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Response to Soft Target TERRORISM: Recommendations for Mega Event Security

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Abstract

Homegrown terrorism and lone wolf terrorism are important terms for the rapidly changing pattern of terrorist attacks since 9/11. Considering that terrorism is intended to terrorize others and spread fear and destruction, entities that terrorist groups can do as much damage as they can are selected as a target of terrorism.

A recent research suggested that terrorist attacks against soft targets including business entities and private and non-governmental facilities have increased while terrorist attacks against hard targets including military and governmental facilities have decreased in general.

The activities of terrorist groups have shown new trends since 9/11. First, it is changing from group-oriented activities to the distributed network by using the Internet and advanced communication technologies. They are recruiting members through the Internet and social media, teaching them how to conduct terrorist attacks, and even raising money for terrorism. Secondly, terrorist targets are changing into soft targets such as skyscrapers and public facilities since 9/11. 7/7 terrorist attacks in London, 2005 and Mumbai attacks in 2008 are typical examples of this trend. Facilities referring to soft targets are crowded with many unspecified people, which makes it important to prevent and counter terrorism at the national level because it can cause a lot of casualties and danger in case of terrorist attacks.

This article introduced the discussion about soft target terrorism and examined characteristics and vulnerabilities of facilities related to mega sports event. It also tried to suggest countermeasures based on these vulnerabilities. This article is meaningful as an exploratory study introducing the terrorist target of soft target which is rarely introduced in Korea. Studies on the possibility of terrorism in Korea have mainly discussed the possibility of terrorist attacks by North Korea or international terrorism. Since South Korea is ahead of the PyeongChang Olympic Games in 2018 and has been on the list of countries for possible terrorist attacks by the IS, both hard and soft target should be considered together to prevent terrorist attacks.

For these reasons, it is meaningful to introduce the discussion about soft target terrorism which can cause massive damage as Korea is ahead of the sports mega event, Pyeongchang Winter Olympic Games in 2018.

[Keywords] *Soft Target Terrorism, Homegrown Terrorism, Lone Wolf Terrorism, Countering Soft Target Terrorism, Target Hardening*

1. Introduction

Considering that terrorism is intended to terrorize others and spread fear and destruction[1], entities that terrorist groups can do as much damage as they can are selected as a target of terrorism[2][3].

A recent research suggested that terrorist attacks against soft targets including business entities and private and non-governmental facilities have increased while terrorist attacks against hard targets including military and governmental facilities have decreased in general[4].

The activities of terrorist groups have shown new trends since 9/11. First, it is changing from group-oriented activities to the distributed network by using the Internet and advanced communication technologies. They are recruiting members through the Internet and social media, teaching them how to conduct terrorist attacks, and even raising money for terrorism[5].

Secondly, terrorist targets are changing into soft targets such as skyscrapers and public facilities since 9/11. 7/7 terrorist attacks in London, 2005 and Mumbai attacks in 2008 are typical examples of this trend[6]. Facilities referring to soft targets are crowded with many unspecified people, which makes it important to prevent and counter terrorism at the national level because it can cause a lot of casualties and danger in case of terrorist attacks.

For this reason, it is meaningful to introduce the discussion about soft target terrorism which can cause massive damage as Korea is ahead of the sports mega event, Pyeongchang Winter Olympic Games in 2018.

2. Theoretical Backgrounds

2.1. Concept of soft target

A soft target is a major facility or major resource that lacks adequate levels of security or is difficult to protect or defend against, because it is open to the general public for its intended purpose[1].

Soft targets are not security-intensified places because they are generally civic centers, which makes them vulnerable to terrorist attacks for their insufficient protection and defense. Due to the nature of soft targets, there are a large number of private-owned facilities, the resources available for security are limited, and security is not the primary mission of the facility[7].

For this reason, terrorists who want to attack soft targets can access large crowded areas without any limitations. This is because the major multi-use facilities corresponding to the soft targets are not designed to limit access to the public, but are designed to be

freely and easily accessible. Strengthening security or restricting access may rather confuse the daily activities of people seeking the facility or may lead to negative perception of the facility. As a result, soft targets are relatively unprotected or difficult to ensure safety effectively. Soft targets are often unprotected private assets because they are considered to be at low risk of being subjected to unlawful acts such as terrorism. Shopping centers or malls, hotels, religious facilities, public transportations, nightclubs and restaurants are examples of soft targets[1].

2.2. Why do terrorists soft targets to attack?

First and foremost, as soft targets are relatively unprotected private assets against terrorism, it is easier to conduct and succeed terrorist attacks. And terrorists do not need much funds to prepare for terrorist attacks. Second, due to the above-mentioned security reasons, the possibility of success in terrorist attacks is relatively high. Third, if the terrorist attacks against soft targets, it will raise the credibility of those who have prepared and conducted terrorist attacks. In other words, their arguments and propaganda will get paid attention. Fourth, as the credibility of the terrorist group that committed soft target terrorism increases, the recruitment of the group becomes easier. It also proves the feasibility of future terrorism. Fifth, terrorism targeting soft targets is also a way for the terrorist groups with a dead end to survive as an organization. Moreover, it can draw attention from the news media worldwide. Sixth, it is used to test new strategies, tactics or weapons. Seventh, soft target terrorism can quickly damage legitimate markets and raise necessary money for terrorist activities[7].

2.3. Characteristics of facilities for mega sports event

1) Sports complex and arena

Sports stadiums are places where a variety of visitors such as competition participants, staffs, news reporters, audience, and cheerleaders come to visit. Therefore, according to the purpose of entering and leaving the

venue, various levels of inspection and retrieval are performed. As there is no restriction on the search or retrieval of the goods held by the competitors or the employees of the stores in the stadium or the seller of other goods, security problems can be caused. Also, access control at the entrance to the stadium may result in a security gap that restricts vehicle control for the convenience of game visitors. Above all, sporting events have a symbolic meaning in that the time, place and contents of the event are publicly known and that an unspecified crowd is gathering in order to perform the event at the appointed time[8][9].

2) Convention center

The Convention Center, which is a multi-purpose facility including events and exhibitions, is located in urban areas for accessibility. Therefore, open access to the public is permitted depending on the nature and duration of the event and the object of the event. Like the shopping center, the convention center is also a part of the center for shopping. There are limited background checks on the employees working in the store and the operating staff in the convention center. In addition, customers who use the convention center do not perform inspections or searches at all, and internal intrusion detection systems are rarely used.

For convenience of transportation, the facilities and the parking lot are located close to each other. It is a security feature that there is often no management and supervision of the goods delivered to the convention center and stores, and the deliveries to and from the convention center[9].

3) Hotel

The hotel is an unlimited access to various public facilities for the purpose of staying, as well as various memorial events. Public access is allowed indefinitely in the vicinity of the facility. Employees working in hotels and facilities are generally limited in background checks in addition to the usual identity surveys, and security personnel are also relatively limited in their use for the convenience of hotel guests. In addition, the hotel's HVAC

system is rarely equipped with protective devices, and the design of the building is not security-oriented. In hotels and other facilities, there are many places where explosives or hazardous materials are required to be placed[8].

3. Case Studies and Implications

3.1. Boston marathon terrorist attack

Two explosions occurred near the finish line of the Boston Marathon on April 15, 2013, resulting in at least three deaths and more than 170 injuries. The bombing of the Boston Marathon was concluded to be the sole crime of the Tsarnaeva brothers. And the case was concluded to be independent terrorism without the support of external Islamic forces. Although the Tsarnaeva brothers, who were identified as suspects of the Boston Marathon terrorist attack, had a background of the Chechen, most of their growth was in the United States, so this terrorist attack was not linked to terrorist organizations outside the United States, but rather to the grievance from multiracial societies of the United States. It can be seen in the form of 'lone wolf' terrorism caused by individuals with conflicts and problems. In other words, this terrorist attack was a result of anger and frustration when the second generation immigrant families failed to adapt to the social system in the United States. Second, it should be noted that the diffusion and dissemination of the Internet has made it possible to conduct terrorist activities not only by specialized terrorist organizations that have been organized and trained on a large scale, but also by individuals.

Korea is ahead of big sports events in 2018. It should be noted that there is a possibility of terrorism similar to that of the Boston Marathon, considering that the isolated individuals in Korea's developed Internet network and social relations are likely to use this as a link to terrorism.

3.2. 7/14 nice terrorist attack

On July 14, 2016, a festival celebrating French national holiday was taking place in

Nice, France's leading resort. At the end of the last event, Muhammad Bouhlel who is Tunisian nationality, drove a large truck to a crowd gathering at the event, shouting "Al-lahu Akbar (Allah is Great)". At least 84 people were killed and 300 were wounded from the incident. As a result of the police crackdown, the terrorist was killed at the scene, and the French police arrested a supporter who has been supporting terrorists and preparing for terrorism for months with him. This terrorist attack is analyzed as a new way of terrorism following the IS without any help from terrorist groups.

This means that followers who are not directly connected conduct a stand-alone terrorist attack in accordance with the IS policy. Terrorists were involved in assault and theft previously, but they were not on the list of radicals to be monitored by law enforcement authorities. The terrorist methods of using cars followed the instruction by the IS.

3.3. How to respond to soft target terrorism?

Most of soft target terrorism takes place in private facilities that are used by an unspecified people. Like fire and other disasters, it is necessary to create scenarios for virtual situations in which soft-target terrorism occurs and to plan response plans accordingly. In particular, the purpose of this scenario technique is to predict the future of a specific phenomenon and analyze strategic and risk factors and opportunities[10][11].

In addition, the established plans should be continuously simulated. In particular, mock drills should provide training on the handling of all hazardous materials, including explosive devices, to promote awareness of soft target terrorism among employees at the facility. The focus of the simulation exercise should be on how to ensure the smooth functioning of emergency tools, including all emergency networks, and measures for emergency communication.

Applying the target hardening techniques and the surveillance techniques for the prevention of situational crime can be a countermeasure to prevent the soft target terrorism[12].

First, all internal and external doors and safety locks and protective devices should be installed. For security reasons, newly installed safety locks and safeguards should be difficult to penetrate from the outside to the inside, but must be available so that they can quickly escape from the inside.

Second, the introduction of CCTV system, internal intrusion detection system, and the installation of lighting for security purpose should be considered.

Third, it is highly recommended to secure a safe area with a reception facility for personnel who can safely evacuate the users in the facility during a terrorist attack, and who can search for visitors who have disappeared during the crisis, in the event of a terrorist attack.

Fourth, if a suspicious activity, for example, working tools, weapons or uniforms are lost or stolen all of a sudden, occurs in a facility corresponding to a soft target, it should be immediately reported to the authorities.

Fifth, security personnel should be trained to look carefully at the following:

- Is there a parked vehicle or a suspected vehicle parked in or near the facilities?
- Is there a continuing access by visitors or outsiders who seem to have no special purpose in the areas that are not open to the general public?
- Are there packages, clothes bags, backpacks or luggage that someone has left?
- Are there other unusual behaviors that attract attention?

Sixth, as for the matters that the security staff should pay attention to, it is highly recommended to remove the parked vehicle from the spot during unusual times, check the main area of the building and adjacent area, and prohibit parking in the area. It should also be able to provide adequate signaling to limit access to areas that are not open to the general public.

Lastly, all background checks on all employees should be investigated thoroughly, and staff training programs should include in-

creased awareness of security and appropriate response procedures in preparation for terrorist situations. It should also ensure that security personnel are adequately sized, have the necessary equipment properly, and are able to operate trained personnel[8][9].

4. Conclusion

Homegrown terrorism and lone wolf terrorism are important terms for the rapidly changing pattern of terrorist attacks since 9/11. So-called 'Mr. Kim with the IS' reminds us that Korea is no longer free of terrorist attacks. Since South Korea is ahead of the PyeongChang Olympic Games in 2018 and has been on the list of countries for possible terrorist attacks by the IS, both hard and soft target should be considered together to prevent terrorist attacks.

This article introduced the discussion about soft target terrorism and examined characteristics and vulnerabilities of facilities related to mega sports event. It also tried to suggest countermeasures based on these vulnerabilities. This article is meaningful as an exploratory study introducing the terrorist target of soft target which is rarely introduced in Korea. However, since the research in this field is still unfamiliar, based on empirical and empirical data, it can not reach a full-scale study. The author expects more research to be produced in these fields in the future.

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