

Case Study of Bioterrorism

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Bioterrorism is an act of crime conducted by a group of people known as terrorists. It is an action where people release biological agents with an intention of affecting human beings, livestock or crops. The most common biological agents used in bioterrorism include toxins, viruses, and bacteria.

A scenario of a hypothetical bioterrorism attack involving plague

Today terrorism is an international threat that is affecting all countries in the world. The actions of terrorists today are taking place in all nations including the nations where all religions are practiced. It implies that terrorism is now a criminal action different from what was believed that terrorism is a culture practiced in Muslim countries. In the northern part of Asia, terrorism cases were rare. However, two years ago the region was attacked in a way that at the beginning the security agents were not in a position of classifying the attack as terrorism. After investigations and close analysis of the occurrence, it was realized that it was caused by bioterrorism.

It started just like an outbreak of plague. It is a disease that is known to have a high rate of mortality. The disease was spreading in some areas leaving behind other areas. It was also noted that the disease did not affect some areas, which were occupied by a given ethnic group in the region. It was after arrest of some criminals who were associated with a group of terrorists operating in the region. The group was demanding the release of the criminals, something that the government was not ready to provide. At first, people started to identify some pests, such as locusts, which are not common in this region, later the plague outbreak struck. Many people were killed by the outbreak while others were hospitalized. The terrorists persisted in their demand to release their people, but the government did not give in to their request. Later, the investigation proved that terrorists were breeding some locusts in the laboratory and were using them to spread plague to the ethnic groups that supported the government.

Characteristics of a natural scenario of plague outbreak

In a natural scenario, plague would strike without any warning from a body either a science research center or government structure. In this case, people would acquire a sudden illness; others would face death without any warning being given by a terrorist group (Seth, 2000).

At the same time, natural disasters, such as natural outbreak of plague, do not recognize any boundaries. As found in the scenario above, the outbreak was effective in given groups of people living behind others, who were living in the same region. It is a clear indication of an intentional outbreak that was brought about by human beings (Hylton, 2006). In cases of natural outbreak, the disease attacks a region starting from a single point, then dispersing to other areas with the help of spreading agents, such as pest insects. However, in this incident, the disease was spreading in one part after the other as the government continued to stand firm on the issue of terrorist release. In this region, there is the frequent spraying of insecticides conducted by the government with the intention of eliminating dangerous pests and insects. It would have prevented the spread of the disease since the pests would not survive the effects of pesticides.

In a natural scenario, plague does not spread by means of touch or getting into contact with an infected person. However, in this situation the disease was spread through physical contact with an infected person. At the same time, this disease was common in the areas that have overpopulation and ethnic groups that support government (Pellerin, 2011). Plague is not common in Asia, a factor that raised suspicion on the occurrence of the disease in this region. These are obvious evidences of distinguishing a natural outbreak of plague from an intentional outbreak, as found in this case.

How the government should respond to hypothetical bioterrorist attack

Federal government together with local government should have taken measures to prevent the occurrence of this hypothetical bioterrorist attack (Gregory & Waag, 2007).

However, since the attack had already occurred, the government should have responded in many ways to make sure that they put the situation under control and prevent such occurrences in the future. The first step would be to take care of the infected people through taking them to the hospitals. The government should also conduct a research that would enable them to control the spread of the disease to other people in the country. After these actions, the government should conduct an investigation to determine the source of outbreak and possible measures that can be put in place to bring an end of the situation (Bernett, 2006).

These biological agents are expensive substances made in big laboratories and medical institutions. For this reason, the government should conduct an investigation to be able to identify the places where the substances were produced and take the legal action against the involved people. At the same time, it is essential for the government to upraise the country's intelligence to ensure that they will be able to get rid of these scenarios before they happen. In most cases, biological agents are used by military of developed countries, such as the United States of America (Wagner, et al., 2001). From this point of view, the government should deploy the military personnel who have the knowledge on biological agents to assist the general public on how to avoid or handle the germs of the disease. If the country's military is not equipped with this knowledge, the government can turn to other countries through diplomatic relations to ask for assistance. Lastly, the government should launch operations to eliminate terrorists in the region to be able to get rid of such situations in future.

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