**Countering violent extremism**

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June 10, 2023

[Opinions](https://www.nation.com.pk/opinions), [Columns](https://www.nation.com.pk/columns)

Violent extremism refers to the use of advocacy for violence to achieve political, religious, or ideological goals. It involves a rejection of established systems of governance and a willingness to use violent means such as terrorism against individuals, groups, or government to achieve desired outcomes. Violent extremist organizations often use propaganda and social media to recruit individuals and create a sense of belonging and purpose with their group governance or societal norms and may target individuals or groups based on their beliefs, ethnicity, nationality, or other characteristics. For example, ISIS; one of the largest extremist groups, has lured 25,000 foreigners to fight in Syria and Iraq by using social media. According to a US government report, 4,500 of them are from North America and Europe.

In this regard, Amarnath Amarasingam, a Canadian extremism researcher at Waterloo University, says, “ISIS’s campaign on social media has played a significant role in turning people’s minds to extremism.”

[Elton John’s Glastonbury triumph attracts 7.3 million TV viewers](https://www.nation.com.pk/27-Jun-2023/elton-john-s-glastonbury-triumph-attracts-7-3-million-tv-viewers)

At present, violent extremism can take many forms, including terrorism, hate crimes, and violent protests (i.e. Protests on May 09, 2023). It can be driven by a wide range of motivations, such as ideology, grievance, or a desire for power or attention. However, the impact of violent extremism can be devastating, with the potential to harm individuals, communities, and entire societies through physical attacks, social disruption, and heightened fear and mistrust.

In my point of view, violent extremism can be termed as the software to run terror activities. Violent extremism is characterized by the use or advocacy of violent actions, including physical violence, threats of violence, or intimidation, to achieve political, ideological, or religious goals. When individuals or groups resort to violent extremism, they often become more radicalized and committed to their cause, which can lead them to engage in terrorism. Terrorism is defined as the systematic use of violence or threat of violence against the masses to achieve desired goals. When this ideology is taken further and individuals or groups start carrying out violent acts against innocent people, it becomes terrorism.

[Mitsotakis’s conservatives clinch landslide Greece election win](https://www.nation.com.pk/27-Jun-2023/mitsotakis-s-conservatives-clinch-landslide-greece-election-win)

It is pertinent to note, Violent extremist ideologies often promote the belief that violence is necessary to achieve their goals and that violence can be justified against those who oppose them, including innocent civilians. This can lead to the radicalization of individuals who are vulnerable to these ideologies, and they may become willing to use violence to achieve their own objectives. Terrorist groups use various tactics such as bombings, assassinations, and kidnappings to create fear and cause destruction. These acts of violence can be targeted toward civilians, government institutions, religious institutions, or any other group or individual, causing harm and destruction.

In summary, violent extremism fuels terrorism by inspiring individuals to take up violent actions to spread their ideology and create fear in society. It is important to combat violent extremism and prevent radicalization by promoting tolerance, understanding, and education to build a more peaceful and cohesive society.

[Ukraine forces recapture new Russian-occupied settlement](https://www.nation.com.pk/27-Jun-2023/ukraine-forces-recapture-new-russian-occupied-settlement)

Prominently, there are several ways in which different types of media can be used to control or prevent violent extremism:

Social Media: Social media is a powerful tool that can be used to spread positive messages and counter violent extremist narratives. Platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube can be used to engage with individuals and communities, provide positive alternative messages, and promote critical thinking and dialogue. Social media can also be a tool that can be used to disseminate messages of peace, tolerance, and understanding. Government, civil society organizations, and community leaders can use social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to share positive messages and counter the propaganda of violent extremist groups. Importantly, NACTA should have to develop a comprehensive roadmap that involves intellectuals, who have the theoretical acumen to get rid of the menace of terrorism.

Entertainment Media: Entertainment media such as movies, TV shows, and video games can also be used to promote messages of peace and tolerance. It is important to accurately portray different cultures and religions in entertainment media to prevent the spread of erroneous generalizations and stereotypes. Again, NACTA should have to establish a media cell for producing documentaries, which portray the true spirit of religion or different schools of thoughts in story-based events.

[Obama: Row in India over former US President’s remarks on Muslim rights](https://www.nation.com.pk/27-Jun-2023/obama-row-in-india-over-former-us-president-s-remarks-on-muslim-rights)

News Media: News media plays a vital role in shaping public opinion and perception. Journalists and news outlets can report fairly and accurately on issues related to violent extremism. Providing context and background information can help people understand the complex nature of the issue and prevent the rise of hysteria and panic.

Education Media: Education media such as online courses and webinars can help raise awareness about violent extremism. Providing education on the root causes, history, and modus operandi of extremist groups can help people develop critical thinking skills and recognize the signs of radicalization. In this regard, NACTA should have to design a bilingual or local language-based curriculum with the help of field experts. Thereafter, which must be incorporated into the school-going students’ educational system.

In conclusion, it is essential to employ various media types to control and prevent violent extremism. By leveraging the power of social media, entertainment media, news media, and education media, it is possible to influence public opinion and reduce the threat of violent extremism. Since Brainwashing is dangerous, someone, once brainwashed, hardly returns to normal and loses all their critical thinking abilities.