Ensuring Security Against the Threats of Terrorist Acts in Mega Sport Events

Anupa Jayawardhana

Department of Sport Science and Physical Education

University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka

Correspondence with:

Anupa Jayawardhana

anupawj@gmail.com

Department of Sport Science and Physical Education

University of Kelaniya

Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Terrorism has been one of major theoretical and teaching themes of sport security management. Since the tragic event of 1972 Munich Olympic to the 9/11 tragedy (in the United States of America) terrorism has galvanised fears among many parties. Mega sport events have more terrorist threats than regional and localised sport events because they carry a significant economic, political, social and symbolic importance and attract global media. Consequently, the security budget for mega sport events has been on the increase for the past decades. In 1992 Olympic Games, the security budget figured US $ 66 million and it reached US $ 2.2 billion in 2004 Sydney Olympic and it is most likely that it will be much higher for Olympic Games 2016 in Rio de Janeiro. Event organisers are trying to reduce the impacts of terrorism by spending more money on security. But then arrive the important questions" what are the impacts of terrorist acts in sport mega events and what are the actions have been taken by event organisers to ensure security against the threats of terrorist acts in mega sport events?" Many social impacts can be identified   of terror in sport events. These include limiting human rights and reduced recreational time. Event organisers have used many strategies to reduce the treats of terrorist such as introducing new technological equipment, establish new polices and legislations.

Keywords: terrorism, sport mega events, security, event management, sport policy

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Introduction

The rises in the number of mega sport events are quite significant in the last few decades, mainly because of the involvement by the governments of many countries. The mega sport events have come to the international limelight since they are a matter of prestige for the participating and hosting countries. The nature of mega sport events is exceptional and their influences are long-lasting (Roche, 2002). Fussey and Coaffee (2012) argued that some mega sport events such as the Olympic Games and FIFA world cup the nature may be seen as exceptional and, in some respects, temporary. Certain mega sport events are of enormous size (Masterman, 2009). These events have associated with them many public investments, larger scale public construction, infrastructure, revitalisation and restructuring of cities (Mastrogiannakis & Dorville, 2013). Many nations have used mega sport events to develop international sport relationships through competitions and these contests often using as a tool of diplomacy (Taylor & Toohey, 2008).

Many scholars have discussed on the relationship between mega sport events and terrorist acts. Jenkins (2012) has defined terrorism as "the systematic use of violence to create a general climate of fear in the population and thereby to bring about a particular political objective. Terrorism has been practised by both right and left wing political organizations, by nationalistic and religious groups, by revolutionaries, and even by state institutions such as military, intelligence services, and police". Giulianotti and Klauser (2012) stated that mega sport events are the good examples for social risk and threats related to terrorism. To win the bid for the 2012 Olympic, London Olympic bidding team presented their anti-terrorist resilience plan in front of the Olympic committee and international audience to avoid any security threats (Giulianotti & Klauser, 2010). Terrorist have been planning their acts in sport events to attract more attention of the media since mega events receive more attention across the world (Talor & Toohey, 2008). The popularity of sport in international community and large attendance of mega sport events has made the mega sport events a strategic aim for terrorist attacks (Hassan, 2012).

There have been many terrorist incidents in mega sport events. The 1972 Munich Olympic is the most obvious illustration for terrorist attacks in mega sport events in which

eleven Israelis and one West German police officer were killed, along with five of the eight assailants, during a failed rescue mission (Toohey, 2008). Palestine rebels planned this act to get much media coverage and global attention to achieve their political objectives.

Before 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, local separatists had launched an attack five days before the on the city of Kashgar in China. Sixteen policemen and several people were killed and injured in this event. The reason for selecting this event was to create a negative psychological effect on society and on the government of China. Terrorists have often resorted on mass destruction methods, such as bombings, and targeted transport or places where people gather, in this case sport stadiums, to feed off the 'culture of fear' (Hassan, 2012 p.265). According to Jenkins (2012), some terrorists used mega events to convey their ideas around the world. In the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games, an American anti-abortion extremist bombed in the Olympic central park and killed one spectator and injured over hundred spectators (Fussey & Coaffee, 2012). Jenkins (2012) mentioned in his definition that the terrorist action can be taken by state institutions such as armies, intelligence services, and police. The 1988 Olympic had a similar incident which was carried out by a government. Both North Korea and South Korea wanted to host the Olympic game; however, South Korea fulfilled the criteria and was selected as the host of the event. After this rejection, two flat bombs were detonated by North Koreans on South Korea to disrupt the Olympic event preparations. North Korea also attacked a South Korean airline during November 1987 (Toohey, 2008).

Effects of terrorist threat in the sports context

Culture of fear, inconvenience in security checking and limited access to recreation facilities which are the results of terrorist, have being created painful environment for human. And, terrorism acts affect human life, behaviour, and overall society in many ways. A large number of families have missed their family member while society lost many renowned individuals. Many sportsmen, who died in 1972 Munich Olympic incident, were fathers or sons who looked after their families. Consequently, the families had not only to face the loss of their loved ones, but also had to face financial problems. In certain cases, curfews were also employed to prevent terroristic acts. These curfews, on the other hand, had negative impact on social routines and on countries' economic growth. Mansfeld (1996) has identified that Cyprus, Greece and Turkey have benefited from conflict in Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria as

tourists looking for an Eastern Mediterranean touch in their holidays chose those destinations perceiving them as safer.

Although anti-terrorism legislation hampers terrorist attacks, these kinds of legislations cause violation of human rights. Many liberal societies in the world have spoken against anti-terrorist legislation. People are facing many inconveniences because of these anti-terrorism acts, for example while entering any public place such as sport stadiums. Many researchers argued that peoples' activities have been limited by both international and national level anti-terrorist laws (Gearty, 2007). Another reason of the drop in peoples' recreation activities is the culture of fear which has been implemented in the minds of mass by terrorist acts. Because of the limited time to physical activities, there has been a negative impact on people's physical and psychological health.

The actions taken against terrorism by event organisers for ensuring security

Many actions have been taken and policies have been made by government authorities and public policy makers to reduce the negative impacts of terrorist activities, such as limiting public inconvenience anti-terrorism legislations, developing anti-terrorist technological equipment and establishing new security management systems. Since the 1972 Olympic incident, sport and event managers have developed awareness over security in sports. Hassan (2012) stated that security systems in sport events have significantly increased and improved after the tragic incident in the 1972 Olympic. The 1972 incident affected to increase 1266% of the proposed budget in 1976 Olympic Games (Flyvbjerg & Stewart, 2012). Before the start of the game, a temporary immigration security act (Bill C-85) was passed by the Canadian government after the request by Montreal Olympic organising committee to deport any persons who were not Canadian citizens and who might be involving in violence (Montreal Olympic organising committee, 1978). The security and emergency systems was increased in every Canadian airport and sea-port such as, new emergency centre, new fences, and introduced new security alarms. In addition, they trained special rowing teams to take care of any kind of immigration customs security matters (Montreal Olympic organising committee, 1978). This security management system helped to organize successful Olympic Game avoiding any terrorist attacks. However, more expenses on security management had a negative effect on Canadian economy for few years after the game.

Nevertheless, the security system used by the Canadian event management was an example for future event managers to follow.

The security management systems in recent mega events have been improved by new technological innovations. The sport mega events security management team often uses CCTV security inspection systems to search persons in and around sport arenas, examine the audience and local residents around the host city (Giulianotti & Klauser, 2010). The London Olympic committee confirmed that the United Kingdom has 20% (4.2 million) of the worlds' total CCTV cameras and London has the highest camera numbers per person in the world, when they presented London security strength in front of the bidding committee (Giulianotti & Klauser, 2010). Most mega sport events have used surveillance helicopters or unmanned aircrafts for the surveillance of the public in stadium and around the host city (Hassan, 2012). Klauser (2007) stated that in Athens, the organising committee has used high technological security system, called "C4I-system" that included thousands of computers, surveillance cameras partially equipped with automated behaviour-recognition software and microphones (able to analyse dozens of languages). In 2012 the London Olympics' security management team introduced new cyber security plans and software to protect IT networks and to diminish cybercrimes (Giulianotti & Klauser, 2010).

The international Olympic Committee and many mega sport events' organisers have introduced much legislation regarding terrorist acts. The international Olympic committee has established two acts, the 2000 section 44, which allows police freedom to stop and search any vehicle or member of the public and the 2006 Sections 19 and 22, which authorize police to access a private property in order to confiscate unauthorized protest or advertising materials (Giulianotti & Klauser, 2010). In the Euro cup football tournament, the organising committee has taken a policy decision to establish a fan zone under the control and supervision of the organising committee for thousands of ticketless fans (Klauser, 2007). Congregating of the fans has been limited by this policy decision of the event organising committee and they could organise a safer event.

Mega sport event's organisers have often used urban redevelopment programmes such as slum clearance and rebuilding programmes to enhance the security of events (Klauser, 2007). In 2008, Beijing Olympic organising committee has spent US $ 40 billion for redevelopment programme and up to 1.5 million people had been removed from several areas and redeveloped new hamlets commercial zones for them (CBS, August 4, 2008 quoted in Giulianotti & Klauser, 2010). During many mega

sport events, security officers tried to build strong relationships between these local communities as a security strategy to minimise the terrorist threat.

Conclusion

Mega sport events' organisers have taken many actions against terrorist acts, such as introduction of new technological equipment, new legislation, and urban redevelopment programmes to ensure better security. The actions against terrorist has been increased since the incident at the 1972 Olympic and the tragic 9/11 event furthered signified it. Actions which were taken against terrorists had sometimes made an environment inconvenient for residents; also some legislation, urban development programmes and technological equipment have been misused by governments to control people according to their own agenda. However, anti-terrorist actions have created a safe environment for people by reducing terrorist acts in public area such as sport arena. But the terrorist may attempt to use different strategies to conduct terrorist acts in mega sport events, such as internet, nuclear weapons threats, and new technological equipment. Because terrorist acts in sport events are becoming a global threats affecting on sporting culture which has made the planet more elegantly competitive. Therefore, governments and event organisers should resort on all the possible methods to minimize the terrorist threats. Mega sport organisers can also utilize new technological equipment and new strategic plans to reduce terrorist threats. In addition, the mass media can be used to adopt public awareness about the way of terrorist acts and the possibilities of their occurrences.

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