Book Review


This book contributes to the literature on terrorism and its economic impacts. This masterpiece of research brings different methodological research approaches to evaluate terrorist attacks on different types of infrastructure, such as airports, highways, seaports, electric power plants. At the same time, each chapter is written by economists and planners with extensive experience on the respective topics.

The chapters discuss in detail the consequence of a terrorist attack from different perspectives and by employing different research techniques to study the final impact of a terrorist attack in different social groups (private sector, civil society, and government). The complexity and dynamicity of different factors such as economic, political, social, technological, religious, cultural, historical are brought together to understand terrorism as a whole. Additionally, some chapters are an exhaustive study of the origins, evolution, organisation, targets and the magnitude of terror and damage inflicted by terrorist groups (damage to infrastructure and human life).

However, the primary focus of this book is evaluating the economic losses of a terrorist attack terrorism. The different contributors of each chapter evaluates the magnitude of a terrorist attack to measure its final economic impact, especially the cost of damages on public and private infrastructure. The authors also discuss government investment on anti-terrorist national security measures and policies. They recommend national governments to monitor as closely as possible terrorist attacks to avoiding massive damage and substantial economic losses in the short or long run.

This book is divided into 15 chapters. Chapter 1: Introduction (by Harry W. Richardson, Peter Gordon, and James E. Moore II) provides general explanation of each chapter to understand the contributions of each author respectively. Chapter 2: Transnational Terrorism: An Economic Analysis (by Todd Sandler and Walter Enders) is a broad summary of different terrorist groups in different parts of the world. Chapter 3: You Can Only Die Once: Interdependent Security in an Uncertain World (by Geoffrey Heal and Howard Kunreuther) examines the philosophical approach of terrorism that justifies a terrorist attack(s). Chapter 4: Increasing the Security and Reliability of the US Electricity System (by Lester B. Lave, Jay Apt, Alex Farrell and M. Granger Morgan) evaluates how a terrorist attack targeting US. electric system can generate significant losses in short

It is an interesting and well researched book but it is not without limitations. The following are not covered though they would offer value and critical insights to the topics discussed:
i. The crucial role of human capital losses in terrorist attacks.

ii. The impact of terrorism on globalisation terrorism.

iii. Some chapters focused heavily on the engineering aspect rather than on the economic impacts of terrorist attacks.

Overall, this is a highly recommended book, especially for those who would like to gain critical insights into the economic impact of terrorism nationally and globally.

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