

Bioterrorism and its impact on the security of citizens

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Extended Abstract

Objective: Security of manpower (workforce) as one of the most valuable assets of the countries is very important and political officials of different political systems pursue various programs in order to achieve this goal. Nowadays, human security is faced with a variety of threats and new sciences and technologies are used in some of these threats. Terrorism is one of the threats that has a long history and is under the influence of advancement of science. The biological form of terrorism is called bioterrorism that threatens people's lives. In fact, bioterrorism is deliberate release of biological agents in order to hurt or destroy humans, animals or plants. It causes fear in the state or civilian populations and prevents people from achieving political or social success. Recent advances in the field of biological sciences, on the one hand, and misuse of the results of scientific research by terrorist groups, on the other hand, have caused microbial agents to become fatal weapons that simultaneously threaten national security and public health of the societies. Low costs, easy access and provision, immediate effect, rapid expansion and their extremely high effect on the spread of sense of insecurity has made these types of terrorist acts attractive to some terrorist groups.

Methods: This research uses descriptive - analytical method and refers to valid sources to study the biological agents that may be used by terrorists. It also tries to specify the most important methods of transmission of these agents and understand the effects of bioterrorist attacks on the security and health of citizens.

Results: The results of the research indicate that bioterrorism is more dangerous than other types of terrorism for threatening the life of citizens and ordinary people due to the attractions of biological materials for terrorists. Some of these characteristics and attractions include difficulty of identifying the biological agents, sufficiency of a small amount of biological agents for a bioterrorist attack, easier spread of biological agents, difficulty of defense against biological agents, possibility of making, production, warehousing and storage of biological weapons in a small and simple place, and having incubation period. Due to these characteristics, biological agents have become attractive temptations for terrorists. They can use biological agents for a terrorist attack on urban infrastructure in sectors of water, food, public services, etc. and threaten the lives of the citizens.

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Conclusion: In the last two decades, terrorism has appeared as a global threat in various regions and countries. Terrorist groups use different plans, methods and equipment in their terrorist operations. One of the most dreadful types of terrorism is bioterrorism and the use of biological agents to threaten people's lives. The intrinsic attraction of this particular type of terrorism for terrorist groups and the probability of its expansion has caused governments to be worry about the security of their citizens. In spite of the various protective measures of the governments, most people and citizens are vulnerable to this kind of terrorism. Therefore, it is necessary to carefully examine the extent and the special ways of vulnerability of people and infrastructure to these types of attacks and to formulate security attachments for prevention of such attacks. This is especially true in respect of Iran that is more vulnerable to such attacks.

Keywords: Security, Terrorism, Bioterrorism, Effects of bioterrorism, Security of citizens

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