

Terrorism Analysis: Causality Trends and Target Vulnerability

A Comprehensive Study on Global Terrorist
Incidents (2021)

Presented By: BALKRISHNA M MOTTANNAVAR
Date: Sep 7, 2024

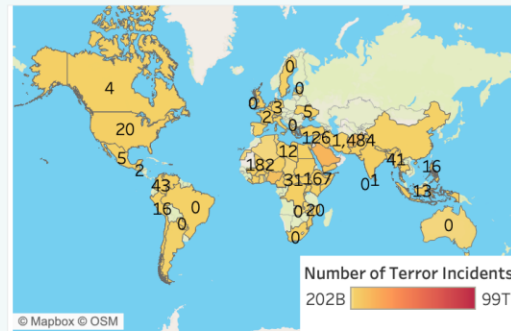
Agenda

1. Dashboard.
2. Global Distribution of Terrorist Attacks.
3. Casualties by Terrorist Attacks.
4. Types of Attacks.
5. Target for Attacks.
6. Terrorist Groups and Their Attacks.
7. Terror Incidents over Time Period.
8. Killings over Time Period.
9. Recommendations.

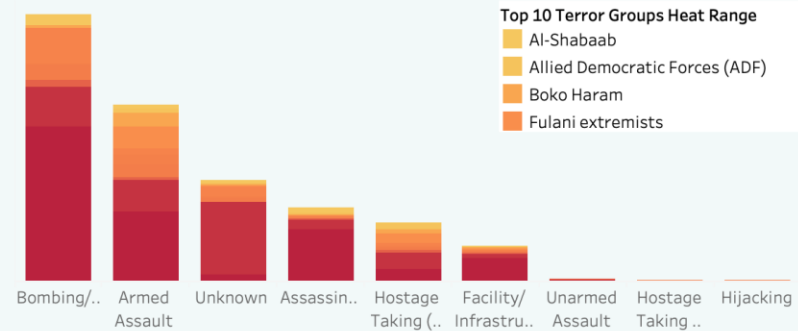
Dashboard

Analyzing Terrorism Incidents (Jan 2021 - June 2021)

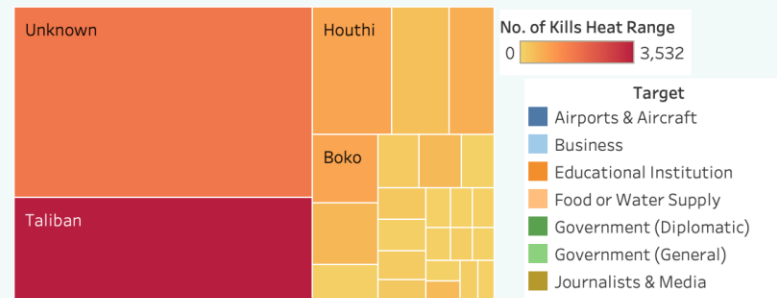
Casualties: Number of Kills



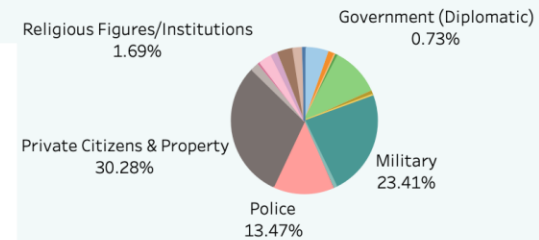
Types of Attack VS No. of Terror Attacks



Terrorist Group VS No. of Terror Attacks



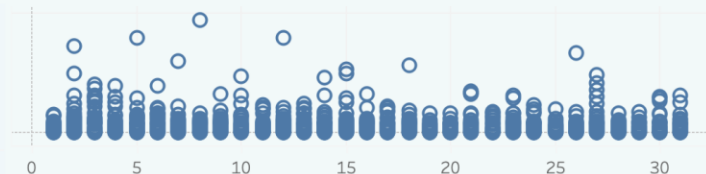
Target Place VS No. of Terror Attacks



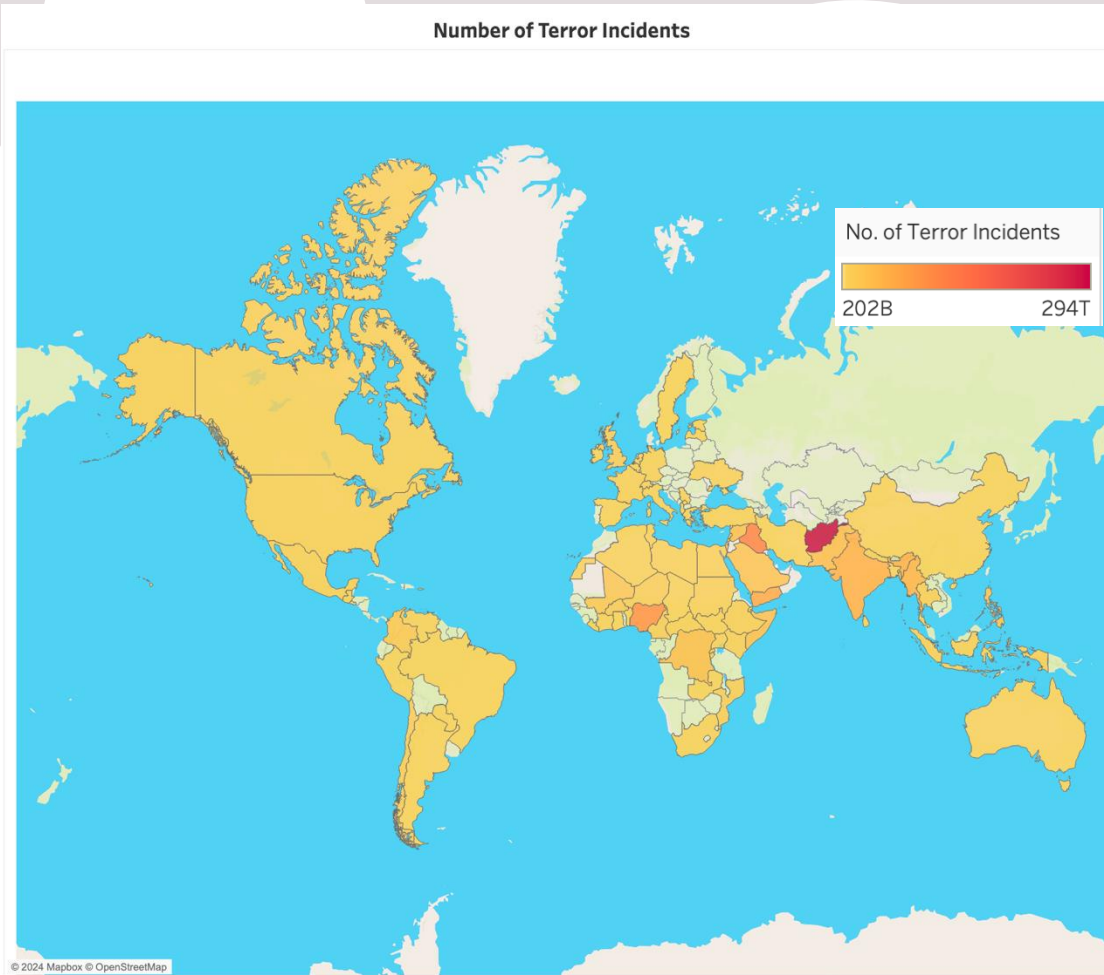
Time Period VS No. of Terror Incidents



Time Period VS No. of Kills



Global Distribution of Terrorist Attacks



Most Affected Regions:

- Afghanistan appears to be the country with the highest number of terrorist incidents, indicating significant instability and conflict within the region.
- Countries like Pakistan, India, and parts of Middle East (e.g., Iraq) have moderate to high number of incidents.
- Sub-Saharan Africa also shows pockets of heightened activity, such as Nigeria and parts of East Africa, indicating the presence of terrorist groups in those regions (e.g., Boko Haram in Nigeria and Al-Shabaab in Somalia).

Less Affected Regions:

- North America, South America, and Europe.
- Australia and Parts of South-East Asia.

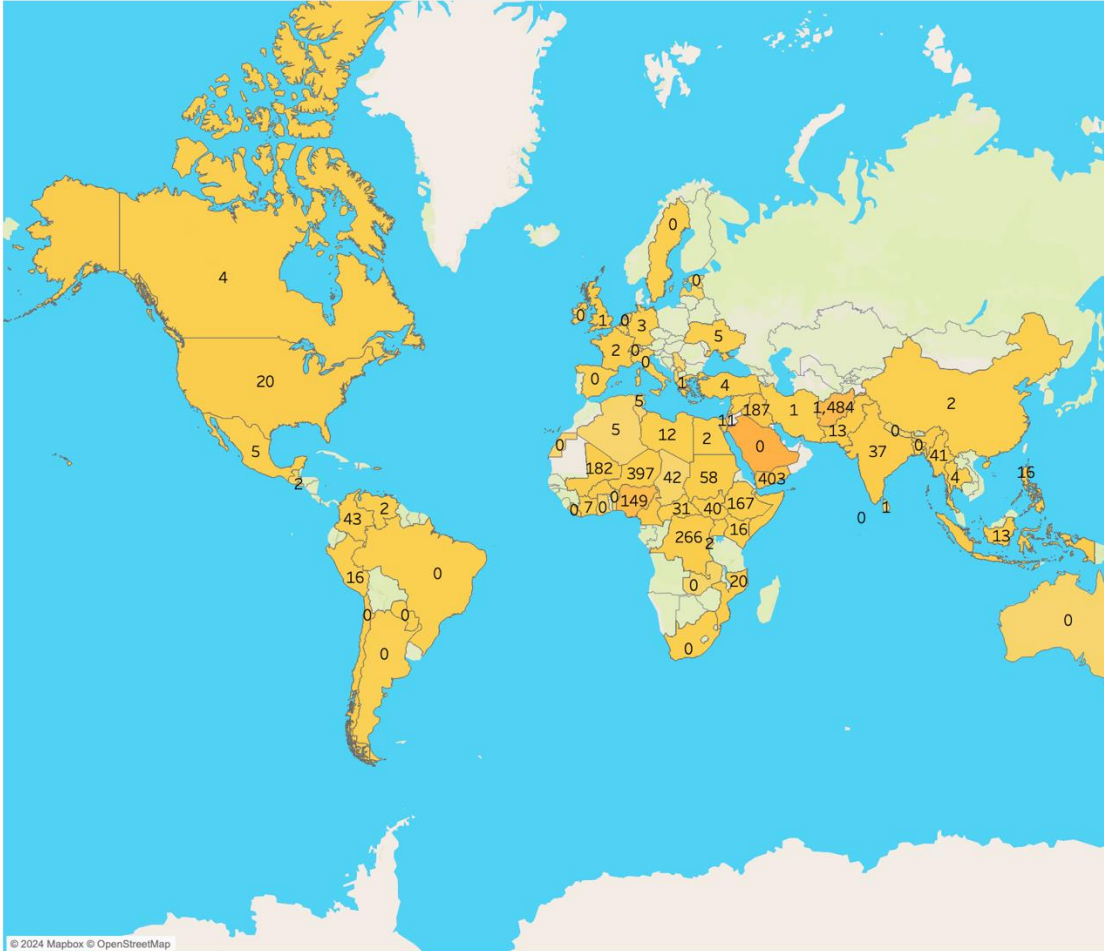
Global Distribution of Terrorist Attacks

Insights and Implications:

- This map illustrates the Geopolitical Instability concentrated in regions like Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, and parts of Africa.
- Countries experiencing fewer incidents may still be vulnerable to isolated attacks but enjoy greater political stability and security infrastructure.
- The countries with higher numbers of terrorist incidents are likely areas where counter-terrorism efforts and political interventions are critical to addressing ongoing conflicts and extremism.

Casualties by Terrorist Attacks

Casualties: Number of Kills



Countries with Highest Fatalities:

- Afghanistan stands out with 1,484 fatalities, indicating a high concentration of deadly terrorist attacks. This is likely due to ongoing conflict, insurgencies, and extremist group activity.
- Iraq follows with 403 fatalities, reflecting the continued impact of terrorist activities, despite efforts to stabilize the country post-conflict.
- Nigeria shows 397 fatalities, which is likely tied to the activities of groups such as Boko Haram and ISWAP (Islamic State West Africa Province).
- Somalia (266) and Yemen (182) also have high casualty counts, indicating significant instability and terrorist presence, such as Al-Shabaab in Somalia.

Casualties by Terrorist Attacks

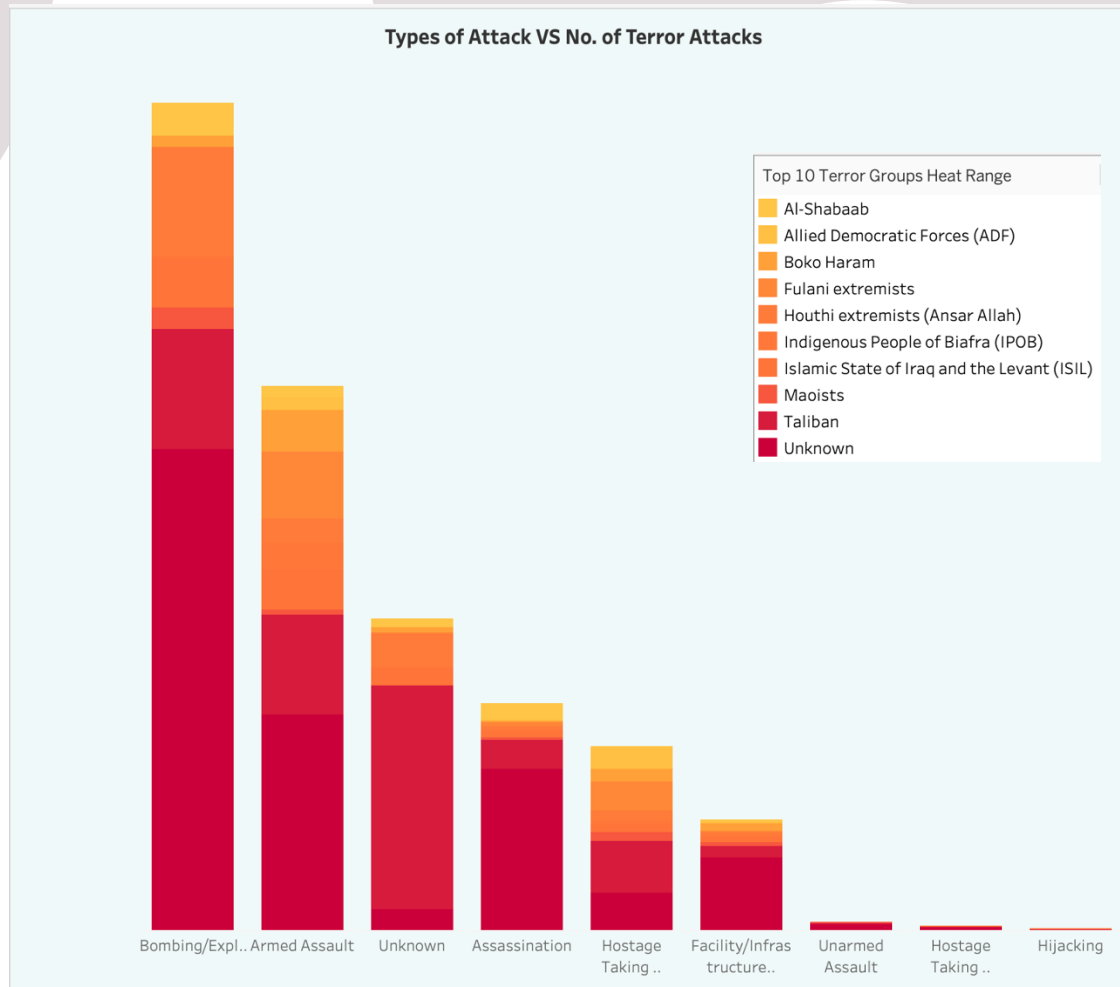
Moderately Affected Countries:

- India (41 deaths), indicating ongoing terrorist threats, particularly in regions like Kashmir.
- Pakistan (187 deaths).
- African Nations like Mali (149 deaths) and Kenya (58 deaths).

Countries with Lower Fatalities:

- European countries, such as France (5 deaths), Germany (3 deaths), and UK (1 death), reflecting a smaller number of successful terrorist incidents.
- The Americas show relatively low numbers, with Mexico (43 deaths) being the most affected country in this region, while the United States reported 4 fatalities.
- Australia, New Zealand, and much of South America report 0 casualties, showing little to no fatalities from terrorism during this period.

Types of Attacks



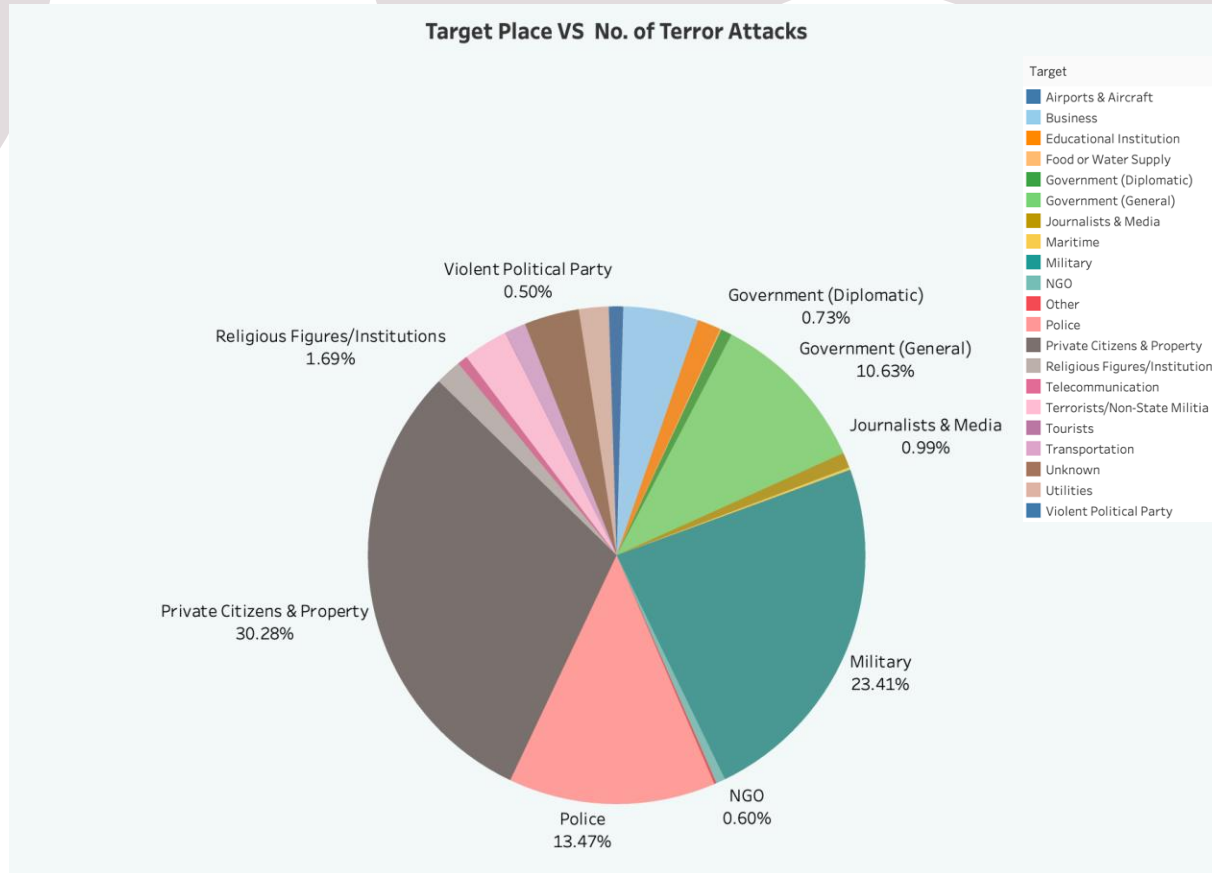
Most Common Attack Types:

- Bombing/Explosion is by far the most common type of terrorist attack.
- Armed Assault follows as the second most frequent attack type, though with significantly fewer occurrences than bombings.
- Other attack types such as Assassination, Hostage Taking, and Facility/Infrastructure attacks are less frequent but still significant in their use.

Dominance of Certain Groups:

- The Taliban (Dark Red) is highly active, especially in bombings/explosions and armed assaults.
- ISIS (Red) and Maoists are also frequent contributors to bombings and armed assaults.
- A considerable portion of attacks is attributed to Unknown groups, highlighting the presence of unverified or unidentified actors in terrorist activities.

Target for Attack



Most Targeted Group: Private Citizens & Property (30.28%)

- This indicates that civilian populations are the most frequent victims of terrorist attacks.
- Terrorist groups may target civilians to instil fear, gain media attention, or destabilize societies. Attacks on civilians are often aimed at maximizing casualties and psychological impact.

Second Largest Target: Military (23.41%)

- Terrorists often view military forces as direct adversaries, making them frequent targets, especially in conflict zones where terrorist groups engage in armed insurgency or guerrilla warfare.
- This also reflects terrorist attempts to weaken government control by directly attacking state military institutions.

Target for Attack

Police (13.47%):

- Police forces are often targeted due to their role in counterterrorism efforts, maintaining law and order, and being a visible extension of the state's power.
- Attacks on police forces could be aimed at disrupting security operations, reducing law enforcement morale, or as a tactical move in insurgencies.

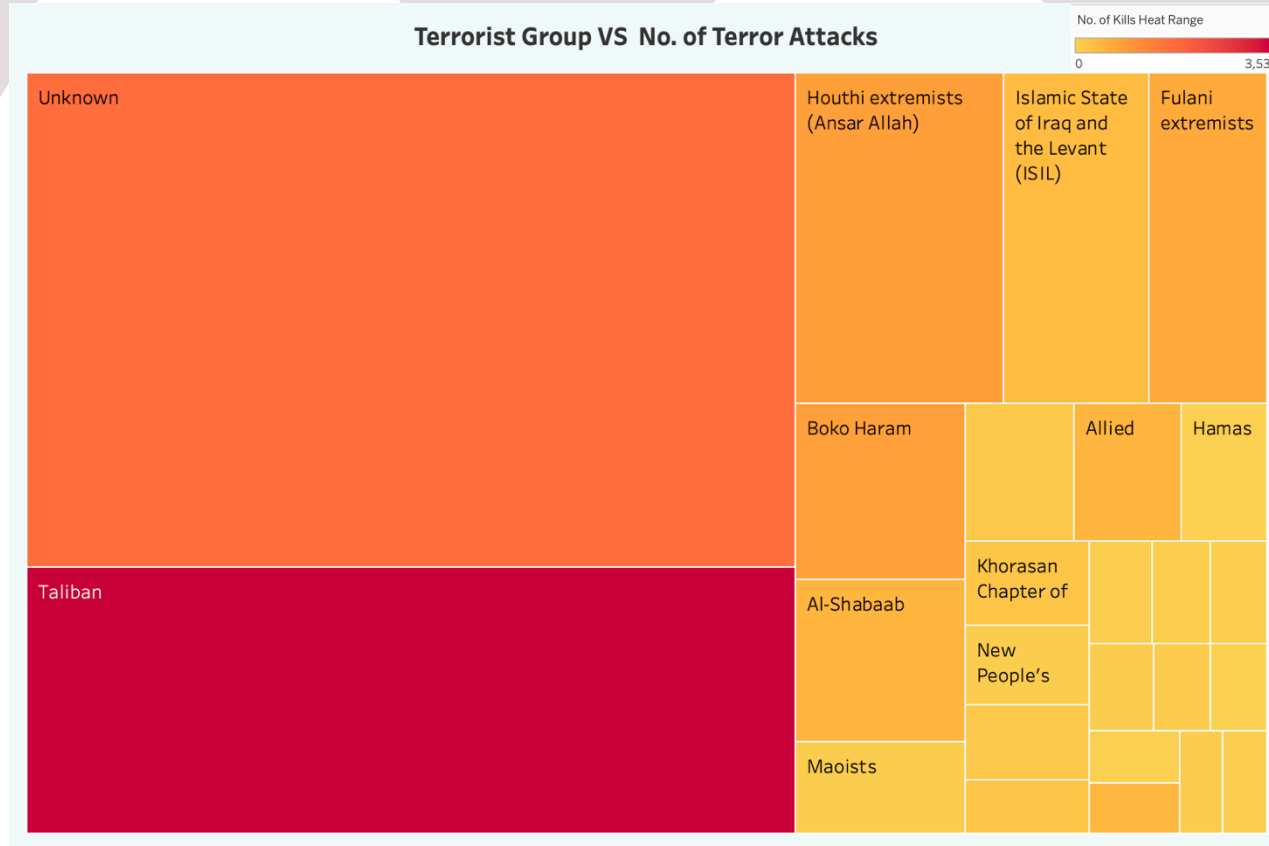
Government (General and Diplomatic, 11.36% Combined):

- Attacking government entities is often a strategic move by terrorist organizations seeking to undermine the state's legitimacy, destabilize governance, or send a political message.

Other Significant Targets:

- Journalists & Media (0.99%): While a smaller proportion, attacks on journalists and media outlets are often carried out to control narratives, suppress information, or retaliate for unfavourable coverage.
- Religious Figures/Institutions (1.69%): Attacks on religious entities may be motivated by ideological or sectarian reasons. Religious figures can be targeted by opposing extremist factions or groups with differing ideologies.
- NGOs (0.60%): Targeted less frequently but may be attacked due to their perceived association with foreign governments, humanitarian efforts, or development initiatives that contradict terrorist objectives.

Terrorist Groups and their Attacks



Unknown Groups (Largest Section):

- A significant proportion of terrorist attacks are attributed to unknown groups. This section dominates the chart, meaning that many attacks either go unclaimed or cannot be traced back to a specific terrorist organization.
- Despite the large number of attacks, the color is lighter compared to others, indicating that while numerous, attacks by unknown groups tend to result in fewer fatalities on average.

Taliban (Second Largest Section):

- The Taliban is one of the most active and deadliest groups. Its section is the second-largest in terms of attacks, and the dark red color reflects a high number of fatalities.

Terrorist Groups and their Attacks

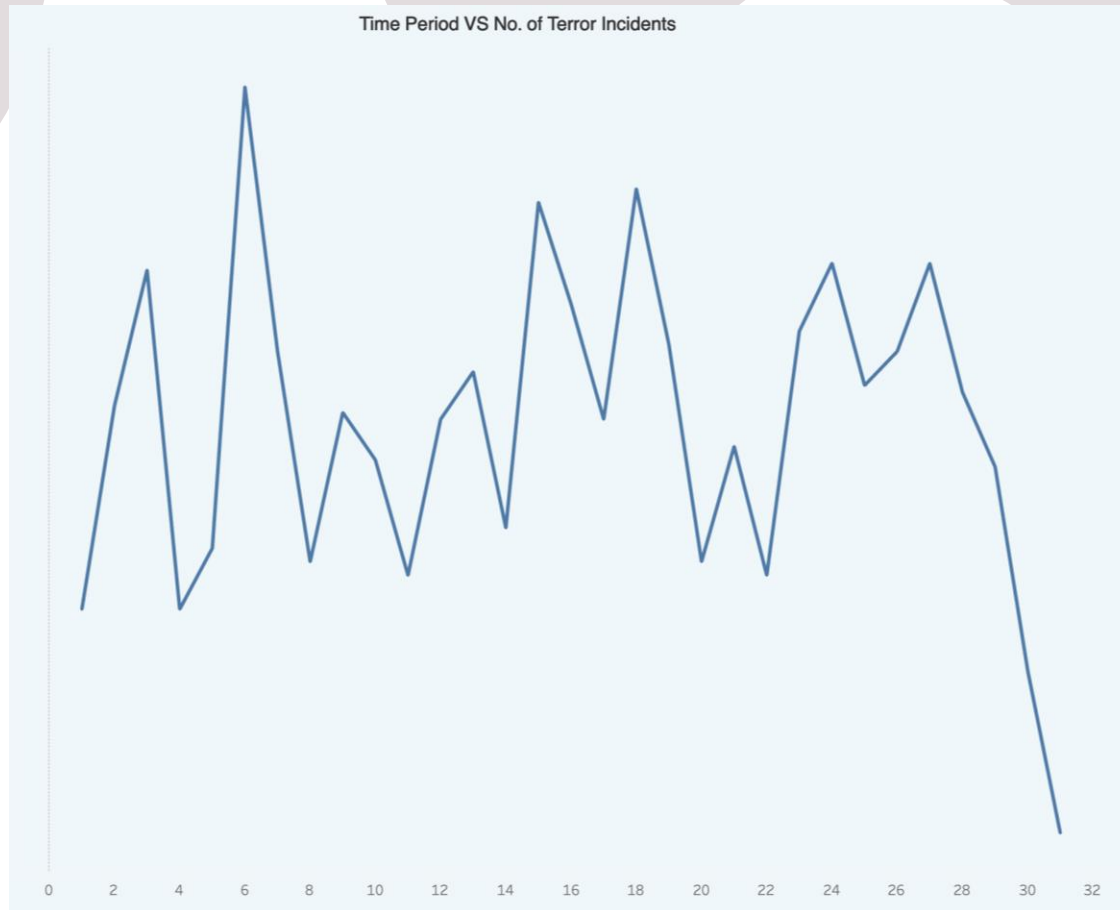
Other Prominent Groups:

- Houthi Extremists (Ansar Allah), ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant), and Fulani extremists are shown as major contributors to terror attacks. Their sections indicate that they are responsible for many attacks, particularly in regions like Yemen (Houthi) and Iraq/Syria (ISIS).
- Boko Haram and Al-Shabaab: Both groups, operating primarily in West Africa (Boko Haram) and East Africa (Al-Shabaab), also appear as significant perpetrators of terrorist activities. They are known for their brutality, with Boko Haram being notorious for mass kidnappings and Al-Shabaab for targeting civilians and military forces in Somalia and Kenya.

Other Notable Groups:

- Smaller but still significant groups include Hamas, Maoists, and the Khorasan Chapter. Although their sections are smaller, the presence of these groups reflects their regional influence and engagement in violent activities.
- Hamas operates primarily in Palestine and Israel, focusing on armed conflict against Israeli forces, while Maoist insurgents operate mainly in India and Nepal, focusing on revolutionary activities.

Terror Incidents over Time Period



Fluctuations in Terror Incidents:

- The chart shows significant variability in the number of terrorist incidents over time. Some periods exhibit sharp peaks in activity, followed by steep declines, suggesting irregular spikes in the frequency of terror attacks.
- The most notable peaks occur around time intervals 5, 9, 17, and 23, indicating periods with a particularly high number of terror incidents.

Periods of Decline:

- After each peak, the chart shows a sharp decline in terrorist activity. For instance, after the major peak around time period 5, the number of attacks drops dramatically before rising again. This could indicate periods of successful counterterrorism efforts, temporary ceasefires, or shifts in focus by terrorist groups.
- The periods following time intervals 9, 17, and 26 also show a marked reduction in incidents, potentially indicating similar reasons for the drop in frequency.

Terror Incidents over Time Period

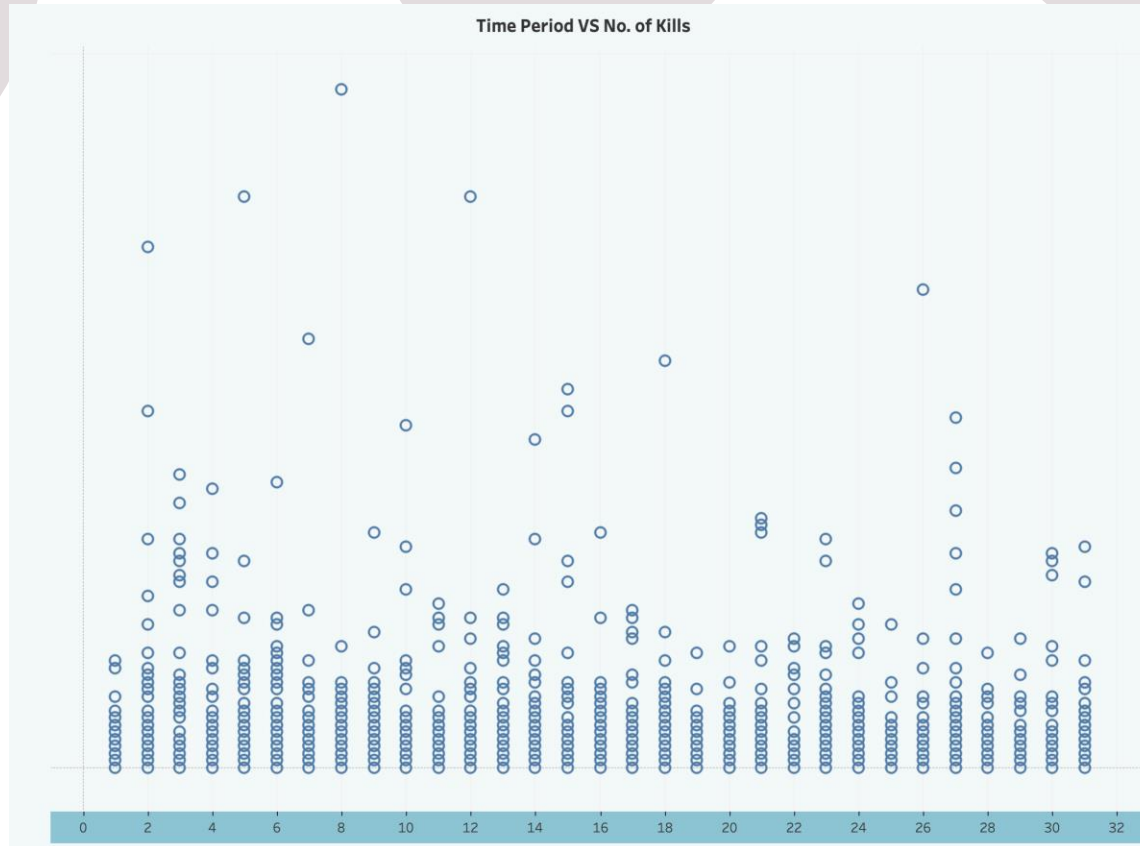
Intermediate Activity Levels:

- Between the peaks, there are periods of intermediate activity where the number of terrorist incidents hovers at a moderate level. For example, time intervals between 12 and 15 show a steady level of attacks without any extreme fluctuations, indicating more consistent, lower-level activity during these intervals.

End-of-Period Decline:

- Towards the end of the chart, the number of incidents begins to decline steeply after time period 28. This could suggest a lull in terrorist activities during this phase, potentially due to factors like increased counterterrorism measures, political changes, or reduced capabilities of terrorist groups during this time.

Killings over Time Period



High Variability in Number of Kills:

- There is significant variability in the number of fatalities over time. Some time periods show clusters of low-fatality attacks (lower dots on the Y-axis), while other periods feature single high-casualty events (higher dots).
- For example, between time intervals 6 and 16, there are notable spikes where some attacks resulted in much higher numbers of casualties.

Cluster of Low-Casualty Attacks:

- The **majority of attacks** result in **low casualties** (represented by the many dots close to the bottom of the chart). These events likely represent more frequent but less deadly incidents.
- These clusters suggest that many attacks may have a local impact but result in a smaller number of deaths per incident.

Killings over Time Period

Isolated Spikes in Fatalities:

- There are several isolated spikes scattered across the chart, representing outlier attacks where the number of deaths was significantly higher. These spikes suggest certain periods where attacks were far more lethal, possibly due to factors such as:
 - Bombings or attacks in densely populated areas.
 - Coordinated attacks with multiple targets.
 - Involvement of more dangerous terrorist groups or high-impact tactics like suicide bombings.

Consistent Spread Across Time Periods:

- The distribution of attacks seems fairly consistent across time periods, without any obvious long-term trends of increasing or decreasing fatalities. The dots are spread across the entire X-axis, indicating that terrorist attacks occurred throughout the time periods being tracked.

Concentration of Attacks in Some Time Periods:

- Some time periods (like time period 6, 16, and 26) feature dense clustering of events, indicating a higher frequency of attacks during those intervals, although the majority of them resulted in low casualties.

Recommendations

1. Strengthen Intelligence Networks:

- The large number of attacks by unknown groups underscores the need to enhance intelligence-sharing mechanisms across national and international agencies. This will improve the tracking of smaller or emerging terrorist factions and lead to better attributions of attacks.
- Deploy advanced surveillance technologies like data analytics, AI, and satellite monitoring to detect terrorist planning and identify potential threats in their early stages.

2. Deploy Counterterrorism Measures in Hotspot Regions:

- Counterterrorism forces and international coalitions should focus on high-risk regions, such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Nigeria, and Somalia, where both frequency and lethality of attacks are highest.
- Support these regions with capacity-building programs, anti-terrorism training, and military assistance to local law enforcement and military personnel.

3. Focus on Preventing High-Casualty Attacks:

- Since bombings and explosions are the deadliest form of attack, counterterrorism efforts should prioritize preventing IEDs (Improvised Explosive Devices) and similar threats, especially in urban areas and crowded locations.
- Increase public awareness campaigns and reporting mechanisms to ensure that suspicious activity is reported early, which can help prevent attacks.

Thank You

