Terrorism has now become part of our everyday lives which appears on almost all continents. The term 'terrorism' originally comes from the Latin word terrere (to cause to tremble) which forms the French word 'terrorisme'. Although terrorism is viewed as a modern phenomenon, some argue that it is as old as human civilization. There are some examples of terrorism in the Greco-Roman world and the Mongol conquests. After the French revolution, the 'modern' terrorism evolved in Europe which followed as a global phenomenon in the twentieth century.

Among the first examples of terror attacks, Zealots were involved in terror campaign in the 1st century against the Roman Empire in the Mediterranean. These terrorists were defeated by the Romans. In the 11th century, the radical Islamic sect known as the Hashshashin employed politically motivated attacks for a cause they believed to be righteous. During the French revolution (1789-1799), the most severe period (1793-1795) was labeled 'The Reign of Terror'. In the 19th century, terrorist groups included Narodniks in Tsarist Russia, militant members of Zionist movement, and the Irish Republican movement. In 1867, the Irish Republican Brotherhood with the support from Irish-Americans attacked England which became recurrent in post British history. By the mid-19th century in Russia, a terror campaign against Tsarists had begun and they attacked the state culminating the assassination of Tsar Alexander 11 of Russia in 1881. In the 20th century, successful terrorist groups included a number of guerilla groups, partisan and resistance movements organized and financed by the Allies in the World War. It is well known that some Islamic terrorists of today were trained by the west to fight the USSR in Afghanistan. Similarly, Viet Cong received training from the Soviet and Chinese experts. One of the most sustained terrorists movements in Europe was that of the Irish Republican Army (IRA) which carried out attacks on 10 Downing street too.

Some historians classify terrorism as regional, national and international for analytical purposes. In the 20th century, many terrorist groups such as Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization and the IRA carried out terrorist activities beyond the boundaries of individual countries. These groups were supported by established governments and leaders such as Mussolini in Italy.

The spread of terrorism from Middle East in the 1960 was seen in West Germany and Italy. In West Germany, the Baader Meinhoff Gang (Red Army Faction) carried out bank robberies, kidnappings and murders including murdering an industrialist, Hans Martin Schleyer in 1977. They cooperated with Palestine terrorists to attack Israeli athletes at the Olympic Games in Munich in 1972. The Red Brigades, a prominent Italian terrorist group, involved in kidnapping and murder including the murder of former Italian Prime Minister Aldo Moro in 1978. The activities of these two terrorist groups declined to a greater extend by the mid 1980s. In Latin America, terrorist attacks are mainly associated with drug cartel. For example, in the 1990s, some members of cocaine cartel in Colombia used terror tactics to terrorise government and law enforcement authorities.

The origins of terrorist campaign in the 1960s can be clearly linked to the Middle East conflict between Israel and the Arab nations. Jewish radicals in the 1940s resorted to terrorism to establish the Jewish state in the Middle East which resulted in creating Israel in 1948. On the night of 8 April 1948,

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Israeli fighters killed more than a hundred Palestine Arabs in the village of Deir Yassin. This massacre was called 'utterly repugnant' at the time. In October 1953, Israeli troops attacked the Jordanian border village of Qibya killing 75 innocent villagers. In the war in 1948-49, Israelis increased their territory by one half. In 1956, in the Sinai campaign, Israel joined by France and Britain attacked Egypt over the nationalization of Suez canal.

Middle East conflict and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) is inseparable entities. With the help of Egypt's president Nasser, The PLO was founded in 1964 in Jerusalem integrating a number of groups and organizations such as Al Fatah, Al Saiga, and the Popula Front for the Liberation of Palestine. The leader of Al Fatah movement, Yasir Arafat was the head of the PLO since 1968 until his death in 2005. The PLO is dedicated to recover their usurped homes and has sponsored a number of terrorist acts to achieve their goal. In 1970, they fought a short war with Jordan and in 1988, King Hussein of Jordan ceded to the PLO claims to the Israeli held West Bank. In November 1988, Arafat declared the establishment of an independent Palestine estate with Jerusalem as its capital.

Most of the Arab nations backed the organization both financially and materially. In the 6-day war in 1967, Israel attacked Egypt and gained more territories including the West Bank from where the PLO operated. In the Yom Kippur War of 1973-74, Egypt, Syria and Iraq attacked Israel on the Jewish holy day but Israelis fought back and recouped more additional territories. In 1982, Israelis attacked the PLO bases in Southern Lebanon destroying all military bases. In 1986, Israeli forces withdrew from Lebanon but unrest has continued in the occupied territories with frequent clashes between Arab and Palestine fighters and Israelis. It is abundantly clear that the seeds of modern terrorism were sown in Israel in the 1940s and the formation of Al-Qaida movement in 1988 by Osama bin Laden was another milestone during this long historical process, which has now become the greatest single potential terrorist threat to the mankind.

Statistically, there was a consistent increase in the number of attacks in Asia since 1990 or so and slow decline in Western Europe. In recent years, acts of terrorist attacks against the United State and its allies have emerged as a major threat particularly after the September 11th attack on the World Trade Centre in New York. It seems that the greatest threat comes from the Middle East where many groups/people consider the US to be their enemy.

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Recent years have witnessed some new trends in modern terrorism. Soviet occupation of Afghanistan in 1979 led to a US-backed insurgent movement which defeated the Red Army. The Iranian Revolution of 1978-9 had led a revival in Shiite terrorism in the region and the emergence of suicide terrorism in Lebanon following the Israeli invasion of 1982. The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in Sri Lanka has taken this trend (suicide terrorism) into an unprecedented lengths by assassinating Presidents, Prime Ministers, Ministers, Tamil and Sinhalese political party leaders, academics, mayors, religious leaders, higher ranking security personnel, army, navy, air force, police personnel, and most importantly countless number of civilians. This suicide terrorism has now been seen in many countries including Chechnya, Sri Lanka, Yemen, Lebanon, Israel, Indonesia, and to a greater extent in Iraq in recent years.

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ගීයුම් පුස්තකාලය හා උතුරු වික්ටෝරියානු සුභසාධක සංගමය කේ ජයතිලක පදනම සමග එක්ව සංවිධානය කළ ප්‍රවීණ ගත් කතුවර කේ ජයතිලක ශූරීන් ගේ සාහිත්‍ය සේවය අගැයීමේ උත්සවය පසුගිය ජනවාරි 7 වන දින බ්‍රෝඩ්-මෙඩෝස් ගීයුම් පුස්තකාල ශාලාවේ දී විශාල පිරිසකගේ සහභාගිත්වයෙන් පවත්වමුණි. එහිදී කේ ජයතිලක මහතා විසින් ගාමිණී පැළැන්ද මහතාට පරිත්‍යාග කරන ලද ග්‍රන්ථ 50 ක් ගීයුම් පුස්තකාලයට පරිත්‍යාග කරන ලද අතර රැවන්ති වීජේතුංග දැරිය විසින් රචනා කරන ලද Fairy Dust & The Funny Man කෘතිය පෙරට වැඩිමද එහිදී සිදුකෙරුණි. පාර්ලිමේන්තු මන්ත්‍රීනි ලිස් බීට් ගීයුම් නගරාධිපති තුමා හා උතුරු වික්ටෝරියානු සුභසාධක සංගමයේ සභාපති චන්දසිරි බමුණුසිංහ මහතා ඇතුලු සම්මානනීය අමුත්තන් රැසක් මේ අවස්ථාවට සහභාගි විය.

කේ ජයතිලක මහතාගේ සාහිත්‍ය දිවිය පිළිබඳ දේශණය ශ්‍රීනාත් මේදුමගේ මහතා විසින් පවත්වනු ලැබිණි.

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