-up guests to safety and removing bodies of those killed in the attacks. However, later news reports indicated that there were still two or three terrorists in the Taj, with explosions heard and gunfire exchanged. Fires were also reported as having been caused at the ground floor of the Taj with plumes of smoke arising from the first floor. The final operation at the Taj Mahal Palace hotel was completed by the National Security Guards at 08:00 on 29 November, killing three terrorists and resulting in the end of the attacks. The security forces rescued 250 people from the Oberoi, 300 from the Taj and 60 people (members of 12 different families) from Nariman House.

The counterattack

Police appeared to have regained control of the situation at the CSP train station, cafe and cinema relatively easier, however they were unable to handle the hostage situation at the hotels, the hospital and the Jewish center. Police officials admitted they were "overwhelmed" by the attacks and unable to contain the fighting. After a delay, more than 200 National Security Guards commandos and a number of elite Naval commandos, as well as an unknown number of Army forces were deployed to Mumbai. The hotels, the hospital and the Jewish center were surrounded as the special operations forces prepared to assault the buildings.

Commandos are in the process of clearing the Taj and the Trident in room-by-room searches. Some of the rooms are reported to have been rigged with explosives.

Several National Security Guards commandos have been reported to have been killed or wounded in the fighting. Indian forces are also storming the Jewish Center after air assaulting soldiers into the complex. Curiously, it does not appear the terrorists have executed hostages once they were taken. At this time, police said seven terrorists have been killed and nine have been detained. Several more were still thought to be hiding in the Taj and Trident hotels and the Jewish center.

The Mumbai attack differs from previous terror attacks launched by Islamic terror groups. Al Qaeda and other terror groups have not used multiple assault teams to attack multiple targets simultaneously in a major city outside of a war zone. Al Qaeda and allied groups have conducted complex military assaults on military and non-military targets in countries such as Iraq, Afghanistan, Chechnya, Somalia, Algeria and Pakistan. But these are countries that are actively in a state of war or emerging from a recent war, where resources and established fighting units already exist.

Al Qaeda has also used the combination of a suicide attack to breach an outer wall followed by one or more assault teams on military bases in Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan, as well as at the US embassy in Yemen. But again, these attacks are focused on a single target and again occur where the resources and manpower is available.

Previous terror attacks in non-war zone countries such as India, London, Spain, the United States, Jordan, Morocco and Egypt have consisted of suicide or conventional bombings on one or more critical soft targets such as hotels, resorts, cafes, rail stations, trains and in the case of the September 11 attack, planes used as suicide bombs. The only attack similar to the Mumbai strike is the assault on the Indian Parliament by the Jaish-e-Mohammed, aided by the Lashkar-e-Taiba, in December 2001. A team of Jaish-e-Mohammed fighters attempted to storm the parliament building while in a session was held. A combination of mishaps by the terrorists and the quick reaction of security guards blunted the attack.

The Mumbai attack is something different. Foreign assault teams that likely trained and originated from outside the country infiltrated a major city to conduct multiple attacks on carefully chosen targets. The primary weapon was the gunman, not the suicide bomber. The attack itself has paralyzed a city of 18 million. And two days after the attack began, Indian forces worked to root out the terror teams (Times of India 2008).

Casualties

Among the dead were 136 Indians (including 17 policemen) and 28 foreigners. The breakdown of the foreigners was as follows: four Americans, three Germans, two Israeli-Americans, two Israelis, two Australians, two Canadians, two French, two Italians, one British-Cypriot, one Dutch, one Japanese, one Jordanian, one Malaysian,

one Mauritian, one Mexican, one Singaporean and one Thai. In addition, nine terrorists were killed and one was captured. Twenty-seven other foreigners of different nationalities were injured in the terror strikes and were admitted to the Bombay Hospital. Hospital sources said the injured foreigners were from Australia, USA, UK, Canada, Germany, Canada, Spain, Norway, Finland Oman, China, Japan, the Philippines and Jordan.

According to Maharashtra Chief Minister Vilasrao Deshmukh, 15 policemen and two NSG commandos were killed, including the following officers: Assistant Police Sub-Inspector Tukaram Omble died but succeeded in capturing a terrorist alive, with his bare hands. Mumbai Anti-Terrorism Squad Chief Hemant Karkare, who headed the team investigating the politically sensitive 2006 Malegaon blasts. Additional Commissioner of Police Ashok Came, Encounter specialist Vijay Salaskar, Senior inspector Shashank Shinde, NSG Commando Major Sandeep Unnikrishnan and NSG Commando Hawaldar Gajendra Singh were also killed in the attack.

Three railway officials of Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus had also been killed in the terror strikes. In the attack on Oberoi-Trident hotel, 4 hotel guests, 18 diners and 10 staffers died and nine people were injured, including two staffers.

Twelve staff members of the Taj Mahal Palace and Tower Hotel were killed and seven were injured. Their medical treatment and counseling needs will be provided and fully paid for by Taj Hotels.

Reactions and aftermath

Political reactions in Mumbai and India included a range of resignations and political changes. Reactions included condemnation of the attacks by Indian Muslim organizations and personalities and insurgent movements. The business establishment also reacted, with changes to transport and requests for an increase in self-defence capabilities. International reaction for the attacks was widespread, with many countries and international organizations condemning the attacks and expressing their condolences to the civilian victims. Many important personalities around the world have very strongly condemned the attacks. Media coverage highlighted the use of new media and Internet social networking tools, including 'Twitter' and 'Flickr', in spreading information about the attacks, observing that Internet coverage was often ahead of more traditional media sources. The attacks had multiple, far-ranging effects. Besides the immediate impact on the victims and their families, the attacks caused widespread anger among the Indian public and condemnation throughout the world. The immediate impact was felt on Mumbai and Maharashtra state and throughout urban India. There were also after-effects on the Indian government, center-state relations within India, Indo-Pakistani relations, domestic impact within Pakistan, on the United States' relationships with

Table 1. Details of attacks and casualties of 26/11.

Location	Type of attack	Dead	Rescued
Mumbai Harbor	Shootings; hostages.	4	none
Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus(Victoria) railway station	Shootings; grenade attacks.	58	none
Leopold Cafe, Colaba	Shootings; grenade explosion.	10	none
Taj Mahal Palace and Tower hotel	Shootings; six explosions; fire on ground, first and top floors; hostages; <u>RDX</u> found nearby.	around 40 (1 commando)	around 250
Oberoi Trident hotel	Shootings; explosions; hostages; fire.	30	143
Metro Cinema	Shooting from carjacked police jeep.	around 10	none
Cama Hospital	Shootings; hostages.	5 policemen	none
Nariman House (Mumbai Chabad House)	Siege; shootings; hostages	7 (1 commando)	9
Vile Parle suburb, North Mumbai	Car bomb blast.	1	none
Lane behind Times of India building	Police killed by gunfire.	9 policemen	none
Mazagaon docks	Explosion; boat with armaments seized.	none	none

both countries, the US-led NATO war in Afghanistan and on the Global War on Terror (Table 1).

Objective of the study

1. To find how various media has covered this incident.
2. To know how people reacted to this coverage.
3. To find the impact of media coverage of 26/11 attacks on public.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Shahzad (December 2, 2008), in 'Al-Qaeda 'hijack' led to Mumbai attack' states that a plan by Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) that had been in the pipelines for several months - even though official policy was to ditch it - saw what was to be a low-profile attack in Kashmir turn into the massive attacks in Mumbai. The original plan was hijacked by the Laskar-e-Taiba (LET), a Pakistani militant group that generally focused on the Kashmir struggle and al-Qaeda, resulting in the deaths of nearly 200 people in Mumbai as groups of militants sprayed bullets and hand grenades at hotels, restaurants and railway stations, as well as a Jewish community center. Roggio (November 28, 2008), in 'Mumbai attack differs from past terror strikes' opines that the Mumbai attack is uniquely different from past terror strikes carried out by Islamic terrorists. Instead of one or more bombings at distinct sites, the Mumbai attackers struck throughout the city using military tactics. Instead of one or more bombings carried out over a short period of time, Mumbai entered its third day of crisis. Gilani (January, 2009) in 'Mumbai attack media coverage more theatrical than professional' talks of an online survey. 'Newswatch' conducted an online Survey between 3 - 6 December. Sample size was 9,906 in which 21 News Channels were selected for the purpose and 16 questions were put to respondents to rate them on a scale of 1 - 5

dealing with perceived negativity aspects of the coverage of Mumbai terror attacks by news and business channels. A finding of the survey was startling. For instance; one time star of electronic journalism Barkha duft of NDTV (Group Editor. English News) was voted as the worst/theatrical reporter/anchor with 46% of the vote, followed by Arnab Goswami (Editor in chief. Times Now) (Earlier he was part of NDTV) Rajdeep Chaurasia (Aaj Tak) and Rajdeep Sardesai (Editor in Chief. CNN-IBN) (Earlier he was also part of NDTV team) "Did TV channels come across as taking credit for their exclusive coverage", here again Aaj Tak maintained the lead along with India TV News channel. Ahmad (2003), in 'Contextualizing Conflict - the US War on Terrorism' states that after September 11, 2001, it is rather astonishing that this report, drafted a year before those events, actually suggested that what the US needed as justification for putting in place its global design for the twenty-first century was 'some catastrophic and catalyzing event-like a new Pearl Harbor. 'As images of the World Trade Center tragedy were flashed across the world, incessantly, day in and day out, dozens of commentators indeed compared that event to Pearl Harbor again and again. And the tragedy of thousands of grieving families was soon turned into the empire's golden opportunity. Nicolas Lemann revealed in the New Yorker in April 2002 that Condoleeza Rice, Bush's National Security Advisor, told him she had called her senior officers and asked them to think about "how do capitalize on these opportunities". Magder (2003), in 'Watching what we say: Global communication in a time of fear' says that atleast since the late 1960s, when the collection of data on cross-border flows of media became commonplace, the term cultural imperialism - and its application of dominance and coercion - has been commonly applied to describe the consequences of the western edge in the flow of media across borders. The cumulation of this argument envisions drastic consequences: a transformation in the practices and collective identities, summed

up in terms such as Americanization, westernization, or the more colloquial McDonaldization, Cooca-Colanization or Disneyfication. The rhetorical appeal of these terms is undeniable. But their scholarly value is limited, especially if they are used to short-circuit analysis of how media and information flows work. These terms rightly draw our attention to the inequalities of power that typify international communication, but they do not adequately describe the nature or the consequences of the flow of media across borders. Seaton (2003), in 'Understanding not empathy' states that news is one of the great political and artistic forms animating contemporary collective and private lives - and it deals with how we understand our condition. Violent news can be awesome and its bitter sights addictive. Yet at times we read and watch events comparable to the fall of Troy or the sack of Constantinople with casual indifference - or prefer other sillier, lighter, things. Webstar (2003), in 'Information warfare in an age of globalization' says that the media explosion of recent decades has led to there being staggering amounts of information available today - anywhere, anytime we have 24 h news services, entertainment, radio talk show and internet sites. This is dominated by the west, but there is such a quantity of information, in so many different outlets, coming with such velocity and with such turnover that, in a real sense, it is beyond control. In this context, with regard to media coverage of warfare, two points may be made.

The first is that war is newsworthy and as such of compelling interest to media. War is dramatic, attention-grabbing and played for enormously high stakes and as such it is a top priority for news-makers. This does not mean that war is in itself sufficient to gain media attention - there are clearly other factors involved such as the scale and intensity of the conflict, its location, where the participants come from, as well as its strategic implications. However, the inherent newsworthiness of war increases the likelihood of the receiving prominent and sustained attention. Brown (2003), in 'Spinning the war: Political Communications, information operations and public diplomacy in the war on terrorism', states that 'War, observed the eighteenth-century Prussian military strategist, Karl Von Clausewitz, is nothing more than the continuation of politics by other means'. As politics and society change so does the nature of war. In the twenty-first century politics is conducted via the mass media with the result that the 'war on terrorism' is a war that is also waged through the media. The way in which the mass media represent the conflict is part of the conflict. Campbell (2003), in 'Commodifying September 11: Advertising, Myth and Hegemony' states that a number of media studies scholars have examined the role of myth in journalism, finding that the storytelling traditions of the news industry tend to subtly sustain dominant political ideologies. S. Elizabeth Bird and Robert Dardenne describe recurrent myths that surface in news coverage "that are derived from culture and feed back into it." They

argue that the mythical qualities of news "offer reassurance and familiarity in shared community experiences; it provides credible answers to baffling questions and ready explanations of complex phenomena such as unemployment and inflation. Coverage of September 11 in the U.S. new media certainly exhibited such mythical qualities. Breithaupt (2003) in 'Rituals of Trauma' opines that for the media, "trauma is an organizing device, that is, a concept. This is why the word "trauma" appears in quotation marks in this text. Concept "grasp" reality by offering a clear vision of otherwise complex situations. As a concept, "trauma" is not a diagnosis of existing medical conditions, but rather a prescription for arranging the scenario of an event. Concepts guide the perception of reality: We see (perceive) what we already (conceptually) know; concepts prepare for future situations. In the world of concepts, there are always competing concepts. Indeed, instead of "trauma", there are numerous other concepts that could have guided the media: a "anxiety", "anger", "vengeance", "sobriety", "mourning", "disbelief", "dialogue" - all other of which do structure some responses of September 11, whether they are named or not. Brown et al. (2003), in 'Internet News representation of September 11: Archival impulse in the age of Information' states that the events of September 11 are now routinely described as the most widely documented tragedies of all time. Such assertions imply an authenticity and totality in capturing the day's events that potentially raise the standard of the historical record and provide for a greater comprehensibility of the terms of September 11. And yet, amidst the pervasive images of September 11 sheer documentation by various forms of technology and media has done little to clarify why the attacks occurred, the nature of change and transformation in the United States and across the world since those events, nor even ensure a "total" picture of the occurrences of that day. Such is the nature of trauma in representation, where tragedy and its impact can only be partially and situation-wise expressed.

THE METHODOLOGY

The methodology adopted for this study are Survey method and Content analysis. The survey was conducted primarily over a web based interface by posting questionnaires through emails and forums. For the content analysis four National English dailies were chosen and their coverage on Mumbai attacks from 27th November to 30th was analyzed.

FINDINGS

Content analysis of newspapers

The four English dailies being chosen are The Hindu, Times of India, New Indian Express and Deccan Chronicle. Of these we have divided the whole issue into six broad categories, they are:

- i) Terrorism in general.

Table 2. Percentage of news stories on 28th November.

News stories	The Hindu	Times of India	New Indian express	Deccan chronicle
Terrorist group behind the attacks	50	30	20	30
Causalities and human interest stories	30	10	40	10
Internal security and terrorism in general	20	30	-	40
Star Hotels	-	30	20	-
Politicising terror	-	-	20	20

Table 3. Percentage of news stories on 29th November.

News stories	The Hindu	Times of India	New Indian express	Deccan chronicle
Politicising terror	35	30	-	25
Star hotels	35	20	35	20
Terrorist groups behind the attack	20	-	10	-
Terrorism in general	10	-	-	-
Causalities and human interest stories and terrorist groups	-	10	45	10
Internal security	-	40	10	45

- ii) Terrorist groups behind the attack.
- iii) Internal security.
- iv) Politicising terror.
- v) Causalities and human interest.
- vi) About star hotels.

Based on these topics, for what kind of news national dailies have given more importance on that day and in what way they differ from each other in giving information to the audience was found out.

Headlines

Since the terror attack happened on 26th November, the newspapers on 27th carried various details of the attack and hence their headlines have been analyzed. For the next few days, a detailed analysis has been done by the newspapers and they are analyzed based on the factors mentioned above.

On 27th November: Since the attack has happened last night most of the dailies did not have much coverage on this issue. But in all the four dailies the head lines was on Mumbai terror attacks.

The headlines are given as follows:

The Hindu: Rash of terror attacks in Mumbai.

Times of India: Its war on Mumbai.

New Indian express: War zone-Mumbai.

Deccan chronicle: Terrorist rip Mumbai apart.

Of these four dailies, only New Indian Express had full page coverage on this day and only 'Times of India' had a lead in story on this day. By comparing the headlines and the story, we come to know that 'New Indian Express' tries to sensenalize the issue and 'The Hindu' is trying to play down with the issue (Tables 2 - 4). Since the coverage of the attack in the Deccan Chronicle dated 30th November, 2008 was negligible it was not included in the table.

Survey method

In this method we have posted various forms of questions based on the news papers' content to know the people's reaction towards the coverage of this issue in news papers. The survey was conducted primarily over a web based interface by posting questionnaires through emails, forums and also directly administering the samples. Survey was done in four major cities of India namely Chennai, Mumbai, Delhi and Bangalore and the total number of samples is 90 (Table 5). Majority of the respondents that is 41% of the respondents felt that the news coverage was overdosed, that is a lot of hype was given unnecessarily. They also felt that unnecessary information are given while covering the incident, which shows that people want the exact portrayal of the incident, rather than giving overhype to terror attacks. Contrary to this, nearly one third of the respondents that is, 32% of them felt the newspapers gave sufficient coverage to the incident, which on other side proves that media's coverage satisfied a large chunk of people too,

Table 4. Percentage of news stories on 30th November.

News stories	The Hindu	Times of India	New Indian express
Internal security	30	25	40
Politicising terror	25	-	40
Star Hotels	20	-	15
Causalities and human interest stories	15	50	-
Terrorist groups behind the attack	10	15	-
Terrorism in general	-	10	15

Table 5. General opinion of people about newspaper coverage of 26/11 Mumbai attack.

Opinion	No. of respondents	Percentage
Sufficient	29	32
Over dosed	37	41
Falling shortage	16	18
Can be still better	8	9

Table 6. Whether the newspapers gave overall dimension about the issue.

Giving dimension	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
a. Yes	59	66
b. No	31	34

Table 7. Effectiveness of the medium in covering this kind of issue.

Medium	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Newspaper	22	24
TV	41	46
Radio	5	6
Online	18	20
Others	4	4

while 18% of them felt that their expectations were not satisfied that is less coverage was given to the incident, 9% of them felt the coverage would had been little better than it was actually given. The answers reflected the different minds of the different types of the respondents. Newspaper being a mass media has to cover the interest of every sect of people, but the majority opinion of the respondents is that media hyped the incident more than actually than it was (Table 6).

It is interestingly found out that with the advent of twenty four hour news channel updating the incident with exclusive visuals then and there, the respondents still felt that the newspapers gave overall dimension of the attack. Nearly two third of the respondents, that is 66% of them felt that newspaper gave overall coverage to the incident, while the remaining 34% felt newspaper did not give overall dimensions of the incident (Table 7). 46% of the

respondents felt television as the most effective medium for covering this issue, the main reason being the television covers the incident live and they could see what is happening over there then and there. The next preferred medium was newspaper, 24% of them preferred newspaper because they wanted to have a in-depth information about the issue, while 20% of them preferred internet, since they can get live updates, as well as in-depth information at the same time and also enables them to take part easily in discussions and share their opinions as well. 6% of them preferred radio over other medium as they felt radio is affordable, as well as gives live updates of the incident. 4% of them preferred other medium than above mentioned (Table 8).

This question was to find whether the respondents felt the English dailies coverage on Mumbai terror attack was biased or not. Nearly two third of the respondents, that is

Table 8. Newspaper medium was unbiased in covering this issue.

Opinion	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	32	36
No	58	64

Table 9. Newspaper was sensenaling the issue.

Opinion	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	61	68
No	29	32

Table 10. Graphic illustrations/pictures are self explanatory and innovative.

Opinion	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	63	70
No	27	30

64% of the respondents felt that the newspapers were unbiased in covering the incident and remaining 36% felt that the newspapers were biased in covering the issue (Table 9).

This is a very important question put forth to the respondents to find whether, they felt that the newspapers sensationalized the issue, only 32% of them felt the newspaper was not sensationalizing the issue, 68% of them, that is a majority of people felt that the newspapers are sensationalizing the incident unnecessarily, than it was actually. This throws light on the important issue how newspapers unnecessarily sensationalize the terror attacks and create panic and insecurity among the people. Among those who said newspapers are sensationalizing the issue, 38% of them felt it made them feel the country is insecure, 26% of them felt it made unnecessary hype to the issue, 21% said it created inner fear in them and interestingly 16% of them felt that the newspapers are blaming the government and gave many negative stories, instead of giving strength to the people (Table 10).

This question was asked to know whether the images in the newspapers are self-explanatory and explained the situation deeply and to know the quality of images given in newspapers during this kind of terror attacks. 70% of the respondents are satisfied with the pictures/graphic illustrations given in the newspapers, while remaining 30% felt it did not satisfy their needs (Table 11).

This is an inquisitive question asked to know whether media coverage on terror attacks have any long time impact on voting decision as well as to know whether, media uses terror attacks to sensationalize the issue and change the mindset of the voters during election. Interestingly, 64% of the respondents said that there is no con-

Table 11. Connection between 26/11 coverage and the upcoming Parliamentary Elections.

Opinion	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
a. Yes	32	36
b. No	58	64

Table 12. The more effective newspaper in covering this issue.

Newspapers	No. of respondent	Percentage (%)
Hindu	44	46
Times of India	24	27
New Indian express	11	12
Deccan chronicle	14	16

nection between newspaper coverage on terror attacks and upcoming Parliamentary elections, remaining 36% felt that the terror incident coverage will have its hand on the coming lok sabha elections. This indicates that people tend to forget the incident soon and the voting decision depends mostly on their personal interests, rather than the media's coverage of these kinds of incidents. Some of the interesting observations of the respondents were that;

- i) During those attack elections were happening in Delhi and some states, this was used by some media to give the opposition leaders' comments on the government.
- ii) When the Parliament polls dates was announced every party and media tended to diminish or even forget the 26/11 incident (Table 12).

When the respondents were asked their opinion about which newspaper covered the issue the most effectively, nearly half of them that is 46% of them felt the Hindu's coverage was better compared to other newspaper followed by, Times of India at second place with 27% selecting it, followed by Deccan Chronicle at third place with 16% of the respondents favoring it and at the last the new Indian Express with 16% of the respondents. Some of the attractive features of the newspapers put forth by the respondents were;

1. The Hindu-its coverage was sensible and does not create any panic.
2. Times of India-narration and graphics were good.
3. Indian Express-the illustration of accidents and the multiple point editorial on the issue was good.
4. Deccan Chronicle-it looks deep into every issue.
5. Human interest stories were the main part of these kind of terror incidents, when the respondents were asked whether they can remember any human interest stories regarding to the terror incident, most of them forgot or had not read the human interest stories, few important stories they remember are;

Table 13. After the 26/11 attack, have you participated by giving information news paper (like writing letter to editors, discuss on online forums, etc).

Participation	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	4	4
No	85	96

Table 14. Report on statement 1.

Level of agreement	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	16	18
Agree	34	38
Neutral	19	21
Disagree	13	14
Strongly disagree	8	9

- a) About a family from Bihar who lost their loved ones at the Mumbai CST railway station firing from and the story of brave Major Unnikrishnan from Bangalore.
 b) The Hindu.
 c) The tamil film 'Nayagan' (especially the hero of the film J.K. Ritish) that used the pictures of the incident was highly condemned.
 d) Indian express.
 e) People in Victoria station started using the Indian Railway Services immediately after the incident without bothering about the hype created by the media over the incident. Further Kudos to Indian Railways to offer the services the people need the most and not for the media channels who were trying to bring the image of the Railways down.
 f) Decan chronicle.
 g) About train announcer who saved many lives -Times of India (Table 13).

This is an interesting question put forth to know how many people respondent to the media's coverage on the terror attack. This was posed to know whether people are active participants like writing letters to editors, replying on online forums etc., or just passive watchers of the incidents that was portrayed during the terror attacks in Mumbai. Interestingly, only 4% of the respondents had been active participants and rest of them remained as passive observers, it shows that people too take little interest in changing how media portrays this kind of terror incidents by accepting whatever is portrayed in the media, which makes the media to decide upon its own, what people should know and what they need not know.

Views on newspapers' coverage of 26/11

To know the views of people deeply, they were given

certain statements and asked to agree or disagree and the results are tabulated.

Statement 1: After the 26/11 attack, the newspapers was giving terrorism related stories in their supplements also; it had created a very good impact (Table 14).

This question is to know how the respondents felt about the newspapers giving serious news items like terrorism related news in supplements they give and whether they created good impact among the respondents. 18% of them strongly agreed that it will create great impact, 38% agreed to it, 19% remained neutral, while 14% disagreed and 9% of them strongly disagreed that it will create an impact.

Statement 2: News papers coverage of terrorism related issues cannot be replaced by other medium (Table 15).

This question was put forth to find whether the news coverage of newspapers on terrorism related issues can be replaced by some other mediums like television, internet etc., 10% of the respondents strongly agreed to it, 24% of them felt it might be replaced, 31% remained neutral, 22% agreed to it, while 14% felt newspapers cannot be replaced by other mediums in covering terrorism related issues. This brings out that people have a mixed opinion on whether newspaper can be replaced or not by other mediums in covering these kinds of issues.

Statement 3: During/after the 26/11 attack news papers are commercializing the issue? (e. g. relating to any brand movies, celebrity etc. Table 16)

When the respondents were asked whether they felt the newspapers were profited by commercializing the Mumbai terror incident, 13% strongly agreed newspapers commercialized the issue, 21% agreed to it, while 26% remained neutral 23% disagreed it and 17% strongly disagreed it.

Table 15. Report on statement 2.

Level of agreement	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	9	10
Agree	21	24
Neutral	27	31
Disagree	19	2
Strongly disagree	12	14

Table 16. Report on statement 3.

Level of agreement	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	12	13
Agree	19	21
Neutral	23	26
Disagree	21	23
Strongly disagree	15	17

Conclusion

Both the media and terrorists benefit from terrorist incidents. Terrorists get free publicity for themselves and their cause. The media, meanwhile, make money as reports of terror attacks increase newspaper sales. Some attempts have been made by international, national and local media organizations to come up with sensible guidelines for covering terrorist incidents. It is important that the media play a constructive role during times of local or national crisis, but it is also critical that they be able to continue to allow providing a counterbalance. The Mumbai incident was one of the best examples, which proved there is a great need for responsible media. The idea behind the terrorists attack in Mumbai was mainly to create fear in the minds of the people as well as topple the name of India in the foreign minds affecting the booming economy and tourism of the country. Media in the name of giving full coverage freely advertised the needs of terrorists and sowed fear in the minds of people, satisfying the terrorist's need, which will definitely encourage them to further take some terrorist activities. Apart from this the full coverage of the actions and plans taken by the security forces are fully covered by electronic media, helping the terrorist to repel and also to plan accordingly in the future. Most of the stories given by the newspapers are negative stories which sensationalized the issue and created fear among people and made them feel insecure.

At the same time, the intensive Indian media coverage also focused the attention of the international community on the attacks and almost the entire world expressed its support and sympathy for India. Within India, there was strong opposition to the way the electronic media sensationalized the attacks and the necessity to regulate the

media content during emergencies was stressed. Though the Government of the nation gave preference to freedom of media and did not introduce any new regulation, the News Broadcasters Association of India have developed a code to be adhered to in times of emergency. This research implies that people want more responsible media with fair coverage of the terror attacks, with less sensationalism. It is equally important that people become active respondents to the media and help in shaping the coverage of media responsibly.

REFERENCES

- Ahmad A (2003). *Contextualizing Conflict - the US 'War on Terrorism' in Thussu DK and Freedman D (Ed) War and the Media Reporting Conflict 24/7*, Vistaar Publication p. 23.
- Breithaupt F (2003). *Rituals of Trauma in Chermark et al (Ed), Representation of September 11 Praeger Publications p. 69.*
- Brown M et al (2003), *Internet News representation of September 11: Archival impulse in the age of Information in Chermark et al (Ed), Representation of September 11 Praeger Publications p. 103.*
- Brown R (2003). *Spinning the War: Political Communications, Informations Operations and Public Diplomacy in the War on Terrorism in Thussu DK and Freedman D (Ed) War and the Media Reporting Conflict 24/7*, Vistaar Publication p. 87.
- Campbell C (2003). *Commodifying September 11: Advertising, Myth and Hegemony in Chermark et al (Ed), Representation of September 11 Praeger Publications p. 50.*
- Gilani N (2009). *Mumbai attack media coverage more theatrical than professional*, www.TwoCircles.net.
- Magder T (2003). *Watching What We Say: Global Communication In A Time Of Fear in Thussu DK and Freedman D (Ed) War and the Media Reporting Conflict 24/7 Vistaar Publications pp. 31 – 32.*
- Seaton J (2003). *Understanding Not Empathy in Thussu DK and Freedman D (Ed) War and the Media Reporting Conflict 24/7 Vistaar Publication p. 45.*
- Shahzad S (2008). *Al-Qaeda 'hijack' led to Mumbai attack*, http://www.atimes.com/atimes/South_Asia/JL02Df05.html
- Times of India Explosions, firing continue at Taj hotel* http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/Seven_fresh_explosions_at_Taj_h

otel/articleshow/3768265.cms.
Webstar F (2003). Information Warfare In An Age Of Globalization in
Thussu DK and Freedman D (Ed) War and the Media Reporting
Conflict 24/7, Vistaar Publication p. 58.