

M.Phil Thesis
on
Religious Extremism and Terrorist Activities in Bangladesh: An Analysis

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I have always tried to relate connection between Religious Extremism and Terrorism. For this purpose i studied various books, journals, reports, newspaper and articles in connection of religious extremism. To collect the data for the study, I visited my field in varies areas of Bangladesh. Interview a number of people for this purpose. I must acknowledge with high appreciation the key informant and experts from different organizations for their time given for the interview despite their busy schedule.

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Abstract

The main purpose of this study is to document and highlight the connection between religious extremism and terrorism in Bangladesh. It examined the nature of various Islamist militant groups and the extent of their terrorist activities in Bangladesh. This study also investigated the underlying causes of militancy, the funding sources of militant groups, and the strategies and techniques used by terrorist groups.

The study mainly used content analysis of secondary sources, interviews from expert and general people in convict area in old four Division Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna and Rajshahi.

The study revealed that Islamist extremism and militant activities rose from 1999 to 2014. However, homegrown and internationally linked Islamist terrorist outfits and groups have continued to emerge in Bangladesh since 1992.

The study revealed that JMB, JMJB, HUJI-B and HT are the major terrorist groups which generated thousands of members, and who have continued their activities under different names in different times. Most of the leaders and founders of these militant groups were educated in madrasha (Islamic seminary institution). These Islamist militant groups have symbiotic relationships among themselves and with foreign outfits based in Pakistan, India and Gulf countries.

The study identified a number of funding sources, mostly from local areas generated through collecting zakat/sadka/fitra (donation on different religious occasions). External funding came through Islamic charitable NGOs from Gulf countries, USA, UK and other countries and through hundi (illegal money exchange) from individuals living abroad.

The Islamist Militancy and terrorism has vandalized the lives of the people and endangered law and order, and national, regional and international security, and handicapped economic development. Therefore, we must eliminate the root causes of militancy and terrorism in Bangladesh. In addressing these risk factors, a comprehensive and integrated terrorism prevention strategy needs to be imparted, which is essential for a sustainable democracy and socio-economic wellbeing in Bangladesh. Therefore, political parties and civil society should work together to combat terrorism.

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Appendix 1. Research Instruments

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACHR	Asian Centre for Human Rights
AHAB	Ahle Hadith Andolan (People of Hadith Movement)
AL	Awami League (Mass Peoples League)
AMLO	Anti-Money Laundering Ordinance
APG	Asia Pacific Group
ATO	Anti-Terrorism Ordinance
ASK	Ain o Salish Kendra
BB	Bangladesh Bank
BCL	Bangladesh Chatra (student) League
BDR	Bangladesh Rifles
BGB	Border Guard of Bangladesh
BIPS	Bangladesh Institute for Peace and Security Studies
BISS	Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies
BNP	Bangladesh Nationalist Party
CHT	Commonwealth Human Rights Initiatives
CID	Criminal Investigation Department
CPB	Communist Party of Bangladesh
CSIS	Canadian Security Intelligence Service
CTG	Care Taker Government
DGFI	Directorate General of Forces Intelligence
DB	Detective Branch
DU	Dhaka University
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
EU	European Union
HUJI-B	Harkat-ul-Jihad al-Islami (Movement for an Islamic Holy War) Bangladesh
HT	Hizbut Towhid (Party of Oneness of God)
HuT	Hizbut Tahrir
IBP	Islami Biplob Parishad
IBA	Institute of Business Administration
ICA	Institute of Cultural Affairs
ICM	Institute of Conflict Management
ICS	Islami Chhatra Shibir (Islamic Student Camp)
IED	Improved Explosive Device
IGP	Inspector General of Police
IIF	Islamic International Front
IISS	International Institute for Strategic Studies
INTERPOL	International Police Organization

IOJ	Islami Okiya Jote (United Islamic Front)
ISI	Inter Services Intelligence (Pakistan intelligence agency)
JCD	Jatiyabardia Chatra Dal
JMB	Jamaat-ul Mujahidin Bangladesh (Party of Mujahidin Bangladesh)JMJB
JMJB	Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh (Awakened Muslim Masses of Bangladesh)
TS	Tatiya Sangsad (National Parliament)
KII	Key Informant Interviews
KMO	Kamtapuri Liberation Organization
KNAB	Khatme Nabuyat Andolon Bangladesh
LeT	Lasker – e - Tayeba
NDF	National Democratic Front of Bodoland
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NGOAB	Non-Governmental Organizations Affairs Bureau
NLFT	National Liberation Front of Tripura
NSI	National Security Intelligence
MP	Member of Parliament
PM	Prime Minister
RAB	Rapid Action Battalion
RAW	Research and Analysis Wing (Indian intelligence agency)
RIHS	Revival of Islamic Heritage Society
RPF	Rohingya Patriotic Front
RSO	Rohingya Solidarity Organization
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SATF	South Asian Task Force
SATP	South Asia Terrorism Portal
SB	Special Branch
SF	Security Force
SSHI	Servants of Suffering Humanity International
SSRC	Social Science Research Council
TIB	Transparency International Bangladesh
TRI	Terrorism Risk Index
UAB	Ulema Anjuman al-Baiyinaat (Clerics' Circle of Clear Understanding)
ULFA	United Liberation Front of Assam
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VDP	Village Defense Police

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The issue of Islamist militancy and terrorism is not just a law and order issue for Bangladesh; it involves overriding concern over other issues including political stability, human and national security, socio-economic development, and international relations. Available public perception as articulated through various media, local and international reports and research evidences supporting such claims is plentiful.

Religious extremism has become a threat to life, the economy political pluralism in Bangladesh. Religious assassinations, political violence and bombing in public place of festivity, entertainment and workshop have stunned the country . Religious violence make unstable our society and country. The religious party imposes their view by using violence. As a result we have to face destructive activities. Religious extremism is always encourage to make terrorism.

This study will identify the connection of religious extremism and terrorism in Bangladesh. It analyzed the nature of religious extremism, patterns, causes and consequences of Islamist militancy and terrorism in Bangladesh. The study also looked at the funding sources, strategies and techniques used by various terrorist groups. These findings can have policy implications for undertaking future action plan in combating Islamic militancy and other terrorist activities in Bangladesh.

1.2. Background

Neither Islamic fundamentalism nor extremism is new to Bangladesh. Although it was linguistic nationalism but not religious nationalism that led to the creation of Bangladesh in 1971, Islamist forces have grown in strength to patronage by successive governments. Following the assassination of its founding father, the secular Sheikh Mujibur Rehman in 1975, the hold of fundamentalist forces over the government-whether military or democratic witnessed a sharp increase.

Successive governments openly courted the fundamentalist Jamaat-e-Islami. Discredited in 1971 for its collaboration with the Pakistan Army during the Bangladesh liberation war, Jamaat-e-Islami was resurrected by General Ziaur Rehman in the late '70s. Jamaat leaders, who had fled to Pakistan in the aftermath of the 1971 war, were brought back to Bangladesh by Ziaur Rahman. Jamaat's

influence grew rapidly thereafter. For instance, in the 1980s, General Hussain Mohammad Ershad went a step further and used Jamaat to counter the secular Awami League.

During Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's first stint at the helm in the first half of the 1990s, Jamaat and other fundamentalist outfits were given free rein. Over the years, Jamaat set up thousands of madrassas in Bangladesh, many of which are known to recruit and train jihadi fighters. Poor, jobless students from the madrassas became easy target of the recruiters of militant Islamist organizations. By late 1990s we had militant organisations such as Jamiatul Mujahedin Bangladesh (JMB) and Harkatul Jihad Al-Islami (HUJI) that took roots in Bangladesh. Starting from 1999 to 2005, the militants bombed temples, churches, political rallies, cultural functions, cinema halls etc.

The government and the opposition kept on blaming each other for those attacks. Even when grenades attack was made on the AL rally in Dhaka on 21 August 2004 killing 21 people and injuring the AL Chief Sheikh Hasina, the government blamed it on the opposition. The series bombing on 17 August 2005 finally compelled the government to come out of the denial mode and stand up to the terrorist threat.

In 2006-07, we saw a series of arrests, prosecution and handing down of sentences, including death sentences, on some of the terror leaders. Since then there has been no major terror attack in Bangladesh, but that the terrorists are active is evident from the frequent arrests of activists and seizure of large cache of arms and explosives from their hideouts.

Many were from the Quomi Madrassa background. However, recent years saw a new breed of extremists called the Hizb-ut-Tahrir (HuT). HuT members are drawn from children of urban, upper income parentage, educated in the mainstream or English medium schools and colleges. HuT is targeting the cream of our youth, the nation's future, and therefore, poses a clear danger. It is feared that HuT has penetrated among schools and universities, professionals – engineers, doctors, government officials and even among the security apparatus. Although the party was banned in 2009, its clandestine activities continue in the country.

On the political front, JI continued to grow in strength in Bangladesh. The party is small in size, but highly disciplined, well-organized and has a well-defined hierarchy. Jamaat's aim is to establish a

pure Islamic state based on Sharia. The party had opposed the Liberation War of Bangladesh in 1971 and actively collaborated in the genocide. Some of the top leaderships are now facing war-crime trial. The party, therefore, is on a back foot now, but given the fact that a new election is around the corner, its rank and file might align with the major opposition party to make a bid for power. JI's student wing, Islami Chattra Shibir (Islamic Students Front), is now a potent student organization, from schools to universities.

The other Islamist party of importance is Islami Oikyo Jote (Islamic Unity Front), a collection of small Islamic parties. Like JI, IOJ also wants to establish an Islamic state in Bangladesh, but there are differences in outlook. IOJ members are exclusively from Quomi madrassa background and more traditional. IOJ has been in the forefront, along with JI, in the movement to declare Ahmedia community as non-Muslims.

Present government's attempt to register Quomi Madrassas and reform their curriculum was thwarted by IOJ's agitation. None of the Islamist political parties gave open support to the militant activities, however, many of the JMB and HUJI activists had previously been members of Islamist political parties.

1.3. Justification:

The islamic militancy and terrorism are not just a law and order issue for Bangladesh. It also involves political stability, human and national security, socio economic development and deteriorating law and order situation and internal relations.

It is world wide problem. Most of the islamic militancy groups in Bangladesh are connected with world wide terrorist group. JMB and HujiB are come from afganstan and pakistan. They are connected with world wide islamic terrorist group such as Al Qaeda. We face many question from other country's in purpose of terrorism. The terrorist groups are getting economical and armed training help from foreign terrorism groups. They opposed to make a peace in world wide. Available public perception as knotted through various media, local and international reports and research evidences are supported such claim.

Religious Extremism has become a scare to human and national security in Bangladesh. Religious assassinations, political violence and detonate of bomb in public place of festivity, entertainment and workshop have stupefied the country.

Religious Extremism make unstable our society and country. They settle their ideology by using violence. It is relate to destructive activities. As a result we are losing in economically and deteriorating law and order situation.

The study will identify connection of Religious Extremism and Terrorism in Bangladesh. It analyzed the nature of religious extremism, cause and consequences of islamic militancy and terrorism in Bangladesh. The study will also look at the funding sources, strategies and techniques used by various terrorist groups. These findings can have policy implications for undertaking future action plan in combating Islamic militancy and other terrorist activities in Bangladesh.

1.4. Aim and Objectives of Study

The research question of this study: Is there any connection exist between religious extremism and terrorist activities in Bangladesh? In order to understand this question several objectives need to be addressed. For instances,

1. To identify relationship between religious extremism and terrorism
2. To identify the nature of religious extremism in Bangladesh.
3. To find out the root cause of religious extremism.
4. To analyses the holistic impact of religious extremism in Bangladesh.
5. To analyses the mass people perception about religious extremism.
6. To identify the level of National Security threats which the terrorist organization poses in Bangladesh.
7. To find out how the counter terrorism strategies be manifested and implemented in Bangladesh

1.5. Methodology

Data collection techniques: Multiple methods were used to collect the data for this study. Secondary analysis was the primary source of data. Despite the drawbacks of studying terrorism based on secondary, official and biased journalistic sources, to ensure the maximum reliability and validity, the same data were verified against different sources.

Secondary data analysis: In the absence of primary data, a content analysis of secondary sources such as newspapers reports, internet publications, books, magazines, journal articles, and intelligence documents was the main method of data collection. This study also verified the content of available and accessible books, booklets, leaflets, press briefings, press releases, reports, letters, articles, magazines, and newsletters and internet publications or interviews or statements published in any newspaper to understand the actual agenda of the groups and the reasons of their terrorist activities. Data on terrorist groups, their types, numbers, ideologies, activities, strategies, funding sources, and locations were gathered from the newspapers. It is important to mention here that terrorism and religious militancy as subject matter of study being very sensitive for investigation and very hard to get access to all required information.

Case study: Case studies on five selected convicted terrorist belonging to five different militant outfits were conducted based on secondary analysis to find information about their reasons for joining, involvement of activities. We had to rely on newspaper/magazine reports, press briefings, press releases, reports, letters, articles and newsletters and internet publications or interviews or statements published in any newspaper on the terrorists to present the case studies for this study. With a view to justifying the authenticity of the data care will be taken to use the original works and documents to distinguish between facts and opinions.

Sample selection for Case studies: Five convicted militants and three religious extremism Group were purposively selected given their involvement, leadership, activities and media coverage. The selected individuals are :

1. Sheikh Abdur Rahman
2. Siddiqul Islam alias Bangla Bhai
3. Dr. Asadulla Al Galib Mufti Hannan
4. Zahidul Islam Sumon alias Boma Mizan
5. Mufti Abdul Hannan

Case Studies of Religious Extremism Groups: Similarly, three religious extremism Group were purposively selected given their involvement, leadership, activities and media coverage.

- 1.Harkat-ul-Jihad-al Islami Bangladesh (HuJI-B)
- 2.Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS)
- 3.Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB)

4. Observation of Religious based Educational Institution (Madrasha)

Intelligence agencies marked 323 Qaumi madrassas believed to be involved in militant training. Newspaper reports on some specific incidents possibly gave credence to the perceptions. The Hathazari Madrassa, with impeccable Deobandi credentials and reckoned as one of the top ten Qaumi madrassas in the subcontinent, came to limelight in 2004 when it was reported that some of its graduates participated in Afghan war in the 1980s. In February 2010, 40 students of the madrassa were arrested when they engaged in clashes with the police while staging protests under the banner ‘Hefazat-e-Islam’ against government’s attempts at secularization of education. Many of the arrested Jamatul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) members had proven links with madrassas.

Sampling

Survey: A perception survey that was held from 01 March 2014 to 28 March, 2014. Using a random (probability) sampling technique a series of questions were asked to 200 men and women aged between 25 and 60 years living in old four Division Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna and Rajshahi in convict area. Purposive sampling technique was used to select respondents for key informant interviews. In this case respondent’s depth of knowledge on the subject matters was the primary consideration. The survey was designed to provide a representative analysis of perceptions of religious extremism relate to terrorism. A field survey for data collection was conducted from 01 March 2014 to 28 March, 2014. The following table depicts detailed distribution of sample for the

Survey:**Table 1: Distribution of survey locations**

Division	District
Chittagong	Cox,s bazzar
	Chittagong
Dhaka	Gazipur
	Jamalpur,
	Mymensingh
Rajshahi	Natore
Khulna	Rajshahi,
	Naogoan,
	Satkhira
	Jhenaideh

Focus group discussions (FGDs): Four FGDs were conducted in the Rajshahi, Khulna, Dhaka and Chittagong Division were chosen to represent a broad range of individuals, including community leaders, politicians, university and madrassa (religious school) students, teachers, human rights activists, lawyers and journalists.

Key informant interviews (KIIs): Thirteen KIIs were conducted in Dhaka with a broad range of civil society members (including journalists teacher and intelligent). The sample is consisting of key officials of research organizations, civil society members representing the following agencies who were considered to be able to provide deeper understanding of their views on terrorism in Bangladesh:

1. Brigadier General M. Sakhawat Hussian ndc,psc(retd), Former Election Commissioner.
2. Dr. Abdur Rob Khan, Professor of International Relations, North South University.
3. Mr. Julfikar Ali Manik, Special Correspondent, Dhaka Tribune.
4. A.S.M. Ali Ashraf, Ph.D, Associate Professor, Department of International Relation, University of Dhaka.
5. Mr. Shahriar Kabir, acting President of Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Committee .
6. Dr. Dalem Ch. Barman, Vice-chancellor, Asa University, Bangladesh.
7. Major General M A Rashid(Retd), Specialist of Security.
8. Mr. Shaheen Mollah, Staff Reporter, Daily Star.

Media survey: Two leading national dailies the Daily Ittefaq and the Daily Star have been purposively selected for data collection. Considering the volume of circulation and the neutrality of these dailies we have selected them. We covered ten (12) years of newspaper from 2001 to 2013. In addition to that, the Daily Prothom and the New Age were consulted to supplement the news reports and the recent government strategies and actions. .

Data Processing and Analysis :The data, acquired from the survey using three different techniques, was processed and analyzed independently and then triangulated. Under the newspaper survey, articles or any kind of news on community security, radicalization, terrorism, drugs and arms trafficking and the use of explosive devices were collected from the 12 selected newspapers. For quantitative data processing, SPSS (Version 17.0) was used for data analysis. Data processing involved the following stages:

- Data entry and entry verification
1. Cleaning and processing of data
 2. Coding and code transfer
 3. Development of analysis plan
 4. Analysis of programme development
 5. Programme running and report generation

1.6. Literature Review

Religious Extremism and Terrorist Activities around the World : Scholars throughout the world have made valiant efforts to define terrorism and to determine its root causes and linkages with other tangible and intangible entities. In his book, *Inside Terrorism*, Bruce Hoffman has presented an in-depth account of the trends and key historical themes of terrorism. The book is well researched, providing valuable insights into the difficulties of defining terrorism, the dominance of ethno-nationalist and separatist terrorism in the post-colonial era, the internationalization of terrorism heralded by acts perpetrated by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), and after the Cold War, religious motivation becoming prevalent characteristics of terrorist activity.

In addition, the book also discussed the evolution of targets, tactics and technologies of terrorists, and explored the relationship between terrorism, the media, and public opinion. The author concluded, among other things, that religiously motivated terrorism, especially with the use of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), would present the most serious threat to global stability.

(Tan Puay Seng, (2004) review of *Inside Terrorism* by Bruce Hoffman.

In the present world, while religious terrorism easily overshadows any other form of terrorist acts, there are proponents to remind us that religious terrorism also needs other necessary and sufficient conditions in order to blossom. In his research, Johan Holmgren finds that as per Failed States Index 2007, many of the nations that western political leaders have accused of harboring or supporting terrorism are among the top Seng, review of *Inside Terrorism* by Bruce Hoffman, twenty nations that are close to becoming failed states (seng, 2004).

These states are not just a danger to themselves; they can threaten the progress and stability of countries half a world away from them. Terrorism has been on the international agenda since 1934. The then League of Nations took the first major step towards curbing the scourge by discussing a draft convention for the prevention and punishment of terrorism. Although the convention was eventually adopted in 1937, it never came into force. Since 1963, the international community has developed thirteen universal legal instruments and three amendments to prevent terrorist acts. Those instruments were elaborated under the auspices of the United Nations, and its specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

They are open to participation by all the member states. In 2005, the international community also introduced substantive changes to three of these universal instruments to specifically account for the threat of terrorism. The world leaders have yet to agree to a unanimous UN definition for terrorism. However, on 8 September 2006, The United Nations Global Counter Terrorism Strategy was adopted by the member states. The strategy broadly delineates following plan of actions: measures to address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism, measures to prevent and combat terrorism, measures to build states' capacity to prevent and combat terrorism, and to strengthen the role of the United Nations system in this regard, and measures to ensure Johan Holmgren, 2008, *Terrorism and Its Connection to Failed States*.

US National Strategy for Combating Terrorism recognizes that today the principal terrorist enemy confronting the United States is a transnational movement of extremist organizations, networks, and individuals – and their state and non-state supporters—which have in common that they exploit Islam and use terrorism for ideological ends. In addition to this principal enemy, a host of other groups and individuals also use terror and violence against innocent civilians to pursue their political objectives. Though their motives and goals may be different, and often include secular and narrow territorial aims, they threaten US interests and those of its partners as they attempt to overthrow civil order and replace freedom with conflict and intolerance.

The role of media is to shape opinions and presenting a particular version as reality. Media are also believed and expected to portray a fair picture on any issues occur both at local and international level. However, in portraying Islam especially after the September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center in New York and Pentagon, a number of research found that International media tend to negatively depict Islam by associating it with terrorism (Zulkifli, 2009; Winegar, 2008; Gerges, 2003).

Dr. Natasha Hamilton-Hart, a lecturer in Singapore National University once said that the definition of terrorism at the moment is too narrow because it only depicts Islam and Muslims in an irrelevant manner (Berita Harian, June 5th 2008:10). The US has made an initiative hunting and targeting any parties involved in a so called terrorism. The first step taken besides arresting few targeted individuals was to attack Afghanistan in which the ruler was claimed to have an affiliation with terrorists who were responsible for the September 11 attacks. Obviously, western countries are prone to identify terrorism with certain groups that are labeled as extremists, militants or Muslim extremists (Zulkifli, 2009).

Winegar (2008) said that such an effort today is seen to focus on Muslim groups which coincidentally accused to be responsible for the September 11 attacks, and this badly affects the whole Muslim society worldwide due to an accusation made by the US government on Islam through most of western media for the tragedy at the World Trade Center. Since the September 11 incident, the United States and some of its allies have expressed concerns several times over the likelihood of Bangladesh emerging as a major hub of pro-Al-Qaeda terrorism in South Asia. Many international and local media, watch groups, and intelligence sources have reported on the Islamist movement in Bangladesh, linking it with the al-Qaeda network.

However, the reports often suggest that the Islamist movement is something of an unprecedented phenomenon in the country. They explicitly link the current Islamist movement with its forerunners as well as other contemporary terrorism movements. They seem to ignore that it has a significant history and it requires a systematic exploration into this history to properly understand its dynamics as well as the dynamics of the society in which it originates and operates.

Terrorism and Religious Extremism in Bangladesh: The largest Islamic party of Bangladesh, Jamaat-e-Islami calls for radical transformation of the society in order to create an Islamic polity in this South Asian nation. A Bangladeshi political analyst maintains that the fundamentalist Jamaat's ulterior motive is to build a "monolithic Islamic state based on Shariah law and declare jihad against Hindus, Buddhists, Christians and free-thinking Muslims."

A series of violent retaliatory attacks launched in the last one year against religious and ethnic minorities following conviction and execution of noted war criminals consisting of Jamaat's top leaders, lend credence to the observation made by him. The civil society of Bangladesh is seriously concerned about the radical agenda of Jamaat and other Islamist groups.

The resurgence of radical Islamism is however not new phenomenon. Some of the mainstream political parties recognise the role of the religion in the polity. A tendency has been noticed in Bangladesh where more than 80% of the people practice Islam that various rightist political parties raise religious issues especially during the election period to enlist popular support. This study seeks to relation between religious extremism and terrorism by analyzing the ideologies of various militia groups propagate; the motivational factors that lead people to be involved in the terrorism

movement; the mobilization mechanisms through which they collect and allocate resources; the organizational structures under which they operate; and the rituals they practice to carry on the movement.

This study also seeks to explore the terrorism movement in Bangladesh by placing it into its proper historical context, nature of religious extremism, root cause of terrorism and security threat. Other than the journalistic and intelligence sources, the militia movement in general has not yet received any considerable attention from sociologists, except a few notable ones.

In the hegemonic view of militias as devoid of any link with their historical forerunners, the militia movement is in general considered as a terrorist activity. It is more so in the case of Bangladesh where the militias are portrayed by local and international media and watch groups to be mostly linked with Islamist militancy and international or transnational terrorism.

"The Next Islamist Revolution?" by Eliza Griswold, *The New York Times Magazine*, January 23, 2005 discussed at the Magazine : The most recent example in this regard that received a good deal of attention from far and wide is Eliza Griswold's report "The Next Islamist Revolution?" The report claims that Siddiqul Islam alias Bangla Bhai (Bengali brother), the operational commander of Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh (JMJB, literally – Awakened Muslim Masses of Bangladesh), and Mufti Fazlul Haque Amini, the Ameer (chief) of Islami Oikya Jote (IOJ – United Islamic Front, an umbrella organization of different small Islamist groups) have links with Al-Qaeda and the Taliban of Afghanistan.

However, the report fails to provide any concrete evidence to support this claim.

According to Griswold, Siddiqul Islam "waging jihad in Afghanistan was now going to bring about the Talibanization of his part of Bangladesh" as he ordered men "to grow beards" and "women to wear burkas [veils]." She also claims that his group JMJB "was determined and violent and seemed to have enough lightly armed adherents to make its rule stick." Apart from his "waging jihad in Afghanistan," Griswold has found his group's indirect links with Al-Qaeda.

By the early 1990's Islamist groups began appearing, mainly at the periphery of the jihad centered on Afghanistan. The most important of these has been the Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami (Huji) [Movement for an Islamic Holy War], which has been associated with Fazlul Rahman, who signed

Osama bin Laden's famous declaration in 1998 endorsing international, coordinated jihad – the document that introduced Al Qaeda to the larger world. But Bangla Bhai's group and others have since emerged and are making their bids for power.

Similarly, Mufti Amini's Al-Qaeda link is also indirect, as Griswold reports. The mufti has been named in Indian intelligence documents as a member of the central committee of Huji (itself linked to Al Qaeda), an association he would, of course, deny. He is also rumored to have close friends among the Afghan Taliban, which he denies, while adding that it's better not to discuss the Afghan Taliban, as they are so frequently misunderstood.

Besides, he says as the corner of his mouth twitches into a smile, the Taliban are running all over his madrassa, as the word "talib" means only student.

Tracing these sorts of links, Griswold concludes that the "global war on terror is aimed at making the rise of regimes like that of the Taliban impossible, but in Bangladesh, the trend could be going the other way." She also quotes Zachary Abuza, the author of *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror* and a professor of Political Science at Simmons College in Boston, to justify her conclusion. Abuza is quoted by Griswold in saying: "Bangladesh is becoming increasingly important to groups like Al Qaeda because it's been off everyone's radar screen.

Al Qaeda is going to have to figure out where they can regroup, where they have the physical capability to assemble and train, and Bangladesh is one of these key places." But my study want to prove that Religious extremism is occurred terrorist activities. They are related to each other.

Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror by Zachary Abuza, (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003) :Abuza writes about the militant Islam in Southeast Asia in general; his arguments about the rise of "Islamic extremism," relevant to the case in Bangladesh, are as follows: "Increasing gaps between the rich and poor, unemployment, corruption, a lack of economic diversity, and the lack of a viable political alternative have all given rise to Islamic extremism." He admits that the ongoing conflict in the Middle East has a large impact on the popular opinion in countries like Bangladesh, having the fourth largest Muslim population in the world: "The injustices suffered by the Palestinians become a metaphor for the injustices of all

Muslims, while the Americans, already scapegoats for the region's economic woes, are implicated again." In fact, the outrage expressed by the Islamist radicals in the Muslim world against the US is also commonly shared by many secular groups and moderate Muslims in Bangladesh.

However, the problematic is Abuza's advocacy for the US war on terror: "The war on terror is important in that it has reengaged the United States in the region.... The United States can no longer distance itself from the region much less abandon it as it was accused of doing during the Asian economic crisis." Can the US now play the same role to boost Asian economy as it could do before 2003 when Abuza was writing? Ironically, the Asian economy has achieved a fast growth while the US economy is still in prolonged recession which in fact started since its invasion to Afghanistan and then Iraq. The US economy is heavily burdened with the investments it put in the invasions while its calculation of return has largely failed.

When Abuza claims that "terrorism and the spread of radical Islam are global issues" he certainly wants to say that 'terrorism' and 'Islamism' are just the two sides of the same coin. In fact, he preaches a version of the American definition of terrorism and Islamism in his book in 2003.

But contradictions are clearly evident in his definitions of terrorism and Islamism. For example, when Al-Qaeda fought the 'communists' in Afghanistan, according to Abuza, it "was not a terrorist organization but a network designed to assist foreigners to join and fight alongside the mujahidin in their war against the Soviets." Is this because Al-Qaeda worked on behalf of the US? Why was it later defined as a "terrorist organization" when it supported the Taliban and worked against the interest of the US? Abuza provides no answer to these questions. Abuza did not write in his books about nature, agent actor of religious extremism and how to combat such religious extremism. My research will prove that religious extremism is connected with terrorism.

Taj I. Hashmi "Islamic Resurgence in Bangladesh: Genesis, Dynamics and Implications" in Satu P. Limaye, Mohan Malik and Rbert G. Wirsing (eds.), *Religious Radicalism and Security in South Asia* (Honolulu, Hawaii: Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies, 2004) : Bangladesh is the fourth largest Muslim country in the world after Indonesia, India, and Pakistan. it is only natural to assume that Islam plays an important role in its politics and culture. Around 90 percent of the country's population is Muslim, representing one of the poorest and least literate sections of the world population. If mass poverty, illiteracy and unequal distribution of wealth have any positive correlation with Islamist resurgence and militancy.

In my view, It is not acceptance that mass poverty, illiteracy and unequal distribution of wealth is not only reason for creating Islamist resurgence and terrorism. The Islamic extremist introduce their view by using violence. Hashmi also claims, then Bangladesh has to be a fertile breeding ground of what is 'wrongly' defined as 'Islamic fundamentalism.' Despite its poverty, backwardness and the preponderance of Islamic ethos in its mainstream politics and culture, he maintains, Bangladesh is not just another Afghanistan, Iran, Saudi Arabia or even Pakistan. Islamic movements in Bangladesh have striking dissimilarities with the similar movements elsewhere.

According to him, Islamic movements in Bangladesh are primarily rural-based, agrarian, and reflective of peasant culture and behavior and as we know, peasants, being traditional, fatalist and religious if not pious by nature, often resort to religion as a means of identity as well as support and sustenance.

In short, peasants' political behavior and culture are not devoid of religion. Their mundane activities, including the political ones (in power perspectives), are inspired by their 'moral economy,' which again is subject to their religious belief system. Consequently, peasants' violent acts and proclivity to anarchy in the name of religion, often classified as 'prepolitical' activities of the 'premodern,' get the epithets of 'Islamic' militancy, fanaticism, and 'fundamentalism' if the perpetrators happen to be Muslims.

Taj I. Hashmi has also discussed in his book of *Women and Islam in Bangladesh (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000)* : There has been an alarming rise of the militant Islamists in Bangladesh and although their 'menacing acts' in the rural areas have received international media attention in recent times, the process began in the early 1990s. According to him, salish (village arbitration) and fatwa (religious edict) have become common features of rural Bangladesh since 1991.

He examines this phenomenon and its relationship to the rise of Islamism as a political ideology and increasing strengths of Islamist parties in Bangladesh. Particularly challenging the existing interpretations that persecution of women through salish and fatwa is a reaction to the rural community against the modernization process and that fatwas represent an important tool in the backlash of traditional elites against the impoverished rural women.

My research seeks to explore the terrorism movement in Bangladesh by placing it into its proper historical context, nature of religious extremism, root cause of terrorism, security threat. Over all my research prove that religious extremism is relate to terrorism.

Ali Riaz, a professor of the Department of Politics and Government at Illinois State University, discussed in his journal of "Traditional Institutions as Tools of Political Islam in Bangladesh," Journal of Asian and African Studies, Vol. 40, No. 3, 2005 and "'God Willing': The Politics and Ideology of Islamism in Bangladesh," Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East, Vol. 23, No. 1-2, 2003 : Riaz shows with several case studies that "use of salish and fatwa as tools of subjection of women and development organizations reflects an effort to utilize traditional local institutions to further particular interpretations of behavior and of the rights of individuals under Islam and that this interpretation is intrinsically linked to the Islamists' agenda.

In another article, Riaz explains the politics and ideology of Islamism in Bangladesh from a historical perspective. He argues that since the September 11 attacks, "media and political analysts have paid enormous attention to a de-territorialized, supranational, uprooted activism conducted in the name of Islam.

Apart from the international events, as he claims, the growing strengths of Islamists in Bangladesh are shaped by the national particularities – its political culture and society. The rise of the Islamist forces as prominent legitimate political actors in Bangladesh follows a conservative Islamization process which Bangladesh has been undergoing since 1977. The process included the deletion of "secularism" as a state principle from the constitution in 1977, the declaration of Islam as the state religion in 1988, the growing use of Islamic idioms in political discourse, and the close liaisons between secularist and Islamist political parties.

Riaz maintains that after the emergence of Bangladesh in 1971 through a nine-month long armed struggle, the country adopted in its first constitution in 1972 the four-pronged state ideology of nationalism, democracy, socialism and secularism. However, soon the "ideology of Bengali nationalism as envisaged and practiced by the ruling party" was proved to be a tool "to marginalize the non-Bengali minority in general and tribal nationalities in particular;" the "socialism of the

ruling party was only beneficial to the intermediate classes through the extension of state property;" and the principle of secularism in fact "injected religious fanaticism into the minds of the people.

As a result, the tribal nationalities in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) particularly protested the state's marginalization policy and ultimately demanded their rights for self-determination and a separate home for them. Frustrated with the ruling party's slow implementation of socialism, the more radical components of the ruling party joined other left wing radicals in fighting against the government to bring about a Chinese-style revolution in the country.

The Islamists who collaborated with the Pakistani army and fought against the freedom fighters of Bangladesh during the 1971 war started rising again to establish an Islamic state. Thus, as Riaz shows, all the three types of militias – Islamist, leftwing and ethnic – have the same historical roots and they emerged almost simultaneously in postwar Bangladesh.

However, the media emphasis on Islamist militias has been so prominent in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks that other militias, the leftist and the ethnic, were almost non-existent from public discourses.

Faces of Terrorism in Bangladesh (A. M. M. S. Ali, 2006): This book is a volume of 26 columns on religion based militancy those published in various leading daily newspapers in Bangladesh between the years 2004 and 2006. The issue of terrorism in Bangladesh has become a subject of considerable public debate for granted. The media and the civil society of Bangladesh played an important role in laying bare the different faces of religious terrorism. Through the columns the author figured out different concepts of terrorism, i.e political terrorism and governance in Bangladesh, investigating acts, conventional terrorism, different terrorist incidents that happened then and specially the terrorism in the name of Islam. The author also discussed the worst terrorist incidents of Grenade Blasts, Bomb blasts; Islamist Revolution in Bangladesh and so on. Author aimed to provide information and data for readers to form their own judgment on terrorism facts but he didn't discuss the root cause of terrorism, religious extremism connected to terrorism.

My research seeks to explore the terrorism movement in Bangladesh by placing it into its proper historical context, nature of religious extremism, root cause of terrorism, security threat. Over all my research prove that religious extremism is related to terrorism.

Terrorism in South Asia Bangladesh Perspective (Hussain, M. S., 2007): Terrorists vandalize and destroy human habitats as well as economic, commercial and social infrastructures. More threatening and terrible is that they often kill innocent people and menace the peace and progress. This book deals with 20 articles on very critical and contemporary issue regarding terrorism in South Asia particularly Bangladesh perspective. The articles were written on various bomb blasts, grenade attacks that have occurred in Bangladesh in recent years. The author proposed strengthening, revitalization, reorientation and reorganization of the law enforcing agencies, the judicial system and the administrative machinery to effectively combat terrorism. He also tells to give attention to reduce poverty and socio economic disparity. The author has also called for democratization of society and role of media. It is commendable that he has not analyzed the conditions of religious, nature of religious extremism, relationship between religious extremism and terrorism, counter terrorism strategies. My findings identify relationship between religious extremism and terrorism.

Terrorism in the 21st Century : Perspectives from Bangladesh (Imtiaz, A., edited, 2009): This book is a volume of writing on terrorism activities in Bangladesh perspective in the 21st century to provide answers to readers about different facts regarding terrorism in Bangladesh. The book consists of seven chapters written by six different authors who really think about the current situation and perspectives of terrorism in Bangladesh. Authors described possibilities and reason of terrorisms, regional security environment and menace of terrorism, anti terrorism activities of media, place of Islam in Bangladeshi's identity creation, the rise of Islamic militancy in Bangladesh, countering terrorism and analyze relationship between Bangladesh and India. But none of the author stated anything regarding terrorism that stemmed by ethnic intolerance or its remedial actions by education or any mean. he didn't discuss the the root cause of terrorism, religious extremism connected to terrorism. My findings identify relationship between religious extremism and terrorism.

However, let us go back to the Bangladesh case again. As I have already mentioned that many international media reports after 9/11 sought to project Bangladesh as a militant Islamist state: Before Griswold, another journalist Bertil Lintner published a series of articles in this regard, such as "Bangladesh: A Cocoon of Terror" (published in the Far Eastern Economic Review on April 4, 2002), "Is Religious Extremism on the Rise in Bangladesh?" (published in the Jane's Intelligence Review in May 2002), "Bangladesh: Championing Islamist Terrorism" (published in the South Asia Intelligence Review on September 16, 2002), "Bangladesh: Celebrations and Bombs" (published in the South Asia Intelligence Review on September 16, 2002), "Bangladesh: Breeding Ground for Muslim Terror" (published in the Asia Times on September 21, 2002), and "Religious Extremism and Nationalism in Bangladesh" (presented in an international workshop at the Asia Pacific Center for Security Studies, Honolulu, Hawaii on August 19, 2002).

Lintner's efforts continued through Alex Perry's "Deadly Cargo" in Time on October 14, 2002, Glenn R. Simpson's "Unraveling Terror's Finances" in Wall Street Journal on October 24, 2003, and Dan Morrison's "Terror on the Rise in Bangladesh" in Newsday on November 23, 2004. Then came the Indian friends: Anand Kumar reported on "Bangladesh: Weak Link in War on Terror" in The Straits Times on December 16, 2003; Aravind Adiga wrote "State of Disgrace" on April 5, 2004 and "A Democracy is Shaken" on August 30, 2004 in Time; Shefali Rekhi published "Clerics' Call to Terror" in The Straits Times on October 21, 2004; and Anirban Roy reported on "Qaeda Fuels HuJI Run in Bangladesh" in the Hindustan Times on December 9, 2004.

Reviewing some of these articles, Reaz Rahman comments in his book Bangladesh's Fight against Terror: Lessons Learnt and Future Perspectives" in Osmany and Kabir (eds.), Global War on Terror: Bangladesh Perspective, 2007 : All these articles have had a large impact on both journalistic and academic writing on Bangladesh militias in general and Islamist militias in particular. These articles reflect a heady mix of hype and hoopla. They represent part of the truth but not the whole truth. They are rife with potential and possibility, exaggeration and interpretation, half-truths and innuendo. They are tailored to conform to pre-fixed notions. Unfortunately these have become all hallmarks of Bangladesh's ties to terrorism. The reality is all too often ignored. Rahman admits that questions "remain as to whether there are possible links between domestic and international militants," but he rejects the assumption that Afghanistan's experience can be replicated in Bangladesh.

Hiranmay Karlekar, an Indian journalist and author, also shares similar views in articles Bangladesh: The Next Afghanistan? (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2006) : He examines Bangladesh's potential as a base for terrorist organizations and points out that Bangladesh is a 'soft state' with poor governance; its police force is ineffective and easily influenced by such Islamist militia groups as Jamaat-e-Islami (JI – Islamic Party), Jamaat-ul Mujahidin Bangladesh (JMB – Party of Mujahidin Bangladesh), and HUJI.

He draws parallels between these groups and the Taliban, compares Bangladesh with Afghanistan under the Taliban rule, and concludes that Bangladesh is far more developed, has an organized system of political parties, has tasted democracy for quite a long time, and has a vocal and assertive civil society. It is a moderate Muslim country with a significant level of religious tolerance and women play an important role in the country's political, economic, social and cultural arenas. Thus, according to Karlekar, while the 'Islamization' of Bangladesh is real, the country is not on the verge of being Talibanized.

In fact, "links between domestic and international militants in Bangladesh, while they cannot be ruled out, have remained basically in the realm of speculation. This realm of speculation is also evident in the RAND Corporation report which was published in two parts in 2006.

Prepared for the United States Air Force, the policy-formulating document claims: In Bangladesh, the principal group that has been linked to al-Qaeda is Harakat-ul-Jihad- Islami Bangladesh (HuJI B)... HuJI B's links to al-Qaeda allegedly go back to the group's inception in 1992, when bin Laden instructed Bangladeshi mujahideen returning from Afghanistan to take up arms against the government in Dhaka.... Although it is difficult to establish the veracity of this claim, al-Qaeda is known to have disseminated at least some funds to the country throughout the 1990s.... Together with donations from Pakistan, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Qatar, and Oman, these financial contributions were used to underwrite a proliferating web of radical unlicensed madrassas throughout Bangladesh that have been linked to some of the country's most fundamentalist religious entities and parties, including the Muslim League, the Tablighi Jama'at, the Jammata-e-Tulba, the Jamaat- ul-Muderessin, Islamic Oikya, and Jamaat-e-Islami.

It is indeed difficult to verify the links of Al-Qaeda with the "country's most fundamentalist religious entities and parties," especially when the RAND report is based on Indian and US journalistic and intelligence sources. The report also admits this: "Indian and U.S. sources both maintain that the madrassas – which number between 15,000 and 20,000, of which at least 40 are known to be run by Afghan war veterans – have constituted an important source of recruits for extremists.

Connection between Terrorism and Religious Extremism in Bangladesh :Bangladesh Perspective Research Foundation determined eleven logical reasons for extremism or radicalism: poverty; inferiority complex; western imperialism and the damage. it has caused to second and third world cultures and economies; futility and being under authoritarian leadership; biased media indoctrination; restraint of freedom of speech and free thought; Islamic fundamentalists believing that it is their job to rid the world of infidels; a refusal of those responsible to address the issues they caused; specific actions by super powers such as TPAJAX; the instigation of Iran/Iraq war; and the support of various sides in proxy wars that ended in the deaths of their families and neighbors over foreign struggles.

Lack of modern education and poverty are more or less responsible for social discrimination for the Madrasa students. As per the report, the Madrasa educated students suffer from an inferiority complex and a sense of deprivation that impacts their outlook. They cannot stand the existing social order which they consider as discriminatory towards them. So when they are asked to change the existing social order, which is man- made and discriminatory as well, they become the easy target of the extremist perpetrators.

The Rise of Islamist Militancy in Bangladesh by Summit Ganguly, *United States Institute of Peace, August 2006*, <http://www.usip.org/publications/rise-islamist-militancy-bangladesh> (accessed 26 March 2011) points out that Bangladesh, which lacked a tradition of militant Islamism, has indeed moved in that direction in recent years. Given the weak governance and lack of political order in Bangladesh, the increase in Islamist militancy could easily turn it into a fertile area for various radical groups to take root and flourish.

In his work —Mapping Terrorism Threats in Bangladesh, Mapping Terrorism Threats in Bangladesh by M. Aynul Islam, *BISS Journal* 29, no. 2 (April 2008): 32-33. discusses on the level of terrorism threats, challenges, risk factors for Bangladesh, and the possible response to minimize its impact on the society. He suggests that there are several Islamist terrorist groups operating in Bangladesh in different scopes, capacity, and nature. Imbalanced national education structure and curricula, proliferation of un-regulated religion based institutions and organizations in rural areas are earmarked as other related factors those generate extremist motivation.

Assessing the Terrorist Threat in Bangladesh by Noreen Chowdhury Fink, *International Peace Institute*, 19 January 2010, <http://www.ipacademy.org/news/comment-a-analysis/144-assessing-the-terrorist-threat-in-bangladesh.html> (accessed 28 December 2010) an eminent policy analyst of International Peace Institute, writes, The story in Bangladesh is also shaped by a number of positive trends, which contribute to the resilience of both state and society in the face of threats like terrorism and violent religious radicalization. A strong sense of nationalism, based on a carefully balanced mix of Bengali culture and Islam, prevents the populace at large from favoring policies that unduly tip the scales towards one or the other. Undoubtedly, Islam plays a major role in the private lives of many Bangladeshis; however, as a recent Gallup poll demonstrated, a large majority of Bangladeshis say that a democratically elected government is very important to them (61 percent) or essential and something they cannot live without (32 percent).

Countering Terrorism in Bangladesh, edited by Farooq Sobhan, provides some insights on the linkages between religion, politics, poverty and violence. This book concludes that religion has been both misinterpreted and misrepresented to provide a moral justification for violence. However, in addition to the religious fanatics inciting terror, inequalities in education, economic opportunities, social welfare and lack of political will have contributed significantly in the rise of terrorism in Bangladesh.

It is found from above literature review that those studies Mainly based on secondary data source. But my study is based on primary and secondary data. Primary data is based on field work on interview.

1.8 Structure of the dissertation

The research has been structured in to seven parts that including 1. Introduction, methodology, 2. Connection between Religious Extremism and Terrorism, 3. Religious Extremism and Terrorist activities in Bangladesh, 4. Case Study, 5. Public View in affected area, 6. Major findings and 7. Concluding Remarks. Ancillary tables are presented. This study identified religious extremism and relating to terrorism in Bangladesh. It analyzed the nature of religious extremism, patterns, causes and consequences of Islamist militancy and terrorism in Bangladesh. The study also looked at the funding sources, strategies and techniques used by various terrorist groups. These findings can have policy implications for undertaking future action plan in combating Islamic militancy and other terrorist activities in Bangladesh. The main objective of this study : Religious extremism is connected to terrorism in Bangladesh. I will prove that religious extremism is related to terrorism.

1.8. Scope and Limitation:

The study confined its scope to Islamist militancy and terrorism in Bangladesh. The complexity of the phenomena of Islamist militancy and terrorism is a major limitation. The study is based on the available and accessible secondary information derived from the content analysis of two newspapers and views of experts gathered through Key Informant Interview (KII). Based on secondary analysis supplemented with KIIs, it addressed the objectives. Limited scope, time and resources as well as inaccessibility to appropriate of data and analysis of the study. Despite our repeated efforts, we could not interview some of the respondents especially the chief executives of the law enforcing agencies such as police and RAB. They were not willing to give the interview without permission from the Home Ministry.

The reliability and validity of data gathered from news media sources, which often count on official sources, pose a significant question. Neither official data nor the news media are from-biasness. Many authors pointed out the drawbacks of terrorism and militancy studies (Quamruzzaman, 2010). Government sources do not release actual information under the excuse of security concerns and the governments image issue. Despite non-implementation of the recently enacted the Right to Information Ordinance (No. 50 of 2008), 2008 and act in 2009 along with the inaccessibility of such sensitive information, this study used various news media as the main source of information.

International and regional news media as well as in Bangladesh, news media do not enjoy much freedom from government control and in most cases media are not neutral in reporting as they represent specific view points and the same is also true for international and regional media as well.

CHAPTER TWO: CONNECTION BETWEEN TERRORISM AND RELIGIOUS EXTREMISM

2.1 Introduction

Although all extremists were not terrorists, all terrorists were extremists. A person ought to have extremist tendencies to resort to aggression, violence, and terrorism. No non-extremist is likely to resort to terrorism. Despite at times not being a terrorist, an extremist is still a threat to the society because he could cause others to become extremists like him, some of who may also turn out to be terrorists. Moreover, there was no way of finding out when a non-terrorist-extremist may decide to become a terrorist-extremist.

Any individual or group who holds to its ideology, does not tolerate others viewpoint and tries to impose his philosophy/ideology through violent means or use of force. Extremism is a term used to describe the actions or ideologies of individuals or groups outside the perceived political c of a society or otherwise claimed to violate common moral standards.

What causes a person to be an extremist? There were apparently three reasons that cause a person to be an extremist: It was either the peculiar personality of an individual, or the kind of information and training he received, or/and a sense of insecurity in him which made him inflexible and as a result extremist. In many cases it was a combination of any two or all three of the above-stated factors that contribute in making an individual an extremist.

There were certain types of personality which are more prone to be extremists. A person who can be easily irritated in the midst of diverse views was a good candidate to be one. Someone who was obsessively fascinated by individuals, ideas, or other influences because of certain immediate, superficial reasons and then refused to reconsider his decision for fear of losing that emotional attachment was likely to be an extremist. A person deprived of his due rights in the society can also have extremist tendencies in reaction to his state of deprivation if he was not willing to reconsider his position on realizing that his reaction was exaggerated. The underlying common denominator amongst all extremists was their inflexibility in the wake of new information.

2.2 Terrorism

Terrorism is a sociological concept. It is a global phenomenon now. Following Durkheim (1973), terrorism is a social fact. It is a socially constructed concept. Following Becker, terrorism a crime as it is labeled. ``Terrorism is more extreme than most common crimes since it often involves the commission of serious violence against civilians who have done nothing to directly provoke their victimization`` (Agnew, 2010). It has been used in various ways such as tactic and strategy, as crime and a holy duty, as a justified reaction to oppression and inexcusable abomination or war on terror. It has been used by different actors ranging from terrorist groups, pressure group, state, a group of individuals, ethnic group, religious group, and so on.

The term terrorism` has no common or universally accepted definition. It is also one of the most debatable terms in the literature. Its meaning is continuously changing and especially aftermath the 9/11 incidence, the term get more complicated and multifaceted.

The definition of terrorism varies from international bodies like the United Nations (UN), European Union (EU), and North Atlantic Organization (NATO) to governments. One government varies from another in defining terrorism. Even within the same state, different agencies responsible for different functions in the ongoing fight against terrorism use different definitions.

The most commonly accepted academic definition starts with the **U.N. Definition produced in 1992**; "An anxiety-inspiring method of repeated violent action, employed by (semi- clandestine individual, group or state actors, for idiosyncratic, criminal or political reasons, whereby - in contrast to assassination - the direct targets of violence are not the main targets.

(<http://www.terrorism-research.com/>)

According to the framework decision of the **European Union (EU)**, terrorism combines two elements: an objective element, as it refers to a list of instances of serious criminal conduct (murder, bodily injuries, hostage taking, extortion, fabrication of weapons, committing attacks, threatening to commit any of the above, etc.); and a subjective element, as these acts are deemed to be terrorist offences when committed with the aim of seriously intimidating a population, unduly compelling a government or international organization to perform or abstain from performing any act, or seriously destabilizing or destroying the fundamental political, constitutional, economic or social

structures of a country or an international organization (EU Website, http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/justice_freedom_security/fight_against_terrorism/133168_en.htm).

According to the **US Department of Defense**, terrorism is “the calculated use of unlawful violence or threat of unlawful violence to inculcate fear; intended to coerce or to intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious, or ideological.” This definition include three key elements—violence, fear, and intimidation. The U.S. Department of State defines "terrorism" to be "premeditated politically-motivated violence perpetrated against non-combatant targets by sub-national groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) uses this: "Terrorism is the unlawful use of force and violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives, (http://terrorism.about.com/od/whatisterroris1/ss/DefineTerrorism_4.htm).

The British Government's definition seem to be less specific and considerably less verbose. According to their definition of 1974, terrorism is "...the use of violence for political ends, and includes any use of violence for the purpose of putting the public, or any section of the public, in fear." Canada's definition of terrorism has been regarded as broad as an act or unlawful acts for purposes of influencing or intimidating governments and the civilian population for 'motivated for political and ideological purposes'."

Since 1930s, international bodies such as the League of Nations and the United Nations, has put terrorism in their agenda. Domestic agencies like the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) have defined terrorism in the late 1930s. Both domestic and international groups flourished and had began to use techniques such as hijacking, bombing, diplomatic kidnapping and assassination to assert their demands. Politicians, lawmakers, law enforcement and researchers have viewed these groups and as real threats to Western democracies.

Lawmakers, security professionals and scholars started efforts to classify terrorism based on what kind of attack agents an attacker uses (biological, for example) or by what they are trying to defend (as in eco terrorism). The US researchers have begun to distinguish different types of terrorism in the 1970s to understand how to counter and deter terrorism.

There has been no internationally agreed UN definition yet or there cannot be a universal definition of such complex and debatable term overnight. However, given criminal law violation, terrorism is a criminal act, one of the cruelest forms of crime that influence the audience beyond the immediate victim.

Working definition of terrorism: The systematic use of violence to create a general climate of fear in a population and thereby to bring about a particular political objective. Terrorism has been practiced by political organizations with both rightist and leftist objectives, by nationalistic and religious groups, by revolutionaries and even by state institutions such as armies, intelligence services, and police.

2.3 Religious Extremism

Extremism can be defined as the holding of extreme political or religious views. Another word that can be used to mean extremism is fanaticism. It also refers to a person who favors or resorts to immoderate, uncompromising or fanatical methods or behavior. One of the most dangerous problems we face is religious extremism. While certainly Islāmic Jihadists are foremost in many peoples minds, Islam is not alone extremist views. Christian extremism is also on the rise as well as in Judaism to a more limited degree. Religious extremism can be defined as a person or group that takes the position that if others do not follow their ways, they will be damned. While these extremists present themselves as deeply spiritual, religious fanaticism comes not from deep faith, but from a lack of it. The only thing religious fanaticism really demonstrates is weakness on the part of the fanatic. Weakness in his own faith.

There is much confusion regarding terms that the media and other groups banter around, such as religious fundamentalism, religious fanaticism, and conservatism. To many intellectuals and media types, these terms are essentially equivalent to religious extremism. However there are important differences. My religious conservatives lead quiet exemplary lives. Religious fanatics or extremists, however, are often very aggressive, seeking to impose their views on other people or people groups. These extremists often preach intolerance against all who disagree with their own viewpoints. We have seen this with Islāmic extremists who cannot tolerate any adverse portrayals of Islam or its leaders or icons. Fundamentalism as well is not fanatical in and of itself. Many fundamentalists are truly seeking the roots of their particular faiths. However, fundamentalism can quickly turn into

dogmatic fanaticism. These types often present themselves as holier-than-thou and openly condemn the practices and beliefs of the society around them with dogmatic certainty, promoting themselves as having a monopoly on the truth.

(<https://religiousextremism.wordpress.com/2011/03/11/what-is-religious-extremism/>)

Religious extremists, in most cases, are not psychopaths. The general characteristics of psychopaths are charm, no signs of irrational thinking, lack of remorse or shame, pathological egocentricity, being incapable of love, not having insight and no life plan. While some of these characteristics can be seen in people who turn extremist, many others are not. For example, while an extremist may numb himself to any feelings of guilt or shame in certain situations, in many cases and with the people he feels close to, he shows such feelings.

There may be a few general characteristics of people who turn into extremists:

1. They have a sense of absolutism: They have a distorted, no constructive and irrational thought that the truth, moral or aesthetic values are absolute, universal, set and unchangeable.
2. They have a sense of righteousness: They usually think that they know the truth and no one else does. They usually don't even have enough knowledge about their own religion and only know the surface part.
3. They do confirmation bias: This is where one only brings in information that fits his thought process and dismisses anything else. Any other information, no matter how historically, scientifically and logically valid, will be disregarded.
4. They have a sense of knowing an ultimate meaning: They have a sense of a black and white thinking where the white is a limited definition of how life "should" be for all of us. There is no flexibility, no adaptability and no objectivity. You are either into this small and specific white zone or you are "the other."
5. They dehumanize whoever does not fit their view: They put other people's views inferior to theirs and dehumanize people whose views do not fit theirs. This gives them a sense that they have the right to kill, harm and destroy others. They also do the same to out-groups.

6. They idealize historic figures or stories: Such people usually idealize some figures in their belief system and stories attached to the past and want to fit the present and the future into that idealization.
7. They have an utter certainty that they are right: The objective mind of a rational person knows that at any time, there are so many things he does not know. But an extremist does not have such view and holds a distorted thought that he knows all the answers and has found the "truth" which is the only truth.
8. They have a sense of unwillingness to compromise: For such individuals, there is only one way and that is what matches their definition of truth. They are not willing to find common grounds with other people and cannot find win-win positions.
9. They have too much focus on the life after death: A religious extremist has too little focus on the importance of this life and what makes him feel fulfilled in it and is too attached to the concept of a "great" afterlife.
10. They have many psychological defenses: Such individuals have formed a number of psychological defenses so none of their internal feelings would be challenged.

At the end, targeting extremism is about targeting ideas more than individuals. There should be a significant concern about the rise of extremists with this populated world. This is our future as it defines whether humanity will have peace or a devastating conflict that will cost all of us tremendously. If there is any war, it should be a collective and universal war against extremist through education, knowledge and information. (http://www.huffingtonpost.com/roya-r-rad-mapsyd/what-turns-ordinary-people-into-religious-extremists_b_3375890.html)

Working definition of Religious Extremism : The man or organization impose their view to other. They can not accept any one view. Their beliefs, attitudes, feelings, actions or strategies of a character far removed from the ordinary. Some religious followers believe that their beliefs, customs and traditions are the only right way and that all others are practicing their faith the wrong way seeing and believing that their faith/ religion superior to all others. Religious extremists are willing to murder because they embrace theologies that sanction violence in the service of god. They readily sacrifice their own lives because they expect huge and immediate after life rewards in return for martyrdom.

2.4 Relationship Between Religious Extremism and Terrorism

An extremist is a person who holds views which are at the extreme side of the continuum of possible views on a subject. A Jew, a Christian, or a Muslim who says that he believes that he is on the right path and the paths others are following are not correct is, to me, not an extremist, despite being a religious exclusivity, so long as he is prepared to concede the possibility that his opinion had the likelihood of turning out to be incorrect and, given that possibility, he was willing to consider other views with an open mind. An extremist is a person who believes that only his views are correct while all others are incorrect and he is therefore not prepared to respect and listen to the other views to find out if they could be correct too.

What is the relationship between extremism and terrorism? Although all extremists were not terrorists, all terrorists were extremists. A person ought to have extremist tendencies to resort to aggression, violence, and terrorism. No non-extremist is likely to resort to terrorism. Despite at times not being a terrorist, an extremist is still a threat to the society because he could cause others to become extremists like him, some of who may also turn out to be terrorists. Moreover, there was no way of finding out when a non-terrorist-extremist may decide to become a terrorist-extremist.

What causes a person to be an extremist? There were apparently three reasons that cause a person to be an extremist: It was either the peculiar personality of an individual, or the kind of information and training he received, or/and a sense of insecurity in him which made him inflexible and as a result extremist. In many cases it was a combination of any two or all three of the above-stated factors that contribute in making an individual an extremist.

There were certain types of personality which are more prone to be extremists. A person who can be easily irritated in the midst of diverse views was a good candidate to be one. Someone who was obsessively fascinated by individuals, ideas, or other influences because of certain immediate, superficial reasons and then refused to reconsider his decision for fear of losing that emotional attachment was likely to be an extremist. A person deprived of his due rights in the society can also have extremist tendencies in reaction to his state of deprivation if he was not willing to reconsider his position on realizing that his reaction was exaggerated. The underlying common denominator amongst all extremists was their inflexibility in the wake of new information.

The training one received in the past could also make a person inclined to be an extremist. For instance, if the religious mentor under whom, or the educational institution in which, an individual got religious guidance continued to instill in his mind the thought that the ideas he was receiving were the only valid ones and the rest of them were either weak, unauthentic, or misleading, the trainee would begin to get convinced that all views other than his were unreliable and thus would give in to the extremist ideology. His stubborn attitude would be reinforced by the constant urging on the part of his religious guides that his reluctance to look at other views objectively was an indication of his 'strong faith'.

When a potentially stubborn person is put through the experience of a learning environment where participants were trained to be extremists, the likely outcome is that the individual would accept what he was being offered. The process essentially would involve reading about and listening to the same view and the arguments supporting it over and over again. Such process would create an exaggerated affinity for the views thus presented. Once the ideology being presented in a controlled environment was internalized, the participant would stop listening to the opposing views. Even when the opposing view would be heard it would not be taken with an open mind with a possibility of change; it would only be read and heard to be rejected and condemned.

What causes people to be inclined to accept the extremist views? The answer is that it is either misery, or love, or both which cause people to be extremists. If one has led a miserable life in the past, one is prone to be fascinated by extremist ideas that would somehow help in responding to the bitter feelings. If one loved an individual or an ideology to the extent of being infatuated by it, extremism would follow. No balanced, non-reactionary individual can ever fall prey permanently to extremist views.

Peaceful fanatics are as unacceptable as violent ones because they all stem from the same source. You can never stop them from doing what they have decided. Intellect has no role to play in their process of idea formation; it only plays a role in the implementation of ideas.

What can be done about it? All religiously inclined people should be helped to be convinced that their intellect was the most precious gift from God. It was only through intellect that they can sift reliable information from the one that was misleading. In not using one's intellect one was being

ungrateful to God. They should also be made to feel comfortable that it was not human intellect that misled people; instead it was the incorrect use of it that misguided them. While one could still be misled if one used one's intellect if it was not done judiciously, one could never be on the correct religious track if one wouldn't use it. Qur'an unequivocally declares "Indeed the worst of the beasts in the eyes of God are those deaf and dumb people who don't use their intellect." (8:22)

The most difficult victims of extremist propaganda are those intelligent minds who were influenced by some seemingly impressive ideas of a religious zealot who after having gained their confidence cleverly stopped them from using the mind any more. In other words, there were charismatic people who would capture the imagination of others through their God-gifted abilities to impress them to the level that their followers would ultimately give in to become passively gullible.

The anti-extremism moderates should play their role carefully. The extremist leadership looks at the weaknesses (apparent or real) eagerly and cleverly employs it to convince their followers that the 'other group' was dangerous. The extremist leadership is very sensitive about its following. It jealously guards each and every follower they were able to capture. Indeed they were clearly distinguishable from the non-extremists in this matter too: While a non-extremist would care little if someone who was in agreement with him decided to disagree with him through intellectual reasoning and sided with someone else. It would never be a problem for him because his agenda was to let others use their intellect and let them agree and disagree on the merit of arguments. For an intelligent person, therefore, it would hardly ever be a complete and total transformation from one position to another. An extremist leader would always demand total allegiance from his followers. He can therefore never allow his followers to enter into a free dialogue with others. He knows that disagreement of his follower in one area would signal a shift from total obedience to a position of partial agreement on the basis of the merit of arguments, which to him was as good (or bad) as complete disagreement.

2.5 Religious Extremism in World Wide

The colonial era, failed post-colonial attempts at state formation, and the creation of Israel engendered a series of Marxist and anti-Western transformations and movements throughout the Arab and Islamic world. The growth of these nationalist and revolutionary movements, along with their view that terrorism could be effective in reaching political goals, generated the first phase of modern international terrorism.

In the late 1960s Palestinian secular movements such as Al Fatah and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) began to target civilians outside the immediate arena of conflict. Following Israel's 1967 defeat of Arab forces, Palestinian leaders realized that the Arab world was unable to militarily confront Israel. At the same time, lessons drawn from revolutionary movements in Latin America, North Africa, Southeast Asia as well as during the Jewish struggle against Britain in Palestine, saw the Palestinians move away from classic guerrilla, typically rural-based, warfare toward urban terrorism. Radical Palestinians took advantage of modern communication and transportation systems to internationalize their struggle. They launched a series of hijackings, kidnappings, bombings, and shootings, culminating in the kidnapping and subsequent deaths of Israeli athletes during the 1972 Munich Olympic games.

These Palestinian groups became a model for numerous secular militants, and offered lessons for subsequent ethnic and religious movements. Palestinians created an extensive transnational extremist network -- tied into which were various state sponsors such as the Soviet Union, certain Arab states, as well as traditional criminal organizations. By the end of the 1970s, the Palestinian secular network was a major channel for the spread of terrorist techniques worldwide.

Key Radical Palestinian groups

Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP): The PFLP, one of the original members of the PLO is a Marxist-Leninist group founded in 1967 by George Habash. The group was against the 1993 Declaration of Principles; participation in the PLO was also suspended. Participated in meetings with Arafat's Fatah party and PLO representatives in 1999 to discuss national unity but continues to oppose negotiations with Israel. Committed numerous international terrorist attacks during the 1970s, has allegedly been involved in attacks against Israel since the beginning of the second intifadas in September 2000. Syria has been a key source of safe haven and limited logistical support.

- **Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC):** This group, led by Ahmed Jibril, split from the PFLP in 1968, wanting to focus more on terrorist than political action; violently opposed to the PLO and is closely tied to Syria and Iran. The PFLP-GC conducted multiple attacks in Europe and the Middle East during the 1970s and 1980s. Unique in that it conducted cross-border operations against Israel using unusual means, including hot-air balloons and motorized hang gliders. Currently focused on small-scale attacks in Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza Strip.
- **Abu Nidal Organization (ANO):** Anti-Western and anti-Israel international terrorist organization led by Sabri al-Banna; left the PLO in 1974. Organizational structure composed of various functional committees, including political, military, and financial. The ANO has carried out terrorist attacks in 20 countries, killing or injuring almost 900 persons. Targets have included the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Israel, moderate Palestinians, the PLO, and various Arab countries. Major attacks included the Rome and Vienna airports in December 1985, the Neve Shalom synagogue in Istanbul and the Pan Am flight 73 hijacking in Karachi in September 1986, and the City of Poros day-excursion ship attack in Greece in July 1988. Suspected of assassinating PLO deputy chief Abu Iyad and PLO security chief Abu Hul in Tunis in January 1991. ANO assassinated a Jordanian diplomat in Lebanon in January 1994. Has not attacked Western targets since the late 1980s. Al-Banna relocated to Iraq in December 1998, where the group maintains a presence. Financial problems and internal disorganization have reduced the group's capabilities; activities shut down in Libya and Egypt in 1999.

While these secular Palestinians dominated the scene during the 1970s, religious movements also grew. The failure of Arab nationalism in the 1967 war resulted in the strengthening of both progressive and extremist Islamic movements. In the Middle East, Islamic movements increasingly came into opposition with secular nationalism, providing an alternative source of social welfare and education in the vacuum left by the lack of government-led development -- a key example is The Muslim Brotherhood. Islamic groups were supported by anti-nationalist conservative regimes, such as Saudi Arabia, to counter the expansion of nationalist ideology. Yet political Islam, more open to progressive change, was seen as a threat to conservative Arab regimes and thus support for more fundamentalist -- and extremist -- groups occurred to combat both nationalist and political Islamist movements.

Meanwhile, in Iran, a turn to revolutionary Shia Islam under the leadership of Ayatollah Khomeini further eroded the power and legitimacy of the U.S.-backed authoritarian Pahlavi regime, setting the stage for the Shah's downfall.

1979-1991 the afghan jihad and state sponsors of terrorism: The year 1979 was a turning point in international terrorism. Throughout the Arab world and the West, the Iranian Islamic revolution sparked fears of a wave of revolutionary Shia Islam. Meanwhile, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the subsequent anti-Soviet mujahedeen war, lasting from 1979 to 1989, stimulated the rise and expansion of terrorist groups. Indeed, the growth of a post-jihad pool of well-trained, battle-hardened militants is a key trend in contemporary international terrorism and insurgency-related violence. Volunteers from various parts of the Islamic world fought in Afghanistan, supported by conservative countries such as Saudi Arabia. In Yemen, for instance, the Riyadh-backed Islamic Front was established to provide financial, logistical, and training support for Yemeni volunteers. So called "Arab-Afghans" have -- and are -- using their experience to support local insurgencies in North Africa, Kashmir, Chechnya, China, Bosnia, and the Philippines.

In the West, attention was focused on state sponsorship, specifically the Iranian-backed and Syrian-supported Hezbollah; state sponsors' use of secular Palestinian groups was also of concern. Hezbollah pioneered the use of suicide bombers in the Middle East, and was linked to the Lebanon, as well as multiple kidnappings of U.S. and Western civilians and government officials. Hezbollah remains a key trainer of secular, Shia, and Sunni movements. As revealed during the investigation into the 1988 bombing of Libyan intelligence officers were allegedly involved with the Palestinian Front for the Liberation of Palestine -- General Command (PFLP-GC).

Iraq and Syria were heavily involved in supporting various terrorist groups, with Baghdad using the Abu Nidal Organization on several occasions. State sponsors used terrorist groups to attack Israeli as well as Western interests, in addition to domestic and regional opponents. It should be noted that the American policy of listing state sponsors was heavily politicized, and did not include several countries -- both allies and opponents of Washington -- that, under U.S. government definitions, were guilty of supporting or using terrorism.

Key Radical Religious Groups:

Hezbollah: Radical Shia group formed in 1982 in Lebanon. Strongly anti-Western and anti-Israeli. Closely allied with, and often directed by, Iran but may have conducted operations that were not approved by Tehran. Known or suspected to have been involved in numerous anti-U.S. terrorist attacks, including the suicide truck bombing of the U.S. Embassy and U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut in October 1983 and the U.S. Embassy annex in Beirut in September 1984. Elements of the group were responsible for the kidnapping and detention of U.S. And other Western hostages in Lebanon. The group also attacked the Israeli Embassy in Argentina in 1992 and is a suspect in the 1994 bombing of the Israeli cultural center in Buenos Aires. Operates in the Bekaa Valley, the southern suburbs of Beirut, and southern Lebanon. Has established cells in Europe, Africa, South America, North America, and Asia. Receives substantial amounts of financial, training, weapons, explosives, political, diplomatic, and organizational aid from Iran and Syria.

- **Egyptian Islamic Jihad (EIJ - Al-Jihad, Jihad Group, Islamic Jihad):** Egyptian group active since the late 1970s. The EIJ is apparently split into two factions: one led by Ayman al-Zawahiri - who currently is in Afghanistan and is a key leader in the Usama bin Laden (UBL) network - and the Vanguard of Conquest (Talaa' al-Fateh) led by Ahmad Husayn Agiza. Abbud al-Zumar, leader of the original Jihad, is imprisoned in Egypt and recently joined the group's jailed spiritual leader, Shaykh Umar Abd al-Rahman, in a call for a "peaceful front." The group's traditional goal is the overthrow of the Egyptian Government and creation of an Islamic state. Given its involvement with UBL, EIJ is likely increasingly willing to target U.S. interests. The group has threatened to strike the U.S. for its jailing of Shaykh al-Rahman and the arrests of EIJ cadres in Albania, Azerbaijan, and the United Kingdom.
- **Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ):** The PIJ, emerging from radical Gazan Palestinians in the 1970s, is apparently a series of loosely affiliated factions rather than a cohesive group. The PIJ focus is the destruction of Israel and the creation of a Palestinian Islamic state. Due to Washington's support of Israel, the PIJ has threatened to strike American targets; the PIJ has not "specifically" conducted attacks against U.S. interests; Arab regimes deemed as un-Islamic are also threatened. The group has stated its willingness to hit American targets in Jordan. PIJ cadres reportedly receive funding from Tehran and logistical support from Syria.

- **Islamic Resistance Movement (HAMAS):** Emerging from the Muslim Brotherhood during the first Palestinian intifadah (1987), HAMAS has become the primary anti-Israeli religious opposition in the occupied territories. The group is mainly known for its use of suicide bombers and is loosely organized, with centers of strength in Gaza and certain areas in the West Bank. HAMAS, while condemning American policies favoring Israel, has not targeted the U.S. directly.
- **Al-Gamaat Al-Islamiyya (IG - the Islamic Group, al-Gama'at, Islamic Gama'at, Egyptian al-Gama'at al-Islamiyya, GI):** The IG, begun in the 1970s, is the largest of the Egyptian militant groups. Its core goal is the overthrow of the Cairo regime and creation of an Islamic state. The IG appears to be a more loosely organized entity than the EIJ, and maintains a globally present external wing. IG leadership signed Usama Bin Ladin's February 1998 anti-U.S. fatwa but has denied supporting UBL. Shaykh Umar Abd al-Rahman is al-Gama'at's spiritual leader, and thus the U.S. has been threatened with attack. From 1993 until the cease-fire, al-Gama'a launched attacks on tourists in Egypt, most notably the attack in November 1997 at Luxor that killed 58 foreign tourists. Also claimed responsibility for the attempt in June 1995 to assassinate Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Has a worldwide presence, including Sudan, the United Kingdom, Afghanistan, Austria, and Yemen. The Egyptian Government believes that Iran, Bin Ladin, and Afghan militant groups support the organization.

1991 -2001 the globalization of terror:

The disintegration of post-Cold War states, and the Cold War legacy of a world awash in advanced conventional weapons and know-how, has assisted the proliferation of terrorism worldwide. Vacuums of stability created by conflict and absence of governance in areas such as the Balkans, Afghanistan, Colombia, and certain African countries offer ready made areas for terrorist training and recruitment activity, while smuggling and drug trafficking routes are often exploited by terrorists to support operations worldwide. With the increasing ease of transnational transportation and communication, the continued willingness of states such as Iran and Iraq to provide support, and dehumanizing ideologies that enable mass casualty attacks, the lethal potential of terrorist violence has reached new heights.

The region of Afghanistan -- it is not a country in the conventional sense -- has, particularly since the 1989 Soviet withdrawal, emerged as a terrorist training ground. Pakistan, struggling to balance its needs for political-economic reform with a domestic religious agenda, provides assistance to terrorist groups both in Afghanistan and Kashmir while acting as a further transit area between the Middle East and South Asia.

Since their emergence in 1994, the Pakistani-supported Taliban militia in Afghanistan has assumed several characteristics traditionally associated with state-sponsors of terrorism, providing logistical support, travel documentation, and training facilities. Although radical groups such as the Egyptian Islamic Jihad, Osama bin Laden's Al Qaeda, and Kashmiri militants were in Afghanistan prior to the Taliban, the spread of Taliban control has seen Afghan-based terrorism evolve into a relatively coordinated, widespread activity focused on sustaining and developing terrorist capabilities. Since the mid-1990s, Pakistani-backed terrorist groups fighting in Kashmir have increasingly used training camps inside Taliban-controlled areas.

At the same time, members of these groups, as well as thousands of youths from Pakistan's Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP), have fought with the Taliban against opposition forces. This activity has seen the rise of extremism in parts of Pakistan neighboring Afghanistan, further complicating the ability of Islamabad to exert control over militants. Moreover, the intermixing of Pakistani movements with the Taliban and their Arab-Afghan allies has seen ties between these groups strengthen.

Since 1989 the increasing willingness of religious extremists to strike targets outside immediate country or regional areas underscores the global nature of contemporary terrorism. The 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center, and the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, are representative of this trend.

Key Groups in the New phase of Milltant Islamic Terrorism:

- **Al-Qaeda (The Base):**Established by Usama Bin Ladin (UBL) circa 1990, Al Qaeda aims to coordinate a transnational mujahideen network; stated goal is to "reestablish the Muslim State" throughout the world via the overthrow of corrupt regimes in the Islamic world and the removal of foreign presence - primarily American and Israeli - from the Middle East. UBL has issued three anti-U.S. fatwas encouraging Muslims to take up arms against Washington's "imperialism." Al Qaeda provides financial, manpower, transportation, and training support to extremists worldwide. In February 1998 bin Ladin issued a statement under the banner of "The World Islamic Front for Jihad Against The Jews and Crusaders," saying it was the duty of all Muslims to kill U.S. citizens, civilian or military, and their allies.

Allegedly orchestrated the bombings of the U.S. Embassies in Nairobi, Kenya and Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania, on August 7, 1998. Claims to have been involved in the 1993 killing of U.S. servicemen in Somalia and the December 1992 bombings against U.S. troops in Aden, Yemen. Al Qaeda serves as the core of a loose umbrella organization that includes members of many Sunni Islamic extremist groups, including factions of the Egyptian Islamic Jihad (EIJ), the Gama'at al-Islamiyya (IG), and the Harakat ul-Mujahidin (HUM). The group is a prime suspect in the Sept. 11 attacks as well as the U.S.S Cole bombing.

- **Armed Islamic Group (GIA):** Having initiated terrorist activities in 1992 following Algiers refusal to accept a democratically elected Islamist government, the GIA has conducted multiple mass killings of civilians and assassinations of Algerian leaders. While present in areas such as Yemen, the GIA reportedly does not target the U.S. directly. However, it is possible that GIA splinter movements or personnel may become involved in anti-U.S. action.
- **Aden-Abyan Islamic Army (AAIA):** The Aden-Abyan Islamic Army is allegedly affiliated to the Yemeni Islamic Jihad and has been implicated in acts of violence with the stated goal to "hoist the banner of al-Jihad, and fight secularism in Yemen and the Arab countries." Aden-Abyan Islamic Army leader Zein al-Abideen al-Mehdar was executed for participating in the December 1998 kidnapping of 16 Western tourists. Four of the hostages were killed and another 13 hostages were freed when Yemeni security forces attacked the place where the hostages were being held. In March 1999 the group warned the U.S. and British ambassadors in Yemen to leave immediately.

- **Harakat ul-Mujahidin (HUM):** Formerly part of the Harakat al-Ansar (HUA), the Pakistani-based HUM operates primarily in Kashmir. Long-time leader of the group, Fazlur Rehman Khalil, in mid-February stepped down; the popular Kashmiri commander and second-in-command, Farooq Kashmiri, assumed the reins. Khalil, who has been linked to Bin Ladin and signed his fatwa in February 1998 calling for attacks on U.S. and Western interests, assumed the position of HUM Secretary General. The HUM is linked to the militant group al-Faran that kidnapped five Western tourists in Kashmir in July 1995; one was killed in August 1995 and the other four reportedly were killed in December of the same year. Supporters are mostly Pakistanis and Kashmiris and also include Afghans and Arab veterans of the Afghan war. The HUM trains its militants in Afghanistan and Pakistan.
- **Jaish-e-Mohammed (Army of Mohammed):** The Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Mohammed (JEM) has greatly expanded since Maulana Masood Azhar, a former ultra-fundamentalist Harakat ul-Ansar (HUA) leader, formed the group in February 2000. The group's aim is to unite Kashmir with Pakistan. It is politically aligned with the radical, pro-Taliban, political party, Jamiat-i Ulema-i Islam (JUI-F). The JEM maintains training camps in Afghanistan. Most of the JEM's cadre and material resources have been drawn from the militant groups Harakat ul-Jihad al-Islami (HUJI) and the Harakat ul-Mujahedin (HUM). The JEM has close ties to Afghan Arabs and the Taliban. Usama Bin Ladin is suspected of giving funding to the JEM. Group by this name claimed responsibility for the USS Cole attack.
- **Lashkar-i-Taiba (LT) (Army of the Righteous):** The LT is the armed wing of the Pakistan-based religious organization, Markaz-ud-Dawa-wal-Irshad (MDI)--a Sunni anti-U.S. missionary organization formed in 1989. One of the three largest and best-trained groups fighting in Kashmir against India, it is not connected to a political party. The LT leader is MDI chief, Professor Hafiz Mohammed Saeed. Almost all LT cadres are foreigners--mostly Pakistanis from seminaries across the country and Afghan veterans of the Afghan wars. The LT trains its militants in mobile training camps across Pakistan-administered Kashmir and Afghanistan.

[1] **Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Al Fatah** : The PLO was founded in 1964 as a Palestinian nationalist umbrella organization committed to the creation of an independent Palestinian state. After the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, militia groups composing the PLO vied for control, with Al Fatah -- led by Yasser Arafat -- becoming dominant. Al Fatah joined the PLO in 1968 and won the leadership role in 1969. In 1969 Arafat assumed the position of PLO Executive Committee chairman, a position he still holds. Al Fatah essentially became the PLO, with other groups' influence on PLO actions increasingly marginalized. Al Fatah and other PLO components were pushed out of Jordan following clashes with Jordanian forces in 1970-71.

The Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982 led to the group's dispersal to several Middle Eastern countries, including Tunisia, Yemen, Algeria, Iraq, and others. The PLO maintains several military and intelligence wings that have carried out terrorist attacks, including Force 17 and the Western Sector. Two of its leaders, Abu Jihad and Abu Iyad, were assassinated in recent years. In the 1960s and the 1970s, Al Fatah offered training to a wide range of European, Middle Eastern, Asian, and African terrorist and insurgent groups and carried out numerous acts of international terrorism in Western Europe and the Middle East in the early-to-middle 1970s. Arafat signed the Declaration of Principles (DOP) with Israel in 1993 -- the Oslo Accords -- and renounced terrorism and violence. The organization fragmented in the early 1980s, but remained the leading Palestinian political organization. Following the 1993 Oslo Accords, the PLO -- read Al Fatah -- leadership assumed control of the nascent Palestinian National Authority (PNA).

[2] **Political versus Fundamentalist Islam** : Political Islam, as opposed to fundamentalist or neo-fundamentalist Islam, posits a worldview that can deal with and selectively integrate modernity. In contrast, fundamentalist Islam calls for a return to an ontological form of Islam that rejects modernity; groups such as Al Qaeda and the Egyptian Islamic Jihad are representative of fundamentalist Islam.

[3] **A Note on State Sponsors of Religious Terror Groups** : Unlike the "secular" national, radical, anarchist terrorism sponsored by states such as Libya, Syria, Iraq, Cuba, North Korea, and behind the scenes by the former Soviet camp, most of the Islamic terrorist groups have never been sponsored by states. Many Egyptian organizations emerged from the Egyptian domestic landscape.

Algerian groups likewise were not sponsored by foreign states. Hezbollah certainly can be viewed as an Iranian surrogate, but other movements, while open to state assistance, remain operationally and ideologically independent.

Through the extremist militant group ISIS has declared a restoration of the Islamic Caliphate and issued a call for all Muslims to pledge their allegiance to it, a Pew survey shows that most people living in Muslim majority countries are very concerned about the threat of Islamic extremism in their nations. The poll investigated specific attitudes towards groups such as al-Qaeda, Boko Haram, the Taliban, Hezbollah and Hamas, in fourteen countries with significant Muslim populations, and found that almost universally negative opinions were held about them.

As Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (2013–2014)

Declaration and dispute with al-Nusra Front :In March 2011, protests began in Syria against the government of Bashar Al Assad. In the following months, violence between demonstrators and security forces led to a gradual militarisation of the conflict. In August 2011 Abu Bakr al –Baghdadi began sending Syrian and Iraqi ISI members, experienced in guerilla warfare, across the border into Syria to establish an organization inside the country. Led by a Syrian known as Abu Muhammad al-Jawlani, the group began to recruit fighters and establish cells throughout the country. On 23 January 2012, the group announced its formation as Jabhat al-Nusra li Ahl as-Sham—Jabhat ai Nusra—more commonly known as al- Nusra Front. Al-Nusra grew rapidly into a capable fighting force with popular support among Syrian opposition.

In April 2013, al-Baghdadi released an audio statement in which he announced that al-Nusra Front had been established, financed and supported by the Islamic State of Iraq and that the two groups were merging under the name "Islamic State of Iraq and Al-Sham". Al-Jawlani issued a statement denying the merger and complaining that neither he nor anyone else in al-Nusra's leadership had been consulted about it. In June 2013, Al Jazeera reported that it had obtained a letter written by al Qaeda leader Ayman al Zawahiri , addressed to both leaders, in which he ruled against the merger, and appointed an emissary to oversee relations between them to put an end to tensions. In the same month, al-Baghdadi released an audio message rejecting al-Zawahiri's ruling and declaring that the merger was going ahead. In October 2013, al-Zawahiri ordered the disbanding of ISIS, putting al-Nusra Front in charge of jihadist efforts in Syria, but al-Baghdadi contested al-Zawahiri's ruling on the basis of Islamic jurisprudence, and the group continued to operate in Syria. In February 2014, after an eight-month power struggle, al-Qaeda disavowed any relations with ISIS.

According to journalist Sarah Birke, there are "significant differences" between al-Nusra Front and ISIS. While al-Nusra actively calls for the overthrow of the Assad government, ISIS "tends to be more focused on establishing its own rule on conquered territory". ISIS is "far more ruthless" in building an Islamic state, "carrying out sectarian attacks and imposing sharia law immediately". While al-Nusra has a "large contingent of foreign fighters", it is seen as a home-grown group by many Syrians; by contrast, ISIS fighters have been described as "foreign 'occupiers'" by many Syrian refugees. It has a strong presence in central and northern Syria, where it has instituted sharia in a number of towns.

The group reportedly controlled the four border towns of Atmeh, al-Bab, Azaz and Jarablus, allowing it to control the entrance and exit from Syria into Turkey. Foreign fighters in Syria include Russian-speaking jihadists who were part of Jaish al Muhajireen wal- Ansar(JMA). In November 2013, the JMA's ethnic Chechen leader abu Omar al Shishani swore an oath of allegiance to al-Baghdadi; the group then split between those who followed al-Shishani in joining ISIS and those who continued to operate independently in the JMA under a new leadership. In May 2014, al-Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri ordered al-Nusra Front to stop attacks on its rival ISIS. In June 2014, after continued fighting between the two groups, al-Nusra's branch in the Syrian town of al Bukamal pledged allegiance to ISIS.

As Islamic State (2014–present) : On 29 June 2014, ISIS removed "Iraq and the Levant" from its name and began to refer to itself as the Islamic State, declaring the territory under its control a new caliphate and naming Abu Bakr -al Baghdadi as its caliph. On the first night of Ramadan, Shaykh Abu Muhammad al Adnani al Shami, spokesperson for ISIS, described the establishment of the caliphate as "a dream that lives in the depths of every Muslim believer" and "the abandoned obligation of the era". He said that the group's ruling Shura Council had decided to establish the caliphate formally and that Muslims around the world should now pledge their allegiance to the new caliph. The declaration of a caliphate has been criticized and ridiculed by Muslim scholars and rival Islamists inside and outside the occupied territory.

By that time, many moderate rebels had been assimilated into the group. In August 2014, a high-level IS commander said, "In the East of Syria, there is no Free Syrian Army any longer. All Free Syrian Army people [there] have joined the Islamic State". The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights claimed that the Islamic State recruited more than 6,300 fighters in July 2014 alone, many of them coming from the Free Syrian Army.

Analysts observed that dropping the reference to region widened the group's scope, and Laith Alkhouri, a terrorism analyst, thought that after capturing many areas in Syria and Iraq, ISIS felt this was a suitable opportunity to take control of the global jihadist movement. A week before it changed its name to the Islamic State, ISIS had captured the Trabil crossing on the Jordan–Iraq border, the only border crossing between the two countries. ISIS has received some public support in Jordan, albeit limited, partly owing to state repression there, but has undertaken a recruitment drive in Saudi Arabia, where tribes in the north are linked to those in western Iraq and eastern Syria. Raghad Hussein, the daughter of Saddam Hussein, now living in opulent asylum in Jordan, has publicly expressed support for the advance of ISIS in Iraq, reflecting the Ba'athist alliance of convenience with ISIS and its goal of return to power in Bagdad.

In June and July 2014, Jordan and Saudi Arabia moved troops to their borders with Iraq, after Iraq lost control of, or withdrew from, strategic crossing points that had then come under the control of ISIS. There was speculation that al-Maliki had ordered a withdrawal of troops from the Iraq–Saudi crossings, in order "to increase pressure on Saudi Arabia and bring the threat of Isis over-running its borders as well". After the group captured Kurdish-controlled territory and massacred Yazidis, the US launched a humanitarian mission and aerial bombing campaign against ISIS.

In July 2014, Boko Haram leader Abubakar Shekau declared support for the new caliphate and Caliph Ibrahim. In August, Shekau announced that Boko Haram had captured the Nigerian town of Gwoza. Shekau announced: "Thanks be to God who gave victory to our brethren in Gwoza and made it a state among the Islamic states". Boko Haram launched an offensive in Adamawa and Borno States in northeastern Nigeria in September, following the example of the Islamic State. On 12 September 2014, there were reports that the moderate Free Syrian Army rebels, who have been backed by the United States with weapons and training, had signed a "non-aggression" agreement with the Islamic State. However, on 14 September, doubt was cast on whether any Syrian opposition groups had entered into a ceasefire agreement with ISIS.

2.6 Conclusion

Bangladesh cannot afford to be seen as a haven for Islamist fanatics and terrorists. But, at the same time, it is undeniable that Bangladesh, over the past decade, has gone through a fundamental political and social transformation. A new brand of nationalism with an Islamist flavour is gradually replacing secular Bengali nationalism as the basis for Bangladesh's nationhood. Furthermore, intelligence officers, local journalists and Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) have managed to locate several terrorist training camps in the country, mainly in the lawless southeast bordering Myanmar.

Since the general elections in October 2001, Bangladesh has been ruled by a coalition government, which for the first time includes two Ministers from the fundamentalist Jamaat-e-Islami (JeI). The four-party alliance that won the elections is led by the Bangladesh National Party (BNP) and, apart from the JeI, also includes a smaller Islamist party, the Islami Oikyo Jote (IOJ), whose chairman, Azizul Huq, is a member of the advisory council of the Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami (HuJI), Bangladesh's main terrorist group. The IOJ captured two seats in Parliament, but was given no ministerial posts. The fourth member of the alliance, a faction of the Jatiya Party led by Naziur Rahman Manjoor, has no obvious Islamic profile.

While the Jamaat may not be directly behind these attacks, its inclusion in the government has meant that more radical groups feel they now enjoy protection from the authorities and can act with impunity. The HuJI, for example, is reported to have 15,000 members of whom 2,000 are described as hard core. Bangladeshi Hindus and moderate Muslims hold them responsible for many of the recent attacks against religious minorities, secular intellectuals and journalists. Bangladesh is yet far from becoming another Pakistan, Islamist forces are no doubt on the rise, and extremist influence is growing, especially in the countryside.

However, extremist Islamist groups have once again become more blatant in their attacks on the country's minorities and secular forces. The HuJI especially has attracted the attention of security planners in the region. The group was formed in 1992 reportedly with funds from Osama bin Laden. The existence of firm links between the new Bangladeshi militants and the Al Qaeda were first proven when Fazlur Rahman, leader of the "Jihad Movement in Bangladesh" (to which HuJI belongs), signed the official declaration of 'holy war' against the United States on February 23, 1998. HuJI is headed by Shawkat Osman alias Sheikh Farid in Chittagong and, according to the US State Department, has "at least six camps" in Bangladesh.

Bangladeshi human rights organizations openly accuse HuJI of being behind both the death threats against Nasreen and the attempt to kill Rahman. The US State Department notes that HuJI has been accused of stabbing a senior Bangladeshi journalist in November 2000 for making a documentary on the plight of Hindus in Bangladesh, and the July 2000-assassination attempt on the then Premier Sheikh Hasina.

As with the Jamaat and its militant youth organization, the Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS), HuJI's main stronghold is in the lawless southeast, which includes the border with Myanmar. With its fluid population and weak law enforcement, the region has for long been a haven for smugglers, gunrunners, pirates, and ethnic insurgents from across Myanmar's border. The past decade has seen a massive influx of weapons, especially small arms, through the fishing port of Cox's Bazaar, which has made the situation in the southeast even more dangerous and volatile.

In one of the most recent high-profile attacks in the area, Gopal Krishna Muhuri, the 60-year-old principal of Nazirhat College in Chittagong and a leading secular humanist, was killed in November 2001 in his home by four hired assassins, who belonged to a gang patronized by the Jamaat. But in October 2001, the Jamaat emerged as the third largest party in the country and its militant youth organisation, the ICS, became especially bold and active. Like the HuJI, the ICS also draws most of its members from the country's many Deobandi *madrassas* and it also has its own network of international contacts. The ICS is a member of the International Islamic Federation of Student Organisations as well as the World Assembly of Muslim Youth and has close contacts with other radical Muslim groups in Pakistan, the Middle East, Malaysia and Indonesia. At home in Bangladesh, it has been implicated in a number of bombings and politically as well as religiously motivated assassinations.

Jamaat's stand on the 'war against terrorism,' however, contrasts sharply with that of the more established parties. Shortly after the US attacks on Afghanistan began in October 2001, the Jamaat created a fund purportedly for "helping the innocent victims of America's war." According to the Jamaat's own announcements, 12 million taka (\$210,000) was raised before the effort was discontinued in March 2002. Any remaining funds, the Jamaat then said, would go to Afghan refugees in camps in Pakistan.

According to above statement various religious extremism groups gather under common view. They oppose their ideology on general people by using violence. So we can say Religious Extremism is connected with Terrorism.

CHAPTER THREE: RELIGIOUS EXTRIMISM AND TERRORIST ACTIVITIES IN BANGLADESH

3.1 Introduction

Over the last two decades, a number of Islamist groups and terrorist outfits both homegrown and internationally-linked have emerged in the country. Though the number of terrorist attacks by Islamist militants has increased since 1999, various militant groups continued to exist in the country since 1992. Various militant groups have grown over the years enhancing strengths in terms of manpower and skills, and widespread networks to conduct terror campaigns (Datta, 2007; The Daily Star 2005; The New Age xtra, 2009; BIPSS, 2010, 2011; ICM, 2011; Munir, 2011).

On January 27, 2005, Jane's Intelligence Review, the leading defence magazine of the world, reported: "Bangladesh is one of the poorest countries on earth, on the brink of being a failed state, and that makes it a perfect target for al-Qaeda and its ever-expanding network of Islamist extremist organizations. Virtually unnoticed by the world at large, Bangladesh is being dragged into the global war on terrorists by becoming sanctuary for them."

Another report by the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) in December 2003, said that the Bangladesh government is not doing enough to prevent the country from becoming a haven for Islamic terrorists in South Asia and pointed out that religious extremists are connected to Al Qaeda. Blaming the BNP government for not taking appropriate action against the terrorist organizations the report said rather than finding out the real perpetrators of violence the government has been routinely blaming the opposition political party for such criminal activities.

Various factors can be associated with the rise of Islamist militancy and terrorism in Bangladesh (Riaz, 2008; Datta, 2007; BIPSS, 2011; Quamruzzaman, 2011). Most of the reports indicate four major groups – JMB, JMJB, HT and HUIB (Riaz, 2008; BIPSS, 2011; ICM 2011; Munir, 2011). The origins of these groups indicate the existence of such militant groups and networks following the Afghan war (Munir, 2011).

Islamist movement leftwing and ethnic militia movements are all equally important. He argued that that the Islamist movement has a long history and it has been periodically revitalized in the country due to some internal and external socio-political factors. Immediate after the 9/11 US attack, Bangladesh has been presented as a new host of extremism and Talibanization in a number of international media reports of 2002 (the Far Eastern Review, the Hindu, Jane`s Intelligence Review, Time Magazine, and Frontline) and 2005 (New York Times, Asia Times). These articles (Linter, 2002 a, 2002b; 2002 b; Perry, 2002; Habib, 2002 Griswold, 2005; Shahin, 2005) pointed out the links of Bangladeshi militants with international terrorist groups and the use of madrasas (religious schools and colleges).

The Canadian Intelligence Service (CSIS) report 2003 also raises the same concern, and later the US, Australia and other western governments have issued advisory stating Bangladesh`s terrorism threats. These studies and reports, based mostly on journalistic and intelligence sources, has portrayed that religious militancy is a deeply rooted problem of Bangladeshi society (BIPSS, 010; Datta, 2007; ICM, 2011; Riaz, 2008; the Daily Star Web Edition, Vol. 5, num. 447).

Before 2008, Bangladesh did not have any law to address the contemporary most pressing issue of militancy and terrorism. The government has not taken any action against this Islamist militancy until 2005 despite local and international media reports and even political and civil society concerns (Datta, 2007). Banning Islamist groups, campaigning program to make people aware about extremism and militancy, and continual drive against militants are the key measures taken by the past and present government against terrorism. eligious militancy and terrorism is one of the most debatable and under- research topic for Bangladesh. The present study explored the nature and extent of Islamist militant groups and their terrorist activities.

The study also examined the underlying causes and factors of Islamist terrorism, the sources of funding, the tactics and strategies used by the militant groups. The study also looked at the government response to the menace of Islamist militancy and terrorism in Bangladesh. Given the rise, extent and costs of militancy and relevant for policy recommendations to address terrorism, this study is very timely.

3.2 Background

British Period : The colonial period: the growth of Islamic consciousness The reformist movements in both Hinduism and Islam contributed to a consolidation of the distinct religious identities of the two communities. The Hindus in upper India started the Shudhi and Sangathan movements and the Muslims started Tabligh, Tanzeems, Firduasi and Sufis mostly in the Indian sub-continent. In Bengal, the Wahabi, Farzai and Tarika-e-Mohammad movements such as those represented by Titu Mir and Haji Shariatullah helped to give a distinct identity to Bengali Muslims.

These were conservative schools of thought that stressed ‘purist Islam’ and urged the Muslims to give up Sufi practices (Ahmed 1998). At the same time, reform movements in Hindu society also created divergence. The idea of Islam and non-Islam as closed systems with definite boundaries is itself largely a product of these nineteenth and twentieth century reform movements.

For most rural Bengalis during the pre-modern period, the line that separated ‘non-Islam’ from ‘Islam’ appeared to have been quite porous and shifting. Popular literature dating from the seventeenth century, such as the Mymensingh ballads, was popular amongst both communities who remained remarkably open to accepting any sort of religious ideas around agency, human or superhuman, that might assist them in coping with life’s everyday problems (Eaton 1993). Yet in the background, the influences of British policy, and of religious movements, began to create and reinforce ideas of difference between Hindus and Muslims in Bengal.

The colonial government’s mistrust of Muslims after the Sepoy Mutiny as well as the war of independence of 1857 further isolated and marginalized Muslim communities. Feeling deprived and humiliated in their political, economic, and social lives, Muslims countered this situation in two ways. First, they initiated movements of religious reform, and second, they established educational institutions to promote a sense of Islamic identity. Examples of such institutions were Darul Uloom Deoband (established in 1866) and the Muhammedan Anglo-Oriental College (established in 1875 and subsequently developed into the Aligarh Muslim University).

Shaping political and religious frontiers The Partition of Bengal in 1905, and the formation of the Indian Muslim League in 1906 were the two most significant events of a period that could be considered the key moment of increased politico-religious consciousness among Bengali Muslims in British India. As a large and potentially troublesome territory, Bengal province had attracted the attention of the British government during the later half of the nineteenth century.

Early in 1903 Sir Andrew Fraser, governor of Bengal, propounded a scheme in which the idea for the partition of Bengal began to take shape. The main argument was that the territories lying in the eastern section of the province were poorly administered and needed more attention from government. *Amrit Bazar Patrika* wrote on December 14, 1903 that the government wished to weaken the Bengali nation by placing it under two administrations, and 'The Bengali' newspaper described it as a manifestation of the policy of 'divide and rule'. It was at this stage that Muslim politics in Bengal took a new turn. Nawab Salimullah emerged as a leader of the Muslim community, especially of East Bengal. He supported the Partition scheme (1905) and organized a movement in its favour. On the other side, Lord Curzon himself toured East Bengal in February 1904 and addressed public meetings at Chittagong, Dhaka and Mymensingh.

Speaking at Dhaka on February 18, 1904, he declared: 'Partition would make Dhaka the centre and possibly the capital of a new self sufficing administration which must give to the people of these districts by reason of their numerical strength and their superior culture the preponderating voice in the province so created, which would invest the Mohammedans in eastern Bengal with a unity which they have since the days of the old Musalmaan Vice-Roy and kings'.

From this it was clear that the British were going to show special favours to the Muslims of East Bengal by creating a new Muslim majority province. Later, while many Muslims of Bengal supported the Pakistan cause, there was apprehension. A.K. Fazlul Haq called for more than one state for the Muslims of India, thereby securing Bengali Muslims rights and interests in Bengal (Ayoob, 1975, p.2-3). It was the 'two-nation theory', which Fazlul Haque was made to present and was known as the Lahore Resolution of 1940 of All India Muslim League.

The Lahore Resolution gave the Bangladesh people a concrete framework or a base in which they developed the idea for a separate Muslim state for East Bengalis. However, his 'two nations' were based on the Pakistan proposal, which had originally been plural in nature - and hence the term 'states' has been used rather than 'state'. Later, this idea was not pursued strongly and by 1946, it was accepted as a mere grammatical error.

In fact, this resolution was moved as a tool to attain the dream of an independent Muslim state by the All-India Muslim League (AIML) leadership in 1940. They had carefully mobilized the Bengali Muslim leaders for the self-reliance of the Bengali Muslims, and extended their political support to the Fazlul Haque government to cultivate their rural mass base. When the Indian National Congress (INC) withdrew their support, the Muslim League extended legislative support to the most popular leader of rural Bengal, Fazlul Haque to make a uniform Muslim movement for one state.

In fact, Jinnah had little support from rural Bengali Muslims, except from a few Calcutta-based Urdu-speaking Muslim leaders such as Nazimuddin and Ispahani (Sen, 1976, p.32-33). Later, H. S. Suhrawardy was to also play a critical role in the Direct Action Day for Pakistan. After riots took place in Noakhali and Calcutta, differences between Hindus and Muslims widened.

As a result, the Bengali Hindu community began to strongly oppose the idea of a united Bengal that had been raised at the last minute of Partition of India by some leaders.¹⁶ Congress supported the division of Bengal in 1947, exactly on the grounds on which it had opposed its division earlier. Politically, the idea of United Bengal was an appealing one to some Muslim leaders, but the attainment of economic progress was a dominant concern of the Muslim peasant class of Bengal. One can argue that besides their economic status, the Muslims of Bengal were essentially provincialists, rather than nationalists or separatists.¹

The Bengali Muslims were neither apprehensive of capturing political power in a democratic set up at the provincial level (being 55 per cent), nor did they fear Hindu domination in politics as did the pre-partition Urdu-speaking Muslim leadership.

Finally, they enthusiastically supported the Two Nation Theory (TNT) based on Muslim nationalism in 1947. Hence, in the partition of Bengal, economic factors were the main drivers in the political and religious mobilization of the Muslims. Islamic nationalists forces were always present to some extent in Bengal. This fact could be analysed from the partition of Bengal in 1905 and the partition of India in 1947. A section of Bengali Muslims regarded the annulment of Partition in 1911 as a victory of Hindu dominance over Bengali Muslims.

The same section of East Bengal was later to support the idea of Pakistan. In fact, the emergence of Bangladesh on December 16, 1971 was the culmination of Bengali nationalist struggle, launched in early twentieth century, to establish a separate identity. This was an identity not only distinct from the Hindu majority of the province, but also distinct from their co-religionists in other regions of India (Haston 1994). Some scholars argue that this Bengali Muslim consciousness has roots as far back as the thirteenth century, with the conquest of Mohammad Bakthiyar (Osmany 1992).

Many scholars believe that there were always fundamental cultural, religious dissimilarities between the two civilizations of India, Hindu and Muslim, even in Bengal (Sayed 1960). Nevertheless, it is clear from the study of Bengal that economic factors had conditioned a far more differentiated set of secular, cultural-linguistic, and religious identities among East Bengalis than was found in other parts of the Subcontinent.

Some reformers of this period emphasized the performance of Islamic rituals and religious education while others tried to adapt the Muslim community to the changing situation through modern education. In either case, Islamic reform remained a central issue until the partition of India in 1947 and movements of reform transcended the traditional boundaries of class, ethnicity, and language.

Educational reform movements were mostly centered in the urban areas, but the religious reform movements spread mostly in the rural areas. Prominent among the religious reform movements were Farai'di, Tayuni, and Tariqa-i-Muhammadiyya. The Farai'di and Tayuni movements were exclusively puritanical in nature, but the Tariqa-i-Muhammadiyya was radical and militant in nature. Another movement similar to the latter was the Ahle Hadith movement.

The adherents of the Tariqa-i-Muhammadiyya and Ahle Hadith movements were also loosely known as the Wahhabis in India (the Deobandis were also branded by some Islamic scholars as Wahhabis). However, it has been argued that there was no apparent relationship between the Wahhabism of Arabia and so-called Wahhabism in India. The basic difference between the Wahhabism of Arabia and Tariqa-i-Muhammadiyya was that the Arabian Wahhabis did not believe in the special power of the Sufis, whereas most of the prominent leaders of Tariqa-i-Muhammadiyya were followers of the Naqshbandiyya, Qadiriyya, and Chishtiyya Sufi orders. In addition, the Wahhabis of Arabia followed the Hanbali school, but the Tariqa-i-Muhammadiyya and Ahle Hadith did not recognize the authority of any single school of law.

The only meaningful similarity among all these groups was that they denied the authority of taqlid (acceptance of traditional interpretation of a single school of Islamic law). Among these reform movements, the Fara'idi and Tayuni were the most active in East Bengal. After the demise of these movements, another movement known as Tablighi Jamaat arrived on the scene in the 1920s.

This movement, which also aimed at purifying Islamic practices, was created as a response to the aggressive campaign of the Hindu Arya Samaj. Bangladesh has the largest organization of Tablighi Jamaat in the Muslim world and its annual iztama (congregation) is the second largest gathering after the annual hajj (pilgrimage) in Mecca. These revivalist movements deepened Islamic consciousness and shaped present-day Bengali Muslim customs and institutions.

During the independence movement against the British colonial rule in the early 1940s, the quest for a separate political identity of Bengal Muslims gained momentum. India was divided into two independent states in 1947. The basis of this separation was the Muslim's desire for a separate political identity; the Muslims of India saw themselves as a separate nation with a distinct cultural and religious heritage.

This theory was popularly known as the "Two Nations Theory" and was propagated by Muhammad Ali Jinnah, one of the founding fathers of Pakistan. The problem with this doctrine was that it defined Islamic identity in the context of communal tensions. Furthermore, it was grounded in British policies that polarized the distinction between Muslims and Hindus and popularized the idea of an India with a Hindu majority and a Muslim minority. The Two Nations theory became the basis of political identity in all the Muslim communities of India, including Bengal. Eventually, East Bengal became a part of Pakistan in 1947.

Pakistan Period: Sindh at one time had a very sizeable Hindu population; however, at the time of partition large numbers migrated to the Indian side of the border. The partition of India in August 1947 resulted in genocidal campaigns against religious minorities, with the Hindus in Pakistan suffering most. In addition to the genocide, several million Hindus were forced to become refugees. Those who decided to stay behind in Pakistan after partition had to face constitutional limitations and social stigma.

One of the country's principal and primary constitutional documents, the Objective Resolution of March 1949 makes provision for non-Muslims to freely profess and practice their religion, and this tolerant spirit is reflected in the provisions of the 1956, 1962 and the 1973 constitutions. However, despite the presence of these constitutional guarantees, the Hindu community both prior to and even after 1971 has been a continual target of suspicion and has often been treated as a fifth column. Political expediency has allowed Hindus to be treated as scapegoats for the general incompetence of governments in power.

While Islam has been used as the great rallying force for political ends, conversely, and for the same purposes, Hindus have been treated as anti-state and anti-Islamic elements, discriminated against and persecuted, arguably becoming victims of genocide during the secessionist war of 1971. Hindus generally lack equal access to education, employment and social advancement.

Conflicts soon began between the two wings of Pakistan as the ruling elites of West Pakistan undermined the ethno-linguistic nature of Bengal's culture. Later, a separate Bengali nationalism emerged, centering mostly on the secular language issue.

During the period between 1948 and 1970, ethnicity and language subsumed religion in Bengali nationalism. Bangladesh emerged as an independent country in 1971 based on ethno-linguistic and socio-political issues.

THE RISE OF ISLAMIC EXTREMISM IN BANGLADESH

The policies and programmes of Fazlul Haq within undivided India, and later those of H.S. Suhrawardy, Maulana Bhashani, Mujibur Rahman and Ziaur Rahman, each played a decisive role in the evolution of Bengali Muslim politics. The origins of the idea of Bangladesh lay in successive identity-related conflicts. The first of these conflicts, associated with religious identities, first led to East Bengal's separation from the body politic of India and from West Bengal within Pakistan. The second conflict, associated with East Pakistan's political, linguistic and cultural identity, culminated in the subsequent division of Pakistan in 1971 and the creation of Bangladesh.

1971-1975 : The disappearance of the 'second colonial rulers', that had attempted to weld the disparate communities of Pakistan into a nation, showed the importance of primordial cultural linguistic identities. Mujib went on to shape the new nation on the basis of his 'four pillars' - democracy, socialism, secularism and Bengali nationalism - the basic principles of the freedom struggle of Bangladesh.

By contrast, the narrower policy perspectives of the anti-Mujib leaders such as Maulana Bhasani and General Ziaur Rahman (who seized power in a coup in 1975) emphasized a different kind of nationalism that had Islam its core. Bhasani's policies were based on ideas of 'Islamic socialism', and in one of his meetings he declared that he would 'trample the Constitution underfoot, if it is not based on the Quran and the practices of the Prophet' (Chakravarty 1995). Contrary to Mujib's policies of secularism, he advocated a narrower form of communalism' based on an anti-Hindu ethos that was closer to that found in the idea of Pakistan. He criticized Mujib for making Bangladesh into a satellite of Hindu India, attempting to forge a united front between extremists of right and left against the forces of secularism. The debate on state and religion became an issue when the 1972 Constitution of Bangladesh stated that secularism was the fourth pillar of state policy.

The idea of making secularism part of state policy followed logically from the freedom struggle in which Bengalis sought to establish a democratic country based on secular values. The essential strength of a secular society is that it reduces the significance of primordial factors such as religion, ethnicity, and caste within national identity construction, influencing political choice and delineating economic opportunities. Elevation of any such primordial factor to a significance that constrains opportunities or incites violence is inimical to the construction of a secular society. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman defined secularism in a distinctive way.

For him secularism neither implied the absence of religion, nor any repudiation of Islam. He argued that it was a way to protect people against the influence of Islamic extremists. In Pakistan, religion had been used as a tool to establish and sustain dictatorship for more than a decade, and this was very well understood by the AL leadership. The repudiation of secularism by the Pakistani state inspired a culture of exclusion that eroded democratic values and arguably culminated in the genocide of 1971.

Under Bangladesh's Constitution, Article prohibited politics based on religion. Under this provision, religious parties such as Jamaat-e-Islam were banned. The aim was to build a society based on national and public welfare that would negate communalism as a political force. Mujib believed that the religious ideology of Islam could be retained within a spirit of secularism.

In order to publicize this, he re-instated the old practice of daily recitals from holy books of different religions on national radio and television. The idea was that Mujib's rule would be based on 'multitheocracy' (Maniruzzaman 1990). All this created an era of religious and cultural disagreement amongst different religious 'stakeholders'. The idea of setting up a new cooperative farming system upset rich rural cultivators, and the creation of the Rakhi Bahini, a paramilitary force between the government and army, displeased the Armed Forces. Mujib's authoritarianism during the later years of his rule, such as the abolition of civil liberties and the introduction of a new one-party system, also undermined liberal democrats in the country.

1975-1982 : The new nation then became plunged into a period of multiple coups that were to lead on to a decade and a half of military dictatorship. The anticolonial nationalistic hegemony faded, and General Zia's military regime began to consolidate state power by harping back to issues of religion. General Ziaur Rahman, in the process of consolidating his political power base, took the steps that began to transform Bengali culture and polity along more communal lines. Religious politics took shape in Bangladesh, with the amendment of Article of the Constitution.

The word 'secularism' was deleted, and a new provision incorporated 'to place full Faith in Almighty Allah', by amending article 8 (1) of the Constitution. It had also introduced the words 'Bismillahir Rahamnur Rahim' at the top of the preamble. The 'struggle for national Liberation' was replaced by the 'war for national Independence' (Constitution of Bangladesh).

Socialism was redesigned to conform to the Islamic idea of social justice. A new clause was added to Article 25(2) relating to 'Islamic solidarity', which allowed the cultivation of fraternal relations among Muslim countries. These changes were aimed at downplaying the role of Mujib and the Awami League in securing Independence. (Constitution of Bangladesh)

The military regime therefore rejected linguistic nationalism in favour of a territorial Islamic nationalism. This attempted to forge a new national identity for the people of Bangladesh by making a clearer distinction between the Bengalis of India's West Bengal, and those in Bangladesh. From this point, the citizens of Bangladesh were described as 'Bangladeshis' (Article 6). This brand of Bangladeshi nationalism was also constructed by the regime primarily to divert attention from the government's failure to deliver meaningful change. The process of Islamisation served the purpose of trying to avert a legitimacy crisis in the face of a weakening economy and persistence of mass poverty.

While there is no doubt that Islam was used politically by these leaders, the critical issue is to understand how deeply this 'Islamisation' process has in fact gone. One of its effects was the attempt to rehabilitate a number of prominent 'collaborators' accused in 1971 of involvement in the killing of intellectuals and other civilians. Indeed, a majority of these collaborators had come from the religious political parties.

They began using every religious occasion to chastise Bangladesh's liberals and secularists for abandoning Islam and the Prophet and accepting Hindu Bengali Rabindronath Tagore as a cultural figurehead. By invoking these slogans, the right-wing establishment succeeded in transferring its communalism into the Bangladeshi brand of nationalism. On the basis of an anti-Mujib ideology, the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) was founded in 1978.

A new era of the relationship with Middle Eastern Muslim countries also developed during the military regime. This new diplomatic relationship opened up new opportunities for employment for Bangladeshi workers in Middle Eastern countries, especially in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf countries. These workers later brought Wahhabi ideology back home from Arabia and created a social ground and support base for future fundamentalists in the country

1982- 1990: Similarly, the second military regime, General H M. Ershad continued his predecessor's policy with enthusiasm. Indeed, he went one step further by declaring 'Islam as state religion' of Bangladesh by amending the Constitution. The Bangladesh masses had struggled against an Islamic brand of nationalism in 1971 to secure a Bengali cultural-linguistic identity, but the subsequent military regimes gradually helped bring an Islamic identity into Bangladeshi politics

To create an aura of political legitimacy as well as to win support from the oil-rich Middle Eastern Muslim countries, military regimes rehabilitated and eventually collaborated with Islamic political organizations, some of which were radical and fundamentalist in nature. As Tazeen Murshid has observed, "Religion and politics do not necessarily come together only when political institutions are weak, but also when dominant authoritarian regimes feel threatened." Both military regimes tried to overcome their legitimacy crises by manipulating the political issue of Islamic identity.

In this way, the military regimes not only created the opportunity for the Islamists to be a part of mainstream politics in Bangladesh, but they also made Islamization an agenda of the state and Islam the de facto state ideology. Subsequent democratic governments could not overcome the religious ideology created by the military regimes.

During the anti-military period of the 1980s, the two major political parties, the Bangladesh Awami League (AL) and the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), continued to maintain tactical relationships with fundamentalist political organizations. The competition over "Who is more Islamic?", which started during the military era, still continues among the political parties of Bangladesh today.

THE RISE AND ESTABLISHMENT OF ISLAMIC MILITANCY IN THE 1990s

1990-2014: After the demise of the second military regime by a mass upsurge organized by the Awami League, the Bangladesh Nationalist Party, and their alliances in December 1990, Bangladesh experienced a major turning point toward militant fundamentalism in its political climate. Militant Islamic fundamentalists in Bangladesh are intolerant of other belief systems, Islamically supremacist in their political orientation, and rigidly literalistic in their scriptural orientation. Without considering the historical context of Islam, they follow a literal interpretation

of the Qur'an and declare jihad against those who are against them. As befits a political ideology, their doctrines are framed in simplistic terms. In an interview with National Public Radio, Vincent Cornell termed this approach "radical superficiality."¹¹ In this section, I shall discuss two of the most prominent militant fundamentalist organizations, the HUIJIB and JMB, in detail and their links with the two major political parties and with international Islamic organizations. Special attention will be paid to their relationship with the BNP-led four party alliances between the period of 2001 and 2006, their sources of funds, and their relations with private Islamic madrasas.

In the general election of 1991, the Awami League won 88 seats, the Bangladesh Nationalist Party won 140 seats, the Jama'at-i-Islami (JI) won 18 seats, and the Jatiya Party (JP) won 35 seats in the Parliament, which is comprised of 300 general seats. To form a government, a party or a coalition of parties must possess 151 seats in the Parliament. Since none of the parties secured a majority in the 1991 election, the JI became the kingmaker by extending its support to the BNP to form a government. Thus, the JI not only demonstrated its strength in forming a government, but also created an opportunity and support base for the proliferation of militant fundamentalist political organizations in Bangladesh in the near future.

In the general election of 1996, the AL won 146 seats, the BNP 116 seats, the JI 3 seats, and the JP 32 seats. The AL formed the government with the support of the ousted General Ershad's JP, against whom the AL fought to restore democracy for almost a decade between 1982 and 1990. Later the JP withdrew its support from the government and joined the four-party alliance led by the BNP. Other members of the alliance were the JI and Islami Oikya Jote (the United Islamic Front) or IOJ, which was an umbrella front of different smaller religious organizations. Some of its member organizations were militant in nature. During the 2001 general election, the AL won 62 seats, and the BNP-led four-party alliance won 230 seats, of which the BNP had 193 seats, the JI had 17 seats, the JP and its fraction had 18 seats, and the IOJ had 2 seats. The BNP awarded two ministries to the JI when it formed the government. During the BNP-led four-party alliance government, Bangladesh experienced a prolific rise of militant fundamentalist Islamic organizations.

The two of the militant fundamentalist organizations of this period that shocked the country the most were the HUIJIB and the JMB. The Pakistani HUIJI had first appeared in the early 1980s as a group of supporters of the Afghan resistance against Soviet aggression, known as Jama'atul Ansar

(Group of the Helpers). With the support of Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence Agency (ISI), the group renamed itself as Harkatul Jihad al-Islam (The Movement for the Islamic Jihad) in 1988. In the 1990s it expanded its operations beyond Afghanistan, especially in support of the struggle of Muslims in non-Muslim countries.

Shafiqur Rahman, an Afghan war veteran, founded the Harkatul Jihad al-Islami Bangladesh in 1992. He gathered a group of militants who had participated in the anti-Soviet war in Afghanistan in order to struggle for a Shari'a-based Islamic regime in Bangladesh. The organization officially declared its existence at a press conference at the National Press Club in Dhaka on April 30, 1992.

However, it first drew serious attention when a group of armed militants of HUIJIB attempted to kill one of the leading secularist poets of the country, Shamsur Rahman, on January 18, 1999. On July 20, 2000 HUIJIB militants attempted to kill the then Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina by planting a bomb at a venue where she was scheduled to visit.

On April 14, 2001 HUIJIB militants detonated bombs at a cultural program celebrating the Bengali New Year in Dhaka. On May 21, 2004 HUIJIB activists threw bombs at the Bangladesh-born British High Commissioner to Bangladesh, Anwar Chowdhury, while he was visiting the shrine of the Sufi Shaykh Hazrat Shah Jalal in the Sylhet district; the High Commissioner barely escaped from this attack. On August 21, 2004, bombs were thrown at the rally of the party of opposition (the AL) in the parliament in Dhaka, targeting the leader of the opposition and former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. Sheikh Hasina narrowly escaped this attack.

During this period, there were several reports that the BNP and Jama'at-i-Islami-led four-party alliance government patronized the HUIJIB and its leaders. Earlier on, the HUIJIB established several madrasas in Chittagong and in the Cox's Bazaar districts of southeastern part of Bangladesh. Some of these madrasas were reportedly used as bases for terrorist training. HUIJIB also established a relationship with the Rohingya refugees.

These are Muslim refugees from the Arakan region of Myanmar that entered Bangladesh in 1977 and again in 1991 to escape forced labor, rape, religious persecution, torture, and humiliation at the hands of Myanmar's military junta. Especially close ties were formed with the Rohingya Solidarity

Organization (RSO). Today, HUIJIB provides training for RSO activists.¹⁵ In addition to Afghanistan and Pakistan, HUIJIB also maintains connections with Islamic militants in Chechnya and Southeast Asia. The relationship among these organizations is far more than tactical; it is driven by the ideological position of the HUIJIB—to initiate a struggle for Muslim rights in non-Muslim countries.

After the incarceration of HUIJIB militants in the southeastern district of Cox's Bazaar and the subsequent discovery of some of its bases by the law-enforcement agencies, HUIJIB moved its remaining bases to the northwestern part of the country.

To confuse the law-enforcement agencies, it changed its organizational name to names such as Qital fi Sabilillah (Fighting in the Way of God) and al-Jama'atul Jihad (Jihad Group) several times. Some observers have also speculated that HUIJIB activists had also worked undercover with Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB). The HUIJIB is comprised of military (jihad) and non-military wings; members of the military or jihad wings are responsible for providing training as well as carrying out terrorist activities.

On the other hand, members of the non-military wings are responsible for motivating people to become members of the organization and create a support base through publication and other means. It is claimed that HUIJIB has about 15,000 members. According to a report of the US State Department's counterterrorism wing, HUIJIB was engaged in planning and preparations for possible future acts of terrorism, and intended to carry out such acts against US targets.

The report states that the leader of the HUIJIB signed the February 1998 fatwa by Usama bin Laden that declared American civilians to be legitimate targets for attack. Since then, HUIJIB has been implicated in a number of terrorist attacks in Bangladesh and abroad. Executive Order 13224, signed by the US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, criminalizes the provision of material support to HUIJIB by US citizens or people living under US jurisdictions, and freezes all HUIJIB properties and interests in the US and in areas under US jurisdiction. In addition, the government of Bangladesh banned HUIJIB on October 17, 2005.

A former member of Jama'at-i- Islami, Shaykh Abdur Rahman, and Dr. Asadullah al- Ghalib, a professor at Rajshahi University of Bangladesh and the founder of Ahle Hadith Andolon Bangladesh (The Ahle Hadith [People of Hadith] Movement of Bangladesh, AHAB), founded Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) in 1998. AHAB, out of which the JMB was developed, is different from the Ahle Hadith movement of nineteenth century India, which was not a political organization. Also, although AHAB declares itself a Salafi organization apparent connection existed between Arab Salafi movements and the AHAB.

However, one of the founders of the JMB, Shaykh Abdur Rahman, studied at Medina University and previously worked at the Saudi embassy in Bangladesh. Thus, he may have been influenced by Wahhabi ideology. JMB's initial areas of operation were the northern and northwestern regions of Bangladesh. Later it expanded its area of operation to other parts of the country. Its supreme decision-making body was known as the Majlis-e-Shura (Consultative Council), comprised of seven members. Its membership was divided into three categories: the leadership, the ehsar (fulltime activists), and the gayeri ehsar (part-time activists).

It claimed to have had training center of the 64 districts of the country, with 20,000 active members. The primary goal of this organization was to replace the "evil and corrupted" secular political system of Bangladesh with a shari'a-based Islamic system. In order to achieve this goal, JMB called for the unity of all Islamic forces in the country. Like HUIJIB, the JMB also had a military or armed wing known as Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh (the Awakened Muslim Masses of Bangladesh or JMJB), headed by Siddiqui Islam alias Bangla Bhai (Brother Bangla), who was reportedly trained in Afghanistan. Since the time it was formed, the JMB drew everyone's attention for its armed and violent activities. In 2004, with the support of a BNP minister and local police administration, it launched a combing operation in three northwestern districts to eliminate underground Marxist organizations. Between April and May of the same year, the JMJB group abducted and killed at least 22 people. On August 17, 2005, its activists detonated 459 bombs in 63 of the 64 districts of the country. (Riaz 2008, 120)

Its activists killed two Senior Assistant Judges in the Jhalakati district on November 14, 2005. On November 29, 2005, two JMJB suicide-bombers blew themselves up at the court houses in the Gazipur and Chittagong districts. This attack killed 9 people, including two lawyers and one policeman.

On August 17, the JMB left a pamphlet in several places addressed to the people of Bangladesh, the government of Bangladesh, judges, civil servants, armed and paramilitary forces and Muslims all over the world. It stated that willful sinners had composed the Constitution of Bangladesh. The Constitution is a challenge against the rule of Allah. In its view, the rulers of Bangladesh opposed Allah because the procedure of selection of the President and other functionaries of the state is un-Islamic. It called upon the people of Bangladesh to reject the judicial system that follows “taghut law” (tyrannical, i.e., secular law) in order to promote the implementation of Islamic law.

Instead, it encouraged everybody to go to the ulama (clerics) for justice and to settle disputes. It asked the members of the Parliament to refrain from calling general strikes, and to implement Islamic law and an Islamic “hukumat” (regime) in the country. It further stated that those who are trying to give democracy an institutional form are enemies of Islam. It asked government employees, bureaucrats, and judges to work for establishing Islamic hukumat, or otherwise to quit their jobs. At the same time, it asked the military, paramilitary, and other law enforcement agencies to help implement God’s law, to join the soldiers of God, and to refrain from taking up arms against them.

It stated that U.S. President George W. Bush is the greatest terrorist in the world for attacking innocent Muslims to make them lose their faith. The pamphlet appealed to Muslims to overthrow the secular rulers and establish Islamic governments in Muslim countries by armed jihad. It also appealed to Muslims to boycott the United Nations and make a separate United Nations comprised only of Islamic countries. It warned President Bush and British Prime Minister Tony Blair to refrain from invading Muslim countries; if they did not stop torturing and humiliating Muslims, their security would also be in jeopardy. Finally, it warned anti-Islamic NGOs to refrain from Islam-destroying activities. Because of extensive media coverage and international pressure, the government banned both the JMB and its military wing on February 23, 2005. Shaykh Abdur Rahman and Bangla Bhai, along with five other JMB activists were arrested, tried, and finally executed on March 30, 2007.

During the rule of the BNP-led four-party alliance between 2001 and 2006, militant Islamic groups such as the HUIB and JMB received significant material and moral support from Islamists within the alliance. Despite media reports on the terrorist activities of HUIB and JMB, the government

denied not only such activities, but even the existence of such organizations. The Jama'at-i-Islami's inclusion in the alliance is especially perceived to have emboldened the extremists, who were protected from harassment by the authorities. For example, the Ameer of the JI, Maulana Motiur Rahman Nizami stated several times that Bangla Bhai was the creation of the media.

On September 11, 2005, the JI lawmaker Riasat Ali Biswas said in Parliament, "Reports of militant training of Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) and Harkatul Jihad to turn Bangladesh into an Islamic state is nothing but propaganda." Forty-one armed men of HUIJIB, who had been arrested in the Cox's Bazaar district in 1996 were later sentenced to life April 9, 2008 imprisonment, were released on bail after the alliance government came to power.

Some HUIJIB leaders were also leaders of the BNP-led four-party alliance. Prominent among them were IOJ leader Shaikhul Hadith Allama Azizul Haq, Bangladesh Khelafat Majlish (Bangladesh Caliphate Council) second-in-command Muhammad Habibur Rahman, Aatur Rahman Khan, Sultan Jaok, Abdul Mannan, and Habibullah. In this regard, Ali Riaz has noted, "The presence of the Islamists in government has not only helped the militants to operate freely but limited the ability of the government to act decisively." It is also believed that the Jama'at-i-Islami was linked with the HUIJIB and the JMB. Most of the top JMB leaders were former members of either JI or its student wing. However, even the Awami League was not averse to maintain a strategic relationship with Islamic militant organizations either.

It nominated six Islamists to contest the parliamentary election scheduled to be held in 2007. These included the Afghan war veterans Mufti Shahidul Islam of Narail and Muhammad Habibur Rahman of Sylhet. Habibur Rahman had visited Taliban militant camps and met Osama bin Laden in 1988 and later declared a bounty on the head of the feminist writer Taslima Nasreen.

Some foreign Islamic charitable organizations also provided financial supports to militant organizations including HUIJIB and JMB, in addition to their support of Islamic NGOs in Bangladesh. Charitable organizations such as the Jeddah-based International Islamic Relief Organization and the Kuwait-based Revival of Islamic Heritage Society provided funds to JMB.

The JMB also received funds from the Saudi-based NGO, Hayatul Ighatha. The South Africa- based Servants of Suffering Humanity and its operatives were reportedly involved with the HUIJIB. The Saudi-based Muslim World League (Rabita al-Alam al-Islami) is widely known to provide financial support for the JI. The police arrested seven foreign citizens of the Saudi- based al-Haramayne Foundation (AHF) in September 2002 for their alleged involvement with terrorist operatives, especially of the HUIJIB.

The arrested ideologue of JMB, Dr. Asadullah al- Ghalib, confessed during interrogation that he received more than four million dollars every year from the Middle East, especially from the Revival of Islamic Heritage Society of Kuwait. He has also been reported that some militant organizations in the country have been running successful businesses, such as shrimp farms and cold storage businesses, leading them to become financially independent. Reportedly, they earned up to \$185 million per year from these business investments. Militant organizations also receive private donations from home and abroad.

Madrashas Education and Religious Extremism : The al-Haramayne Foundation (AHF) reportedly spent approximately \$40 million for the construction of 80 madrasas and 4 orphanages in Bangladesh between 1992 and 2004. When it was closed down in July 2004, the AHF had been operating in 38 districts and had a five-year grant of \$3 million to Bangladesh in the pipeline. Some of these madrasas and orphanages were being used to provide training for JMB militants in the manufacture and use of bombs.

Quoting intelligence sources, The Daily Star, the Bangladeshi English daily, reported on August 22, 2005 that militants received funds for madrasas from the UAE-based welfare organizations al-Fuzaira and Khairul Ansar al-Khairia, the Kuwait-based Doulatul Kuwait, and the Bahrain-based Doulatul Bahrain. The same daily reported that one arrested confessed to the police that he had distributed approximately \$300,000 among 421 madrasas to train activists of HUIJIB.

He received this sum from a Pakistani citizen named Muhammed Sajid. Other militants said that Osama bin Laden had sponsored them to develop a madrasa infrastructure. However, most of the Islamic charity organizations placed education at the top of their agenda and were involved in setting up Salafi-oriented madrasas in various parts of the country. There are two major categories

of madrasas in Bangladesh: the government controlled 'Alia madrasa system, and the independently run Qwami or Deobandi madrasa system. Unlike the degrees awarded by the 'Alia madrasas, the degrees awarded by the Qwami madrasas are not recognized by the government; thus, the graduates of these madrasas never get any jobs in the formal sectors. These madrasas follow the curriculum known as Dars-e-Nizami, introduced by Nizamuddin Sihalvi (d. 1747), a respected Islamic scholar of Lucknow, India.

It is estimated that there are as many as 10,000 Qwami madrasas imparting Islamic education to 100,000 students; however, these figures could be much higher. These madrasas are supported by religious endowments and private donations.

All the Deobandi or Qwami madrasas in Bangladesh and elsewhere in South Asia follow this curriculum. It consists of twenty subjects of two categories: al-ulum an-naqliya (transmitted sciences), and al-ulum al-aqliya (rational sciences), which covers grammar, rhetoric, prosody, logic, philosophy, Arabic literature, medicine, mathematics, polemics, life of the Prophet, jurisprudence, Islamic law, Hadith, and exegesis of the Qur'an. It uses books written in the eleventh and fourteenth centuries CE. At present, there is no specific data available for the number of Qwami madrasas in Bangladesh or the students therein.

Most of their students come from poor families with rural backgrounds who cannot afford to send their children to modern schools. The newly founded and foreign-funded Qwami madrasas, popularly known as Ahle Hadith or Wahhabi madrasas, are believed to be the breeding ground of militant and terrorist activities. It is reported that there are as many as 700 Qwami madras in Bangladesh controlled by the Ahle Hadith organization and run by the financial support of the Hayatul Ighatha and Revival of Islamic Heritage Society.³⁸ It is alleged that these madrasas have been providing their students guerrilla training to realize their dream of establishing an Islamic state in Bangladesh. There may have been as many as 233 Qwami madrasas across the country where such training took place. Thus it is revealed that not all madrasas, but only a small portion of Qwami madrasas run by the Ahle Hadith, provide shelter and training to the militants.

Prompted by the pressure of public perception as well as international concern, the extremist elements faced their first pressure under the Caretaker Government (CTG) of Fakhruddin Ahmed. By early 2007, six prominent leaders of JMB and JMJB had been arrested, tried and executed. The Awami League-led Grand Alliance government, upon assuming office in January 2009, continued the momentum started by the CTG and adopted a proactive approach to curbing terrorism.

The adoption of the Anti-Terrorism Act and the Money Laundering Prevention Act in 2009 and the formation of ‘The National Committee on Militancy Resistance and Prevention’ and ‘The National Committee for Intelligence Coordination’ have built a strong multi-faceted resistance to extremism and portrayed Bangladesh’s concerted efforts against terrorism to national and international observers. It is imperative that a comprehensive national strategy be adopted that would act as a holistic intra-governmental blueprint for countering terrorism with the plenary endorsement of civil, community and military constituents.

Clash Between Religious Extremism and Atheism: The recent developments in Bangladesh suggest an alarming and simultaneous rise of religious fanaticism and atheism, complicating the already volatile political scenario of the country. In the last four weeks, Bangladesh witnessed the killing of a writer dubbed as atheist by the fundamentalists, conviction of five Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen-Bangladesh (JMB) militants and arrest of eight suspected Islamic terrorists. Many in Bangladesh find the current trend both disturbing and confusing. Dhaka’s intelligentsia is particularly concerned over the turn of events in which two extreme groups of young people are confronting each other: political Islamists opposing the present secular-democratic dispensation and the atheists who like to be called “progressives” but appear intolerant towards “anyone who believes in god”.

This peculiar phenomenon has been developing in the country for two years or so. On February 26, Avijit Roy, a Bangladesh-born US blogger and writer, was ruthlessly murdered near Dhaka University (DU) by suspected Islamists who accused him of propagating atheism in a predominantly Muslim country. Roy had received numerous threats from the fundamentalists during the last one year for his writings. Such threats had gone up after the release of his two books at the Ekushe Book Fair dealing with certain issues which are considered sensitive in a Muslim society.

Several young Bangladeshis proud of their rich Bengali heritage and the glorious Liberation War have not found the aggressive approach and content of radical writings too inspiring. They strongly condemn the gruesome murder and support Roy's freedom of expression, even though they may not be in conformity with the writer's thoughts.

Roy was the fourth writer and blogger attacked for allegedly spreading atheism. In 2004, Dhaka University professor and renowned writer, Humayun Azad, was assaulted by the Islamists. In 2013, two more bloggers came under violent attacks for similar reasons. The repeated attacks on bloggers and liberal thinkers sparked countrywide protests by the secular nationalist groups demanding immediate ban on all fundamentalist organizations.

The religious extremist forces staged counter-rallies clamouring for public execution of atheist bloggers and introduction of stringent laws, including Pakistan-type anti-blasphemy act, to curb writings critical of Islam. In early 2013, a radical Islamic outfit named Hefazat-e-Islam had sprung up from madrassas; it prepared a list of 84 bloggers identifying them as atheists and blasphemous. In its bid to pacify the Islamists, the Awami League (AL) government promptly ordered arrest of seven bloggers and removed controversial sites from the internet. The Islamic hardliners claim that most of the blogs were filled with obscene language. They vowed to punish those who had been spearheading slanderous campaign against Islam and its prophet.

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3.3. Number of Terrorist Groups

Our study explored 70 names of organizations that are either reported in different sources as militant or terrorist outfits (Table 3.3.1 and Table 3.3.2). The number varies across sources – official, political party, research studies, and newspapers. Although some key informant interviewees mentioned the political parties like JIB and IOJ and student wings like ICS as militant organization, this study excluded those. It is very difficult to estimate the exact number of terrorist groups who are active in Bangladesh. This is difficult because of numerous definition of terrorism as we discussed earlier.

According to key informant interviews, it is very difficult to estimate the exact number of terrorist groups in Bangladesh and they argued that there must be an agreement regarding the definition of terrorism. During his interview, one respondent mentioned one list included 112 and another list included 125. There cannot be any reliable or accurate list as the groups are operating in different names, for example, JMB is changed to JMJB, HUJI to Chital (form of jihad) which later merged to JMB and another new group named Islam o Muslim has emerged. Many of these organizations are connected to each other like JMB and JMJB. He also regards that this nature of changing ghost is not only in militant groups in Bangladesh but in Pakistan, e.g., Laskar e Taiyeba (LeT), and Sipahi Sahara in Pakistan.

A report published in English newspaper the Daily Star revealed that there are 30 terrorist groups who are active in Bangladesh. But, the report did not provide the name of all the organizations. Studies suggest that the number of active militant groups range from dozens (Ahsan, 2005), 30 (Khan, 2007) to 50 (Barakat, 2005). Quamruzzaman (2011) identified 18 such Islamist militia groups which included 2 political parties (JIB, IOJ) and one student organization of JIB (ICS). In 2005, the then opposition party Awami Leage identified 33 Islamic militant

Table : 3.3.1 Number of Terrorist Groups

Sl.	Name of the Organization	Sl.	Name of the Organization
8.	Global Relief Foundation(RF)	17	Amra Dhakabashi
9.	Al Jomiatul Islamia	18	Basbid
10.	Iqra Islami Jote	19	al-Khidmat
11.	Al Khidmat Bahini	20	Amra Dhakabashi
12.	Al Mujahid	21	al-Qaida
13.	Jama'ati Yahia Al Turag	22	Muslim Millat Sharia Council
14.	Jihadi Party	23	Hizbullah Islami Shomaj
15.	Al Mahfuz Al Islamia	24	The International Khatme Nabuwat Movement
16.	Jama'atul Faladia	25	Islamic Constitutional Movement
17.	Tahfize Haramaine Parishad	26	Al Hikma
18.	Duranta Kafela	27	Ulema Anjuman al- Baiyinaat (Clerics of Clerics for Clear Understanding)
19.	Muslim Guerrilla	28	Hijbe Abu Omar (HAO)
20.	Al-Markajul-al-Islami	29	Islam o Muslim (IOM)
21.	The International Islamic Front	30	Dawat-e-Islam (DeI)
22.	Jammat-e-Muslimeen	31	Muslim Ummah Millati MaZahabul Qurran (MUMMQ)
23.	Al Harmain	32	Quran Education Foundation (QEF)

Table : 3.3.2 Number of Terrorist Groups

Sl.No.	Name of the Organization	Sl.No.	Name of the Organization
1	Jama'atul Mujahideen Banglades (JMB) (Party of Mujahidin Bangladesh)	20	Khatme Nabuat Andolon Samannay Committee
2	Shahadat Al Hiqma (Testimony of Wisdom)	21	Sahadat-e-Naboyed
3	Jamaat-e-Yeaheya-al-Turat	22	Hizb-ut- Tahrir (Party of Liberation)
4	Hizbut Towhid (HT) (Party of Oneness of God)	23	Lasker – e Taiba (LeT)
5	Harakat-e-Islam-al-Jihad	24	Hizb-ul Mujahahideen (HM) JK based
6	Hizbul Mojahedeen	25	Al Harkat al Islamia
7	Harkatul Jihad (HUJI-B) (Movement for anIslamic Holy War in Bangladesh)	26	Joish-e-Mostafa
8	Jagrata Muslim Janata, Bangladesh (JMJB) (Awakened Muslim Masses of Bangladesh)	27	Jadid al Qaeda
9	Harkat-ul Ansar	28	Allahr Dal (Party of God)
10	Ahle Hadith Andolon (AHAB) (Movement of the Hadith)	29	al-Islam Martyrs Brigade
11	Joisea Mohammed (JeM)	30	The World Islamic Front for Jihad
12	Majlishe Tahaffuze Khatme Nabuwat Bangladesh	31	Warot Islamic Front
13	World Assembly of Muslim Youth (WAMY)	32	Hizb-ul Mahadi
14	Al-Jihad Bangladesh	33	Bangladesh Khilafat Andolon (Caliphate Movement)
15	Tamir al Din (Tree of Religion)	34	Hifajate Khatme Nabuwat Andolon (HKNA)
16	Nashik Murtad Resistance Committee	35	Towhidi Janata
17	Hikmat-ul Jihad	36	Bishwa Islami Front
18	Hizbul Mahadi	37	Juma'atul Sadat
19	Shahadat-e-Nabuwat	38	Islami Biplobi Parishad (IBP)

groups. On March 16, 2009, the Government identified 12 militant outfits – the MB, HUI-B, HT, Ulema Anjuman al Bainat, Hizb-ut Tahrir (HuT), Islami Democratic Party (IDP), Islami Samaj, Touhid Trust, JMJB, Shahadat-e al Hikma Party Bangladesh, Tamira Ar-Din Bangladesh (Hizb e Abu Omar), and Allahr Dal. The security agencies identified 33 militant groups. The security agencies identified 33 terrorist groups (Bangladesh Timeline Year 2009),(See also www.satp.org/satporgtp/bangladesh/timeline/2009.htm).

The list of major Islamist militant groups is presented in Table 3.3.1& 3.3.2 and the strengths, goals and other characteristics are presented in Table 3.5.1 HUJI, JMJB, JMB and HT are described as the the most prominent militant groups in Bangladesh (South Asia Terroism Portal, 2011; BIPS, 2011;

Datta, 2007; The Daily Star Investigation, 2005). JMB and JMJB are often considered twin and many others change name when the government banned the mother organization. Many reports also demonstrate other Pakistan and Indian operatives are active in Bangladesh (BIPSS, 2010; ICM 2011).

Thirty three (33) Islamic terrorist groups identified by the then opposition party Awami League include JMB, Shahdat-e-al Hikma, Jamaat-e-Yeaheya-al-Turat, Hizbut Touhid, Al- Harat-al-Islamia, Al-Markajul-al-Islami, Jamaatul Faliaya, Touhidi Janata, the International Islamic Front, Jummatul-al-Sadat, hahadat-e-Naboyed; Harakat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami (HUJI), Allahar Dal, Joisea Mustafa Bangladesh, al-Jihad Bangladesh, the World Islamic Front for Jihad, Joisea Mohammed, Jamaat-ul-Muzahidul Bangladesh, Warot Islamic Front, Jamaat-us-Sadat, al-Khidmat, JMJB, Harakat-e-Islam-al-Jihad, Hizbullah Islami Shomaj, Muslim Millat Sharia Council, Ahl-e-Hadith, Hizbul Mahadi, Basbid, Hizbut Tahrir, al-Qaida, al-Islam Martyrs Brigade, the International Khatme Nabuwat Movement and Amra Dhakabashi (Datta, 2007).

Our content analysis found that different Islamist terrorist groups have emerged over time. The arrest of activists of different groups also indicates the presence of many terrorist outfits. Islamic Constitutional Movement, Jaise Mostafa, Khatme Nabuat Andolon Samannay Committee (KNASC) emerged in 2003 while 2004, HKNA, Majlishe Tahaffuze Khatme Nabuwat Bangladesh, Nashik Murtad Resistance Committee, Muslim Millat Shariah Council, Mujaheedeedn al Islam, Hikmat-ul Jihad emerged in 2004 are also appeared in media reports. IKNMB is seen in 2005. On September 21, 2003, police arrested Tamir-ul Din Chief Maulana Abdur Rauf and on March 20, 2003, an Al Hikma activist was arrested.

Table: 3.3.3
Year wise Number of Terrorist Incidents and Persons Killed/Injured (1999 – 2014)

Year	Number of incidents	Number of People Killed	Number of People Injured
1999	3	18	147
2000	1	2	18
2001	5	24	202
2002	10	28	461
2003	5	17	40
2004	11	45	792
2005	39	44	1050
2006	22	9	68
2007	10	2	17
2008	8	2	30
2009	9	5	13
2010	11	13	210
2011	2	1	20
2012	5	1	2
2013	10	139	664
2014	8	6	155
Total	159	356	3789

www.satp.org/satporgtp/bangladesh/timeline/2009.htm).

3.4. Nature of Terrorist Activities

We have analyzed the newspaper reports on major terrorist activities occurred between 1999 and 2014. Table 3.3.3 shows that between 1999 and 2014, 356 people were killed and 3789 were injured. Table 3.4.1 also shows that most of the incidents took place in 2004 and 2005. The highest number of terrorist incidents (39) occurred in the year 2005 in which 44 people were killed and 1050 were injured (Table: 3.3.3). In 2004, 45 people were killed and 792 sustained injury. Table 3.3.3 reveals that in a era about 159 Islamist incidents took place in Bangladesh. The highest number of attacks (39) was reported in 2005 followed by 22 incidents in 2006, 10 incidents in 2002, accordingly 11 incidents and 9 in 2004 and 2009, 10 incidents in 2007, 8 incidents in 2008, accordingly 5 incidents and incidents 11 in 2001 and 2010 and accordingly 3 incidents and incidents 5 in 1999, 2003 (Table 3.3.3). Accordingly 2 incidents and 5 incidents in 2011 and 2012. Most of the incidents happen in 2005. Table- 3.4.1 shows the list of

Table: 3.4.1**Major Terrorist Activities in Bangladesh (1999-2014)**

Sl.No.	Year	Place of occurrence	Summary of incidents	Killed	Injured
1	1999	Dhaka, Jessore and Khulna	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secular poet Shamsur Rahman was attacked by religious extremists at his house . • bomb blast attacked a cultural group • Ahmadiya mosque 	18	147
2	2000	Dhaka	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bomb explosion 	2	18
3	2001		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bomb explosion at a Bengali New Year • Bomb explosion near the venue of an AL election meeting . • Bomb blast at an Awami League election rally, 	24	202
4	2002	Barisal District, Chitagong District, Dhaka, Gurdaspur, Natore, Satkhira Town, Khulna, Rangamati Town and Mymensing Town.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bombs at a press club • A Buddhist monk is stabbed to death • bomb blast at cinema, 	28	461
5	2003		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bomb blast at a carnival • Muslims invade the home of a Hindu farmer, chop him to death and then rape three members of his family. • Bomb blast at a International Trade Fair • Two policemen were killed and two more badly injured by terrorist bomb in the United Arab Emirates • One businessman is killed and ten others people are injured in an attack by militant fundamentalists (Hizbut Touheed). 	17	40
6	2004		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bomb explosion at the shrine of Hazrat Shah Jalal (Rh:) • Bomb explosion at the Poush Mela (winter fair) • Bomb attack on the British High Commissioner to Bangladesh • A series of grenade attack on AL leader Sheikh Hasina at a meeting • Bomb blast at Faridpur • A chirstan convert from islam has his throat slashed by muslim fundamentalists. • Attack carried out by cadres of JMJB on a AL leader • Muslim invaders kill a hindu 	45	792

			<p>husband and wife in their home.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A leader of the Bangladesh Chatra League was killed by cadres of JMJB • Hindu minority leader gunned down in his home. • Religious fundamentalists finally murder an economics professor on campus after several unsuccessful attempts islamic militants set off bombs at two different carnivals killing . 		
7	2005	<p>Sahajanpu (Majhira Upzila)</p> <p>Vogra and Nator. Putia, RajshahiBaiddar Bazar,</p> <p>Hobigonj, Narsingdi, Jalalpur, Brahambaria, Shatkhira, Pabna,</p> <p>Daulatpur in Kustia (SATP), Naruamala, Gabtolli, Bogra, Jhalokhathi,</p> <p>Daulakhan(Vhola),</p> <p>Vogra,Sylhet,</p> <p>Panchagar, Kishorgonj,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four people, including a 73-years-old man are assassinated by muslim radicals in a grenade attack as they leave a public meeting. • Awamileague meeting • Jamaat-e- Islam terrorists kill a business man with a bomb in a shopping center. • Chirstan pastor attacked and beheaded by muslim extremists as he is returning home from work. • Door shut to prevent their escape or rescue. • 459 explosions in 63 out of 64 districts (barring Munshiganj). • Islamic extremists suspected in deedly attack on a high school teacher. • According to SATP, there is no fatalities or • injuries on October 2, 2005 in Pabna, and Daulatpur in Khulna . • Five separate bomb explosions near court room and court premise • Bomb attack carried out by a JMB cadre in front of the judge's residence. • A hindu priest is kidnapped and murdered by islamic extremists. • Jammaat-ul- Mujahidden suspected of bombing that kills a party leader. • JMB suicide squad exploded a bomb killing two Senior Assistant judge. • Two suicide bomb attacks by the JMB cadre in Chittagong and Gazipur court premises. • According to SATP, anotehr incident on KD Ghos Road in Khulna, but no death or injuries. • bomb explosion by JMB in front of 	44	1050

			<p>the office of the Udichi.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Radicals murder a university 		
8	2006	<p>Kishorgonj, Hobigonj Khulna, Savar, Dhaka Kachua, Khathalia, Jhalkathi Gangni, Meherpur Shampur, Munshiganj Rajshahi, Komorpur, Meherpur, Sher-e- Bangla Road, Jhenidah, Comilla Bhorodah Village, Chuadanga, Maricha, Kustia, Daulatdia Village, Chuadanga, Paka Village, Chuadanga, Sonadanga Bus Stand, Khulna, Gobra bazar, Sadar Sub-district, Narail, Omar Shahpara, bander Police Station, Chittagong, Shiromoni, Khanjahan Ali Station, Khulna City, Mirzapur Town, Atrai Sub- district, Naogaon, Dhaka, Binnakuri</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A university professor is murdered after receiving death threats from islamic fundamentalist. • An islamic millitant sets off a suicide blast to avoid arrest. A mother and two children are blown apart as well. • A university professor is gunned down in his home. • A man is murdered by the Jama'atul Mujahideen 	9	68
9	2007	<p>Dhaka, Meghna Village, Bheramara Sub-district, Kustia, Sarishabari, Jamalpur, Jhalkhati, Dhaka, Chittagong, Sylhet, Dhaka, Chittagong, Sylhet, Chawk Ramakantapur Village, Sapahar Sub-district, Naogoan, Joypur Masterpara village, Sapahar Sub-district, Naogoan, Joypur Masterpara village, Sapahar Sub-district, Naogoan, Kamlapur Rail Station, Dhaka, Nilphamari.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A police man is killed in a bomb attack by suspected islamic extremists. • Jama,atul Mujahideen is suspected to be behind the assassination of a prosecutor • Three explosions at the main railway stations in Dhaka, the southern port of Chittagong and the ortheastern city of Sylhet. • 10 Christan converts from islam are savagely beaten by a muslim mob. 	2	17
10	2008	<p>Rangpur, Kanchon Nogar in the Jenidah Town, Naopara Rail Station, Abhoynagar Sub-district, Jessore, West Bengal, Krisna nagar under Tala Sub-district, Satkhira, Hajapur graveyard in the Awaliapur union of Dinajpur Sub-district, Faridpur, Medical Colege.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A convert to Christianity dies from burns suffered when a muslim mob set fire to her house four weeks earlier. • Fifteen hindu pilgrims, including women and children, are burned by molotov cocktails thrown by a muslim mob. • Suspected Jama,atul Mujadeen strangle a women, than hang her from a tree. 	2	30
11	2009	<p>Chapainawabganj, Barisal, Mirpur, Dhaka, Boailia,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three christans, including pastor , are pulled from their church and tortured for their faith with a burning cigarettes and wooden 	5	13

		Hobigonj, Purabonogram, Mohespur, Jhenidah	clubs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A group of muslims brutally torture and murder a young Christian student. • A christian evangelist dies from injuries suffered from severe torture at the hands of a muslim gang. 		
12	2010	Faridpur, Netrokona, Netrokona , Goyasabari, Pabna, Brahamanbaria, Baghaichhari, Jhenaidah, Meherpur, Doulatpur, Rajshahi.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A catholic humanitarian worker and his wife are attacked by a gang of Muslims. • At least eight people are killed when Muslim villagers riot against the Christian and buddhist neighbors. • An elderly Christian man and his son are beaten by a muslim villagers for refusing to return to muslim. • A suicided bomber kills one other person at a residence. • A women dies from injuries suffered by a lashing ordered by Muslim clergy over an adultery charge. 	13	210
13	2011	Chittagong,Shariatpur,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wahabbis and sunnies clash over control over a mosque, beating rivals and setting fires. • A 14- year old girl is lashed to death on the orders of a sharia council. Her crime was having been raped by a 40 years. 	1	20
14	2012	Gulbaria/ Pabna District. In fornt of the office of the Ministry/Dhaka, A road adjacent to the Secretariat/ Dhaka Near the BNP headquarters Dhaka Abhoynagar/Jessore		1	2
15	2013	Bogra town of Bogra District. Cox's Bazar town of Cox's Bazar District. Gaibandha District in a clash. Satkhira District. Joypurhat District,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In four JeI-ICS cadres were killed in a clash with the Police. • Three JeI- ICS cadres were killed and 50 others were injured during a gun battle between JeI-ICS cadres and Police. • Policemen and two JeI-ICS cadres killed • JeI-ICs cadres and one civilian killed • Civilians killed in Thakurgaon 	139	664

		Rajshahi District, Chapainawabganj District, Noakhali District,	<p>District as JeI-ICS cadres attacked them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • four civilians were killed in clashes between the Police and JeI-ICS cadres. • Three cadres of ICS were killed and 30 others sustained bullet injuries when the Police opened fire to disperse a mob of villagers led by JeI-ICS cadres after they attacked the law enforcers during a raid in Shyampur village of the District. • JeI-ICS cadres clashed with law enforcers in Companiganj sub-District leaving six ICS cadres dead and 15 others injured. 		
		Lalmonirhat District,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three ICS cadres and one AL supporter were killed and at least three others were injured during instances of violence in Patgram sub-District. 		
16	2014	Thakurgaon District, Dinajpur District,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three BNP men were killed as law enforcers opened fire on the BNP and JeI cadres who tried to bar voters from casting their votes at a polling centre in Sadar sub-District. • An Ansar member and two opposition men were killed and five others injured by JeI-ICS cadres as the law enforcers were trying to resist the cadres from attacking a polling centre in the sub-District. 	6	55

terrorist activities from 1999 to 2014. Our analysis of newspaper reports from 1999 to 2014 reveals that these terrorist attacks targeted cultural groups, cultural celebration and activists, Christian churches, movie theaters, fairs, Urs (the anniversary of the saint's death) celebration, university professors, Ahmadiyya mosques diplomats, Awami League leaders including the ex prime minister Sheikh Hasina, journalists, political party meetings, NGO offices, book fair, circus, international trade fair (Table 3.3.3). However, the exact number is very difficult to determine. According to the Daily Star Investigation, the JMB activists carried out over 100 operations including murders and attacks on people they believe to be criminals in different regions.

3.5. Ideologies and Strengths of Islamist Extremism Groups

The aims and goals of these groups vary widely. It appears that the ideological basis of most of the groups is religion. Table 3.4 provides a snapshot of major Islamist militant groups strengths based on available media reports and other secondary sources such as academic studies, intelligence reports. The Daily Star investigation found that over 30 religious militant organizations have set up their network in Bangladesh since 1989 with the main objective of establishing Bangladesh as an Islamic state. The Daily Star investigation (The Daily Star Vol. 5, No. 447, 2005) profiled seven militant organizations (JMB, JMJB, HUJI, Shahadat al Hiqma, HT, Hizb-ut Tahrir, and IBP). Munir (2011) considered three the most lethal and threat groups (JMB, HUJI-B, and Hizbut Tahrir). Though the Intelligence Agencies of the country advised the government to ban the outfits - JMB, HUJI, Hizb-ut Tahrir IBP in 2003, but the government has not implemented before 2005 following the lethal terrorist attacks in 2005. The militant groups have some ten lakh members across the country.

According to an intelligence report, about 80,000 of them took training in arms and explosives. Only JMB has the strengths of militants are substantial 57 districts. Huji has timers more than 25,000 activists. The report further revealed that even some university teachers are involved with these militant groups. The exact number of members or activists of these militant groups cannot be estimated.

According to former chief of Bangladesh Police, Chief A S M Shahajahan, the strengths of militants are substantial for which attempting a countrywide blast is possible (New Age Extra, August 21-27, 2009). He argued that the number of people brainwashed by militant ideologies, their financial sources, training areas and the trainers of these militant outfits are yet to be explored. The strengths of major groups (HUJI, JMB, and JMJB) ranges from 10,000 to 300,000 .

The profile of major militant groups are discussed below.

HUJI-B: The rise of militancy in the country can be traced back to the year 1992, with the Bangladesh chapter of Harkat-ul-Jihad-al Islami (HUJI). HUJI aided by Osama Bin Laden was established under the leadership of Shawkat Osman alias Sheikh Farid in 1992 to establish Islamic rule in the country (www.satp.org). HUJI-B has estimated cadre strength of more than several thousand members. They operates and trains their members in Bangladesh, where it maintains at least six camps in Bangladesh (US Depaartment of State, 2003). In 1998, a group called Bangladesh Jihad came into existence to notice when one of its members signed a fatwa issued by bin Laden calling for a jihad against the US and Israel (The Daily Star, December 10, 2003).

The profile of major militant groups (Table 3.5.1)

Sl.No.	Outfit/ Organization	Date/ Established	Strength	Status	Aims
1	HUJI-B	1992	15,000	Banned on October, 2005	Establish Islamic rule through jihad, Fight in Kashmir, freed from the aggression and influence of the west .
2	JMB	1998	10,000	Banned on February 23,2005	Establish Islamic rule, end anti-Islamic forces and practices
3	Hazbut Towhid(HT)	1994		Banned	Establish Islamic state through jihad, Anti-traditional government.
4	JMJB	1998	300000	Banned on February 23,2005	End activities of the left wing extremist in the north west east,Establish Islamic rule, Taliban ideology, oppose democracy.
5	Islamic Biplob parisad(IPB)	2001			Establish Islamic state
6	Shahadat al Hiqma	1996	36000	Banned on February 9,2003	Liberation struggle
7	Khatm-e Nabuyat Andolon	Late 1980s			Establish that mohammad the last prophet and declare Ahmadiyas non muslim
8	Akra Dhakabasi	Late 1980s			Anti-Ahmadiya
9	Hizbut Tahir(HuT)	2000s	20,000 according to chief Mohiuddin	Banned on October 22,2009	Establish caliphate state under a caliph through invitation and Jihad,Oppose the traditional way of politics.
10	AHAB	1994	700 Maderssas in 42 District.		
11	Tamir ud Deen	1999		Black listed	Establish Islamic Sharish law
12	IDP	2008		Black listed	Establish Islamic Sharish law
13	Allar Dal			Black listed	Establish Islamic rule through Jihad
14	Islami Samaj	May 6 1993 by Mufti Abdul Jabbar. Militant Networks, Tactics,and Strategies			establishing the sovereignty of Allah and Islam, a comprehensive lifestyle guideline of Allah
15	Ulema Anjuman Al Baiyinaat				Establishment a new government that will implement Islamic laws.
16	Touhid Trust	established by Dr Galib of Ale Hadith Andolan in 2001		Banned in 2005	Revival of Islamic Heritage Society

Adapted from Quamruzzaman (2011), BIPSS (2011), SATP (www.satp.org).

It initiated Islamist movement with a view to convert Bangladesh into an Islamic state (The New Age Xtra and the Daily Star). HUIB brought out their first publication, Jago Mujahid, which served as the outfit's mouthpiece until 2005 when the HuJI was officially proscribed by the government. Afterwards they published under a new name of Rahmat. Unlike JMB, HUJI is an international organization established with the assistance from Osama bin Laden to unite the Muslim world and free Muslim countries like Bangladesh from the western aggressions and influence. The Bangladeshi chapter began in 1992 by Abdur Rahman Faruqi and after his death, Shakat Osman alias Sheikh Farid became the chief while Imtiaz Quddus was appointed as general secretary of the organization. HuJI-B is originated from Harkatul Ansar and received financial and ideological patronage from al Qaeda (Munir, 2011).

It is reported that HUJI-B has connections with the Rohingya organizations operating in the country as well as with South East Asian groups. The US DoS declared Bangladeshi-based HUJI-B as FTO (Foreign Terrorist Organization). Its funding network can be traced back to sources in the Middle East. Despite arrests and operational pause of its activities, HUJI-B remains a major challenge due to its strong transnational connections, support network, and the operational alliance with JMB and other groups.

HUJI activities were concentrated in the southeastern coastal belts, Chittagong and Cox's Bazar. It has two types of memberships: i) activists who train and sawat sections. Its membership include local residents and foreigners, such as the Rohingya Refugees from Myanmar. HUJI also recruits madrassa students. There are allegations that they have linkage with Pakistan and receive funds from Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Afghanistan through Islamic NGOs working in Bangladesh. Huji activists are involved in several cases – the attack on eminent poet Shamsur Rahman in 1999, the killing of Journalist Shamsur Rahman in 2000, two attacks on Sheikh Hasina in 2000. HUJI-B carried the most lethal terrorist attacks on 21 August 2004 on a political rally of Awami League. In a subsequent crackdown by the law enforcing agencies, a number of HUJI-B leaders and activists were arrested and they lost their operational capabilities.

JMB : The JMB is founded in 1998 and follows the Ahle Hadith school of thought (Munir, 2011).

It believes the Hadith is the path to salvation and the Bangladeshi state and society manifest the devil (Taghoot). The target of JMB attacks on people and institutions (movie theaters, court houses, local governments and intellectuals indicate their ideology. This group carried a number of terrorist attacks including the nationwide serial bomb blasts in an hour in 2005 which demonstrate their operational capabilities. JMB had a Special Suicide Squad, and tried a number of suicide attacks. It has links with LeT and other south Asian Fraternity.

In 2003, some members were arrested with fissile materials (225 gram of Uranium oxide) which was later traced to Kazakhstan (Munir, 2011). Despite the arrests of senior member and although the group weakened, the JMB remains a major threat group. Scholars argue that despite unsophisticated nature of bombs, but such powerful explosives could have catalytic implications given the density of population (Munir, 2011).

Maulana Saidur Rahman led the organization and after he and his nephew (Bhagin Shahid) were arrested in 2010, the JMB leadership became critical. The 2005 nationwide bomb blasts brought international attention that Bangladesh has become a hotbed for Islamist terrorism. The Bangladeshi Government took serious steps to do crackdown on Islamist terrorist organizations especially focusing on curbing JMB (The New Age, August 18, 2010). Various reports including the study of the Brussels-based International Crisis Group showed that despite the execution of the key figures of JMB in 2007 along with apprehension of many leaders, JMB started to regroup and reconsolidate (Munir, 2011).

JMB had a Special Suicide Squad, and tried a number of suicide attacks. It has links with LeT and other south Asian fraternity. In 2003, some members were arrested with fissile materials (225 gram of Uranium oxide) which were later traced to Kazakhstan (Munir, 2011). Though the arrests of senior leaders has weakened JMB to some extents however, they still remains a major threat group.

JMJB: The highest decision making body (Majlish-e-Shura (central council) was 7 members of JMJB. The JMJB is a three-tier organization – activists (full time) who act at the behest of the higher echelons, part-time activists, and those who indirectly co-operate with the outfit (The Daily Star Investigation Team, 2005). It has 9 organizational divisions in Khuklna, Barisal, Sylhet, Chittagong and 2 divisions in Dhaka. It has network of madrassas and educational institutions in 57 districts. It has 10 camps in Naogaon, Rajshahi and Natore Districts. It is based mostly in northwestern districts – Rajshahi, Rangpur, Bogra, and the southern districts of Bagerhat, Jessore, Sathkhira, Chittagong and Khulna. It's headquarter is reported to be in Dhaka. Its chief Moulana Rahman in an interview on May 13, 2004 denied any international links including Taliban.

Hizb-ut Tahrir Bangladesh: Hizb-ut Tahrir is an international organization established by Islamic thinker Tokiuddin Al Nakhani in 1953 in Jerusalem five years after Israel occupied Palestine. It aims to restore the Caliphate and establish a global Islamic state. Hizb-ut Tahrir began its activities in Bangladesh in 2000. It has no constitution or committee. They mainly want to unite Muslims to establish Islamic state. They publish and distribute leaflets in hard copies and websites sharing their ideology and organize seminars symposiums. Changing human thoughts first is perceived as the right strategy to propagate Islamic lifestyles. The organization recruits their members from the different public and private universities of Bangladesh. There is no report of exerting violence, but their publications indicate that they are against various foreign and domestic policies and military or political ties with the US, neighbor India and so on (Munir, 2011).

Dhaka University management lecturer Golam Mowla, IBA lecturer Mohiuddin Ahmad, Public administration lecturer Sheikh Towfik, Kazi Morshedul Haque, and London returns Dr. Nasimul Gani, Kawser Shahnewaj who launched Tahrir works with Golam Mowla whom they met in London in 1993. The Bangladeshi chapter was launched in 2009. And the government was the main target of its activities.

Hizbut Towhid (HT): Hizbut Towhid (HT) founded by Mohammad Bayezid Khan Ponni from Tangail in 1994. Ponni left the country after the independence and returned in the 80s. In 1996 he published a book where he argued that this Islam is not at all Islam. The book was banned in 1999. HT followers do not believe in traditional political system. HT activities were run across Barisal, Feni, Madariour, Tangail, Meherpur, Jhenidah, Noakhali, Khulna, Chittagong and Narsingdi.

Adapted from Quamruzzaman (2011), SATP (www.satp.org).

Hizbut Towhid (HT) : published ideologies and objectives in booklets and leaflets. HT followers do not like ajan (prayer calls) and mosques and never greet salam (Islamic greetings).

Islami Biplobi Parisad (IBP): The main objective of the Islami Biplobi Parisad (IBP) is to establish Islamic state. It was formed by a former JIB leader Moulana Abdul Jabber in 2001. JIB is made split in the 80s, heformed a faction called Jammat-e-Islami (Jabber), and he renamed it Islami Samaj Bangladesh and later changed to IBP. Its head office was in Dhaka. Jabber sent a letter to Prime Minister Khaleda Zia to declare the country Islamic state within a 3-month ultimatum and in case of no action, IBP would form a counter government claiming that they can run the government. They also organized several meetings to pass their message.

Shahadat al Hiqma: Shahdat al Hiqma was formed in 1996, but it activities opened in 2001 as an NGO. It is reported that Shadat al Hiqma is an armed group arose from ICS. ICS leader founded it. The founder - Syed Kawsar Hossain Siddiqui was imprisoned for sedition charge. He termed liberation war as a terrorism activity. Shahadat al Hiqma publishes leaflets; has extremist connections with 5 Islamist groups – JMB, Towhidi Janata, Iqra Islami Jote, Jumaatul as Sadat, and Biswa Islami Front. Shahadat al Hikma get training and fund from NGOs and voluntary organizations. It has contacts with Kashmir based LeT, and even get arms training from Nepal based Maosit organizations. It is reported that Dubai based Daud Ibrahim is one of the financiers.

It also received fund from JMB and Towhidi Janata under the banner of Biswa Islamic Front. Self-declared Chairman Siddiqui claimed that some cabinet members of the government are with him in a press conference on February 8, 2003.

AHAB : The Ahle Hadith Andolon Bangladesh (AHAB) was formed by a university professor Dr. Asadullah Al Galib. He is also a leader of JMB and served as a policy maker of the organization. Galib and JMB chief Rahman has close relationship. They have similar opinions about the Islamic revolution. AHAM used JMB as operational wing and HUJI as training unit. It has transnational links with the movement network in Saudi Arabia and Pakistan. In the Rajshahi AHAB Conference in the late 90s, his links with al-Qaeda militants from Middle East, South Asia was revealed. West Bengal and Punjab Ahle Hadith leaders, Nepalese Ahle Hadith Leader participated in the

conference. It received funding from Hayatul Igaccha, Saudi Arabia and Society for the Renaissance of Islamic Legacy, Kuwait, Asadullah al Galib is the leader in police custody since 2005, received training from JMB training centers and Pakistani Madrassas.

After his arrest on February 23, 2005, Galib admitted that he spent huge money for building mosques and seminaries, giving military-style training to Madrassa students and other organizational works. Galib and Rahman used to meet in Chittagong in 1998 to discuss about their plans for revolution and they worked among Muslim Rohingas and Arakan militants. It is reported that Galib masterminded the militant actions in the country (Kumar, 2006).

3.6. Militants Networks, Tactics, and Strategies

Media and intelligence reports indicate the major Islamist militant outfits are interlinked and leaders of these groups are supporting each other (the Daily Star Investigation, 2005; Munir, 2011). JMB has local intent and connections while HuJI-B is a Bangladeshi chapter of a major international terrorist group. It is found that AHAB chief Dr. Asadullah Al Galib was a policy maker of JMB and his AHAB followers used to raise fund for running JMB activities. Some media reports claim that JMJB is an outgrowth of the JMB, others as a youth front of HUJI. JMB wants to run the country with Islamic rule.

They want to remove anti-Islamic forces. The JMB activists attacked cinema, cultural events, fairs, meetings and rallies. They used madrasa students to collect tolls. They use motivational speeches, statements, leaflet and graffiti to energize their followers. Evidence indicates that they received training in arms and bomb making in abroad. Both HuJI-B and JMB were founded by Afghan war veterans in 1992. Both of them brought international attention. JMB follows the Ahle Hadith school of thought and HUJI-B follows the Deobandi school of thought akin to the Taliban and its other counterparts in Pakistan (Munir, 2011). They have similar target patterns such as the members of intelligentsia and cultural celebrations.

The 2003 Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) Report expressed concern over the rise of al-Quaeda linked Islamist militant networks and the negligence of the government to prevent the country from becoming a haven for South Asian terrorists (CSIS, 2003). According to some newsreports, the activities of HUJI, Jihad Movement, the Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh (JIB), the Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS) - the JIB's students' wing, the Islami Olkyo Jote (IOJ), and two other organizations - the Arakan Rohingya National Organisation (ARNO) and the Rohingya Solidarity Organization (RSO) - Rohingya Muslim refugees from the Arakan area of Myanmar and the proliferation of madrassas were on the rise in the country (Linder, 2002).

In July 1992, about 150 armed men belonging to the Taliban and Al Qaeda had been transported to Bangladesh from Afghanistan and Pakistan by a ship called "MV Mecca" and that 50 others had similarly been transported during 2001 (Perry, 2002). The Counter-Terrorism Division's report presented to the Congress in May, 2003 did not refer to any pro-bin Laden jihadi terrorist activities in Bangladesh territory on the lines of what has been appearing in the US media (US Department of State, 2003).

However, previous report mentioned the HUIB's connection to the Pakistani militant groups Harakat ul-Jihad-i-Islami (HUJI) and Harak ul-Mujahidin (HUM), who advocate similar objectives in Pakistan and Kashmir. HUIB was accused of stabbing a senior Bangladeshi journalist in November 2000 for making a documentary on the plight of Hindus in Bangladesh.

HUIB was the primary suspected in July 2000 assassination attempt of Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. Many of these militant groups are linked to each other locally. Even more than 20 Islamic parties are reported to have militant members (Khan, 2007). Some Islamic groups have links or networks with other terrorist groups active in India, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Myanmar (Khan, 2007). HUIB is the chapter of international terrorist group the HUJI based in Pakistan, it has links with Al Qaeda and it is a member of his International Islamic Front (IIF). The HUIB supported Indian and Pakistani militants belonging to Pakistan based LeT, and Indian ARCF (Asif Reza Commando Force) - a group allied to HuJI.

Indian militants Obaidullah and Mansur and Amir Reza belonging to LeT and ARCF were engaged in teaching in madrassas, training and supporting militants and opening chapters of Pakistani and Indian Islamist militant outfits Let in Bangladesh. Obaidullah and Hannan have visited several sites in the country to establish training camps during early 2000. Obaidullah was looking to establish camps for the LeT, one of which was formed in 2002 at Purashanda, an area between Srimangal and Habiganj.

The New Age Xtra (17-21 August 2009) reported that the Detective Branch (DB) finds LeT operatives hiding in the country, LeT, ARCF and HUIB have ties JMB allies with newoutfit Jamaat-e-Mulimeen. In a press briefing, DMP Commissioner AKM Shahidul Haque (The Daily Star, 8 February 2010 as cited in BIPSS, 2010) told that LeT operatives of Indian and Pakistani nationalities are active in Bangladesh.

According to BIPSS president, the process of radicalization in Bangladesh starts when the Islamist political parties entered into politics and want Islam to be the state religion and extremism increased when militants intrude the political system demonstrating terror attacks on lawyers, judges, DC offices, political leaders, diplomats, foreigners and transnational linkages.

In a workshop organized by the Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies (BIPSS), Major General Muniruzzaman (retired) and president of BIPSS argued for a common South Asian strategies to address the problem of terrorism.

In an international meeting, Shafqat Munir told that Bangladesh's counter-terrorism measures should primarily focus on ensuring the security of its citizens from terrorist attacks and "defeat of the forces of terrorism that challenge the authority of the state and legitimacy of its constitution"

Obaidullah and Mansur were engaged in militant outfits against radical Hindu organisations such as the Shiv Sena and RSS, and worked in Bangladesh to organize a chapter of LeT in Bangladesh. Obaidullah told interrogators about organising a local outfit of the LeT under the leadership of Amir Reza – a leader of the ARCF, a group allied to Harkat-ul-Jihad-al Islami (HuJI). They were among the 41 HuJI members arrested from a training camp at Cox's Bazar on February 19, 1996. The arrested members were sentenced to life imprisonment by the court and after changing state power all 41 members were released on bail by the High Court.

According to the intelligence agencies, both Obaidullah and Mansur have been working as coordinators between their operatives in Pakistan and India and were involved in most of the terrorist attacks that were plotted in India since 2005. They disclosed the names of Amir Reza, Khurram Khaiyam and Amzad Hossain.

All these militants were in regular contact with each other over phone. Khurram is believed to be a financier of the LeT members in Bangladesh. By scrutinizing phone records it is found that Obaidullah and Amir had previously exchanged several calls and text messages every day. They had extensively discussed some of the attacks, including the one on August 21, at Hannan's residence in Badda. Abdul Baki, an Afghan Mujahed and also a HuJI member in West Bengal provided the explosives to Hannan for the August 21 blast (New Age, Xtra, August 21-27, 2009; The Daily Star, 2009-05-18).

According to the intelligence sources, detailed JMB explosives expert Mizan informed them about the JMB activities, affiliates and the bomb stocks. He told that the militants are most organised in Dhaka, Gazipur, Joypurhat, Comilla and Chittagong districts. Saidur, who once was Ameer of Habiganj district Jamaat-e-Islami, took charge of JMB after the execution of its top six leaders including Shaekh Abdur Rahman and Siddiqui Islam alias Bangla Bhai in March 2007.

Besides him, Rahman alias Zafar, Sohel Mahfuz, Bashar, Mehedi, Mustafiz alias 'Mostafiz Sir', Sayeem, Ejaj, Abir, Nazmul alias 'Bhagne Shahed' and Shahid alias Osman are in the top echelons of the outlawed group. Saidur's another son AHM Shahim was JMB's IT expert, and has been behind bars since arrest in 2005. Following up information from Mizan, the elite crime-busters have already busted a bomb-making factory at East Monipur in Mirpur and recovered a huge cache of explosives, detonators and grenade's outer casings.

Ex. Bangladesh Police Chief A S M Shahajahan pointed out that due to political blaming game and using terrorist attacks and investigation for political advantages are providing opportunities to breed militant networks. Instead of using terrorist attacks and investigations for political advantages, a united effort is needed to address the issue of terrorism in Bangladesh.

According to Dr. Imtiaz Ahmed, professor of international relations of Dhaka University while interviewing with the New Age mentioned that Indian and Pakistani terrorist organizations were associated with terrorist attacks in Bangladesh since 1999; madrassas are facilitating militancy (The New Age Extra August 17-21, 2009). He also added that Indian agencies might nurture terrorism in Bangladesh. India has blamed for Pakistani Intelligence Service for anti-Indian insurgency and terrorist activities.

In Bangladesh, militancy and terrorism have become a socio-economic and political issue. Over the last two decades, a number of Islamist groups and terrorist outfits both homegrown and internationally-linked have emerged in the country. Though the number of terrorist attacks by Islamist militants has increased since 1999, various militant groups continued to exist in the country since 1992. Various militant groups have grown over the years enhancing strengths in terms of manpower and skills, and widespread networks to conduct terror campaigns. Bangladesh is one of the poorest countries on earth, on the brink of being a failed state, and that makes it a perfect target for al-Qaeda and its-ever expanding network of Islamist extremist organizations. Virtually unnoticed by the world at large, Bangladesh is being dragged into the global war on terrorists by becoming sanctuary for them.

Bangladesh government is not doing enough to prevent the country from becoming a haven for Islamic terrorists in South Asia and pointed out that religious extremists are connected to Al Qaeda. Blaming the BNP government for not taking appropriate action against the terrorist organizations and find out the real perpetrators of violence the government has been routinely blaming the opposition political party for such criminal activities.

Various factors can be associated with the rise of Islamist militancy and terrorism in Bangladesh . . The origins of the JMB, JMJB, HT and HUIB indicate the existence of such militant groups and networks following the Afghan war .

Immediate after the 9/11 US attack, Bangladesh has been presented as a new host of extremism and Talibanization. Bangladeshi militants is linked with international terrorist groups and the use of madrasas (religious schools and colleges).

This study also looked at the government response to the menace of Islamist militancy and terrorism in Bangladesh. Given the rise, extent and costs of militancy and relevant for policy recommendations to address terrorism, this study is very timely.

3.7. Terrorist Financing

The content analysis of media reports showed that sources of funding for running militant activities come from both local and external sources. All of the experts speak of both local and foreign sources of funding, but emphasized the foreign funding sources that include international charities, individuals and groups and even state sponsorship. They mentioned the name of different countries, one respondent mentioned Kuwait and UK, another respondent mentioned Iraq, Iran, and Saudi Arab, and another respondent mentioned UK, Gulf Countries, and European countries where funds are raised to support terrorist groups in Bangladesh. Among the local sources of funding, two respondents mentioned donations in the form of sadka, kaffara, zakaat, fitra are used by these militant groups.

From different literature, it is found that HUJI-B primarily raises funds from madrassas in Bangladesh. In the wake of the 17 August blasts, financial connections between JMB and some local and international NGOs have come into the limelight (Datta, 2007). The Kuwait-based Revival of Islamic Heritage Society has provided financial support to some of the militant campaigns taking place in Bangladesh (Datta, 2007). The Daily Star Investigation found that JMB gets money from local sources by collecting tolls with Kwami madrasa students and AHAB followers. They also have Gulf donors. JMB used to secure funds from Saudi charities in the name of building mosques and seminaries. HUJI-B gets money from Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Afghanistan through several Islamic NGOs operating in Bangladesh. Some of these NGOs include Adarsha Kutir, Al Faruk Islamic Foundation, and Hataddin. Shahadat al Hiqma activities were financed by two other militant groups - JMB and Towhidi Janata. AHAB received funds from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait through Hayatul Igaccha, and Renaissance of Islamic Legacy respectively.

Hundi (a black market money exchange procedure) is one of the major issues of financial crime associated with terrorist financing in Bangladesh. Arms smuggling is also associated with terrorism. Terrorist groups use the means of money laundering for transferring money raised in the Gulf countries in the name of charitable NGOs (BIPSS, 2010). Various studies and reports indicate that a number of Islamic charitable NGOs local and international is funding madrassas, mosques and orphanage or other programs supporting militants (Datta, 2007; Quamruzzaman, 2010; Riaz, 2008; BIPSS, 2010, Munir, 2011).

The JMB, HUJI, and the rest of Islamic terrorist network in Bangladesh were spawned by the al Qaeda and Taliban jihadis. They were trained by Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) and Pakistan-based major terror outfit Lashkar e Toiba (LeT). None of the umbilical cords has been cut for good. As many as twenty local and foreign NGOs, including al Qaeda chief Osama bin Laden's International Islamic Front (IIF) have been financing radical Islamic groups JMB and HUJI.

In addition, huge funds regularly pour in every month from two Pakistani militant leaders, Sajedur Rahman and Hafiz Mohammad Ibrahim. These two Pakistani militant leaders send money through Hawala channels to JMB chief Maulana Saidur Rahman. This information has been revealed by Maulana Saidur Rahman, who was arrested on May 26, 2010.

JMB chief Saidur Rahman disclosed that the JMB activists learnt operational tactics of hitting multiple targets simultaneously from the Tamil Tigers of Sri Lanka, from whom they also acquired techniques for manufacturing explosive devices and arms. He also said that the JMB follows al Qaeda's ideology, and works to expand and strengthen al Qaeda's base in Bangladesh. Information about location of JMB suicide squad members was disclosed by JMB military wing chief Boma Mizan and Zaved Iqbal Mohammad, both of whom were arrested ahead of Saidur Rahman's arrest.

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Saidur Rahman disclosed that bin Laden's International Islamic Front (IIF) has been offering financial assistance to JMB and HUJI regularly as part of its worldwide endeavour to assist all pro-al Qaeda outfits. He admitted that huge funds were provided by IIF to JMB when the former was apprised of the latter's plan to carry out countrywide synchronized bomb blasts in Bangladesh and deployment of suicide bombers at strategic points in August 2005. Saidur Rahman, who was former Habiganj District JEI Amir, also said that apart from IIF, JMB has also been receiving funds regularly from 20 local and foreign organizations including Saudi-based World Assembly of Muslim Youth (WAMY), Rabeta-al-alam-al-Islami, Kuwait-based Revival of Islamic Heritage Society, International Federation of Islamic Organizations, Islamic World Committee, Qatar-based Charitable Society, and UK-based Muslim Aid.

He also said that in 2008 the two Pakistan militant leaders Sajedur Rahman and Hafiz Mohammad Ibrahim sent US \$ 42 million for JMB through hawala channel. Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) Commissioner A.K.M. Shahidul Haque said that militant organizations regularly receive funds from expatriate Bangladeshi community settled in the US, Europe, and Middle East countries. Money is mostly received through "hundi" from these countries.

The intelligence agencies of the country have found that Jamaat-e-Islami (JEI) even now works as a conduit of foreign funds. Funds are received regularly from Pakistan, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Libya-based NGOs to the JEI accounts in the Islamic Bank of Bangladesh and then handed over to other pro-al Qaeda outfits in the country. This enables the party to indulge in money laundering and inciting the militants to take part in violent activities.

The party had a plan to resort to serious violence during the last elections and made it clear to its cadres that some parliamentary seats including those of JEI Amir Matiur Rahman Nizami, Delwar Hossen Syeedi, and Shahjahan Chowdhury must be won at any cost, including assassination, if so needed. The party had also planned to resist Awami League at any cost as victory of AL in elections

would spell disaster and result in virtual decimation of JEI. But this plan did not succeed as the Army-backed interim dispensation that conducted the elections stood on the way affirming that no electoral malpractices or violence would be countenanced leniently.

Internationally banned Islamic NGOs linked to terror funding were functioning in Bangladesh. These NGOs like the Revival of Islamic Heritage Society (RIHS), Al Harmain Islamic Foundation (AHIF), and Benevolence Society based in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Libya, and Pakistan were directly linked with financing activities of the Islamic radical groups. Two RIHS officials, one from Sudan and the other from Yemen, were deported in 2006 for having channelized from Bangladesh over US \$ 700,000 to local and foreign terrorist organizations. RIHS was forced to close its operations in Bangladesh thereafter.

Earlier, Bank accounts of RIHS in Pakistan were sealed for its al Qaeda links. Another Islamic NGO Al Harmain Islamic Foundation had to wind up its operations in Bangladesh under US pressure as it was suspected to have funded the 9/11 al Qaeda attack. Even former Finance Minister Saifur Rahman said that a number of bank accounts in Bangladesh were under investigation for illegal transactions. Activities of the Islamic radicals will continue unabated until the sources of funds and patronage are identified and choked forever.

According to the US DoS 2009 report, rampant corruption and the widespread use of hawala or “hundi” system to transfer illegal money outside the formal banking system poses a significant money laundering risk and contributes significantly to terrorist financing in Bangladesh. Other financial and organized crimes such as smuggling, customs fraud and tax evasion are also associated with hundi and annually \$1 billion worth of dutiable goods are being smuggled into India with the aid of hundi system (US DoS, 2009).

According to SATP report, investment and business for raising funds for terrorist activities are evident. The JMB and its leaders invested in a large number of shrimp farms and cold storages in the south-western region of Bangladesh. They are also alleged to be involved in activities such as money laundering including Hundi operating from Dhaka, Jessore and Chittagong which ensures a steady flow of finances to its coffers. Funds through the Hundi (illegal money laundering mechanism) channel are generated through operatives in places such as Dhaka, Jessore and Chittagong.

It is well established that information technology facilitated the terrorist groups to mobilize their resources resources, influence people and use for terrorist violence. Available reports and studies show that Bangladeshi Islamist militants use latest technologies such as TV and radio channels, websites, and CD-DVDs (Quamruzzaman, 2010). The militants use bombs using explosives. Most of the groups have a military wing. They are trained in operations and tactics. The simultaneous bomb blasts in 63 out of 64 districts indicate their strengths and organizational networks in terms of use of communication technologies, explosives, training, recruitment, arms and financing.

The present government also found some private universities are linked with militancy. It is true that some madrassa students joined Afghan jihad and get involved in militant groups on return and used some madrassas as training camps. Aftermath of the 2005 August nationwide bomb, local and external media and intelligence sources accused madrassas.

3.8. Factors and Causes of Islamist Extremism and Terrorism

The issue of Islamist militancy and terrorism in Bangladesh is related to various factors. According to some key informants of the study, unemployment problem, poverty and illiteracy are the underlying factors and causes of Islamist militancy in Bangladesh. While some key informants view that madrassa education system can be associated with militancy, majority of the experts strongly denied the linkage between madrassa education and militancy.

According to one expert interviewee in this study, bad governance leads to terrorism. Several experts mentioned that many political leaders have link with terrorist groups. These are the internal factors mentioned by most of the key informants. According to some respondents, anti-Islam or anti-Muslim treatment or attack on Muslim countries by the US or other western countries as well as the anti-Americanism or anti-Israelis motivate terrorist groups to commit terrorist acts.

However, most of the journalistic and intelligence reports and some academic studies did not see militancy, insurgency and terrorism based on historical-empirical contexts of Bangladesh (Quamruzzaman, 2010).

According to Datta (2007), religious militancy is attached to Islamaization, growth of madrassas, upsurge of religious parties, perceived official patronage and Taliban/al-Qaida presence to the problem of religious militancy.

Quamruzzaman (2010) did not attach madrassa sector to the rise of Islamist militancy, rather he pointed out that the role of transnational Islamic charity organizations in funding madrassas and social organizations preaching and brainwashing distorted Islamic teachings and the presence of transnational Islamist political organizations like HUJI and Hizbut –ut-Tahrir bringing radical Islamist ideology in Bangladeshi politics are responsible for expanding international Islamist militant networks in the country. He referred to a study to refute the allegation against madrassas, he referred to the study findings that tertiary level students and their teachers in madrassa were concerned with politics, but with the overall development of the country.

Quamruzzaman (2010) identified poverty and resource deprivation, economic dislocation and social disorganization, political blame game and patronization, and easy access to arms and ideological apparatuses as the major factors of militia motivation in Bangladeshis.

According to him, the major causes of radicalization include widespread poverty, huge youth population and unemployment, confused religious identify, unregulated money flow, lack of freedom, democracy and political space, poor governance and the failure of the state to deliver and politicization of Islam (BIPSS website, www.bipss.org.bd).

Riaz (2008) examined the issue of Islamist militancy in Bangladesh. By mid-1980s Islamists appeared as a formidable political force. He sees the growth of Islamist militancy as the complex web of domestic, regional and international events and dynamics. The political culture characterized by historical patrimonialism, patron-client relationship based leadership and the rivalry BNP and AL relationship eroded public confidence in the democracy and has assisted the Islamists to envision an Islamist Bangladesh.

He associated four factors with the rise of Islamism as a political ideology: the crisis of hegemony of the Bangladeshi ruling class, the crisis of legitimacy of the post-1975 military regimes, the politics of expediency of the secularist parties, and the ineffective resistance of civil society.

He found Islamist are of three categories- mainstream (Jamaat e Islami Bangladeshi, (JIB), Bangladesh Tariqat Foundation and Zaker Party who participate in constitutional democracy); intermediate (Islami Oikyo Jote (IOJ), Islami Shashontantra Andolon (ISA), Hisbut-Tahrir who operate within democratic polity despite reservations; and militant (HUJI-B, JMJB, JMJB, Hizb-ut-Tawhid, Shahdat-i-Hiqma, and Jaish-e-Muhammad.

Among other domestic factors, the changing socio-political and cultural factors such as economic policies, the criminalization of politics, weak governance combined with cultural changes facilitated the Islamist to grow and allow militants to operate with impunity. He asserted the disturbing nexus between mainstream Islamists and the militants.

Among the regional factors affecting the rise of militancy, Riaz (2008) identified Bangladesh's relationship with its neighbors, particularly India, operation of various militants groups in neighboring countries, the ongoing rivalry relationship between India and Pakistan. He also brought the potential of Bangladesh to use against India (helping the IIGs) and the vice versa (Indian

intelligence agency to assist Bangladeshi rebels). The unsolved Kashmir issue and the use of Pakistan based militant groups to bleed in India, the arms smuggling that give access to weapons by militants are also important here.

Riaz (2008) also associated ideological and material influence of international factors on the rise of Islamist militancy – ideological support from a transnational terrorist group called HUJI, the financial support from the Gulf based Islamic charities, the return of Afghan war veterans in the 1980s due to Anti-Soviet mobilization by the USA, known and unknown foreign funds supporting militants and their activities.

3.9. Laws, statues and conventions related to terrorism

Before 2008, Bangladesh did not have any law to address the contemporary pressing issue of militancy and terrorism. The existing Criminal Code and politically driven laws like the Special Powers Act of 1974, the Public Safety Act 2000, Speedy Tribunal Act and the Suppression of Terrorist Offences Act, 1992 were used to punish terrorist offences. In 1992, Bangladeshi National Parliament - Jatiyo Sangsad (JS) enacted the Suppression of Terrorist Offences Act, 1992 for two years with provision of further extension. The definition of terrorist offence in the 1992 Act is not what the UN uses or other countries mean by terrorism in their anti-terrorism laws (Patriot Act 2001 of USA, Anti-Terrorism Act of 2001 of Canada). Many including human rights organizations argue that without having an agreed meaning of terrorism, it is difficult to enact laws against terrorism or an act as terrorism (Khan, 2007). Various human rights organization including Odhikar and Ain-o-Salish Kendra (ASK) and political parties

blamed the government for not doing public consultation before enacting laws and also raised the issue of misuse of the law against a cross section of people including opposition activists, teachers, journalists and human rights defenders and violation of human rights(<http://www.sai.uni-heidelberg.de/bdlaw/1994-a21.htm>).

Despite expiry of the act, the government used it to oppress opposition party people. The Act defines terrorism broadly by including crime like mugging, arson, public property damage which could be dealt with the criminal code.

However, with respect to counter-terrorism, it has approved some bills/acts in 2005, such as the Law and Order Disruption Crimes (Speedy Trial/Amendment) Act 2005, Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing Prevention Bill 2005, Anti-terrorism Bill 2005, and Bangladesh Telecommunications (Amendment Ordinance) 2005. The BNP-led Alliance government also formed RAB having members form armed forces (Army, Navy, Air Force), one border service (the BGB, erstwhile BDR), and police to counter serious criminal and terrorist activities. Human rights organizations and activists raised the issue of violation of human rights for using these laws to punish general crimes which were supposed to be under general criminal law of the land– the criminal code, the Penal Code. Bangladesh also acceded to 11 international (the UN) anti-terrorism conventions, of which 3 were signed in 2005 (Khan, 2007).

Two important laws -the Anti-terrorism Ordinance (ATO) and the Money Laundering Prevention Ordinance (MLPO) were first promulgated by the military-backed Caretaker Government in 2008. The 2008 Anti-terrorism Ordinance (ATO) and the 2009 Terrorism Prevention Act and amended 2011 Terrorism Prevention Act are in fact anti terrorism laws to address the issues of militancy and terrorist outfits, their links and activities. Most of these acts were abused by different governments to revenge against political opponents. Due to serious implications of money laundering, the Money Laundering Prevention Act 2002 came into force on April 5, 2002 with the provisions of empowering Bangladesh Bank –the central bank to conduct investigations into money laundering cases and supervise all financial transactions, establishing money laundering court, legal seizure of property, government's agreement with a foreign country and punishment for violating the law (The New Age, 29 December 2005 as cited in BISS, 2010).

The ATO 2008 provides penalty for offences like arms running, financing terror attacks, committing murders and creating panic and endangering national sovereignty and creation of a special tribunal to put terrorists on trial (BIPSS, 2010). It provides punishment for being associated with proscribed groups, financing terrorism and death penalty as the maximum punishment.

Since the present AL Government came in power in December 2008, the Terrorism Prevention Act 2009 was passed in the very first session of the current Parliament on February 24, 2009. On July 11, 2011, The Cabinet also approved the draft ‘The Anti-terrorism Act 2011’ amending the Terrorism Prevention Act 2009’’ to stop use of Bangladeshi land for conducting any terrorist activities inside the country or other countries. This act keeps the provision of death sentence as the maximum punishment to control terrorism and abuse of arms and explosives that poses a threat to national security. The Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina’s promise with India not to patron Indian Insurgent Groups(IIGs) for using Bangladeshi soil and arms and training support to conduct terrorist activities in India is also reflected in this government's counter terrorism initiatives.

3.10. Law enforcement measures against religious militancy and terrorism

Arrest of Islamist militants has been continued as the most visible law enforcement measure since 2003. The exact statistics of the group operatives may not be possible to estimate as these groups change names or members change groups time to time. Our content analysis revealed that out of 1040 arrests in 10 years (2003-2012), JMB arrestees constitute the majority (583 Terrorists) followed by HuT (163 Terrorists). HT (108 Terrorists), HUIB (43 Terrorists) and JMJB (34 Terrorists). It is found that most of the LeT arrestees were foreign nationals (Pakistan and India).

According to the content analysis, majority of the arrests (227 Terrorists) are made in 2010, followed by the year 2007 (215 Terrorists), 2009 (166 Terrorists), 2006 (154 Terrorists), 2005 (103 Terrorists) 2003 (82 Terrorists), 2008 (77 Terrorists) and 2004 (16 Terrorists). Table 3.10.1 presents the number of arrests based on media reports for the period 2003 to 2012, which represents three governments - BNP government (2003-2006), Care Taker Government (2007-2008) and the present Awami League government. The content analysis show that militant groups has started their activities from 1992 and some terrorist attacks occurred in 1999 and 2000 (Table 3.10.1), but arrests of Islamist militants before 2003 were not held.

AL Government in their previous tenure (1996-2001) did not play any serious role. The content analysis indicates that since the nationwide bomb blast in 2005, most of the arrests were held during the current Awami League Government (2009-2012), followed the Caretaker Government (2007-2008) and the BNP-alliance Government (2005-2006) and it can be estimated that before August 2005 terrorist attacks, more than 100 arrests were made during the BNP regime. (2003-2005). Six (6) top leaders of JMB were sentenced to death during the BNP coalition government.

Table: 3.10.1
Year wise Number of Arrests by terrorists Groups/Outfits (2003 – 2012)

Year	JMB	HT	HuT	HUJIB	AHAB	Allahr Dal	JMJB	Other	Total	Others include
2003	31	28						23	82	Al Hikma, Tamir-ul Din
2004	7						3	6	16	Amra Dhakabasi
2005	41			2	2		12	46	103	Harkat-ul-Ansar
2006	134	10		5			4	1	154	
2007	154	7	22	12		9	1	3	215	HAO, Jadid al Qaeda
2008	30	2	10	10		20		5	77	
2009	99	11	10			2		44	166	Dawat-e-Islam, Islam-o-Muslim, HM
2010	46	29	66	8		37		41	227	JeM, QEF, HM, MUMQ
2011	41	21	55	6		23	15		165	HuT, JeM,
2012	583	108	163	43	2	91	34	169	1255	

Bangladesh Enterprise Institute (BEI) in its report “Trend in Terrorist in Bangladesh August 2007-2008” mentioned that the execution of JMB leaders has substantially reduced the number of bomb attacks. Between 2007 and 2008, seventeen (17) terrorists were sentenced to death while 86 others were sentenced to varying jail terms. According to police sources, 435 Islamist terrorists were arrested on charges of terrorism during 6 years from 1998, but none of them has been convicted because of a lack of political will and a lack of coordination between different investigating agencies (The Prothom Alo, 26 February 2005).

According to Bangladesh Enterprise Institute (BEI), 104 Islamists were arrested with highest number from HT (46 percent) from August 17, 2005 countrywide attacks up to February 2008 (SATP Bangladesh Timeline Year 2008, from www.satp.org). Due to unavailability of official data on arrests, based on the content analysis of accessible reports, it is found that the number of arrests increased from 82 in 2003 to 227 in 2010 except in 2004 and 2008 (Table 3.10.1).

According to Bangladesh Police and RAB sources, since the nationwide 459 time bombs in 63 out of 64 districts on August 17, 2005, 356 cases have been filed against around 800 JMB members and law enforcers have so far arrested 656 of them. Of the cases, 142 cases were filed in connection with the August 17 blasts against 443 JMB leaders and operatives. According to the then Home

Minister Lutfozzaman Babar, 229 cases were registered in connection with the August 17, 2002, bomb blasts, 642 militants were arrested and 22 were convicted and sentenced to death by rapid action tribunals (Raman, 2006). Out of 229 cases, 52 were against Abdur Rahman, 48 against Bangla Bhai and 28 against Aatur Rahman Sunny. Among the 142 cases, the courts pronounced verdicts in 78 cases giving death sentence to 24 accused, life term imprisonment to 92 and imprisonment to 77 others on different terms. Besides, 171 of the accused were acquitted. The senior police officials admitted that JMB still has roots, but they have no strength to carry out ant subversive activities at this moment due to the arrests of its members of all tiers in massive crackdowns (*The Daily Star, August 17, 2011*).

It is true religious fundamentalism, extremism and radicalization were run in the cover of religion, and the government and political parties are likely not to affect their political support. However, it is found that the government proscribed some militant organizations and some individuals from foreign organizations in the 1990s or before. Intelligence agencies also suggested for banning some outfits in 2003 or before.

In 2001 during the AL regime, police arrested one civilian linked with Osama bin Laden and 80 Islamic fundamentalist leaders including IOJ top two leaders in a crackdown on religious fundamentalists and killing of police personnel. BNP came in power in 2001. On September 23, 2002, police arrested 7 Arab nations working with Islamic NGO Al Hermann Islamic Institute for their involvement in arms training to students following the intelligence reports (SATP Bangladesh Time line Year 2002 retrieved from www.satp.org).

Table: 3.10.2
No. of Convicts by Type of Sentences (2006-2014)

Type of Sentences	No. of Convicts	Percents
Death	19	11.45
Life imprisonment	77	46.39
20—48 years	37	22.29
10—19 years	22	13.25
7—8 years	11	6.63
Total	166	100

Due to unavailability of official data on convictions and sentencing, the number of arrests, type of sentences, the charges for which the militants were arrested and accused, and the group to whom the convicts belong to, and the laws under which the cases are dealt with, it is difficult to summarize the data quantitatively. Table 3.10.1 and Table 3.10.2 present the number of militants convicted and type of sentences awarded during the period of 5 years (2006-2010) to understand the execution of militants. During this five-year period (2006-2010), out of 166 persons sentenced, 19 were death sentences, 77 were life imprisonment sentences and 70 persons were imprisonment for the period between 7 years and 48 years (Table 5.2).

The nature of punishment seems to be severe as the majority of the convicts (46.39 percent) got life imprisonment followed by 20-48 years of imprisonment (22.29 percent), 10-19 years of imprisonment (13.25 percent) and deaths (11.45 percent) and 7-8 years (6.63 percent). In only 6 cases, fine was added and the amount of fine ranges from 5,000 taka to 20,000 taka (Table 3.10.2). JMB, HT, HuT, AHAB and HUIB activists are convicted for most of these cases.

From Table 4.3 it is found that most of the cases for which sentences were awarded in the period 2006 -2010 included August 17, 2005 serial bomb blasts, killing of judges and civilians, killing of cultural activists, 2004 grenade attack in Sylhet, cinema hall bombing in 2005, attack on AL rally, and for carrying arms, recovery of explosives. Most of these cases were under Explosives Act, Speedy Tribunal, and Arms Act. There was no case under money laundering or anti-terrorism act so far. Only in 2010, one case was tried under the ATO.

But many incidents since 1999 (Table 3.2.2) seem to be not yet executed. While the government thinks the execution of militants will reduce militancy, the recent prescheduled procession and posting of leaflets containing various calls including establishment of Khilafat system (an Islamic system of governance) through ousting the present government across the capital by a banned religious outfit - Hizb ut-Tahrir (HuT) Bangladesh does not reflect the effects of anti-militancy measures of the current government.

According to press reports, around 60 activists in the capital's Paltan area gathered to hold a rally at Muktangon at 12:30pm (The Daily Star, August 14, 2011). Police arrested 15 activists of the outfit filed a case against the 15 arrestees under the Speedy Trial Act, 2002 for obstructing policemen in discharging their duties and assaulting them. The Committee on Resistance and Correction Militancy (CRCM) thinks if the militants are arrested regularly, they would lose strengths (The Daily Star, October 6, 2010). According to police and RAB

Table: 3.10.3
Numerical Convicts and Type of Sentences (2006 – 2010)

Year	No.of persons convicted and type of sentence	Terrorist groups/outfits	Charges
2006	36 (Life imprisonment)	JMB,AHAB	August 17, 2005 serial bomb blast August 27 bombing in Thakurgaon
	1 (20 Years)	JMB	For possessing a powerful bomb
	1 (17 years)	JMB	For processing firearms, ammunition and explosives
	2 (48 years)	JMB	August 17, 2005 serial bomb blast
	3 (12 years)	JMB	
	10 (Death)	JMB	Killing of 2 judges in Jhalkhati Killing of a trader in September 2004 in Jamalpur
2007	1(30 Years)	JMB	Possessing bomb-making materials and explosives in his house in Rajshahi City in November 2005
	1 (40 Years)		Chittagon court house bomb explosion
	6 (Death)	JMB	Convicted of killing 2 judges in Jhalkhati
	8 (Charged)	JMB, HUIB	Serial bombing in movie theatre in Mymensingh August 17, 2005 bomb blasts s in Dhaka
	4 (Life)	JMB	August 17, 2005 serial bomb blast
	8 (10 years)	JMB	August 17, 2005 serial bomb blast
	4 (14 years)	JMB	Recovery of explosives
	3 (Death)	JMB	Killing 8 people of the cultural group Udichi and Shata .Shilpi Ghosti in Netrokona in December 2005
2008	3 (31, 5, 10 years) Fine Tk.10,000/- , Tk.5000/	JMB	For bombings at Udichi and Shatadal Shilpi Ghosti in Netrokona, in December 2005
	11 (life with fine 20,000 taka	JMB	A sedition case taking combat training to fight against the state in July 2005.
	4 (20 years with fine Tk.5000/-)	HUJI-B	for possessing arms and explosives in Magura
	6 (Life)	JMB	Murder of a rickshaw puller during August 17, 2005 bomb blasts in Chapai Nawabganj
	4 (20years)	HUJI-B	
	6 (Charged)	HUJI-B	2004 grenade attack in front of Gulshan Centre in Sulhet
2009	13 (Life)	JMB	August 17, 2005 serial blasts
	1 (20 years)	JMB	Explosives
	5 (20 years, fine BDT 20000)		August 17, 2005Bogra,2009
	1 (15 years)	JMB	
	5 (14 years)	JMB	Explosives Kishoreganj
	2 (10 years)	JMB	August 17, 2005 serial blasts in Chittagong
	1 (10 years, fine 500BDT)	JMB	August 17, 2005 serial blasts in Chittagong
5 (8 years)	JMB	August 17, 2005 serial blasts Cox's Bazar	

2010	2 (Life)	JMB	Arms case Dinajpur
	5 (Life, BDT 20,000 fine)	JMB	August 17, 2005 bomb blasts Bogra, 2010 .
	2 (37 years)	JMB	Arms and ammunition
	2 (32 years)	JMB	August 17, 2005 bomb Mymensingh
	14 (20 years)	JMB	2 for 2003 bomb blasts in Dinajpur, 3 for explosives possessing, 9 for arms act and explosive act.
	5 (7 years)	JMB	3 for August 17, 2005 bpmb in Natore, 2 for explosives use in robbery in Dhaka
	1 (charged)	HUJIB	August 7, 2004 AL rally blast

The figures are subject to fluctuation depending on the nature of sources. sources, around 350 leaders and activists, including the organization's chief coordinator Mohiuddin Ahmed, senior leaders Golam Moula, Kazi Morshedul Huq and Mahmudul Bari, have been arrested since the ban imposed on the Islamist outfit and claimed that Hizb ut-Tahrir is in no position to hold the rally and procession as announced in the posters (The Daily Star, August 4, 2011).

3.11. Measures against extremism and terrorism

Denial of the presence of militant groups is a customary tradition of the government to avoid any blame. The ruling alliance denied the presence of militant groups and al-Qaeda or Taliban presence in the country, only after the international pressure posed by the donors in Washington, first initiative was taken against militant groups by banning two militant outfits – JBM and JMJB along with arrests of militants, Huji-B was overlooked (Datta, 2007). Opposition political leaders and even the ruling part MPs pointed that political parties have militant elements (Datta, 2007).

The current government is very strict against using Bangladeshi soil by any terrorists. They came with a mandate to war on terror. The present prime minister and AL government already undertook various measures to uproot extremism and prevent terrorism. It banned 14 terror outfits in 2009. The government formed a committee for combating militancy. The Committee for Resistance and Correction Militancy comprising secretaries of the ministries of home, education, law, religious affairs, social welfare, LGRD and cooperatives, and information, the Inspector General of Police, chiefs of Directorate General of Forces Intelligence (DGFI), Bangladesh Rifles (BDR), Ansar and VDP, National Security Intelligence, Rapid Action Battalion, and the director general of Prime Minister's Office. The committee under took various initiatives that include campaign to make people aware about extremism and continual drives against militants as well as investigation of militants' bank transaction.

It is learnt that the education ministry is taking steps to expand the on-going anti-militancy campaign to schools and other educational institutions at the grassroots through publicizing booklets and leaflets against the menace. The Islamic Foundation, Bangladesh took initiatives to expedite the anti-militancy campaign through Imams of various mosques in the city and some other districts. All imams and other religious leaders across the country were being briefed on militancy so that they could preach their followers in mosques, especially after the Jumma (Friday) prayers, that militancy was anti-Islamic to create mass awareness about the misinterpretation of Islam.

The government had launched a socio-political campaign involving religious leaders, teachers, students and local administration against the militancy. The Islamic Foundation is publishing leaflets while the information ministry is working for developing short-films to create mass awareness against militancy. Local administrations—Deputy Commissioners, Upazila Nirbahi

Officers and police— and lawmakers and heads of the educational institutions are holding meetings for effective campaign in their respective areas to uproot extremists from the society. The members of Ansar are trained by Deputy Commissioners (DCs) so that they can engage grassroots people at union level to fight against the militants (The New Age, October 6, 2010).

The present government has been making efforts to work with South Asian counterparts to fight against terrorism. In inaugurating the APGC (Asia Pacific Group) conference on financing militancy and terrorism in Dhaka, the Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said that terrorism is not confined to a boundary and hence cannot be curbed by a country alone. She pointed out that terrorism is causing huge threat of security in South Asia as well as global security. Outlining the loss of lives and property, she pointed out that despite the resource constraints huge amount of money is being spent in combating terrorism. She also Bangladesh has passed the Anti-Money-laundering Act for the first time in South Asia (The prothom Alo, October 26, 2010).

Both prime ministers condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and underscored the need to tackle the security issue by giving no opportunity to use either territory by militants, insurgents, terrorists and criminals be they domestic or foreign (India-Bangladesh Joint Statement, January 2010 Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, New Delhi).

On January 28, 2009, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in her 1st session of the 9th Parliament expressed her bold position to root out militancy by finding out militants' patrons, financiers and sources of illegal arms and ammunition. Referring the AL manifesto and her government's election pledge to curve terrorism, she also asked authorities concerned to take steps to form South Asian Anti-terrorism Taskforce. On February 20 in the same year, the Home Ministry formed a 3 –member committee to investigate the JMB activities, their actors, financiers and arms and explosives suppliers. The security agencies identified 33 militant groups (Bangladesh Timeline Year 2009, from www.satp.org/satporgtp/bangladesh/timeline/2009.htm).

On March 16, 2009, the Government identified 12 militant outfits and banned 12 militant organizations in April 2010. The Government formed a 17-member high profile committee called the National Committee on Militancy Resistance and Prevention to tackle militancy in the country and mobilize public opinion against terrorist activities.

Expressing zero tolerance against the twin problem of militancy and terrorism, the Government announced a three-phase program to be undertaken in short-medium and long terms. On July 20, 2009, the Home Ministry ordered an intelligence agency to investigate Faruqqi Welfare Foundation – a charity founded by HUJI-B on June 29, 2008. On April 1, 2010, the Government planned to deploy 6 million Ansar (voluntary paramilitary force) and VDP (Village Defense Party) members to combat militancy. The CRCM also inquired into any local bank is used by the network.

3.12. Conclusion

Terrorism is the cruelest of crimes, which is designed to threaten the personal safety of its target. Terrorism, which was a domestic phenomenon, is now considered as a threat to global peace and security. In Bangladesh, terrorism is not just an issue of Islamist militancy and it is not only associated with Islamist terrorist groups only. Islamic extremism, threat of fundamentalist elements and the sharp increase in the number of terrorist attacks in recent years deteriorated the international image of Bangladesh as a moderate secular Muslim country. Some scholars argue that a number of international media, intelligence reports and studies portrayed Bangladesh as a new hub for Islamist militancy devoid of any socio-political and historical contexts.

Fortunately Bangladesh has not witnessed any lethal terrorist like Pakistan or India. Bangladesh has not been portrayed by the international community, media or security institutes as a risky country. It is not in the extreme risk category of 20 countries as per the latest Terrorism Risk Index (TRI) of 2011 released by the respected British risk analysis and mapping firm Maplecroft (http://maplecroft.com/about/news/terrorism_index_2011.html).

Maplecroft's TRI rated Neighbor South Asian countries – Pakistan, Afghanistan and India rated 1st, 3rd and 18th respectively. The International Crisis Group reported about the threat from JMB (International Crisis Group, 2010). Indian scholars, media and government reports are found much concerned about Islamist militant networks with Pakistan and India, links with IIGs and these are very expected in the midst of the bilateral counter-terrorism initiatives since AL came to power.

Above discussion the study recommended for a comprehensive anti-militancy and counter-terrorism strategy balancing enforcement, intervention and prevention. The existing approaches seem to be law enforcement-centric. Catching and execution of militants is effective but cannot be sustainable solution. Banning militant outfits, catching militants, sealing bankaccount, and anti-money laundering can be some short-term solutions, but these may not prevent religious militancy. This is evident from the recent media and intelligence reports that despite various enforcement measures, militant outfits are reorganized and operating activities.

According to newspaper reports from 2010 and 2011, security forces have been arresting militants of banned outfits like Hizb-ut Tahrir, Allahar Dal, for their involvement in militant activities including recruitment, dawati activities (invitation) and distributing jihadi books, CDs, leaflets.

This fact indicates that what the Committee for Resistance and Correction Militancy and the law enforcement agencies think that militancy is under control and arresting the militants would curb terrorism is not true. The government has undertaken various initiatives, but effective short, medium and long term well-coordinated plans are needed.

CHAPTER FOUR: CASE STUDY ON EXTREMISM GROUP BASED ON AVAILABLE MEDIA AND INTELLIGENCE REPORTS

Introduction

Terrorism is one of the extreme forms of crime, since it involves serious violence against civilians. The terrorist activities by the religious militant groups. Since the mid-1990, terrorism has become a hot topic for research . Research on Religious extremism is connected to terrorism as well as focused on the issues of religious militancy, organized crime, and financial crime. In modern times, militants and terrorists are synonymously used.

Religious extremism and terrorism are not new to either Bangladesh or other South Asian countries such as Pakistan, India, Bhutan, Nepal, Myanmar and Sri Lanka. Various religious, ethno-national and political rebel outfits, militant groups or insurgent groups have been operating in these countries and many of these groups are interlinked . Despite terrorism being a subject of considerable public debate for a long time, counter terrorism strategies has become the major governmental priority in these countries to combat terrorism for national, regional and international interests.

Since 1999, Bangladesh has witnessed the rise of religious extremism groups and terrorist outfits both homegrown and internationally linked including al-Qaeda. Evidences suggest that terrorist attacks have increased from 1999 to 2006. The mass-media, academics, researchers, politicians and the government have not seriously brought the menace of Islamist militancy and terrorism in Bangladesh before 2000s, but aftermath the country-wide showdown of force and strength by two Islamist militant organizations – the Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) and the Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh (JMJB) in 2005.

Various reports by local and international media and intelligence sources claimed that Bangladesh has been facing the rise of Islamist militancy, Talibanization by Islamist militants, becoming another Afghanistan, becoming a regional terrorist hub linked with al-Qaeda or pro-bin Laden Jihadi terrorism It is found that the rise of religious militancy and terrorism are linked to various factors, such as domestic, regional and international.

The study by [redacted] pointed out that Islamist militancy is the result of both errors of omission (the state, politicians and the civil society failed to do things that could have stemmed the rise of militancy) and errors of commission (the state, politicians, and the civil society did things that worsened the situation).

This field is too complex, connected between religious extremism and terrorism, multi-faceted and multi-dimensional in terms of forms, causes, patterns, consequences, organization, and networks.

Therefore, no single study can adequately explain religious militancy in Bangladesh. Necessary data and appropriate subjects for studying such topic is always an issue. As a result, there is hardly any rigorous scientific study on terrorism in Bangladesh.

Most of the studies on terrorism were descriptive in nature. Given these limitations, the present study made efforts to explore the linkages between Islamist militancy and terrorism in Bangladesh by looking at the growth of numbers and outfits, the links with regional and international groups, the sources of funding, the patterns, trends and causes of Islamist militancy and terrorism as well as the government responses to address the problem of terrorism.

4.1 Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami Bangladesh (HuJI-B)

The Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami-Bangladesh (HuJI-B) is a militant organisation active mostly in Bangladesh since 1992. The HuJI-B can be called as the Bangladesh chapter of the Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami (HuJI), which is believed to have been formed in 1980s by the Islamists of Pakistan, who fought against the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) in Afghanistan. Initially, the HuJI operated as a group of supporters of the Afghanistan's fight against the Soviet forces. Those days, it used to work under the umbrella of an organisation called as the Jama'atul Ansar Afghani (JAA) (group of helpers).

It is also believed that in the later stage, with the active support of the Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence (ISI), the JAA was rechristened as the HuJI in 1988. According to the available sources, by the year 1988, when the Soviet forces left Afghanistan, the HuJI was believed to have the strength of about 4,000 cadres. In the 1980s, the HuJI mostly restricted its activities in Afghanistan only. In the later stage, it tried to expand its base and activities in different parts of the South Asian region.

The HuJI-B is the result of the expansion project of the HuJI which was guided by an ideological orientation towards the belief in waging a war for the Muslims in the non-Muslim countries. The HuJI-B, however, came to the notice only in the year 1992, and got prominence in 1999 when it engineered a plot to kill one of the renowned secularist poets of Bangladesh, Shamsur Rahman. Again, the group's presence was felt in a big way when it plotted to kill the then Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina, by planting a bomb on 20 July 1999.

Genesis of HuJI-B The formation of HuJI-B is an outcome of the expansionist project of the HuJI. The HuJI-B formally declared its existence in 1992 when a group of Bangladeshi Islamist fighters in the Afghan war declared it at a press conference in Dhaka on 30 April 1992. Such a declaration was made immediately a week after the mujahideens in Afghanistan emerged victorious against the Soviet force. The group of people who were present in this meeting were: Abdus Salam, president of HuJI-B; field commander, Manzur Hasan; Dhaka city unit president, Maulana Delwar Hossain; publicity secretary, Mufti Shafiqur Rahman; and Maulana Mufti Abdul Hye.

It was in this meeting that the HuJI-B declared that the first-ever Bangladesh mujahideen group was formed by Abdur Rahman with the help of the HuJI in 1984. He, however, died in 1989 in the Afghan war. Similarly, the meeting also identified the members of the HuJI-B and demanded from the then government, led by the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), to recognise the mujahideen government in Afghanistan and show proper respect to the Bangladesh "martyrs" in Afghan war and establish a complete Islamic state in Bangladesh.

Ideology of HuJI-B: HuJI-B aims to establish Islamic *Hukumat* (rule) in Bangladesh by waging war and killing progressive intellectuals. It draws inspiration from bin Laden and the erstwhile Taliban regime of Afghanistan. At one point of time, the groups issued a slogan, *Amra Sobai Hobo Taliban, Bangla Hobe Afghanistan* (We will all become Taliban and we will turn Bangladesh into Afghanistan). HuJI-B recruits are indoctrinated in the mould of radical Islam.

The HuJI-B has both a military and non-military wing for carrying out its operations. The military wing is meant for waging an armed jihad, whereas the non-military wing is engaged in the propaganda business. The non-military wing, again, has two sections: *dawat* (inviting someone to Islam) and *irshad* (religious preaching). The HuJI-B, like any other Islamic radical/militant group, believes that the ideas of secularism, composite culture and democracy are un-Islamic. Hence, it has targeted a number of scholars, politicians and cultural celebrations.

Leadership and Strength: Among the leaders of the HuJI-B, Fazlur Rahman was the most important one under whose leadership HuJI-B worked during the initial years. Some of the founding members of the HuJI-B were: Shaikhul Hadith Allama Azizul Haq, who was also associated with the Islami Oikyo Jote (IOJ) and a member of the former ruling coalition led by the BNP; Muhammad Habibur Rahman of Sylhet; ataur Rahman Khan of Kishoreganj; Sultan Jaok of Chittagong; Abdul Mannan of Faridpur; and Habibullah of Noakhali. It is also important to mention that it was under the leadership of Fazlur Rahman that the HuJI-B signed the official document of Osama bin Laden of armed jihad against the US on 23 February, 1998.

According to the available sources, in the subsequent years, Shawkat Osman alias Sheikh Farid was appointed as its leader and Imtiaz Quddus was appointed as the general secretary. Sheikh Farid was arrested by the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) of Bangladesh on 26 April 2011 from Ghazipur district. Similarly, another colleague of Sheikh Farid, Abdul Hannan, and the recruitment and secret training coordinator, Ainul Haq, was arrested on 25 April 2011 from Dhaka. Golam Mustafa was also an important leader of the HuJI-B and the chief of the United Kingdom (UK) unit. He, was arrested on 15 April 2010. The counter-terrorism initiatives by the Sheikh Hasina-led Awami League (AL) government have forced the leadership of the HuJI-B to go underground. However, according to the intelligence sources of Bangladesh, Maulana Yahiya has been given the charge of the HuJI-B. He received training in Pakistan in 1998 and on returning home, joined HuJI-B. He is also believed to have gone to Afghanistan and taken part in Afghan war against the Soviet Union along with Mufti Hannan and Sheikh Farid.

According to the HuJI-B militants, arrested on various occasions, the organisation has about 15,000 members. However, this number cannot be verified. The arrest of 41 HuJI-B operatives with a huge arms cache at Cox's Bazar on 19 January 1996 and the recovery of some 76 kg bomb from Gopalganj on 20 July 2000 are indicative of the fact that the HuJI-B has a huge amount of explosives capable of causing major damage to Bangladesh. So far as the armed cadres of the HuJI-B are concerned, they are expected to be 700 in number. These 700 armed cadres are mainly Bangladeshis, Rohingya Muslims from the Arakan are of Myanmar and Pattani Muslims from southern Thailand. There are some estimates which say that out of the strength of 15,000 cadres, 2,000 can be described as hardcore.

Cadres: Although there is no authoritative information on the actual cadre strength, most reports mention it to be around 15,000. Several of these recruits were trained in the Kormi and Kasia areas of Bangladesh. Further, many hundred recruits were reportedly trained at various training camps in Afghanistan, primarily during the reign of the Taliban.

Both local residents and foreigners are recruited into the HuJI-B. Besides, refugees from Myanmar are a significant source of cadres for the outfit. They include stateless Rohingyas, whose families have fled Myanmar over the years allegedly due to religious persecution. Cadres of the HuJIB are primarily recruited from various *Madrassas* (seminaries). The *Madrassas* essentially impart religious training and most of them are financed by Arab charities. Reports also indicate that many HuJI-B recruits have seen ‘action’ in the Indian State of Jammu and Kashmir, Chechnya and Afghanistan.

Area of Operation: The HuJI-B is believed to have its main operational bases in the coastal areas stretching from Chittagong to Cox’s Bazar to Myanmar. Reportedly, the HuJI-B has six training camps in the hills of Chittagong and six more in and around Cox’s Bazar area. Moreover, HuJI-B has a very strong network in various madrassas and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). According to a Bengali daily newspaper, Prothom Alo, the HuJI-B had its camps in Bandarban, Naikhangchari, Ukhia, Dailpara, Chandgaon and Khatunganj.

Abul Kalam Azad alias Bulbul, who was believed to be the “chief trainer” of the HuJI-B till 2005, revealed to the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) that his activities were based in Borodah Dakhil madrassa in Shailakupa subdistrict of Jhenidah district and gave training to some 65 cadres at the bank of Kumar river. He also revealed to have trained at Balidapara Quami madrassa in Kaliganj subdistrict, Bhabanipur in Harinakundu subdistrict and some students’ messes in Pabahati, Chaklapara, Dhol-Somudrer-Pukur and Bhuttiargati areas of Jhenidah district.

Network and Funding: The HuJI-B has a very strong network at the national level and outside Bangladesh as well. At the national level, it has been successful in garnering support from like-minded militant groups and the politic groups which, in a way, supported the activities of the outfit by ignoring them. So far the links with the militant groups are concerned, the HuJI-B maintains a very strong link with the Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB). Since its emergence as a

militant organisation, the HuJI-B has been getting support from the Rohingya Solidarity Organisation (RSO). Reportedly, the cadres of the HuJI-B have merged with other militant organisations after a ban being imposed on them.

At the political level, the HuJI-B got support from political parties like the Jamaat-e-Islami (JeI) and IOJ, when both the parties were part of the BNP-led government. There have been a number of instances where these two parties tried their best to cover up the activities of the HuJI-B. The HuJI-B carried out an attack on a rally of the AL on 21 August 2004 which killed 23 individuals and injured more than 150. In this case, the investigation under the direct supervision of the then state minister for home arrested some individuals, including two of AL members.

Ironically, another investigation agency found out “foreign hand” behind the attack. There have been instances where the political leaders belonging to JeI have gone on record to say that “Bangla Bhai was the creation of the media”. On 11 September 2005, the JeI lawmaker, Riasat Ali Biswas, said in the Parliament that “Reports of militant training of JMB and HuJI-B to turn Bangladesh into an Islamic State is nothing but Propaganda”. Moreover, some of the HuJI-B leaders were also leaders of the BNP-led four-party alliance.

Prominent among them were IOJ leader, Shaikhul Hadith Allama Azziul Haq; Bangladesh Khelafat Majlish (Bangladesh Caliphate Council) second-in- command, Muhammad Habibur Rahman; Aatur Rahman Khan; Sultan Jaok; Abdul Mannan; and Habibullah. Outside Bangladesh, the HuJI-B has a strong link with the HuJI Pakistan, which is quite obvious. At the same time, HuJI-B is also believed to have support from the ISI Pakistan. An investigation report by the CID of Bangladesh has revealed that of the 32 Arges grenades sent to HuJI-B by Pakistan-based militant outfit, Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), most were used in at least seven major terror attack in 2004–05. Investigators unearthed this while trying to get to the source of the grenade used in the killing of AL leader and former Finance Minister, S.A.M.S.

Kibria. This report provides credible evidence of the link between HuJI-B and the LeT. The arrest of one LeT leader in October 2009 in Dhaka and a subsequent statement from the LeT militant revealed that it had links with the HuJI-B and they were planning for a terror network in the region.

Similarly, there have been reports suggesting HuJI-B having links with militant groups in South Asia in general, and India in particular. In May 2002, some nine radical Islamist groups, including HuJI-B, Bangladesh Islamic Manch. This newly formed radical association was believed to have included a group representing the Rohingyas of Myanmar and the Muslim United Liberation Tigers of Assam (MULTA). So far the funding of the HuJI-B is concerned, reportedly, it receives financial assistance from Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Afghanistan through some NGOs like Adarsa Kutir, Al Faruk Islamic Foundation and Hataddin.

There are also reports suggesting financial help from the ISI for the HuJI-B. In the initial years of HuJI-B's existence, it was believed that the funding came from different organisations supported by Osama bin Laden via NGOs to construct madrassas and training camps. A Pakistani citizen, Mohammad Sajid, who was arrested for attacking poet Shamsur Rahman on 18 January 1999, told police that he received Taka 2 crore and gave it to someone called Bakhtiar. Bakhtiar, when arrested in Sirajganj the same year, confessed to police that he distributed the money among 421 madrassas for training cadres of HuJI-B. Apart from that, the HuJI-B has demanded Taka 400 million as extortion from Asha University located at Dhaka.

According to this report, two men claiming to be the cadres of the HuJI-B set a deadline of 17 October 2011 for the money and threatened to blow up the university if the university authorities failed to comply with such a demand. Besides extortion, HuJI-B also gets donations from its supporters and various madrassas. It is also involved in criminal activities like piracy, smuggling and small arms running in many parts of Bangladesh to raise funds.

The HuJI-B is also linked to another Islamist extremist outfit, the Asif Reza Commando Force (ARCF) that had claimed responsibility for the January 22, 2002-attack on the American Center in Kolkata, the capital of West Bengal. The arrest of Aftab Ansari alias Aftab Ahmed alias Farhan Malik, the prime accused in the attack, led to further information on the linkages between the Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM), Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) and the HuJI based in Pakistan and Bangladesh. Ansari is reportedly linked to the ISI and to JeM terrorist Omar Shiekh, convicted for the abduction and murder of American journalist Daniel Pearl, in Pakistan. Ansari was reportedly asked in August 2001 in Islamabad by Omar Sheikh to provide cover and logistics support for terrorist operations from Bangladesh. There have also been reports that a 25-member team of Taliban operatives reached Bangladesh in June 2001 to train HuJI-B cadres.

In Bangladesh, the HuJI-B is also known to have enjoyed the patronage of mainstream political parties such as the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and the Jamaat-e-Islami. HuJI-B ‘operations commander’ Mufti Hannan, subsequent to his arrest on October 1, 2005 was reported to have confessed that the country’s former home and the then commerce minister, Altaf Hossain Choudhury, had assured him of protection and guaranteed his freedom following his involvement in the assassination attempt of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in July 2000. The Jamaat-e-Islami, however, denies any links with the HuJI and dismisses such reports as propaganda.

Government Response: As mentioned earlier, the threat of HuJI-B was first felt in January 1999 when it attempted to kill a poet. Similarly, in the year 2000 also, it attempted to kill the then Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina. A number of terror activities were undertaken by the HuJI-B from 1999 to 2005. Ironically, the US blacklisted the HuJI as an international terrorist group in 2002. Again, the Bangladesh chapter of the HuJI, HuJI-B, was blacklisted by the US in 2003. But the Bangladesh government outlawed the organisation only in the year 2005 after growing pressure from political opponents of the BNP and international actors. The HuJI-B garnered support from the Islamic parties like the JeI and th IOJ and to some extent, the BNP. For example, the then Foreign Minister of Bangladesh, M. Morshed Khan, once said in 26 February 2005 “There maybe some local goons, working in the name of religion, who are being hunted down.

There is a difference between international terrorists and local goons. There are no international terrorists in the country”.¹⁹ There are many instances where it was found that political persons in the BNP-led government, mostly from the JeI and the IOJ, had links with the HuJI-B. The BNP-led government in Bangladesh banned the HuJI-B in 2005 following a countrywide blast on 17 August 2005, terming it as a “self-confessed militant organisation”. There are reports which claim that the Prime Minister, Khalida Zia, had held a meeting with the HuJI-B leaders who had called on her, after the ban. Further, a number of HuJI-B leaders, under a different banner, held a meeting in Dhaka with the government approval.

It is, however, important to mention that the law enforcement agencies have arrested a number of key leaders of the HuJI-B despite the support of the BNP-led government. Some of the important leaders who have been arrested by the law enforcement agencies are: the operations commander,

Mufti Abdul Hannan, in 2005; a key accomplice of Hannan, Abu Zandal, in 2008; one of the founding members of the HuJI-B, Abdus Salam, in 2009; and many others. The AL-led government has been committed towards counter-terrorism activities which are proving to be positive in controlling the activities of the HuJI-B. On 29 June 2011, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said that apart from banning five organisations (Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh [JMJB], JMB, Shahadat-e al Hiqma, HuJI-B and Hizb-ut-Tahrir [HuT]) for militant activities, the government is closely watching some other suspected organisations. She stated, “acts of militancy and terrorism will not be allowed on the soil of the country”.

In this connection, on 14 July 2011, a Dhaka court issued arrest warrants against BNP Senior Vice Chairman, Tarique Rahman, and 11 others in the 21 August 2004 grenade attack. The law enforcement agencies produced former State Minister for Home, Lutfozzaman Babar, JeI secretary general, Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojaheed, former BNP Deputy Minister, Abdus Salam Pintu, HuJI-B chief, Mufti Abdul Hannan, and 25 others before the court in this connection.

Current Status: The HuJI-B has not been involved in major acts of militancy in last few years. Soon after the ban imposed by the government, many of the cadres and leaders of the HuJI-B are believed to have joined other militant groups like JMB or are at large. The HuJI-B is suspected to have opened up a number of sleeper cells in Bangladesh which may pose serious security threats to Bangladesh. Though the law enforcement agencies have arrested many of the key leaders of the outfit, they are facing difficulties in catching more cadres of the HuJI-B as they do not come out openly.

Some of the former leaders of the HuJI-B have gone on to float a new political party, Islamic Democratic Party (IDP). Maulana Sheikh Abdus Salam, who was instrumental in floating the party, has been charge sheeted by Bangladesh court over 21 August 2004 grenade attack. A number of HuJI-B cadres and leaders who have been arrested by the law enforcement agencies have been punished. On 13 October 2011, a special tribunal in Brahmanbaria district sentenced six militants of HuJI-B to various terms of imprisonment in four separate cases. The convicts were identified as Shamsul Islam Mollah, Musa Miah, Maulana Hedayatullah, Saiful Islam Sajib alias Saifullah, Jamal Miah and Mizanur Rahman.

Though the militant activities of the HuJI-B have gone down drastically in Bangladesh, but still, HuJI-B maintains a full-fledged military wing and has spread into India for its activities. There have been in a number of occasions where HuJI-B's hand has been suspected by the security agencies. The Intelligence Bureau of India suspects that the HuJI-B is on a recruitment spree. Allegedly, some 150 youths of West Bengal have gone missing and they are suspected to have been trained by the HuJI-B for its anti-India activities.

The HuJI-B intensified its subversive activities after the Awami League formed the Government in June 1996. On February 19, 1996, HuJI-B activists were arrested with fire arms from Cox's Bazaar. The arrested cadres were sentenced to life imprisonment by a court, but all of them were released on bail by the High Court after the four-party alliance assumed power in October 2001.

Three HuJI-B cadres made a failed attempt on the life of poet Shamsur Rahman at his residence in Dhaka on January 18, 1999.

It was involved in a number of incidents, including the killing of journalist Shamsur Rahman, on July 16, 2000, in Jessore. Later, police arrested 10 HuJI-B activists and sealed its office at a Dhaka suburb, Khilgaon. Interrogations revealed that HuJI-B cadres had planned to kill 28 prominent intellectuals, including National Professor Kabir Choudhury, writer Taslima Nasreen and the Director General of the Islamic Foundation, Maulana Abdul Awal.

The HuJI-B has been accused of plotting twice to assassinate the then Prime Minister and AL supremo, Sheikh Hasina in July 2000. Security forces on July 20, 2000, during routine security checks, recovered explosive devices weighing 76-kilograms at or near the places she was scheduled to visit in her native Gopalganj district, including near the venue of a public meeting she was slated to address. The key suspect in the plot was Mufti Abdul Hannan. He had allegedly been instrumental in the manufacture of the explosives at a soap factory—Sonar Bangla Chemical Industries Limited—near Gopalganj. Mufti Abdul Hannan, on November 1, 2007, also confessed to have been instrumental in the grenade attack on the August 21, 2004 AL rally in Dhaka.

In Bangladesh, the government, under the leadership of Sheikh Hasina, has taken strong and positive steps to crack down on the terrorist organisations. But very little attempt has been made to investigate the roles of madrassas and NGOs in supporting and promoting groups like HuJI-B. With continuous support from the NGOs and the madrassas, HuJI-B has not ceased to be a terrorist organisation and continues to be a threat to the security of Bangladesh and its neighboring countries, especially India.

4.2 Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB)

The Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), a militant organisation, continues to remain a threat to the state of Bangladesh. The JMB, the Assembly of Holy Warriors in Bangladesh, was formed in the year 1998. It came to prominence as a terrorist/ militant group after it engineered a serial attack across the country on 17 August 2005. It is, however, important to mention that the JMB was proscribed by the Bangladeshi government led by Begum Khalida Zia of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) on 23 February 2005, under the pressure from Awami League (AL) and secularists in Bangladesh. Since the serial blasts by JMB, the law enforcement agencies of Bangladesh have arrested hundreds of JMB cadres. A number of kingpins of JMB, including its founding members like Sheikh Abdur Rahman and Bangla Bhai, have been executed.

According to the government sources, the JMB as a militant group has been weakened by the measures taken by the Sheikh Hasina-led government. However, there are reports suggesting that more number of cadres belonging to the JMB have been arrested by the law enforcement agents and huge amount of arms and explosive materials have been recovered from ex-JMB hubs. Such reports certainly demonstrate that though the JMB has been weakened with the arrest and execution of its cadre and some of the kingpins, it is still trying to regroup, recruit and raise funds for more spectacular strikes.

Genesis: The JMB was founded as a militant jihadi organisation in Bangladesh in the year 1998 by Sheikh Abdur Rahman. The founder of the JMB himself has gone on the record to say that JMB as an organisation was born in the British colonial era. ¹ The JMB is also believed to be the youth front organisation of Al Mujahideen. Al Mujahideen was believed to have existed during 1990s and remains obscure even today. A number of organisations were believed to have affiliation with Al Mujahideen. They were/are Jama'at-ul-Jihad, JMB, Ahle Hadith Andolan Bangladesh (AHAB), Ahle Hadith Jubo Shangha, Harkat-ul- Jihadi-al-Islami (HuJI), Hizb-ut-Tawhidi Janata, Islami Jubo Shangha, Islami Shangha, Al Falah A'am Unnayan Shastha and Shahadat-e al Hiqma. The JMB as a militant organisation was deeply associated and influenced by the ideas and practices of Salafist 3 movement in Bangladesh known as the AHAB.

As a militant organisation, the JMB continued to grow unnoticed by the security forces and the government till 2005. There were a number of instances indicating the covert expansion of the organisation both militarily and ideologically. Initially, Abdur Rahman followed a two-pronged action to strengthen the organisation. The JMB cadres were sent to various parts of the country, first, for extensive da'wah (religious preaching outreach) and second, for garnering support from the politically influential people and supporters of jihad for his agenda. In a way, he was successful to a great extent as the then government, led by the BNP in alliance with the Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh (JeI), did not acknowledge or accept the existence of JMB.

Such covert backing from the government is evident from a couple of incidents. In 1999, the Chittagong police arrested 41 suspected militants with arms. It was also reported that they confessed to the police to being members of the Abdur Rahman's group. However, the matter was not investigated further, thereby giving JMB a chance to rise. Similarly, in 2000, some cadres of the JMB were arrested in Parbatipur with petrol bombs. They were released after a local court thought them to be ordinary criminals.

So, the two-pronged action plan of Abdur Rahman to garner the support of radical Islamic constituencies in face of the apathy of the government was successful to a great extent. Finally, JMB as a militant organisation came to the prominence in 17 August 2005, when it carried out serial blasts across the country.

Ideology: As far as the ideological underpinning of the JMB is concerned, to a great extent, it is influenced by the ideological orientation of the AHAB. The reason has been the family lineage and socialisation of Abdur Rahman. Abdur Rahman was educated in a madrassa run by his father who was an Ahle Hadith scholar.

Rahman's family was also closely associated with AHAB. His AHAB experienced was mixed with the ideological input he gained from his association with the HuJI-Bangladesh (HuJI-B). In the year 1997, when he was blamed for the conviction of some 41 cadres of HuJI-B, he deserted HuJI-B citing ideological disagreements.

Unlike many Islamic militant groups worldwide, Rahman never wanted to raise a global jihad. Rather, the primary aim of JMB was to establish Islamic rule in Bangladesh. For Rahman, the near enemy—supporters of democracy and secularism in Bangladesh were more important than the global enemies of Islam like the United States (US) and its Western allies. Capitalising on the discontent among the to strength. Such rapid growth of JMB did not go without criticism by various Islamic groups like Islamic Oikyo Jote (IOJ). The JMB wanted to implement the Islamic rule, it had thought of, on its own. A member of the IOJ is reported to have said that, “we told them that the time has not come for such a revolution. But they did not listen to us.”

It is, however, important to mention that the serial blast it engineered was, in fact, an attempt to show its strength and disseminate its ideology and objectives. The bomb-disseminated pamphlet of JMB, titled “Call to implement Islamic Law in Bangladesh”, read: The Jamaat ul Mujahideen Bangladesh, keeping in mind the laws of Allah, does not recognize the prevalent system. In addition to the constitution under which the state is functioning is contradictory to and does not confirm to Allah’s system. The JMB calls all those who are cognizant to shape the country as per Allah’s order and the prophet’s way and to reject the rule of law and the so-called electoral system and functions. Otherwise the JMB has resolved to implement Allah’s law in Allah’s land through comprehensive realisation of Allah’s directed Kital (armed struggle) method...

The JMB was very clear on its targets, that is, who it considered as enemies of Islam. The prime enemies of Islam in Bangladesh, according to the JMB, are the democrats and secularists. For JMB, democrats and the secularists, like the leftists and cultural organisations, are the instruments promoting un-Islamic values. Therefore, they have been attacked many a time by JMB. Various attacks on cultural programmes like jatra, communist rallies, cinema hall and religious shrines in Bangladesh are testimonies of the mindset of the JMB. So, the main targets of JMB can be categorised as:

- democratic institutions like judiciary, legislative assemblies and their members;
- intellectuals and public figures necessarily supporting secularism;
- the leftists;
- non-Muslims and the minorities like the Hindus and the Ahmediya communities; and
- cultural function halls, cinema halls, etc.

Though the JMB does not wage a global jihad, it follows the same ideological orientation as most of the other radical Islamic groups. For example, in one of its handwritten leaflets recovered from the blast site, it goes on to say: “we do not want Taguti (non-Islamic) law, let Quranic law be introduced. Law framed by humans can not be continued and only the laws of Allah will prevail.”

Organization Structure : So far the organisational structure of the JMB is concerned, it is designed in accordance with a manual titled, Shamorik Shakhur Obhijan Nirdeshika (Operational Manual of Military Branch). Accordingly, the JMB has a four-tier structure:

- “Majlis-e-Shura” is mainly a consultative decision-making body that works under the leadership of an amir (chief).
- “Ehsar” consists of the full-time members of the organisation. The main responsibility given to these full-time members is to engage in the activities like military operations and da’wah. These members are also engaged in recruiting new members to the organization.
- “Gayeri Ehsar” consists of the part-time members of the organisation. Though not involved with the military and preaching-related activities, they are supposed to give the due donations and also undergo a low level of military training. One of the most important responsibility that these members are supposed to discharge is to give shelter to the full-time militants of the organization.
- “Sudhi”, or “Saathi”, are primarily the sympathisers and well-wishers of JMB. They help raise funds for the organisations and provide shelter to the militants as and when needed. The highest structure of the JMB, Majlis-e-Shura, divides the members of the organisation into military and non-military wings. According to the above-mentioned manual, JMB will ideally have six divisions and each division will be guided by a chief and his deputy. Similarly, the military wing of JMB divides Bangladesh into regional operational commands. By 2005, it had nine regional operational units.

They are Dhaka North, Dhaka South, Chittagong, Sylhet, Khulna and Barisal and three units in Rajshahi. The decision-making power of the JMB has always been with the Majlis-e-Shura, and it continues to be highly centralised in nature. Till the execution of Abdur Rahman, the decision-making power of the JMB remained in the hands of Abdur Rahman, his sons and family members. After his death, according to the available sources, some new shura members like Saidur Rahman were appointed. As far as the military wing of JMB is concerned, it used to be headed by Bangla Bhai. The JMB is believed to have a suicide squad known as Shahid Nasirullah Arafat Brigade. It is also believed to be in the process of organising a women’s wing to act as intelligence operatives.

Leadership and Growth: Maulana Saidur Rahman is known to be currently heading the JMB after the March 30, 2007 execution of the top six militant leaders of the outfit. On November 16, 2008 security forces came close to arresting Saidur Rahman who used to live in a rented house in the Mirpur locality of national capital Dhaka. Although the raid resulted in the arrest of a JMB *ehsar* (full-time worker) identified as Mohammad Hanif alias Kamal, Saidur Rahman managed to escape.

In the early hours of March 30, 2007, six top militants of the JMB, including its 'supreme commander' Maulana Abdur Rahman and second-in-command, Siddiqui Islam alias Bangla Bhai were executed in different jails in Bangladesh. The other senior leaders of the outfit who were hanged were *Majlish-e-Shura* (the highest decision-making body) members Abdul Awal, Khaled Saifullah and Aatur Rahman Sunny and suicide squad member Iftekhar Hasan Al-Mamun. All of them had been pronounced guilty by the Supreme Court of involvement in the killing of two judges in Jhalakathi in November 2005. On March 4, 2007, President Iajuddin Ahmed had rejected the mercy petitions filed by the convicted militants paving the way for their execution.

Prior to the March 30, 2007 execution, JMB was led by a triumvirate consisting of its 'supreme commander' Abdur Rahman, a former activist of the Jamaat-e-Islami, Siddiqui Islam alias Bangla Bhai of the Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh (JMJB) and Muhammad Asadullah al-Ghalib, an Arabic language lecturer at the Rajshahi University and chief of the Ahle Hadith Andolon Bangladesh (AHAB). Of these, Maulana Rahman was projected as spiritual leader of the organisation while Bangla Bhai functioned as the second-in-command and the outfit's 'operational chief'. On March 2, 2006, Abdur Rahman, surrendered after a 34-hour siege on his East Shaplabagh hideout in Sylhet City, 200 kilometres northeast of capital Dhaka. Arrested along with Rahman were his wife, sons, daughters, grandson, domestic helps and some associates. Four days later, on March 6, 2006 the JMB number two Siddiqui Islam hiding in a tin-shed in the remote Rampur village under the Muktagachha sub-district of Mymensingh, 120 kilometres north of Dhaka, was wounded and captured, after skirmishes with the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB). Asadullah al-Ghalib had been arrested since February 23, 2005.

Operational details of the outfit were overseen by a seven member *Majlish-e-Shura*. Apart from Abdur Rahman and Siddiqui Islam, the *Shura* consisted of Aatur Rahman Sunny (arrested on December 14, 2005), Abdul Awal (arrested on November 18, 2005), Rakib Hasan Russel alias Hafez Mohammad (arrested on February 28, 2006), Faruq Hossain alias Khaled Saifullah, 'commander' of the Rangpur-Dinajpur region (arrested on April 26, 2006) and Salahuddin alias Salehin, 'commander' of the Sylhet-Mymensingh region (arrested on April 25, 2006).

Some of the other leaders of the outfit were Maulana Akram-uzzaman, Abdur Rouf, Maulana Shahidul Islam, Maulana Mahadi, Sheikh Maulana Noman, Maulana Manjur Ahmed, most of whom were reportedly trained in Afghanistan. Maulana Fariduddin Masud, a former Director of the Government-run Islamic Foundation, is also suspected to be a top leader of the JMB. He was arrested on August 22, 2005 from a London-bound flight at the Zia International Airport in Dhaka. The JMB has grown primarily due to the nonchalant attitude of the Government and partly because of the official promotion. For instance, the eight JMB cadres arrested from Parbatipur on May 30, 2002 were subsequently released on bail and investigations were stalled after the case documents went missing in a "mysterious" fire at the Parbatipur police station.

The outfit's growth received a boost after the Bangladesh National Party-led coalition Government under Prime Minister Khaleda Zia came to power in 2001. Many members of the JMB and JMJB have invariably been found to be cadres of the Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS), student wing of the Jamaat-e-Islami, a partner in the ruling coalition. Such unbroken linkages with the Jamaat-e-Islami have helped the outfit immensely not just in terms of unhindered growth but also in terms providing relief in the event of intermittent official action. Following the August 17, 2005 developments, during which the outfit carried out serial blasts in 63 of the 64 Districts in the country, international pressure grew on the government forcing it to take action against the outfit.

Prior to that, the JMB, for long, promoted the building of mosques and *Madrassas* (seminaries), some of which have developed into effective training centres for the outfit's radical mobilisation. For example, with assistance from Ghalib, JMB cadres used the facilities of some 700 mosques built across Bangladesh by the Revival of Islamic Heritage Society, which is based in Kuwait.

In 2003, decoded diaries of some arrested Islamist militants is reported to have revealed that the outfit had training camps in 57 districts with bases at the Ahle Hadith mosques and seminaries. "They have well-equipped training stations in all the 16 northern and some southern districts, and small stations in other districts where they operate," the then Inspector of Joypurhat Criminal Investigation Department, Khalilur Rahman, had told The Daily Star.

Although the outfit was formed in Jamalpur district, its terrorist campaign is based in the North Bengal region, Daily Star reported on August 28, 2005. Rahman's relatives in the Dinajpur and Rajshahi districts helped him expand his organisational activities in these districts.

According to *Growing Fanaticism and Extremism in Bangladesh: Shades of Taliban*, published by the opposition political party, the Awami League, the JMB is active in the Dinajpur, Joypurhat, Jamalpur and Bagerhat districts.

Recruitment: A group of dedicated full-timers of JMB, mainly the Ehsars, have been given the responsibility of recruiting new people for JMB. These Ehsars use multiple platforms for recruiting new cadres. The most important platform for targeting people for recruitment is from the madrassas run by the Ahle Hadith groups. In its initial stage, JMB depended heavily on the Ahle Hadith madrassas, mostly in the north-western part of Bangladesh, for the recruitment of Imam and Islamic teachers. In the course of time, these imams and teachers helped JMB to recruit other entrants. According to the report, by 2000, the JMB was able to establish four of its own madrassas in four different parts of Bangladesh. These four madrassas cater to the needs of the JMB as far as recruitment is concerned.

Apart from the madrassas, the JMB also targets other Islamic organisations like JeI and Islamic Chhatra Shibir (ICS) for recruitment. Many JeI and ICS members who were having disagreements with the functioning of their organisations joined JMB. The likes of Saidur Rahman, Bangla Bhai, former shura members—Hafez Mahmud and Salahuddin—and former military wing head, Aatur Rahman Sunny, had past linkages with JeI and ICS. People who joined JMB from organisations like ICS and JeI were the link persons for JMB to penetrate into these organisations for further recruitment.

The third source of recruitment for the JMB is believed to be the family network. The influential members of JMB like Abdur Rahman, Bangla Bhai and Saidur Rahman often recruited from their family. The sons, brothers and son-in-laws of these leaders and other members of the JMB became part of the JMB in the course of time. As the security concerns mounted, JMB leaders married within the group. Those who were already married were sometimes asked to go in for a second marriage to a person from the trusted JMB family. The strength of the JMB can be divided into pre- and post-2005 period.

According to the available sources, at its peak in 2005, it had 10,000 Ehsars hundred thousand part-timers and one million sympathisers/supporters. 12 It is believed that after the crackdown on them by the Bangladesh government, the strength of JMB has gone down drastically. Though the strength has gone down drastically, yet the capability of the JMB to strike cannot be underestimated. There have been reports claiming that the former JMB cadres are moving around the country changing their affiliation to other organisations like Tablighi Jamaat (supposed to be peaceful Islamic organisation).

According to the confession report of Saidur Rahman, at present, the JMB has 400 full-timers across the country and a military wing capable of launching major attacks. He also said that the hardliners who had taken over the leadership of JMB would be more destructive in his absence. The JMB is also believed to have had women wings. Each women wing consisted of 10–12 members. The main responsibility given to them was confined to the da'wah, to read Quran, persuade people to perform namaz regularly and encourage their husbands and other family members for jihad. 14 The existence of such wings was also spelt out during an interrogation of one of the senior leaders of JMB, Abu Bakkr Siddique alias Shibli. He said to the security forces that the JMB had trained some female cadres in using grenades and they have been making preparations to carry out a series of grenade attacks in Dhaka on a small scale.

Network and Alliances: The JMB has a very strong network both at the domestic and international level. At the domestic level, it has connections with the like-minded militant groups like the HuJI-B. Similarly, it has also links with the Islamic groups like JeI, ICS and the AHAB. The strong connection of JMB with JeI was officially established in a face-to-face interview of the former chief of the JMB, Saidur Rahman, and the senior leaders of JeI, Motiur Rahman Nizami, Ali Ahsan Mojahid and Delwar Hossain Sayeedi, on 13 July 2010.

During the interrogation, according to the security forces, Motiur Rahman Nizami threatened Saidur Rahman with regard to disclosing anything about the links between JeI and JMB. 16 It is also a fact that both the important leaders of the JMB, Abdur Rahaman and Bangla Bhai (already executed), were active members of the JeI. Similarly, Saidur Rahman was the chief of JeI's Habibganj unit in 1983. Saidur Rahman also revealed that at least 25 JeI rokans (high-ranking field

operatives) were directly involved with the JMB and that the JeI provided arms training to them. Apart from the Islamic organisations in the Bangladesh, the JMB was able to garner support from political parties like the BNP and from some of the police officers till 2005. This is evident from the fact that the intelligence wing had cautioned the government in 2003 about the threat potential of the JMB.

Despite this, it took two years for the government to ban the organisation in February 2005. The reason for such delayed action was very simple. The government, led by the BNP, depended on the JeI's support. Any action against the JMB would have put the JeI in trouble as many of the JMB leaders had connections with the JeI.

The JMB was also supported covertly by the BNP-led government that came to power in 2001. One of the most important factors that cemented the links between the government and the JMB was the common aim of suppressing the communist movement in Bangladesh. The communist movement, mainly led by the Sarbahara Party and the Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP), was a major threat to the government. In the year 2004, with support of the government, the JMB, with its front organisation—Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh (JMJB)—launched the programme, “annihilate the Sarbahara”.

Though there was a constant pressure from the AL to crackdown on the JMB, the BNP-led government instead blamed the AL for manufacturing militancy to tarnish the government. Similarly, the police also played an important role in helping the JMB leaders and the members by not arresting them in many cases. to have a strong connection with the Al Qaeda. The reason is that some of the important leaders of the JMB are believed to have fought in Afghanistan with the Al Qaeda. Similarly, it also has a strong connection with HuJI-B and the Rohingya Solidarity Organisation (RSO). The JMB has also has links with the front organisations that promote the cause of radical Islam and jihad. Some of the charitable organisations like the Al Fuziara and Khairul Ansar al Khairia Foundation in Saudi Arabia, Daulatul Kuwait in Kuwait and Daullatul Bahrain are also linked to the JMB. The JMB is also believed to be connected to the Al Harmain Foundation, a front organisation of Al Qaeda, which is banned in many countries.

Finance and Funding: The JMB raises funds both from domestic and external sources. In the initial days of its existence, it used to be dependent on its members like Ehsars, shura members and Gayeri Ehsars for donations. In the course of time, it started collecting donations from its supporters in terms of zakat (alam). During its peak time, at the domestic level, the outfit depended a lot on criminal activities of its members for funds, and to some extent, it invested in the local markets to generate some money. As one report suggested, JMB invested in several small and medium enterprises like rickshaws, auto rickshaws and taxis in the capital to raise funds locally. 20 An interrogation of Saidur Rahman revealed that the JMB gets cash around Taka (Bangladesh currency) 50–60 lakh during Ramadan. Another report states that the highest earning by a unit (several villages) is 10,000–12,000 taka; by a subdistrict unit, it is up to 50,000 taka; by district unit, it is up to 200,000 taka; and it goes up to 500,000–600,000 taka at the divisional level.

At the domestic level, JMB also gets some assistance from the Ahle Hadith community. Similarly, some top businessmen in Bangladesh are also believed to be funding JMB. Though many of the members of the JMB are behind bars, it is believed that the flow of fund from the supporters in terms of monthly contribution, zakat and donations remains uninterrupted. So far the external funding of the JMB is concerned, as mentioned earlier, it receives fund from the so-called charitable organisations in countries like Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Bahrian. Apart from that, every month, around Taka 600,000 is being sent by around 3,000 JMB supporters staying in Australia, England, Italy, Canada, Malaysia and the Middle East countries. 22 The system of hundi (an informal banking sector that operates mostly illegally) continues to be one of the most important sources of funding for JMB. The Bangladeshi workers employed in the Middle East and other parts of the world send money to their families through human couriers, and a portion of that amount goes to the JMB fund.

The involvement of JMB cadres in the fake Indian currency note (FICN) is another source of funding for JMB. Solaiman alias Majumdar, kingpin of Pakistan-based FICN racket, disclosed in one of the interrogations that at the behest of Pakistani intelligence agency, Inter Services Intelligence (ISI), he entrusted two Bangladeshi militant organisations, JMB and HuJI-B, with smuggling of FICN.

According to the Detective Branch of Bangladesh Police, many JMB cadres are involved in marketing the FICN. Out of the money earned in this process, Taka 50,000 is deposited in JMB account every month. Some reports also indicate that JMB is also well involved in the armed struggle across the Indian border.

State Response to JMB: The response of the Bangladesh government towards JMB remained rather favourable till 2009, when Sheikh Hasina-led AL took over power. From the beginning, JMB continued to garner support from the radical Islamic constituencies like the JeI and the ICS. The JeI's alliance with the BNP-led government was a major factor for the growth of JMB. As mentioned earlier, the BNP-led government, supported by the JeI, continued to refuse the existence of JMB till February 2005 when it was banned. Rather, it went on to say that the AL was trying to get political mileage by highlighting these false security issues. There were instances where the politicians in power in those days asked the police not arrest certain JMB members after the 2005 serial blast by the JMB.

The caretaker government of the Bangladesh by the army (which took over in 2007 and ruled for almost two years) did a little to bring the JMB under control. According to the available sources, the caretaker government arrested some 226 militants belonging to the JMB, of whom 57 have been put behind bar, 30 were charge sheeted, six were hanged to death and one killed in encounter. The caretaker government never showed any interest in seriously investigating JMB's financial linkages.

Meanwhile, Sheikh Hasina's government has taken some drastic steps to crackdown on the JMB. The government of the day has invested significant resources for the counter-terrorism programme and continues to be committed to the same. The Sheikh Hasina government remains committed not only to crackdown on the JMB but it also has been trying to punish the war criminals of the 1971 liberation war. Sheikh Hasina's good intentions against the radical and terrorist elements in the country have been under constant threat. The JeI has been constantly criticising and trying to cause disturbances by organising strikes and protests against the government. At the same time, the poorscene. According to some locals, a lot of JMB cadres were seen working for BNP and JeI during the 2008 elections. 28 There are also reports suggesting that the JMB has a hit list of some 12 politicians from the ruling party.

Also, it is tasking female operatives to carry out operations. The security forces and the law enforcement agencies are not very sure of the arms that JMB possesses. While some leaders of JMB claim that they have destroyed them all, some other leaders are of the opinion that they have been shifted to a safer place. It is, however, important to mention that the JMB retains a strong cadre base and residual capacities to create havoc in the country.

4.3 Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS)

Bangladesh Islami Chhatra Shibir is an Islamist student organization in Bangladesh, and the largest student organization of South Asia. Islami Chhatra Shibir is close to the leading Islamist political organization of Bangladesh, Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami. Before the 1971 Bangladesh liberation war, it was known as Islami Chattara Shangha, and had ties to the West Pakistani army. In 1971, leaders of Islami Chattara Shangha formed the paramilitary group Al Badar, who were involved in the 1971 killing of Bengali intellectuals. In February 2014, a US thinktank study titled "IHS Jane's 2013 Global Terrorism & Insurgency Attack Index" listed Shibir as third largest armed group in the world, an allegation that Shibir has both denied and protested.

History: Bangladesh Islami Chhatrashibir: 35 years of Struggle, Tradition, and Glory A characteristic feature of the Indian subcontinent is the existence of an active and strong student bodies in its politics. It has influenced the political course in Bangladesh also. A number of political parties are active in the country with significant differences in ideologies, objectives, programmes and modus operandi with corresponding effects in the student political bodies whose inception often crosses the boundaries of Bangladesh-Pakistan-India divide in the British Raj. Bangladesh Islami Chhatrashibir is the name of such a student organization born in the post liberation era of Bangladesh.

An informal enlightened alternative to the traditional educational institution, BICS started its glorious journey some 35 years ago on Feb 6, 1977 from the central mosque of the Dhaka University. Today it occupies a permanent seat in the hearts of the common people as a progressive, dynamic, and democratic student organization working to promote the cause of the humanity.

The last 35 years of history of BICS can be looked from different angles in the background of the socio-economic, political and cultural structures of a developing country like Bangladesh. It deserves a close consideration in a country which is the world's 4th largest Muslim majority state. A conscious, neutral and adequate view of the organization is necessary. Shibir has made a history and a great tradition in its 35 years of activism. This text is an attempt to present to the public eye for a proper consideration.

The birth of Shibir: an inevitable reality of the late 1970's- No organization is born without adequate historical necessities. The social, religious, political and cultural scenarios of Bangladesh in the late 1970 have made the birth of an organization like Shibir very inevitable.

Objective: According to the outfit, its objectives are to struggle for changing the existing system of education on the basis of Islamic values, to inspire students to acquire Islamic knowledge and to prepare them to take part in the struggle for establishing Islamic way of life. A significant aim of the outfit is to establish an Afghanistan-Taliban type Islamist regime in Bangladesh. Consequently, the outfit is opposed to forces of modernization, secularism and democracy.

Programmes

- 01.** To convey the message of Islam to the students and to inspire them to acquire Islamic knowledge and to arouse in them the sense of responsibility to practice Islam in full.
- 02.** To organize the students within the fold of this organization who are prepared to take part in the struggle for establishing Islamic way of life.
- 03.** To take appropriate steps to impart Islamic knowledge to make them men of character, capable to brave the challenges of Jahilyah and thus to prove the superiority of Islam.
- 04.** To struggle for changing the existing system of education on the basis of Islamic values for building up ideal citizens and to provide leadership to the students in solving their genuine problems.
- 05.** To strive to bring about Islamic social reformation for freeing humanity from all forms of economic exploitation, political oppression and cultural servitude.

Area of Influence: The ICS is one of the strongest student fronts in the Universities of Chittagong, Dhaka, Rajshahi and Jahangirnagar. It is also emerging as a dominant group in the Khulna and Sylhet Universities. Within the vast *madrassa* (religious seminary) structure in Bangladesh, the ICS is reported to be a dominant and uncontested organisation.

External Linkages: As one of the largest Islamist student organisations in South Asia, the ICS maintains a close relationship with various Islamist fundamentalist organisations of different countries. In 1979, the ICS secured membership of International Islamic Federation of Student Organisation (IIFSO). Its former President Dr. S A M Taher was also the Secretary General of IIFSO. The outfit is also a member of the World Assembly of Muslim Youth (WAMY).

The outfit is also reported to be maintaining close links with the Inter Services Intelligence ([ISI](#)), Pakistan's external intelligence agency. With the help of the latter, it is reportedly working to support Islamist subversive agenda in many regions in India, particularly in areas bordering Bangladesh. The ISI is also reportedly providing substantial amount of funds to the ICS. Other Islamic countries, particularly Saudi Arabia, have provided a major proportion of its financial resources.

The ICS is also reported to be maintaining close links with various terrorist outfits operating in South Asia and Afghanistan. These terrorist outfits reportedly carry out their activities in Bangladesh through the ICS. The ICS reportedly helps them recruit and indoctrinate fanatic youth. A significant number of them were reportedly sent to Pakistan and Afghanistan during the reign of the Taliban regime where a large number of fanatic youth come under the direct command of Osama bin Laden.

The ICS is also part of a larger network Islamist extremist network of the HUJI, Jamaat-e-Islami, and Islami Oikyo Jote. This network has assisted the terrorist outfits in developing an effectual infrastructure for training as also a network of clandestine camps and shelters for stockpiling weapons and supplies in Bangladesh.

Major Incidents : throughout November one headline dominated the media – ‘Jamaat-Shibir men continue to attack police’. The spate of attacks across the country left several hundred policemen injured, many of them were hospitalized with serious injuries. In some cases weapons were snatched from the law enforcers while in most occasions their vehicles were vandalized or torched. The government found it an ominous sign of destabilizing the country and subversive activities by the fundamentalist party, which are out to foil the trial of the war criminals. The way police came under attack was somewhat unprecedented and in most cases the police lost the battle to the attackers. At one stage, an English daily newspaper suggested that ‘police got panicky at Jamaat-Shibir offensive.’ In other newspapers and television talk shows, there were analyses about why and how police continued to become the victims of such violence. Though top police officials continued to say that they would not tolerate such violence, we did not see any decisive action to contain it. The month-long act of mayhem and vandalism culminated to Tuesday's hartal which again was marked with violence. The spate of violence raise one important question — what messages the Islamic fundamentalist party wants to give the government by attacking one of its strong organs?

Psychological benefit of violence: Some political doctrines predispose their adherents to the use of violence. Like other major monotheisms, Islam does not forbid violence on behalf of religiously sanctioned causes, but neither does it encourage it, according to Lisa Anderson, a foremost writer on political Islam. Is Jamaat-Shibir interpreting saving of their leaders from war crime trials as a religiously sanctioned cause? The substantive dogma of Islam does not tell us when or why its followers will resort to violence to further its cause. However, Franz Fanon's famous defence of the psychological benefits of violence in political struggle is a case in point. Apparently, Jamaat-Shibir is taking this notion of psychological benefits of violence to further their cause. To gain psychological advantage it carried out the violent attacks on their rival students' organizations in different educational institutions in the country. In an attempt to show their strength, this time they have decided to attack the law enforcers. No other political organization or group dared to swoop on the police the way Jamaat-Shibir did in recent weeks.

Rather than looking to the substance of Islam, some groups are interpreting the political doctrines for a wiliness to embrace violent means to a desired ends though Islam condemns terrorism and suicide. "Take not life, which Allah hath made sacred, except by way of justice and law", the Quranic verse (6:151) clearly and categorically declared. Does Jamaat adhere to this Quranic verse?

Jihad in Islam: About Jihad, there are so many mis-interpretations. To many Islamists, Jihad means 'holy war'. According to Mir Zohair Husain, another prominent writer on Islamism, the term Jihad is derived from the Arabic root jhd, which means 'to strive', 'to endeavour' or to 'struggle in the way of God'. The term does not merely mean 'holy war'. Ideally Jihad has three meanings: a battle against evils within oneself (personal jihad); a battle against evils within Muslim community (ummaic jihad); and a struggle against aggressors who are not practicing Muslims (Martial jihad). Martial or violent jihad is referred to in Islam as jihad-i-asghar (literally, the lesser or smaller jihad). Martial jihad should be used to protect and to promote the integrity of Islam and to defend the ummah against hostile non-believers. Personal jihad or jihad-i-akbar is the greatest jihad for any Muslim while ummaic jihad also represents the non-violent struggle for freedom and justice within the dar-al-Islam (Islamic state). Neither of the three above meanings of jihad permits Islamists to wage violent jihad in a predominantly Muslim country like Bangladesh.

ICS branded as a terrorist organization: Islami Chattra Shibir (ICS), the student wing of the Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami is branded as a terrorist organization by the US-based National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and the Responses to Terrorism (START). START (<http://www.start.umd.edu>) is a project funded by the US Homeland Security and it is based in the University of Maryland. The terrorism profile is prepared by the Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism, another project supported by the Department of Justice and Homeland Security.

According to the profile, the current goal of the ICS is to dedicate itself to the establishment of an Islamic system of education in Bangladesh and the foundation of an Islamic state. It is an active student-militant organization with a large but unknown number of members. It has shown no hesitation to use violence to further its aims.

The US research body also said the ICS is directly funded by the Jamaat-e-Islami, the largest Islamic political party in Bangladesh. Although ICS is founded as a legitimate students' organization, it is now an extremely militant organization linked to numerous acts of violence over the years. In addition, the group has also been linked to a number of larger terrorist organizations both in Bangladesh and internationally.

According to the research portal, the violence perpetrated by the ICS can generally be put in two categories. The first category involves inter-fighting between the ICS and other student organizations on university campuses. The second category of violence includes general terrorism beyond the borders of educational institutions. The ICS has been blamed for numerous terrorist attacks throughout Bangladesh.

The research also found the ICS linked to several largest terrorist organizations. It is considered to be nothing more than a recruiting ground for Bangladeshi terrorist groups such as Harkat ul-Jihad and Jamatul Mujahedin. Some others however view ICS as a front for Jamaat-e-Islami terrorist operations. The ICS has also been linked to international groups such as the Taliban and al-Qaeda but concrete linkages have never been established.

If the Franz Fanon's theory of psychological benefits of violence works for the Jamaat-Shibir, the country would embrace similar violent activities in the future. It's time for the government to take decisive action. See more at: <http://opinion.bdnews24.com/2012/12/09/jamaat-shibir-attack-on-police-and-the-psychological-benefits-of-violence/#sthash.6K4nAa9N.dpuf>

'Jamaat-Shibir men continue to attack police'. The spate of attacks across the country left several hundred policemen injured, many of them were hospitalized with serious injuries. In some cases weapons were snatched from the law enforcers while in most occasions their vehicles were vandalized or torched. The government found it an ominous sign of destabilizing the country and subversive activities by the fundamentalist party, which are out to foil the trial of the war criminals. The way police came under attack was somewhat unprecedented and in most cases the police lost the battle to the attackers. At one stage, an English daily newspaper suggested that 'police got panicky at Jamaat-Shibir offensive.' In other newspapers and television talk shows, there were analyses about why and how police continued to become the victims of such violence. Though top police officials continued to say that they would not tolerate such violence, we did not see any decisive action to contain it. The month-long act of mayhem and vandalism culminated to Tuesday's hartal which again was marked with violence. The spate of violence raise one important question — what messages the Islamic fundamentalist party wants to give the government by attacking one of its strong organs?

4.4 Madrashah Education

There are primarily two types of Madrasahs in operation in Bangladesh. The Aaliyah Nissab Madrasahs (commonly known as Sunni Madrasahs) are operated with state support under state control, while the Qawmi Nissab Madrasahs (commonly known as Wahabi Madrasahs) are operated beyond state control or support with voluntary labor and both foreign and local funding. The Madrasah system which is operated under state control is the one which is considered to be the mainstream of the Madrasah education system. In addition to these, maktabas or Forqania Madrasahs exist to teach the Qaeda (the Arabic alphabet), Aampara, and the Quran and the Hifzul Quran Madrasahs which train Quran Hafezes (students who completely memorize the Quran). There are also some government and non-government project based short-term teaching centers.

The Aaliyah Nissab Madrasah system has five levels of education. Beginning with the primary level it takes a total of 16 years to complete. The different levels of education are the Ebtedayee (primary level: 5 years), Dakhil (secondary level: 5 years), Alim (higher secondary level: 2 years), Fazil (graduate level: Pass Course 2 years, Honors Course 3 years), and Kamil or Title (Post graduate level: 2 years for the Fazil Pass Course completers and 1 year for the Fazil Honors Course completers)¹. Although in 1982 the military government of Ershad declared the levels of Dakhil and Alim as equivalent to secondary and higher secondary degrees respectively in accordance with the new staffing patterns, Fazil and Kamil were not acknowledged as graduate and post graduate equivalents.

Ebtedayee Madrasahs: After 1915, the primary level maktabas operated as feeders to the New-Scheme Madrasahs. Later, following the recommendations of an Education Commission, the maktabas were transformed into Ebtedayee Madrasahs as feeder institutions. The Bangladesh Madrasah Education Board provided approval to these Ebtedayee Madrasahs. There are 18 requirements that the Ebtedayee Madrasahs have to fulfill for approval. The Board investigates whether the community agrees that there is a need for a Madrasah in the locality, that the proposed Madrasah has enough land registered for it, waqf land, the required furniture as required by construction regulations, approval from the Madrasah committee and relevant bodies, a selection committee which includes a government representative formed through appropriate advertisement in public publications, teachers and administrative staff, money in the bank in general fund and reserve fund as per regulations, enough books in the library, enough students and reasonable distance from other Madrasahs before giving approval. However, in most cases, Ebtedayee Madrasahs have mushroomed all over the country without fulfilling all or even the most basic of these requirements.

These government approved Madrasahs are operated through donations from the local community, government grants, and sometimes grants from the local government. Among these, all sources of income, including government grants are more or less irregular.

Reliable information regarding the number of Ebtedayee Madrasahs is unavailable. In addition to all Madrasahs having an Ebtedayee section (primary section), there are a number of separate Ebtedayee Madrasahs. According to BANBEIS, there are 1,363,572 students in the Ebtedayee sections adjacent to the Dakhil, Alim, Fazil and Kamil Madrasahs. A report in the Daily Janakantha states that there are 10,000 Ebtedayee Madrasahs in the country. Another source determines the number at 9,561.

Dakhil and Alim Madrasahs : The Dakhil and Alim levels are equivalent to secondary and higher secondary school respectively. Dakhil is for 5 years and Alim for 2 years duration. Currently there are four sections in the Dakhil level: Dakhil General Section, Dakhil Science Section, Dakhil Mujabbid Section and Dakhil Hifzul Quran Section. Under the New Scheme policy, both the Dakhil and Alim levels place emphasis on science. However, in reality, the majority of the Dakhil and Alim Madrasahs do not even have a basic laboratory. In fact, in a number of Madrasahs, the position of science teacher often remains vacant.

In Bangladesh, currently there are 4,865 Dakhil and 1,090 Alim Madrasahs that are government approved. Akin to the Ebtedayee Madrasahs, Madrasahs at these levels have to fulfill 18 conditions before applying to the Board for government approval. These Madrasahs are also operated through government grants, donations from the local community, student fees, local government grants and fees and payments from religious occasions. Almost all sources of income are more or less irregular.

The Madrasah Education Board or the Directorate of Higher and Secondary Education do not have any regular monitoring or inspection activities for Dakhil and Alim level Madrasahs. A kind of monitoring does take place however for auditing and for allocation of grants. However, several of these types of Madrasahs are included among the 251 Madrasahs that lost government approval and MPO because of charges of corruption and mismanagement.

Fazil and Kamil Madrasah: Fazil and Kamil are the last two levels of the government approved Madrasah system. The Fazil level includes both Honors and Pass Courses. The duration of Honors Course is 3 years and Pass Course duration is 2 years. The Kamil level is 2 years for the Fazil Pass Course completers and 1 year for the Fazil Honors Course completers. There are 1,000 Fazil Madrasahs and 141 Kamil Madrasahs (among which there are 3 completely state owned Kamil Madrasahs) in Bangladesh.

The Bangladesh Madrasah Education Board undertakes the final exams at Fazil and Kamil level as well as presenting the certificates. Even after the establishment of Islamic University, the Board's authority in this was not curbed by granting this particular responsibility to the University. As a result, it is not possible for the Board to maintain even quality from primary level to Masters level. It should be noted that the Bangladesh Secondary and Higher Secondary Education Boards have access to more resources and staff compared to the Madrasah Board. Yet the Secondary and Higher Secondary Education Boards do not have the responsibilities of awarding graduate level certificates or of controlling graduate level exams. These responsibilities are taken care of by the relevant universities. But the Madrasah Board, despite its limitations in terms of resources and staff is responsible for all these things.

Both Fazil and Kamil place high emphasis on the learning of Arabic. Completers of these degrees have almost no knowledge of the social sciences or of the fundamentals of science. Hence, it has not been possible to combine these levels with mainstream general education.

In addition to these government approved Madrasahs, there are a few different types of Madrasahs in operation in Bangladesh located across the country.

However, precise numbers regarding these types of Madrasahs are not retained in government offices. Following is a brief profile of these Madrasahs:

Khariji or Qawmi Madrasah : The word 'Khariji' means rejected or external. These are called Khariji as these are operated beyond state control. These institutions are generally run on foreign funding or local donations and voluntary services. They do not accept government funding. Accepting government funding will entail a certain amount of government control, which the authorities of these Madrasahs do not want. One hundred years after the establishment of the British

supported Aaliyah Nisaab Madrasah in Kolkata, the Khariji Nisaab Madrasah was initiated in Deoband, India. As the word Khariji carries a connotation of something discarded, some identify these Madrasahs as Qawmi (National).

Failing direct confrontations with the British, these Madrasahs were initially established by conservative Alims as indirect strategy in the spheres of education and culture. The key founder of the Deoband ideology was Shah Aliullah Muhaddis Dehlovi (RA). The Deoband Madrasah was established by his followers to promote the Dehlovi ideology. They are followers of Sunnat and Jamaat. According to these conservative beliefs, where there is no Sunnat, there is Bid 'at, and where there is no Jamat, there lies "Khondrayi" and there roams unrestrained thought and ideas. And both of these are "Gomrahi".

Akin to the Aaliyah Nisaab Madrasah, this type also has five levels. Ibtidayyah, Mutawassitah, Sanabia Uloiya, Fazilat and Taqmil. According to the claims made by the authorities of the Qawmi Madrasah, education equivalent to the primary, secondary, higher secondary, graduate and post graduate levels is provided at these Madrasah levels. In addition to these levels, each Qawmi Madrasah has Ilmul Quran Wat Tazbid and Hifzul Quran sections. As the government has no control over these Madrasahs, the government does not possess any qualitative or quantitative information on these. It is estimated that there are around 5,000 of these types of Madrasahs across the country.

According to some sources there are about 500 of these Madrasahs in Dhaka. About 400 Madrasahs are operated under the Faridabade Befaqul Madrasah located at Gendaria in Dhaka city. Around 70 Madrasahs are under the Lalbagh Madrasah, there are several more located at Jatrabari and Madaninagar. These controlling Madrasahs each operate like separate boards. Similarly, there are 300 Madrasahs under the Ittehadul Madrasah located at Potia in the Chittagong district, at least 90 Madrasahs are run under the Dwini Education Board and the Azad Dwini Education Board in Sylhet.

There are 50 Madrasahs under the Sawtul Hera Madrasah in the greater Mymensingh district, more are controlled by the Tanjimul Madrasah of Kishjoregamj and the Pathalia Madrasah of Jamalpur. However, the largest concentration of Qawmi Madrasahs exist in Brahmanbaria.

According to the chairperson of the Madrasah Education Board, Qawmi Madrasahs number around 2,000 in Bangladesh. For a long time, the Qawmi Madrasahs took exams and gave certificates from their respective organizations. Recently the Bangladesh Qawmi Madrasah Education Board was established to ensure an equivalent exam for these institutions.

The Qawmi Madrasahs follow the methods and the syllabus of Darse Nizam. Hence, they are highly conservative and abhor any kind of modernity. Apart from Arabic, they may encourage Urdu or Farsi, but they show no interest in providing instruction on the mother tongue. It is considered that as the Quran, the Hadiths, the Tafsirs, Aqaid and Fikh volumes are written mainly in Arabic, Farsi or Urdu, it is enough to study these languages. However, there exists a massive dearth of truly qualified tutors in these disciplines in Bangladesh. As a result, Qawmi students are faced with severe problems in obtaining proper and higher learning in these disciplines. The Qawmi syllabus aggressively promotes Sunnat, circumcision, milaads, waaz nasihat, fatwa etc.

In the majority of Qawmi Madrasahs, young boys are trained with arms to become “Jihadis”. In some Madrasahs, arms instructors are hired from Pakistan and other Islamic countries. It is compulsory for the students to participate in the arms training and to take part in various fundamentalist terrorist activities. According to newspapers, students undergo horrific abuse in the Qawmi Madrasahs. According to a report published in the Daily Sangbad (February 8, 2001), in the Al Jamiyatul Islamia Darul Ulum Qawmi Madrasah of Old Babupara in the Syedpur municipality, students who were uninterested in arms training were chained, hung from chains, caned, starved, locked up and were not allowed to see their parents. Although the management of the school does not believe this abuse to be abuse. According to them, students are merely punished according to the Shariah for various infractions.

There are a number of famous Khariji Madrasahs in Bangladesh. The Madrasahs in Hathajari and Potia of Chittagong, Lalbagh and Malibagh of Dhaka, the Balia Madrasah of Mymensingh and Jamiya Imdadia of Kishoreganj are well known. Ancient Madrasahs of this type include the famous Madrasahs of Deoband and Lucknow in India. Khariji educated students from Bangladesh are often interested to go to Deoband and Lucknow for higher study.

Maktab or Forqania Madrasah : These types of educational institutes are in operation everywhere in the rural areas of Bangladesh. Almost every mosque has a Maktab or Forqania Madrasah adjacent to it. The Forqania Madrasah teaches Qaeda (the Arabic alphabet), Aampara (the last Paraa of the Quran) and reciting the Quran. These types of institutions usually conduct their operations an hour or slightly longer in the morning. In the case of mosques, the Imam of the mosque and for the separate forqania madrassahs a Quari or a Moulvi employed by the local community acts as the teacher. The Forqania Madrasah adjacent to mosques are usually run by the mosque committee, and the committee makes an additional payment to the Imam. Alternatively, the Imam may be engaged under the condition that in addition to being the Imam he must also teach at the Forqania Madrasah. For the Forqania Madrasahs that operate independently of mosques at village level, the local community pays the Quari or the Moulvi a nominal monthly fee.

In some cases, the salary is paid by collecting a fistful of rice from each household of the community. A more or less unemployed person is engaged to visit the households every week or fortnight to collect the rice. This rice is conserved by the women of the household in the kitchen. They measure the rice required at each meal and separate one or two fistfuls each time. This rice is then given over to the collector when he comes round at the end of the week. The rice thus collected is then sold off to pay the teacher's salary. In addition, the Quari or the Moulvi occasionally receive gifts of clothing or religious artifacts as tokens of appreciation when the students graduate from Qaeda to Aampara to reciting the Quran.

Apart from learning to read Arabic and basic concepts of namaz and roza (praying and fasting), students do not learn much else at these Madrasahs. Many students discontinue after completing Forqania, however, many also move on to Ebtedayee Madrasahs.

If, after completing the Forqania and learning to read Arabic, a student wants to properly perform Qirat (formal recitation of the quran) or become a Qari (formal reciter), then he has to receive separate and additional training from a qualified Qari. In the majority of cases, a qualified Qari is engaged as private tutor at the student's household. There are also Qariana teaching institutes in some areas. This skill is known as *Ilm Qirat* and the skilled individual is designated as Qari.

There are no reliable estimates as to how many Forqania nad Qariana institutes exist in Bangladesh. However, there are 2,929 Forqania Madrasahs according to a 1965-66 report published by the Education Division, and 6,601 Forqania and Hafezia Madrasahs according to a 1972-73 report. According to a survey conducted by BANBEIS in 1993, there are 130,000 mosque adjacent Madrasahs and 60 thousand Maktabas.

Hifzul Quran Madrasah: Even during the times of the Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh), prior to the invention of the printing press, it was customary to memorize all thirty sections of the Quran to preserve it without any distortion. This course is given to students who have not exceeded the age of 8 or 9, who have good memories and who have completed reading of the Quran successfully. The majority of the larger Madrasahs in the country have a department for Quran Hifz. In addition to these, there are a number of independent Hafezi Madrasahs in the country that focus on only Quran Hifz.

As, according to religious dictum, the Quran should not be touched in a Napak (unclean) state, the Hifzul Quran students practice and study wearing clean clothes and after proper ablutions. It takes three to four years to complete the course. Memorizing the Quran does not signal the end of his studies, this must be replicated throughout his lifetime. There are no reliable statistics as to the number of these Madrasahs. According to estimates of the Education Division in 1965-66, there were 188 Hafezia Madrasahs in the country. According to the figures for 1972-73, the combined total for Forqania and Hafezia Madrasahs were 6,601.

It has been reported at various times that children are abused mercilessly in these Madrasahs as well. More than once, the national dailies have reported that children were literally chained up in these institutions in the name of religious education. In a news item in the Daily Janakantha published on June 18, 2000 reported that children were being chained up like animals to have them memorize the Holy Quran and become Hafezes. In 1992, Maulana Habibur Rahman was given the management of the Jamanul Quran Hefzkhana and Nurani Madrasah established in 1985 on land owned by the Railway Division at Double Mooring thana in Chittagong. This Maulana commenced this system of instructing children in the Quran by chaining and shackling them. Then the dailies published reports of another similar child concentration camp also located in Chittagong. The same Habibur Rahman had been a teacher at that Madrasah. It is possible that Hafezi Madrasahs following similar inhuman methods may exist in other parts of the country including the capital.

Cadet Madrasah: Recently a few Cadet Madrasahs have been established with the aim of elevating Madrasah education to the level of general education. However, establishing cadet type institutions here and there instead of developing a generally acceptable universal educational system is only reinforcing the existing inequalities.

It is said that these establishments aim to ensure blossoming of a student's potential in the light of the Quran and the Hadith, by providing a good environment, scientific teaching methods, and a pragmatic curriculum that is in keeping with governmental policy. These Madrasahs follow the semester system and in addition to providing instruction on the Quran and the Hadith, students are taught using computer and internet related audio visual aids. Each class also has computers. These educational facilities are not for the poor. Education costs at these institutions are relatively more expensive and within the reach of the middle and upper middle classes. A large part of resources needed to run the Cadet Madrasahs come from student fees. Some of these institutions have classes from Playgroup to Class IX, some have Hifzul Quran sections. The exact number of these institutions, which also provide boarding facilities for students, could not be determined. Relevant sources estimate that there are no more than 10 Cadet Madrasahs.

Islamic University: The major advocate of Pan Islamism, Maulana Muniruzzaman Islamabadi, undertook many plans to regenerate and revitalize the Muslims of the subcontinent. He was the first to feel the need to establish a National Arabic University in Chittagong. From 1915 he began writing to magazines and newspapers including 'The Mohammadi' in support of this proposal. He also published a detailed pamphlet in Urdu in favor of this proposal.

He selected and managed to obtain 500 Kani of land from Zamindar Anwar Ali Khan Chowdhury for the proposed university at Deyang Mountain in Potia thana on the Bay of Bengal and Karnaphuli river, seven miles to the south of Chittagong city. In addition, about 600 bighas of land was also obtained from the then government. A conference was arranged at Chittagong of the All India Anjumane Ulama to obtain the support of the Ulamas throughout the subcontinent. His proposal was accepted at this conference. However, before this proposal was implemented, India underwent the Partition.

The 1949 Akram Khan Committee also strongly supported the previously proposed establishment of the Islamic University. But no progress was made. With the death of Maulana Islamabadi in 1950, local initiative to establish the university died down. The 1958 Pakistan National Education Commission remained silent on the issue of establishing an Islamic University in Bangladesh. The Islamic Arabic University Commission was established in 1963-64 under the leadership of Dr. Syed Moazzem Hossain, the Vice Chancellor of Dhaka University. The report of this Commission was not implemented either.

A proposal to establish an Islamic University in Bangladesh emerged from the OIC conference of heads of state of Muslim countries held in Saudi Arabia on March 31-April 8, 1977. In 1979, an office was opened in Dhaka, with Dr. A. N. M. Momtaz Uddin serving as Project Director for the Islamic University project. Prior to that, a seven-member committee presented recommendations regarding establishment of the Islamic University. On November 22, 1979, the then President Ziaur Rahman laid the cornerstone of the Islamic University at Shantidanga-Dalalpur of Kushtia district. The Islamic University law was passed in the National Parliament on December 27, 1980. On January 31, 1981, Dr. Momtaz Uddin was appointed the first Vice Chancellor.

When President General Ershad came to power later that year, it was declared that the Islamic University campus would be relocated to Boardbazar of the Gazipur district. However, in the face of strong protests and violence, Gen. Ershad was forced to again relocate the campus to Shantidanga. The present campus was inaugurated in Shantidanga of Kushtia on November 1, 1992. The Islamic University is located there till date. The concerned factions are not satisfied with the establishment of the Islamic University, in addition to this facility, they want the Dhaka Aaliyah Madrasah upgraded to become the Arabic University.

Connection between religious extremism and Religious Educational Institute

In the past decade, a good number of studies have been commissioned by development partners and the implicit or explicit focus of almost all of those studies has been understanding madrassa-militancy links. Side by side, there have been academic studies as well. The present chapter explores the nature of the linkages and the perceptions around them.

The focus of the madrassa-militancy debate centres on Qaumi madrassas, not so much on Aliya madrassas. Aliya madrassas are registered with the Government, regulated by the Bangladesh Madrassa Education Board (BMEB) and they have undertaken modernization of curriculum in terms of introduction of general education courses up to higher secondary levels. On the other hand, Qaumi madrassas have resisted any attempt at registration and regulation by the Government. The curriculum Qaumi madrassas are offering are three to four hundred years old, without much change. The events of 9/11 in the USA and the subsequent counter-terrorist measures have focused attention on Qaumi madrassas as many of the terrorists reportedly had their education and training in Qaumi or unregulated madrassas. Common Western perceptions about Qaumi madrassas are that they are fundamentalist and militant in approach teaching *Jihad* among the students. A lot has been written in the Western media about madrassas as breeding ground of terrorism.

Many commentators have claimed that madrassas, especially Qaumi ones, teach jihad literature and that their curriculum are intended to produce Islamic warriors. It has also been suggested that there is an inherent relationship between what is taught in the madrassas and Islamic extremism or radicalism. Such a perception widely prevails in the terrorism discourse in Bangladesh as well. Frequent arrests, seizure of arms, books, CDs in different parts of the country, recruitment, training of militants in deep jungles of CHT and Teknaf are often reported in the media. Reports that the militants develop international linkages also appear in the press. Seizure of unauthorized arms and inciting literature from madrassas is also reported. Local media has published reports on links between financing from the Middle East-based Islamic NGOs and the Qaumi madrassas in Bangladesh, especially in southeastern parts of the country where alleged militant training goes on.

The names of Al-Haramine Islamic Foundation (Saudi Arabia), Welfare Association (UAE), Darul Ansar Al-Khairia (Dubai), Daultul Kuwait (Dubai), and Daultul Bahrain (Dubai) often come up. These NGOs do not have offices in Bangladesh but a number of local madrassa teachers and ulama act as their agents to bring financial aid for the rehabilitation of and educational assistance to the

Rohingya refugees, it is reported. However, while some of the madrassas may have been used for militant activities, it is difficult to verify these stories, even though the Government has in recent months made a number of raids on several Qaumi madrassas following reported connections with the activities of Islamist extremists.

There is little doubt that madrassas, particularly Qaumi madrassas, receive funds from Islamic NGOs operating in and out of the Middle East, although there is no way of proving this since accurate accounts are not available. On the other hand, while these funds may be used to promote different Islamic ideologies, there is little or no hard evidence to link such funds with militant or terrorist activities based in or channeled through madrassas.

According to one report a few years back, intelligence agencies marked 323 Qaumi madrassas believed to be involved in militant training. Newspaper reports on some specific incidents possibly gave credence to the above perceptions. One is the unearthing of the Green Crescent Madrassa activities in Bhola where suspicious activities, including training in arms, went on under the camouflage of a madrassa. The Hathazari Madrassa, with impeccable Deobandi credentials and reckoned as one of the top ten Qaumi madrassas in the subcontinent, came to limelight in 2004 when it was reported that some of its graduates participated in Afghan war in the 1980s. In February 2010, 40 students of the madrassa were arrested when they engaged in clashes with the police while staging protests under the banner ‘Hefazat-e-Islam’ against government’s attempts at secularization of education. Many of the arrested Jamatul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) members had proven links with madrassas. For example, Dr. Mohammad Assadullah Ghalib received funds from the Kuwait-based Revival of Islamic Heritage Society for mosques and madrassas.

Another empirical study that mentions about militancy links with Qaumi madrassas is Madrassa Education : An Observation prepared under the aegis of Bangladesh Nari Progati Sangha (BNPS), 2003. The BNPS mainly compiled newspaper reports about militant activities involving madrassas. Secondly, it made a content analysis of the Qaumi madrassa curriculum to show that even general subjects like Geography, Science, and History have been Islamised so much so that a student learns practically nothing from these general subjects other than the Islamic version.

In another study, based on limited field study, Mercer *et al* argue that the picture is at best confusing. While funds do come to some of the Qaumi madrassas from foreign NGOs, it cannot be ascertained how this fund is used.

From newspaper reports, however, it would appear that madrassas were not the primary source of the so-called religious terrorists. In fact, a large number of apprehended terrorists were found to have background in general education and they came from financially solvent families.

CASE STUDIES ON SELECTED ISLAMIST TERRORISTS WHO ARE BELONG TO ABOVE EXTRISM GROUP:

The five case studies are done on 5 terrorists based on available media and intelligence reports.

4.5 Shaikh Abdur Rahman

In order to establish Islamic rule in the country he formed JMB and became the chief of this organization. Shaikh Abdur Rahman was born in the village Hazrabari of Melandah upazila in Jamalpur. His father Fazal Munshi was a well-known mawlana (religious leader) of the area. Later, his family settled in Charshi Khalifanpara of Sadar Upazila. Rahman established a mosque and a madrassa in his locality and became a Madrassa teacher. He was popularly known as Ahsan Mawlana. Of the four brothers and five sisters, Shaikh was the eldest one. His other three brothers, Waliur Rahman studied at the Madina University and is now a Madrasa teacher. Obaidur Rahman is also a Madrassa teacher. Youngest brother Aatur Rahman alias Sunny, was the student of the Kushtia Islamic University. Sunny was the military commander of JMB.

In his early life Shaikh Abdur Rahman was a fertilizer trader. His father's Fazal Munshi was a collaborator who helped Pakistani army during the Liberation War of 1971. Fazal Munshi was the founder of Ahle Hadith in Bangladesh (AHAB) Rahman passed his Fazil Degree from a local Madrasa and his Kamil from the Aramnagar Madrasa at Sarishabari in Jamalpur. He then left for Saudi Arabia and studied at the Madina Islamic University. According to the Daily Star Investigation (2005), Rahman's father was a leader of Jammata-e-Islami, Bangladesh (JIB) and he joined the Islamic Chatra Shangha (present Islamic Chatra Shibir), the student front of JIB and he studied in Saudi Arabia at JIB party expenses. After returning home Shaikh tried different jobs and did fertilizer business at Sarishabari for some time. According to the Daily Star Investigation, his main portfolio turned to be an interpreter and translator that provided many contacts with diplomats from Middle Eastern countries and frequently travelled to India, Pakistan and Afghanistan. He also worked at the Saudi Embassy and Kuwait Embassy in Dhaka.

He worked at Saudi Embassy in Dhaka between 1985 and 1990 (The Daily Star Investigation, 2005). Rahman's father set up the Al Madina Cadet Madrasa, the Habibunnessa Women's Madrasa (after the name of Rahman's mother) and a mosque. Rahman reportedly fought in Afghanistan alongside Osama Bin Laden's people.

Returning from Afghanistan where he received jihadi training, Rahman started dreaming for an Islamic revolution in Bangladesh. He felt that arms struggle is the only means of establishing an Islamic state. It is said that Abdur Rahman has link with Pakistan's extremist group Jaish-e-Muhammed and India's Kashmir-based group - Lashkar-e-Taiyeba. In 1998 Abdur Rahman founded the JMB in his native district - Jamalpur. But he runs JMB activities in the North Bengal Region. His relatives in the districts of Dinajpur and Rajshahi helped him expand JMB activities in this region.

In 2003, he openly started his activities and recruited thousands of supporters in the south and southwestern region. Following arrests of 17 activists during the first conference of JMB commanders in Joypurhat in the early 2002, the JMB commanders went underground and extended their activities across the country. Rahman built permanent headquarter in Rajshahi town and formed the so called Bangla Bahini having its leader Siddik Ullah as the key associate (The Daily Star Investigation, 2005).

In a public speech, Rahman published a manifesto of JMJB as the public front of JMB. In an interview with the Daily Star on May 12, 2004, Rahman mentioned that they are not part of al-Qaeda, Taliban or Islamist militant organization, against the use of force and not interested to go to power, rather they would like to serve people as a social organization. It is alleged that Abdur Rahman and his organization received huge funds from two NGOs - the Saudia Revival of Islamic Heritage Society (Kuwait) and Al Haramain Islamic Foundation. These funds were used to expand JMB's infrastructure, train its workers and pay wages. After the government banned JMB in 2005, Rahman simply stepped up his extremist activities. He conceived the idea of countrywide bombings and attacks on the judiciary. JMB carried out the nationwide near simultaneous bomb attack on August 17, 2005. Subsequently, the suicide squad members of JMB also carried out bomb attacks in Gazipur, Chittagong, Lakshmipur, Chandpur and Natrokona.

At least 30 people were killed and hundreds injured in the bombings that were masterminded by Shaekh Rahman. Abdur Rahman was executed on March 29, 2007 for killing of two Jhalakathi judges on November 14, 2005. Since the nationwide bomb blasts on August 17, 2005, the security forces searched for him, but he was arrested on March 1, 2006 through a break-through counter-terrorism operation in a house in Sylhet where he stayed and surrendered along with three of his

associates to the authorities. But he was sentenced in absentia for 40 years of imprisonment on February 9, 2006 for that judge killing case. By the end of 2005, the authorities had arrested Rahman's son-in-law Abdul Awal Sarker alias Ashiq alias Adil alias Arafat, and his younger brother Ataur Rahman alias Sunny alias Sajid, both members of the Shura of the JMB. According to the Home Ministry source, out of 229 cases registered in connection with the August 17, 2000, bomb blasts 52 were against Abdur Rahman (Raman, 2006).

4.6. Mufti Abdul Hannan

Mufti Hannan is a highly educated person. He was a madrassa teacher. After his primary education, he studied Koumi at Gouhordanga Madrasa in Gopalganj district (1975 to 1979). Later he went to Daubond Madrasa in India. He did his MA in Islamic Studies from the Aligarh University in India. He returned home in 1987. He went to Pakistan and studied at Jamia Usuf Bin Noria Madrasa in Karachi since 1988. At that time, he joined into Afghanistan war in favor of Afghanistan. He received a training of war for fifteen days. Upon his return at home in 1989, he along with some other Afghan warriors established Horkatul Zihadul Islami Bangladesh to support Afghan war.

Mufti Abdul Hannan was a regular member of HUIB and became operations commander later. Mufti Hannan had contacts and worked with Indian and Pakistani militants belonging to Pakistan based Let and Indian ARCF since 1995. Two Indian militants belonging to Pakistan based Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) - Mufti Sheikh Obaidullah and Maulana Mohammad Mansur Ali alias Habibullah were engaged in teaching in different madrassas in Jessore, Habiganj and Dhaka. They worked to strengthen militant outfits and used the territory to affect terrorism inside the country and to organize a local chapter of LeT (New Age Xtra August 21-27, 2009, The Daily Star May 18, 2005). Hannan and Obaidullah established training camps in early 2000. Mufti Hannan is accused for the July 20, 2000 assassination of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. He manufactured the explosives at his shoap factory Sonar Bangla Chemical Industries Ltd. His arrest along with other top leaders in the period 20005-2006 has weakened the organization. He was arrested in October 2005. HUIB was not banned with JMB and JMJB in 2005. Only after the August 17 bomb blasts, HUIB was banned.

4.7. Siddiquil Islam

Siddiquil Islam alias Bangla Bhai alias Azizur Rahman alias Omar Ali was an operations commander of JMJB. Bangla Bhai was born in Bogra District. He joined the Islamic Chatra Shibir (ICS) when he was a college student. He led the Bangla Bahi Bahini to fight against left-wing extremists. He and his force emerged in April. He used left-wing militancy in Rajshahi region as a tool to justify his terrorist activities. In his camps, many dead bodies were found. He hanged dead bodies in the tree and displayed sliced bodies. Earlier the panic was the left-wing militants and Bangla Bhai became a panic during the BNP government.

Police knew it and the government overlooked it. The State Minister for Home Affairs ordered to arrest, he was not arrested. The Prime Minister ordered to arrest, he was not arrested. There were some hands for protecting him. This was explored in different media and intelligence reports. In public speech, he spoke in the same tone of his spiritual leader Sheikh Abdur Rahman that the main aim is to establish Islamic rule (Saptahik 2000 published in 2004-2005).

Siddikur Rahman is a Bengali professor in a college who was educated in madrassa and general education system. He was active member of ICS in his student life. He also taught in the Retina Coaching Centre affiliated with JIB. In course of his college teaching and coaching centre tutoring, he recruited activists. He used to force people to go to pray, use headwear by men and hijab by women. Siddikul Islam was known as Siddik master and Bangla Bhai.

He was sent to Afghanistan and returned with training from Taliban camp. He got Bangla Bhai title in Taliban camp in Kandahar. On return he joined JMP as operations commander. He was arrested in Bagerhat, but got released. Later he was again arrested in a clash with police in Joypurhat, he was released again for unknown reasons. Later he opened JMJB with his name as Aziur Rahman. He made the plots of bombing in Dinajpur, cinema hall in Mymensingh. Although his group was to fight left-wing extremists, the opposition political party leaders – AL, Workers Party and Communist Part were his targets. His attitude against secular political parties came into lime light on May 23 when he organized a JMJB March in Rajshahi where about 3000 people with bamboo stick, hockey stick, and arms inside bag showed up in Rajshahi Town.

In another significant break-through in their counter-terrorism operations, the Bangladesh authorities arrested Siddiqui Islam alias Bangla Bhai. His JMJB carried out a spate of killings in Rajshahi, Natore and Naogaon in early 2003 and 2004. It was reported that the JMJB came into existence in 1998 under the leadership of Abdur Rahman and it was renamed as the JMB in August 2003 following the discovery by the police of a secret jihadi training camp run by it at Joypurhat (Raman, 2006).

Based on information from a 19-year old cadre of the JMB named Amanullah Rimon – who was arrested on March 5 from a house in Sylhet, Bangla Bhai was captured wounded in the village of Rampur in the Muktagachha area of Mymensingh after an exchange of fire with the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) next day. He was sentenced in absentia for 40 years of imprisonment on February 9, 2006 for the killing of 2 judges case and out of 229 cases registered in connection with the August 17, 2005 bomb blasts 48 were against Bangla Bhai (Raman, 2006).

4.8. Asadullah Al Galib

Asadullah Al Galib was a professor at Rajshahi University. He headed the Ahle Hadith Andolon Bangladesh (AHAB). He is also a leader of JMB and served it as a policy maker. He was arrested on February 23, 2005 and a total of 10 cases were filed against with him. He was freed on bail by the High court from Bogra Jail on August 28, 2008. He was granted bail in two cases as the trials could not be held within the time set by the court six months ago.

During the BNP led government he got released in 6 cases and granted bail in another case. During the Care Taker Government on July 16, 2008 A Gaibhanda court declared him not guilty in an explosives case. After his arrest on February 23, 2005, Galib admitted that he spent huge money for building mosques and seminaries, giving military-style training to Madrassa students and other organizational works.

Galib and JMB chief Rahman has close relationship. They have similar opinions about the Islamic revolution. Galib joined hands of Rahman in starting JMB activities with international support. Indian AHAB leader Abdul Matin Salafi who was expelled from Bangladesh in 1988 worked with them. In the mid 90s, Galib established AHAB and recruited nationwide secretly to work for Rahman (Kumar, 2006). Galib recommend Rahman to study at Madian University in Saudi Arabia and work at the Saudi Arabia and Kuwait embassies in Dhaka.

Galib was with Jamayate Ahle Hadith founded in 1945 but he left in the late 70s due to his debatable actions. He established Ahle Hadith Juba Sangha (AHJS) and recruited members afterwards (Kumar, 2006). Galib and Rahman used to meet in Chittagon in 1998 to discuss about their plans for revolution and they worked among Muslim Rohingas and Arakan militants. It is reported that Galib masterminded the militant actions in the country (Kumar, 2006). AHAM used JMB as operational wing and »HUJI as training unit. In the Rajshahi AHAB Conference in the late 90s, his links with al-Qaeda militants from Middle East, South Asia was revealed. West Bengal and Punjab Ahle Hadith leaders, Nepalese Ahle Hadith Leader participated in the conference.

4.9 Zahidul Islam Sumon alias Boma Mizan

Mizan joined JMB as a full-timer in 2001 and had close relations with executed militant kingpins Shaekh Abdur Rahman (HUJIB leader) and Siddiqul Islam alias Bangla Bhai (JMB leader). He is known as boma (bomb) Mizan for being an explosives expert. According to the intelligence unit of the elite crime busters, Mizan had long been working as explosives expert for JMB and he had been training the militants how to make bombs and improvised grenades. Mizan had visited a number of countries including Afghanistan. He however did not reply to query how they manage funds to run their organization. He was arrested in 2003 at Jhikargachha of Jessore, but released on bail after three months. Since then he had been on the run.

Mizan was born in Shekher Bhita of Jamalpur district. He is a former student of the Tejgaon Polytechnic Institute. He was sentenced to 20 years' rigorous imprisonment in his absence in 2008 along with the Chittagong division JMB chief, Javed Iqbal, and two others on charge of carrying out a bomb attack on a judge in Chittagong in 2005. Detained Mizan told that JMB high command paid him told Tk 30,000 a month to cover personal and organizational expenses. He also disclosed about the JMB plan for terrorist attacks and about some bombs ready for use. Mizan used to often meet Saidur's son Bashar, a key figure in JMB, at Gulistan and asked to make bombs. He said his deputy Shishir or the outfit's military wing commander Sohel Mahfuz alias 'Hatkata Mahfuz' might fill in for him.

Bashar and Sohel Mahfuz would hand him the money. Mizan sometimes used his wife for terrorizing activities, for an example he gave his wife Sharmin some coded instructions, and immediately afterwards a bomb went off inside the room when RAB raid his house. The blast has

blown off Sharmin's right wrist and wounded her two children—two-year-old son and a few months old girl. The boy sustained head injuries, while the baby girl's dress bore bloodstains. According to RAB sources, the JMB explosives expert Mizan was involved in the countrywide bomb blasts. He informed the interrogation team that JMB has close links with RSO – an Arakan State of Myanmar based insurgent group, from which he along with other JMB operatives received training near Myanmar border in 2002.

He also disclosed that in exchange for the firearms training, the JMB trained RSO to manufacture improvised explosive devices. He also revealed one new outfit – Jamaat-e-Muslimeen that is linked to JMB. Mizan used fake identity for renting his house. According to the owner, Nishat Mohammad, said he rented out the second floor of his four-story building to Mizan in the name of Imrul Kayes, working as a contractor and hailing from Jessore.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

In this section, I argue that the rise of Islamic fundamentalism in Bangladesh is rooted in the social and political dynamics of the country as well as in the perceived anti-Muslim aggression of the West. These internal and external factors have created a feeling of deprivation and a feeling of humiliation in the minds of certain people, which motivate them to become involved in militancy and terrorism. I will analyze Connection between religious extremism and terrorism in Bangladesh.

Religiously motivated terrorism is a new phenomenon in Bangladesh, which started in the late 1990s. In the early 1990s, there was an upsurge in the issuance of fatwas by rural clerics. Fatwas were pronounced against NGO activists, social reformers, and feminists. Some Western donor countries channeled their aids to Bangladesh through NGOs or put pressure on the government to spend aid money through NGOs. The intervention of NGOs in Bangladesh society in the 1980s especially challenged the rural power structure and social hierarchy.

This was because the NGOs' prime goal was to empower rural women through literacy and by providing micro-credit programs. Literacy programs often emerged as an alternative to madrasa education. A poor child who would otherwise attend a Qwami madrasa would now attend an NGO-run school in certain areas of the country.

Similarly, micro-credit programs emerged as an alternative to loans by mohajans (rural wealthy traders and money lenders). Thus, rural elites felt threatened by these NGOs. At the same time, rural clerics who used to earn their living as Imams (prayer leaders) of mosques and teachers of maqtabas (rudimentary religious learning centers) and madrasas felt threatened by NGO programs. Rural wealthy elites typically provided such clerics with salaries and residences. The increased influence of NGOs deprived the rural clerics of money, power, and influence.

Thus, the increased issuance of fatwas against the NGOs can be viewed as the reflection of economic grievances, and perceived feelings of injustice. Most of the time, a fatwa was pronounced in a salish (a traditional rural arbitration council for dispute resolution) that was called by rural elites. The salish and the fatwa were used as instruments to ameliorate the grievance and injustice, and to restore the lost dignity and honor of the rural elites and clerics.

In the early 1990s, these incidents were local and uncoordinated. However, the situation changed in the late 1990's, during which fundamentalist religious organizations started using fatwa in a coordinated way throughout the country.

On the other hand, after winning the general election in 2001, the Bangladesh Nationalist Party offered two ministries to its coalition partner, the Jama'at-i-Islami, whose loyalty to the Constitution has always been remained questionable because of its collaboration with the occupation army of Pakistan during the War of Liberation in 1971. The JI never supported the secular character of the Constitution, as it wanted to establish an Islamic state. The BNP allowed the JI to hold political offices that increased the probability of seditious activities, and thus, created an opportunity for the rise of militant fundamentalism in the country. However, both AL and BNP ignored the fatwa and salish incidents in the early 1990s, which ultimately created an environment conducive to flourish a militant movement in the country.

The rise of militant fundamentalism. As described earlier, militant Islamic fundamentalism appeared in Bangladesh in the late 1990s. In the beginning, fundamentalist sentiments were expressed through the events of fatwa and salish in the rural areas. But these haphazard quantitative events soon turned to qualitative events of organized violence, terrorist attacks, and suicide bombings after the arrival of militant fundamentalist organizations in the scene in the late 1990s.

We have noticed that the HUIB and JMB organized themselves against the perceived secularist forces of the country, and at the same time, against the perceived threat and fear of the non-Muslim countries against the Muslim umma. JMB's warning to Western leaders to quit the Muslim land particularly reflects this fear. Some of the organizers of both of these organizations fought against Soviet occupation in Afghanistan. They also helped organize the Rohingya refugees politically against the torture, dishonor, and humiliation perpetuated by the Myanmar government. These aids, provided for the Afghan Muslims and Rohingya Muslims, can be described as fellow feeling, the help of one religious group to another in order to rescue them.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Political stability is considered to be a priori for the socio-economic development of a country. Maintaining law and order is thus viewed as one of the basic functions of any government. But terrorism of any sort is detrimental to law and order, and also to the socioeconomic and political development of a country. Terrorism not only destabilizes a country, but also makes the credibility and effectiveness of a government questionable. There is no doubt that religious extremism and terrorism are connected between them in Bangladesh. It appears that religious terrorism and militancy are rooted in the socio-economic and political conditions of the country. To fight against religiously motivated terrorism and religious extremism, the government of Bangladesh should consider the following policy recommendations:

- (1) Madrasas established with the funds of Islamic charitable organizations should be incorporated into the mainstream madrasa education system of the country in order to supervise their curriculum as well as to establish governmental control over them;
- (2) The government should establish a separate Qwami Madrasa Education Board, similar to the Madrasas Education Board for 'Alia madrasas, in order to establish administrative control over them;
- (3) The government has been paying 80% of the salary and benefit of the madrasa teachers registered with the Madrasa Education Board. The government should introduce a similar system for the Qwami madrasa teachers in order to reduce their dependence on private endowment and donation and also to control the financial sources of these madrasas. Although it will be difficult for a poor country like Bangladesh to arrange necessary funds for such expenditures, the government should arrange this fund by shifting the budgetary preferences for the greater benefit of the country. It may help stop the use of the Qwami madrasa-premises as training camps by the militants;
- (4) Like the “Governing Body” of the mainstream madrasas, which supervise the financial and general administration of the madrasas and to whom the principal/superintendent of the madrasas remain accountable, the government should introduce similar “Governing Body” for the Qwami madrasas, which may prevent other people to use the madrasa venues other than educational purposes;
- (5) The government should give priority to modern education by rearranging program preferences and budgetary allocations. A modern education, in the long run, may create a core value that will prevent religious extremism and militancy from growing;

- (6) The government should closely monitor the financial transactions and ensure financial accountability of the non-government and charitable organizations;
- (7) The government should arrange extensive terrorism and counterterrorism training programs for the members of the law-enforcement agencies;
- (8) The government should strengthen and ensure timely elections of all the local government bodies, such as the district, sub-district, and union councils as well as the municipalities. It will help empower the masses as well as help reduce the feeling of deprivation, even among the marginalized people. It will increase the possibility of creating a common ground and shared interest among the stakeholders to combat terrorism socially and politically;
- (9) The government should launch social mobilization and motivational programs against terrorism through electronic and printed medias, and also by engaging local government and public officials, to make people aware of the evil sides of religious extremism and militancy;
- (10) The government should make a coordinated and concerted effort with other countries to fight against terrorism. The government should be aware of public exposure of its involvement with the Western countries, especially the United States, as most of the people do not view the United States as a Muslim-friendly nation; and
- (11) The mainstream secularist political parties should drop the politics of expediency as a strategy by aligning themselves with the fundamentalist organizations considering the fact that in the future, if the fundamentalists take over the country, they will not spare anybody from persecution

CHAPTER FIVE: PUBLIC PERCEPTION

Composition of public Perception:

Two hundred respondent were selected from urban and semi urban areas Dhaka, Khulna , Chittagong, Rajshahi division. Opnion were collected from those public who has their own opinion, can mobilise public opinion and who actively take part in the public sphere of the country in different way. Thus, students, professionals, businessman, politicians, concious people who are the main players in the public sphere have taken very active part in the political areana are included in this study.

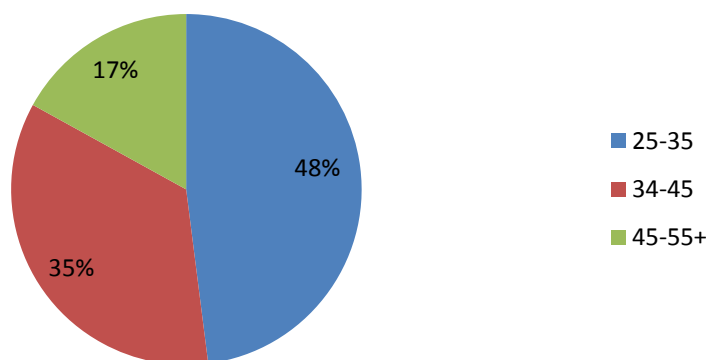
5.1 Demographic Profile of the Survey Respondents

Age distribution

The age of the respondents veries mainly from 25 to 55 plus population. The main section of public came from (25-35) age group which composed of 48 percent of the respondents.

Chart: 1

Distribution of the respondents by age

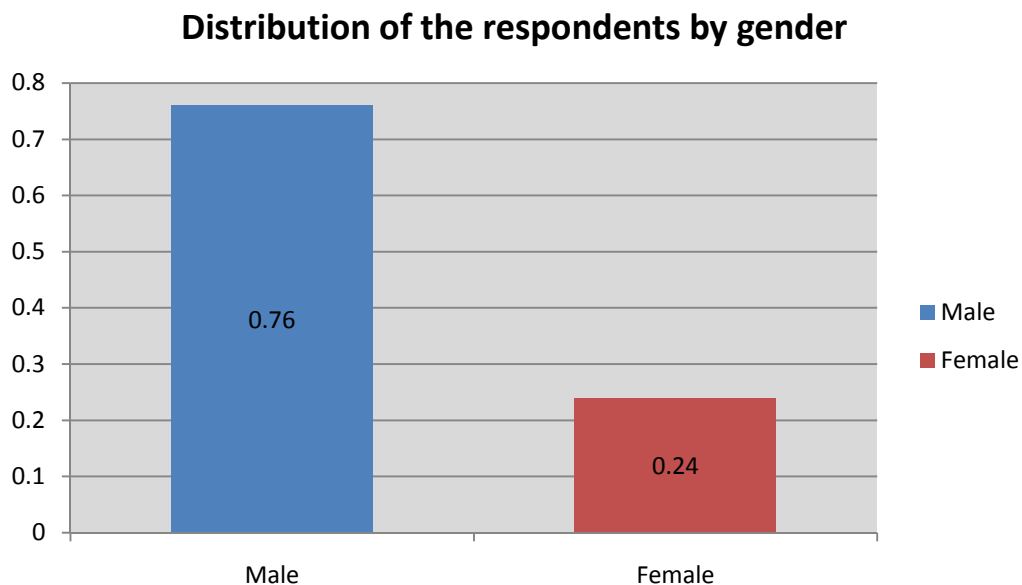


The second largest group is (35-45) age group which composed of 35 percent of the total population. Only 17 percent of the total respondents came from 55 and above age group. So this study reflects the opinion and outlook of younger generation of the country mostly.

Gender composition

This study considered the gender, religion etc of the population. The male and female respondents were 76 and 24 percents respectively.

Chart: 2



Under this section, major findings of the surveys are presented in different broad and subheadings which were derived from three separate methods that include quantitative household survey, Key Informant Interviews (KII) from three distinguished groups of personalities spread in different sections of the communities, information through desk research and the newspaper survey.

Location

This section presents the socio-economic characteristics of the survey respondents in terms of age, sex, education, religion and occupation. Table 2 shows the distribution of male and female respondents throughout the survey areas under seven divisions of the country. I take interview 50 person each division.

The following table depicts detailed distribution of sample for the survey:

Table 1: Distribution of survey locations

Division	District	Respondents %	Religion %
Chittagong	Cox,s bazaar	40	Hindu 27
	Chittagong	60	
	Dhaka	32	
	Gazipur	24	Muslim 60
	Jamalpur,	26	
	Mymensingh	18	
Rajshahi	Natore	34	Another 13
	Rajshahi,	45	
	Naogoan,	21	
Khulna	Satkhira	56	
	Jhenaideh	44	

The distribution of respondents by district of residence shows that a majority of the respondents live in Chittagong (60%), nearly (45%) live in Rajshahi and another (40%) lives in Cox,s bazaar. Over 9 percent live in Barisal and 16 percent of the respondents reside in Dhaka division. The number of respondents living in Chittagong was found to be similar to that in Barisal (over 9 percent). Mymensingh district showed the lowest proportion (18 percent) of respondents in the survey. Nearly 60% muslims and 27% hundu.

Education and Working Status

About 32 percent of the respondents interviewed completed Higher Secondary level schooling. The second highest respondents (28 percent) completed their education up to secondary level. A good number of respondents interviewed completed their level of education up to graduation. There were also post-graduate level respondents, at over 10 percent. The lowest (4.2 percent) responses were taken from the respondents who had primary level of education. No significant differences were found in education levels between male and female respondents.

Chart: 3

Distribution of the respondents by Education

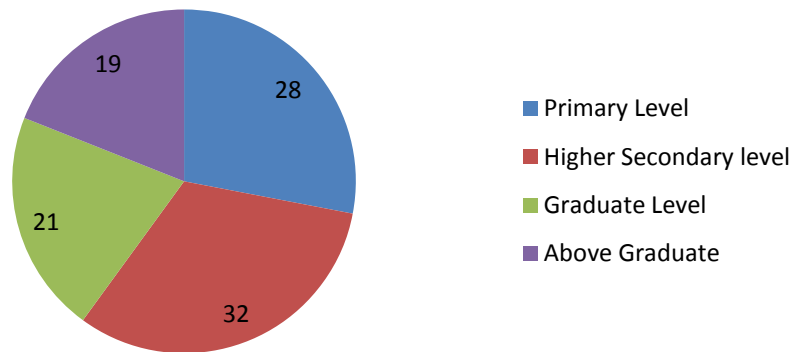
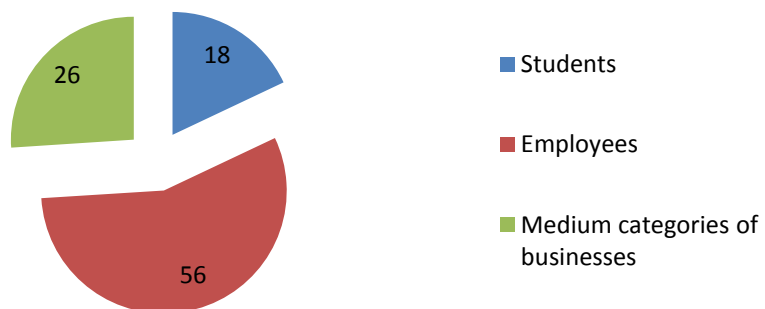


Chart: 4

Distribution of the respondents by working status

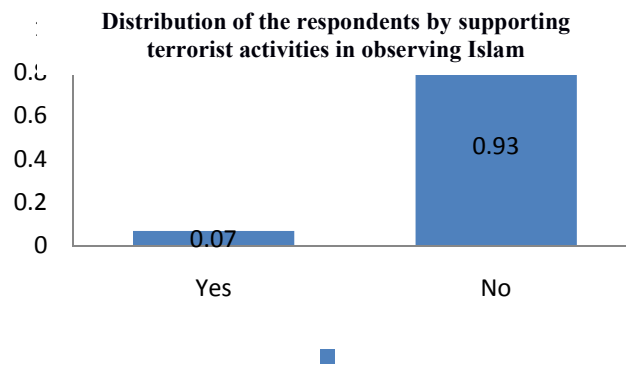


A variation was observed in the occupation list of the participants. It seems that the majority responses were taken from the students (18 percent). The second majority responses (56 percent) were found to be employed. About 26 percent of the respondents had small or medium categories of businesses; among them almost 76 percent were male.

5.2 General Perception on connection between Religious Extremism and Terrorism:

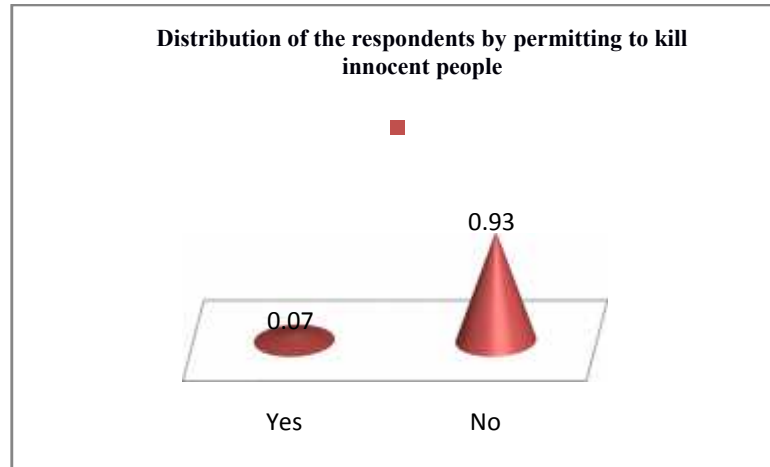
From a terrorism perspective, in order to get a clear view of the situation of the country, respondents were asked about the terrorism in observing Islam. Data Analysis of General People in the Terrorism Affect area

Chart: 5



While this perception is shared among the male and female respondents, this perception does vary between districts. For instance, while only seven percent of respondents supported that terrorist activities observing islam. A significant proportion of respondents in Rajshahi(Town), Natore, believe this to be so. In these districts, a greater proportion (18 percent, 25 percent respectively) believes that there are many more incidents of crime and violence. This is in contrast to Naogaon District, where only two percent of the respondents believe so that. Most of the respondents are not support terrorism in observing islam. Majority of the respondents views that religion can't permit to kill innocent people.

From a terrorism perspective, in order to get a clear view of the situation of the country, respondents were asked religion can permit to kill innocent people?

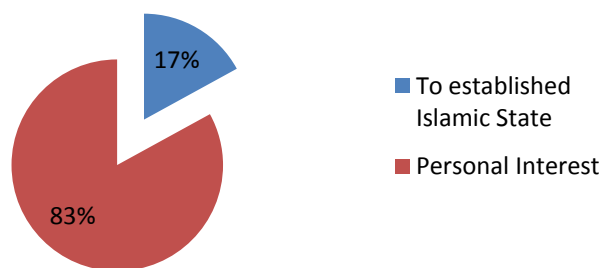


A significant majority of survey respondents (93 percent) do not agree with the view . Only 7 percent responded support the view. A significant proportion of respondents in Rajshahi(Town), Natore, believe this to be so. In these districts, a greater proportion (35 percent,45 percent respectively) believes that religion can't permit to kill innocent people. This is in contrast to Dhaka District, where only two percent of the respondents believe so that.

Majority of the respondent view that most of the terrorist activities are occurred in basis of personal interest.

From religious extremism relate to terrorism perspective, in order to get a clear view of the situation of the country, respondents were asked , people are misguided divert fro truth.

Distribution of the respondents by purpose of such activities

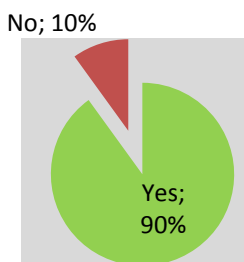


Majority of survey respondents (83 percent) agree that they have done such work in own interest. Only 17 percent responded believe that terrorist group have done this work to establish islamic state. A significant proportion of respondents in Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna believe, terrorist group have done so in own interest.

Majority of the respondents views that most of the religions extremism are occurred for a misguided or deviate from to truth religion.

From a terrorism perspective, in order to get a clear view of the situation of the country, respondents were asked , religion can permit to kill innocent people?

Distribution of the respondents by Do you think that this people are misguided or deviate from truth

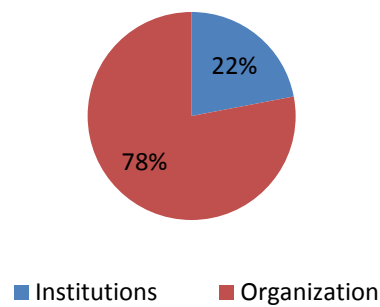


A significant majority of survey respondents (90 percent) do not agree with the view . Only 10 percent responded support the view. A significant proportion of respondents in Rajshahi(Town), Natore, are not believe that people are misguided or deviate from truth religion. In these districts, a greater proportion (65 percent,55 percent respectively) believes that people are misguided or deviate from to truth religion . This is in contrast to Dhaka District, where only 6 percent of the respondents believe so that.

Majority of the respondents have viewed that religious terrorists are taken their training in organizationally.

From a terrorism perspective, in order to get a clear view of the situation of the country, respondents were asked , who have trained them for terrorism?

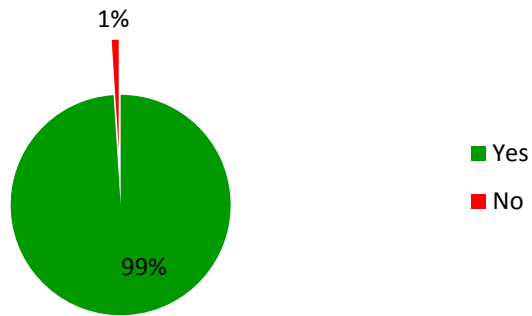
Do you know who have trained them for terrorism?



A significant majority of survey respondents (78 percent) believed that religious extremism groups are trained by organization. Only 22 percent responded believed that extemism group s are trained by institution.

From a terrorism perspective, in order to get a clear view of the situation of the country, respondents were asked , who have trained them for terrorism?

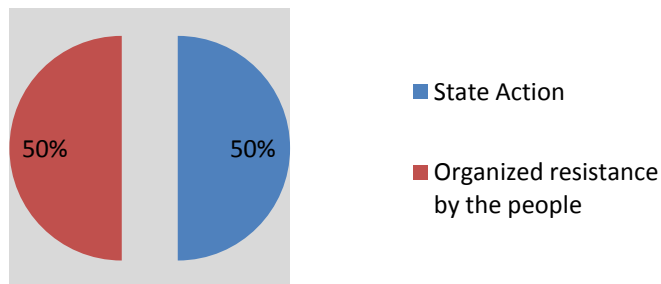
Do you think that terrorists activities are criminal offenses against Society and humanity?



Cent percent (99%) respondents think that terrorist’s activities are criminal offenses against Society and humanity. Only 1 percent respondents are not support the view.

From a terrorism perspective, in order to get a clear view of the situation of the country, respondents were asked , How to get rid of this situations?

How to get rid of this situations?

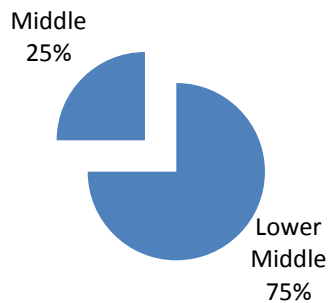


50% respondents view their opinion, we can combat to the terrorists activities by state action. Half of the respondents view their opinion, we can combat the terrorists activities in Organized resistance by the people.

Majority of the respondents views their opinion that most of the terrorists are come from lower middle class.

From a terrorism perspective, in order to get a clear view of the situation of the country, respondents were asked , How to get rid of this situations?

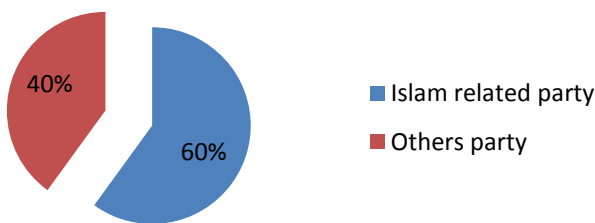
Do you know the Socio-economic status of terrorists group ?



Majority of the respondents view their opinion that most of the terrorists are connected with Others political party in Bangladesh.

From a terrorism perspective, in order to get a clear view of the situation of the country, respondents were asked, Were the terrorists connected with any political party in Bangladesh?

Were the terrorists connected with any political party in Bangladesh?



Majority of survey respondents (60 percent) are agree that terrorist are connected islamic party. Only 40 percent responded believe that another party are connected with terrorism. A significant proportion of respondents in Rajshahi(Town), Natore believe that religious extremism is connected with terrorism. This is in contrast to Dhaka District where only 90 percent of the respondents believe Islamic parties are connected with terrorism.

CHAPTER SIX: FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Eight experts agreed to participate in the study. They represent different organizations including security researchers, anti-corruption researchers, terrorism researchers, and university professors and Journalist. The findings of the Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) are presented thematically.

6.1. Public Perception

Public do not support any kind of terrorism and terrorist activities not only in Bangladesh even in the world. Most of the respondents pointed out that some people support aims, goals of the religion based political groups but not support the act such as destruction of property, assault and murder or conspiracies and coercive threats to achieve the goals through terrorism. Ideologies of religious groups are ok, but their methodology is wrong which leads to commit terrorist activities. Our neighbor countries have many terrorist groups, so we can't deny terrorism in our country.

One of our respondents pointed out that Islam is against the terrorist activities. But all the terrorist groups for example, JMB, Harkatul Jihad, are misinterpreting this concept and in the name of Jihad they killed many innocent people. One respondent claimed that extremists support terrorist activities. Another respondent told that most of the political parties use militancy for political advantage, such as blaming each other facilitating militants. Besides Students based on quomi madrasa is learned jihad from primary.

One responded said that religious based party and some Islamic thinker patronized the terrorists group. While asked about the claim that Bangladesh became a heaven for international Islamic terrorists most of our respondents said that it is completely incorrect. Presently, there is no such symptom. Never it possible because our neighbor country is not majority of Muslim and they do not indulge the terrorist group. It is simply propaganda.

6.2. Rise of Islamic Militancy

The vast majority of the respondents argued that the weak political system and absence of good governance is the key to the rise of Muslim militancy in Bangladesh. In many cases our politicians patronize the terrorist groups for their political interest. Citing the reference respondents pointed out that during the BNP-Jamat regime the top BNP leaders including the then Prime- Minister publicly denied the existence of Muslim extremism in Bangladesh.

For example, JMJB chief Siddiqui Islam Bangla Bhai had escaped from police dragnets and subsequently waged a reign of terror with backing from ruling party lawmakers. Police arrested Bangla Bhai several times but he was released. Press report revealed that forty-one Huji operatives were convicted in May 1998 for keeping arms and explosives but the High Court granted them bail after BNP led coalitaion came to power. In sum, there are many examples where police released the militants without investigating charges brought against them. An investigation by the Daily Star found that most of the JMB and JMJB leaders were in the past members of the Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS), the student front of ruling coalition partner Jamaat- e-Islami Bangladesh (JIB).

Unfortunately, the previous BNP government did not take any concrete actions against these terrorist organizations. In other words, to some extent terrorists received political support from their allies. As a result, they managed to secure international undoing to organize the groups. KIIs suggest that the main contributing factors for the terrorist activities in Bangladesh include poor knowledge about religious matter such as rules and regulations, laws relating to slam, poverty, unemployment etc. Most importantly, some people especially the activists of the religion-based political parties mislead the illiterate people in the name of religion.

In public do not support any kind of terrorism and terrorist activities not only in Bangladesh even in the world. Though some people support religious groups and their objectives but they do not support terrorism as a means of achieving the goals. It is important to mention that the primary goal of most of the political parties is to establish the “Sharia Law.” Respondents argued that the ideologies of religious groups are okay, but their course of action in achieving the goals is not acceptable.

In fact, it is against the spirit of Islam because any sensible person can not support the act of violence and terrorism in the name of Islam. For example, the concept of “Zihad” is heavily misinterpreted by the terrorist organizations like JMB to recruit young and innocent people.

While asked about the patrons of terrorist groups data revealed that different religious groups especially Jamat-e-Islami Bangladesh and Islami Oikko jote (IOJ) are the main patrons of the terrorist groups. Besides, some international Muslim NGO’s are providing financial support to many religious educational institutions specially quomi madrsa in our country.

6.3. Organization of Terrorist Groups

Terrorist groups firstly chose and target aggrieved party people and recruit them as member of their groups/ outfits by providing various job opportunities. They also target mentally weak people and motivate them to work for the organization. Some terrorist groups have also international linkage for obtaining financial assistance. In recent years, the activities of these terrorist groups have decreased because a large number of terrors are in jails who are serving sentences. The majority of the respondents believe that terrorist groups have been reduce for police activities in present time. Present government have committed to eliminate the terrorist group. The terrorists group change their policy. They recruitment member fro university students .

This is because it is very difficult to eliminate the member of the terrorist groups from the grass root level. Terrorism arises from sense of deprivation. It is true that for counter terrorism, good political system and good governance is essential. The majority of the respondents do not link between the expansion of madrassa and the rise of militancy. But some argue that the present system of madrassa education is largely responsible for the growth of terrorist organizations in this country. This is because the unfocused educational policy makes them frustrated after completing madrassa education. Most of the madrassa students are motivated to obey the instruction of their leader and fight for the cause of establishing Islam. The common belief is that the establishment of religious institutions for example, madrassa and expansion of religious education in recent years promote religious militancy in Bangladesh.

But one respondent claimed that this may not be the case always. He pointed out that several years ago, some madrassas used to provide financial support to the terrorist groups. But now, the madrassa are properly monitored and their courses and curriculum are being modernized over the years. On the other hand, the Western propaganda against Islam especially identifying Muslims as terrorist rather motivated them to get involved in terrorist activities around the world. For example, the propaganda that Bangladesh is a haven for international Islamic terrorists.

What it appears that most of the political parties including the top two are using religion as a weapon to win the election. In fact, this is an election strategy for the political parties. For example, prior to the last election the AL lead grand alliance made different election pledge such as after assuming state power they will eliminate the Islamic militancy from Bangladesh. Also, they pledged that they would not enact any anti-Islamic law.

Bad governance leads terrorism in any country and Bangladesh is not different. In our country many political leaders are doing so many illegal activities and they have link with terrorist groups to stay in power. If the objectives of political leaders and terrorist groups are same, then terrorist activities must be continued. Some foreign countries NGOs are providing money and support to do these illegal activities in Bangladesh.

6.4. Terror Financing

It is learned that the Islamic terrorist groups received funds from foreign countries, Bangladeshi citizens living abroad, foreign cultural group, charity group formed by Bangladeshi citizens. Not only that some of the Muslim countries (like Iraq, Kuwait, Iran, Saudi Arab) plays an active role as donor, NGOs and Bangladeshi and foreign citizens in the UK and USA raise funds for terrorists in Bangladesh. Some international Islamic NGO's also provided funds. Respondents pointed out those not only foreign countries terrorist groups have been managing funds locally.

According to some respondents, most of the funds are generated locally from sources like membership fee, Islamic waz, sadka, and jakat. One respondent argues that resource mobilization mechanism is very complex. While asked about the measures to stop terror financing respondents argued that only sealing the bank account of terrorist groups is not enough in controlling terrorist activities.

It may be an immediate solution to control terrorism. According to press report the terrorists groups have been using "Zakat" funds for conducting their terrorist activities. In this respect some respondents emphasized the importance of monitoring the activities of international Muslim NGO's working in Bangladesh because there are widespread allegations that these NGO's provided financial assistance to different terrorist groups. Therefore, government should block the opportunities for securing funds from local and international sources.

6.5. Preventing Religious Extremism

Most of the respondents believe that the weak political system and absence of good governance may be an immediate cause of terrorism in Bangladesh. However, it is not the root cause. Terrorism arises from sense of deprivation. It is true that for counter terrorism, good political system and good governance is essential. The present madrassa education should be vision oriented and scientific so that after completing the education graduates can actively participate in the job market. At the same time government should take some awareness building program against terrorism. Terrorism as a subject matter should be included in the curriculum at the secondary and higher secondary level.

Interviews suggest that just banning terrorist groups is not enough in controlling terrorist activities in Bangladesh. It can be an immediate solution but after banning the organizations, they run their activities in the banner of another name or joined another groups. According to one respondent, terrorists network, sources of funds, arms and explosives supply mechanism and implementation of law must be checked. According to another respondent, execution of militants is essential and for long terms impacts, the governments must punish the criminals for cases like the BDR mutiny, war criminals, Bangabandhu killing, and justice must be ensured regardless of political considerations for university campus violence.

One respondent argues for ending of the culture of immunity. If terrorist see criminals can pass the justice system, militants will be encouraged to continue their activities. Though terrorism is an international problem, our respondents think that terrorism in Bangladesh is homegrown and is related to domestic politics. On the other hand, the problem of terrorism in the USA or UK is international in nature and the causes are different. In preventing terrorism the government should undertake both short-term and long-term plan.

Besides legal action, such as arrest and prosecution of terrorists should be effective. At the same time, education, awareness, motivational campaign should be undertaken to combat the root of terrorism. This is because awareness and motivational programs can play a vital role in preventing religious militancy in Bangladesh. Everybody should work together to prevent terrorist activities from Bangladesh. In this case, government and non-government organization can work jointly and state security sector has to take the primary responsibility in curbing terrorism.

Therefore, we need good intention and effective program. Finally, the political parties have to come forward and work with the government for preventing terrorist activities in Bangladesh. Most of our respondents suggest to reform madrassa curriculum, especially Ahle Hadith and Qaomi madrassa, remove the legal loopholes, remove corruption of NGO Affairs Bureau officials and build its capacity as an independent agency, undertaking of development projects in northern and southern poverty- driven districts, and creation of job opportunities for unemployed youth and madrassa graduates.

In 2009, our Prime Minister proposed the setting up of South Asian Task Force (SATF) for combating terrorism in this region. Respondents were asked whether they think it would have any impact in controlling terrorist activities. South Asian Task Force for combating terrorism is still on conceptual level. Till now, there is no follow up action in this regard. They argued that it is too difficult to control the border of our country. So, it (South Asian Task Force) may be done. But the organization should be transparent and competent enough to fight terrorism across the region. Government may corresponded neighbor country about terrorists information Otherwise, the establishment of such Task Force would not serve the purpose.

While most of the respondents think it is a good idea, but doubt of its implementation unless SAARC is involved seriously. One respondent suggests to add other regional actors in the process, such as China, Japan and some other countries.

Regarding the challenges, our law enforcement agencies facing today, most respondents brought some important issues like the inadequacy of skills, technology and resources, political interference, corruption, lack of plans, laws and data, and lack of coordination among different state organs.

Most respondents do not think sealing the bank account can control terrorist financing, it is a good short-term measure, but for long term impacts, channels like informal hundi system, use of banking channel of patrons or mentors (politicians, business people, NGO, charities) must be checked.

6.6. Impact of Terrorism

There are many bad impacts of terrorist activities in national socio-economic and political development. In a sentence we can say these activities destroy all advantages and security system of a country. Among various implications of terrorism, respondents include civilian casualties and property damage, creation of panic among the public, fear of women for participating in politics, decline of national and foreign investment, crisis of international image, and halting of democratic institutions building, continuity of political conflicts between major parties, law and order deterioration, human rights violation by law enforcement agencies, and so on. One respondent mentioned about madrassa education system where about one million students get educated.

Summary of Findings

Bangladesh has generally been heralded as a stable, democratic, moderate Muslim state that has made great strides in economic and human development. Following the restoration of democracy in 1990, it carried out four largely free and fair general elections in 1991, 1996, 2001 and 2008. Since 1999, attacks by Islamic militants have been increasing. They have targeted opposition politicians, scholars, and journalists, members of the judiciary, religious minorities, and members of the Islamic Ahmadiyya sect. Recent years have seen a deepening crisis in governance with continued politicization of civil society, deterioration of judicial independence, and diminishing rule of law and respect for human rights. As a result law and order situation become deteriorated and militancy took place in the name of religion.

The previous attacks, it is widely believed, were the work of the recently banned *Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen* (JUM), a pro-Taliban, Wahabi-oriented organization. The attacks on the judiciary were the apogee of a series of lethal assaults that have taken place in Bangladesh in the past several years. Almost all can be traced to a range of Islamist organizations that have been operating with impunity. For example, Islamist militants are alleged to be responsible for the February 2005 assassination of S.A.M.S. Kibria, a former foreign secretary and foreign minister.

They also were implicated in the death of a prominent opposition politician, Ivy Rehman, and an aborted attempt in August 2004 on the life of Sheikh Hasina Wajed, the parliamentary opposition leader in that time. Those attacks make the international community doubtful, worried about Bangladesh, which lacked a tradition of militant Islamism, has indeed moved in that direction in recent years, as Eliza Griswold showed in her *New York Times Magazine* article (January 23, 2005). “The rise of Islamic militant groups in Bangladesh and their possible ties to Pakistan should be of concern to U.S. Policy makers.

Given the weak governance and lack of political order in Bangladesh, the increase in Islamic militancy could easily turn it into a fertile area for various radical groups to take root and flourish. On the regional level, the emergence of such groups could worsen already strained relations with India. They also could adversely affect U.S. security interests if Islamist insurgents from Southeast Asia and the Middle East come to see Bangladesh as a possible haven, especially as they face U.S.

pressure in Pakistan and Afghanistan.”In the past several years, Islamist militancy in Bangladesh and tensions with India have attracted the attention of journalists, scholars, and the international community. But the then ruling coalition (backed by two Islamist parties, the *Jamaat-i-Islami* and the *Islamic Oikye Jote*) of former Prime Minister Khaleda Zia has vigorously denied that Islamist militancy in Bangladesh is on the rise. Instead it has dismissed these charges as "hostile propaganda," designed to besmirch Bangladesh's reputation as a moderate Islamic state. It makes some contradictions among the Government and International community about the terrorism issue. My findings proved that Religious Extremism and Terrorism are connected with one another.

CHAPTER SEVEN: A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE STUDY & CONCLUSION

Summary of the study

Bangladesh is mostly a homogeneous country with communal harmony having minority groups of other religions and indigenous tribal communities rooted in linguistic nationalism. The majority of its people are poor, illiterate and ignorant. Although it has become recently reputed as a lawless, corrupt and violent country, its crime rates are still lower compared with South Asian or western countries.

Both militancy and terrorism have become complex issues for Bangladesh today. The rise of Islamic militancy and terrorism has become globally known in the 2000s, particularly after the publication of some international media reports in 2002 and the August 17, 2005 nationwide serial bomb blasts in 63 out of 64 districts. Most of these Islamist militant groups sought to establish Islamic state. While the rise of HUJI can be traced back to 1992, but terrorist attacks since 1999 by JMB, JMB and HUJI have raised concerns among the national governments, intelligence agencies, security forces, and foreign governments and international media regarding the rise of religious militancy and international terrorism in Bangladesh.

Public do not support any kind of terrorism and terrorist activities not only in Bangladesh even in the world. Most of the respondents pointed out that some people support aims, goals of the religion based political groups but not support the act such as destruction of property, assault and murder or conspiracies and coercive threats to achieve the goals through terrorism.

The study findings indicate that there are various issues and concerns over the problem of Islamist militancy and if appropriate strategy is not undertaken. The first issue is that there is no exact number of terrorist groups and militants and no reliable and accurate data about who joins militancy, what are the backgrounds of militants, what are the reasons for joining militancy, who supports militancy, where operating, operational headquarters, sources of money, geographic variations and so on.

As the content analysis of secondary sources and the key informants indicate that it is not easy to estimate the exact number of militant outfits and the number of militants. A report published in the Daily Star revealed that there are 30 terrorist groups in Bangladesh but the report mentioned the name of only few. It is found that the number of terrorist groups can be more than 100 and the number of militants can be several hundred thousand.

Some militant groups are operating as home-grown groups, some are operating as Bangladeshi chapters of international terrorist outfits, and others are operating as charity, foundation, NGOs, voluntary organization, student or youth groups. Islamist militant groups are operating in different names and reorganized in different groups. When JMB is banned, JMJB emerged. AHAB, JMB and HUJI-B are interlinked; there are overlaps in leadership, operational and training activities, ideologies and financing among different militant groups. They also have international links and networks in different countries including Pakistan, India, Nepal, and Afghanistan. Many militants are also linked to religion-based political parties. Many militants formed political parties and many militants run NGOs.

Sometimes people perceive political violence as an act of terrorism. We merged these two concepts, which are very unproductive and meaningless. However, suicide bombing in a public place or government establishment to precipitate a change in government policy is an act of terrorism. In our country, there are some terrorist groups who are active and in this case series bomb blast in 64 districts can be an example.

Since 1999, terrorist attacks targeted legal and judicial establishments including lawyers, judges, and courts. Bengali cultural events (Bengali new Year celebration), cultural activists (Udichi cultural group), entertainment establishments (movie theatre, cinema hall), religious minorities, secular intellectuals, cultural sculptors, journalists and politicians belonging to secular parties and leftist activists are also attacked by Islamist extremist during the last two decades.

Our intelligence agencies and law enforcement agencies could not identify the perpetrators of different attacks. In 2004, Bangladesh Awami League policy makers and leaders including Awami League leader Shaikh Hasina (August 2004) were targeted. The nationwide bomb blasts in 2005, attack on British High commissioner, lawyers, courts, journalists, cinemahalls, cultural activists and leftist progressive scholars. Interpol, FBI and Scotland Yard helped our investigators to investigate several cases but no report has been published. Most of the key informants also mentioned that they are not skilled and equipped to investigate terrorism.

Bangladeshi media by that time already published the news about the activities of extremists and militants of Bangla Bhai and JMJB. Some leaders were arrested, but Bangla Bhai and MoulanaAbdur Rahman – a former activist of JIB were not caught. No action against HUIB was taken either. Politicians are not serious to address the problem; they mostly do showdown by doing some token programs just to satisfy foreign powers or following external pressure or international concerns. If our governments or politicians were serious, the situation would not be that worst.

After 2001 election, Jammat-e- Islami Bangladesh and Islamic Oikya Jote (IOJ) joined the BNP led alliance government. This coalition government coincided with the fall of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan in late 2001 and the disruption of their operations in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Research indicates that both of these parties are not just fundamentalist organizations, they have links with terrorist activities in Bangladesh.

Many of the leaders are accused of membership in HUIB, JMB and JMJB were associated with JIB and its student wing ICS Another issue is about madrassa education system. The study found the linkage between madrassa education and the rise of militancy is not true for Bangladesh. We have madrassa for many years, but militancy and terrorism are of recent phenomena. However, the study found madrassa students particularly from qaomi and Ahle Hadith madrassa are associated with militant activities. The study found that some madrassas are used for employing and sheltering foreign militants linked with Pakistan or India based militants. Some madrassas funded by militant groups or Islamic NGOs were used by militants for training and operational activities.

The vast majority of the respondents argued that the weak political system and absence of good governance is the key to the rise of Muslim militancy in Bangladesh. In many cases our politicians patronize the terrorist groups for their political interest.

Intelligence reports indicate that many foreign militants despite rejection have resided in Bangladesh and continued to plot for attacks both in Bangladesh and in India. According to some key informants, about a million students get education from madrassa. The absence of monitoring of madrassa education and the traditional curriculum of Qaomi madrassa are likely to join militant groups and the graduates with no scientific education remain unemployed and are risky to join militancy. The teachers and funding sources of those educational institutions also facilitate militancy.

Both Islamist and non-Islamist terrorist can cross the border, give shelter, provide training, supply arms and engage in money laundering. The study found that HUIB and JMB are getting arms trainings from the RSO, IIGs (ULFA, NITF), and Nepalese Maoist groups.

The study found that there are loopholes in the anti-money laundering act and anti- terrorism act and the capacity of Bangladesh Bank and the NGO Affairs Bureau are not yet adequate to monitor terrorist financing. The BB needs skilled people and logistics. NGO Affairs Bureau is weak in terms of its manpower, funding and corruption.

A number of Islamic charities and chapters of international Islamic NGOs operating in Bangladesh helped them to channel money, raise funds and engage in militancy activities. The study also revealed that many foreigners worked in these NGOs and engaged in militant activities. Various infrastructures like madrassa, orphanage and mosques were established with foreign funds and these facilities were used for training camps and supporting operations of these outfits.

There are many bad impacts of terrorist activities in national socio-economic and political development. In a sentence we can say these activities destroy all advantages and security system of a country. Among various implications of terrorism, respondents include civilian casualties and property damage, creation of panic among the public, fear of women for participating in politics, decline of national and foreign investment, crisis of international image, and halting of democratic institutions building, continuity of political conflicts between major parties, law and order deterioration, human rights violation by law enforcement agencies, and so on.

Most of the respondents believe that the weak political system and absence of good governance may be an immediate cause of terrorism in Bangladesh. However, it is not the root cause. Terrorism arises from sense of deprivation. It is true that for counter terrorism, good political system and good governance is essential. The present madrassa education should be vision oriented and scientific so that after completing the education graduates can actively participate in the job market. At the same time government should take some awareness building program against terrorism. Terrorism as a subject matter should be included in the curriculum at the secondary and higher secondary level.

Religious based party imposes their view by using violence . In view of above Religious Extremism connected with Terrorism.

Observation and Analysis of the Study

Terrorism is the cruelest of crimes, which is designed to threaten the personal safety of its target. Terrorism, which was a domestic phenomenon, is now considered as a threat to global peace and security. Terrorist attacks in recent years deteriorated the the international image of Bangladesh as a moderate secular Muslim country.

Based on the findings, the study recommended for a comprehensive anti-militancy and counter-terrorism strategy balancing enforcement, intervention and prevention. Banning militant outfits, catching militants, sealing bankaccount, and anti-money laundering can be some short-term solutions, but these may not prevent religious militancy.

According to newspaper reports from 2010 and 2011, security forces have been arresting militants of banned outfits like Hizb-ut Tahrir, Allahar Dal, for their involvement in militant activities including recruitment, dawati activities (invitation) and distributing jihadi books, CDs, leaflets. The government has undertaken various initiatives, but effective short, medium and long term well-coordinated plans are needed. The study made the following recommendations to root out the problem of militancy and terrorism in Bangladesh.

Enforcement: Implementation of existing laws and execution of militants must be ensured. The study found that most of the cases were tried under the explosives and substance act or arms act. No case before 2010 was found executed under the anti-terrorism acts. According to some human rights organizations (Odhikar and ASK) and key informants of this study, the definition of terrorism is broad and may be abused to take political advantage to oppress opposition parties. Law enforcement must be kept free from political pressure, political patronage and corruption. RAB demonstrated some success in catching dangerous criminals, butthey are criticized for extra-judicial killings and human rights violation. Violation of human rights by law enforcement must end. Politicians must not facilitate the culture of immunity among the law enforcers. Regardless of political identity, ethnic identity or socio-economic status, criminals must be punished fairly. This will discourage militants to join terrorist activities. Capacity building of security forces including the RAB and the police in investigating terrorist incidents, explosives and arms must be undertaken. They also need to have training in human rights, terrorism-related crimes, money laundering and social research and data analysis.

Intelligence training needs to include how to uncover the militancy network, to track operations, sources of funds, the financiers, patrons and actors and the motives for joining militancy. Sophisticated technology and logistics must be provided to the law enforcers and investigators. Surveillance of Islamic NGO operations, foreign funding, money exchange agencies, banking and hundi channels must be strictly continued. These issues around NGOAB may facilitate the flow of foreign funds to terrorist outfits. The Government should establish NGOAB as an independent self-sustaining agency. Fees can be imposed from its affiliated NGOs that fund can make NGAB self-sustainable.

Bangladesh Bank is empowered under the anti-money laundering act, but its staffs must be provided skill training to conduct financial crime including money-laundering cases, investigate transactions, and execute under money laundering courts. The government should undertake measures to address arms smuggling, customs fraud and tax evasion, drug trafficking, passport fraud, national identification forgery, foreign workers' background check and legal permit for working in madrassas, business investments and illegal business run by militants for generating funds for terror activities. Appropriate legal and institutional measures to ensure accountability of financial institutions and NGO regulatory bodies, implementation of immigration acts, money-laundering acts, arms act, explosives act, and other criminal acts including anti-terrorism. Monitoring of madrassas and vigilance on hundi and foreign funded NGOs need to be in place.

The government already took initiatives to stop cross-border terrorism. Security forces must ensure border security. The government must be vigilant so that Indian Insurgent Groups (IIGs) in the North East India, Jammu-Kashmir based Islamist militant groups and other foreign militants do not use our soil for training, operations or hiding.

Intervention: The government should undertake programs to intervene with madrasa students, Rohingya refugees and others who are already exposed to militancy. The study found that many Rohingya refugees are involved in arms smuggling and drug trafficking in Cox's Bazar, Chittagong and CHTs. Many madrasa students are brainwashed by militants. Many rural and char (riverine island) residents are motivated to support and join militant activities. Counseling, awareness raising, life skills training and income generating activities for these segments of affected population can change their paths to become militants. Social development programs and proven crime prevention

programs based on the local context, culture and socio-economic characteristics have demonstrated successful interventions to reduce crime rates improve the quality of life for the youth at risk and address the risk factors that cause crime.

Prevention: Anti-madrassa policy will result negatively in Bangladesh as thousands of students are getting education from madrassas. The study found that madrassa is not responsible for the rise of militancy, but existing curriculum of madrassa may not produce graduates attractive for the job market. Curriculum needs to be modernized with special focus on qaomi and ahle hadith madrassa. Well-integrated education policy along with competitive examination is needed. The present government has undertaken some initiatives, but needs to implement policy based on research and needs analysis.

The government needs to include lessons about anti-terrorism in the pre-university school curriculum. The government already undertook initiatives to raise awareness in schools, mosques and community through educational institutions, Islamic foundations and Ansar and VDP respectively to root out militancy. For implementation of these initiatives, Deputy Commissioner, civil society organizations and community leaders need to work together.

The study found that most of the southern and northern poverty-driven districts are the hot spots for militant activities. While many outfits are originated in Dhaka or surrounding districts, militant networks and activities are spread in these northern districts. Poverty, unemployment, monga (food crisis) and illiteracy are some reasons for which people may join militancy for easy livelihood and going to haven. The government needs to undertake development projects in these areas and create employment opportunities. The government needs to undertake socialpolicy to provide training and job opportunities for the Rohingya refugees. The study found that Rohingya refugees are recruited by the militant outfits.

Other Recommendations: Islamist extremism and terrorism have been added to this context in the region over the last two decades. The PM's South Asian Anti- Terrorism Taskforce is a good idea but depends on the SAARC actors specially the two big brothers – India and Pakistan. It is a good success that Bangladesh and India could reach consensus to stop cross border terrorism between India and Bangladesh. But the success of joint initiative will depend on the fair deal between the two neighbor countries.

There is a dire need for reliable and accurate data about militancy and terrorism. Law enforcement must have available data about the background of militants, operational headquarters of militants, sources of funding, regional variations of militant networks, bomb and explosive makers, and socio-economic data about developmentally deprived areas. Future empirical research can examine the different aspects of actors, patrons, financiers, and arms and explosives suppliers and areas of operations. Future research can also look at the money laundering and terrorist financing, regional variations, patrons, networks and strengths of militant outfits. Research should also investigate the loopholes of anti-terrorism laws and the impacts of anti-terrorism measures from time to time. Political violence and confrontation political culture facilitate militancy in any country.

Politicians should be tolerant and not let the political environment conducive for the rise of extremism and militancy. Confrontational political culture and alarming rise of Islamist extremists also paved the way for proliferation of small and illegal arms threatening the human security. Good governance, rule of law and democracy must be prevailing.

The Father of the Nation issued general forgiveness to them. Following his assassination in a military coup in 1975, both military backed and elected governments (BNP and JP) facilitated Islamist forces to engage in politics, become partners in coalition governments and used to counter the Bangladesh Awami League (AL) until 1996. Even AL also compromised and made Islamist parties as ally in the vote politics. This political culture provided avenues for the rise of Islamist forces to implement their agenda in the name of Islam. Politicians should agree to not let religion-based political parties facilitate militancy. They also need to support the implementation of executing all political killings to establish the rule of law and to end the culture of immunity. So Religious Extremism is creat Terrorism. They are related with one another.

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APPENDIX A

Interview for general people

1. Do you support terrorist activities in observing Islam?

- A. Yes B. No

2. Does religion permit to kill innocent people ?

- A. Yes B. No.

3. What is the purpose of such activities ?

A. To established Islamic state.

B. Personal Interest

4. Do you think that this people are misguided or deviate from to truth religion?

- A. Yes B. No

5. Do you know who have trained them for terrorism ?

- A. Institutions B. Organization

6. Do you think that terrorists activities are criminal offenses against Sociocity and humanity ?

- A. Yes B. No.

7. How to get rid of this situations ?

- A. State Action B. Organized resistance by the people

8. Do you know the Socio-economic status of terrorists group ?

- A. Lower Middle B. Middle

9. Were the terrorists connected with any political party in Bangladesh ?

- A. Islam related party B. Others party

APPENDIX B

Key Informant Interview (KII) Guide

(The followings are some focus questions, but the KIIs are expected to explore the underlying causes of terrorism and militancy, factors influencing involvement with terrorist and militant groups, international linkages, trends, history and policy recommendations. The KIIS may include 5 to 10 persons including academic experts, law enforcing agencies, research organizations, NGO's, and civil society members representing the following agencies who were considered to be able to provide deeper understanding of their views on terrorism in Bangladesh:)

Key Informant Interview

Interview Number:

Date :

Time :

Venue:

Interviewee Name :

Position:

Organization / Department, Ministry etc.:

Telephone / Fax / Mobile:

E-mail:

Openness:

Credibility/ Reliability:

Other Comments:

1. Perceptions of Terrorist Groups

1.1. How do you think the terrorist group is perceived by the public? Has this changed since the elections, and if so, how and why?

Answer :

1.2. Would you please tell us about the actors, patrons, motivators and supporters of such activities?

Answer :

1.3. How these groups are organized initially? Has this changed in recent years?

Answer :

1.4. Ideology and terrorism – Is there any relationship?

Answer :

1.5. Do you think that the expansion of Madrassas and religious education promote religious militancy in Bangladesh?

Answer :

1.6. Many argue that Bangladesh became a heaven for international Islamic terrorists? What do you think?

Answer :

1.7. Many argue that the weak political system and absence of good governance is the key to the rise of militancy in Bangladesh. What do you think?

Answer :

2. Terror Financing

2.1. Do you think that funds for terrorist activities are drawn from foreign countries? If there are any local sources?

Answer :

2.2. Do you think that sealing the bank account of terrorist groups is enough in controlling terrorist activities?

Answer :

3. Fighting Religious Militancy

3.1. What legal and institutional measures would you suggest in combating militancy and terrorist activities in the country?

3.2. In 2009, our Prime Minister proposed the setting up of South Asian Task Force for combating terrorism in this region. Do you think that it would have any impact in controlling terrorist activities?

Answer :

3.3. What challenges do law enforcing agencies face when trying to combat terrorism?

Answer :

3.4. What are the implications of terrorist and militant activities in national socio-economic and political development?

Answer