Peacemaking Criminology in Combating Internationalized Religious Radicalism in Bangladesh

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Abstract: The paper focuses on the background of religious radicalism in Bangladesh. It then reviews the existing major literature on Peacemaking Criminology and religious radicalism. Main argument of the paper is that Peacemaking Criminological approach better deals with religious radicalism than classical approach.It offers a theoretical framework where it shows how initiatives of Peacemaking Criminology can eliminate crimes in general and religious radicalism in particular. The paper also emphasizes on the internationalized character of religious radicalism in Bangladesh. As a qualitative study, it uses secondary data and takes content analysis as method. It analyzes the existing hard approach of Bangladesh government in tackling internationalized religious radicalism. After that the paper explains the contemporary soft approaches of the government in this regard. The paper contributes to the Peacemaking Criminology discourse and also to how it can be used to combat internationalized religious radicalism.

Keywords: Peacemaking Criminology, religious radicalism, Bangladesh, extremism, terrorism.

I. INTRODUCTION: RELIGIOUS RADICALISM AND BANGLADESH

Maintaining law and order to offer a safe and secure environment to the citizens is one of the vital defining characters of a modern state. However, threats to law and order have evolved over time and that asks state foradopting a dynamic process to revise old strategies and develop new onesin order to best serve in encountering the worst threats to the same. In this inevitable race between state and crime, state is strongly favored by realist definitions oflegitimacy but somewhat constrained by idealist explanations of human rights and justice. When a state depends more on its monopoly on powerof using force and punishing criminals–that means on retributive justice system–it often fails to address the underlying factors and as a consequence, both crime and punishment keep on having a long race over ages. The same scenario is true in case of dealing with radical outfits in particular. Bangladesh–a territory standing right inside the malicious circle of religion-biased decision-making since 1947 and a state passing the transitional phase in sociopolitical domain–has successfully been suppressing radical activities since its first exposure in 1999 (Rahman and Mahmud, 2009; Ghatack, 2014). Following is the record of major criminal incidents carried out by religious radicals in different districts of Bangladesh since 1999.

Table 1: Terrorist Attacks by Religious Radicals in Bangladesh since 1999

No.	Date	Place	Perpetrator	Target	Type	Casualty
1	March 6, 1999	Jashore[1]	HuJI	Udichi	Bomb attack, mass murder	10
2	October 8, 1999	Khulna	HuJI	Ahmadia mosque	Bomb attack, mass murder	8
3	January 20, 2001	Dhaka	HuJI	CPB rally, AL central office	Bomb attack, mass murder	7
4	April 14, 2001	Dhaka	HuJI	RamnaBatamul	Series bomb attack,	10

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[1] The National Implementation Committee for Administrative Reorganisation under the Prime Minister's Office of the People's Republic of Bangladesh changes spelling of Jessore to Jashore resembling it to Bangla phonetics on April 02, 2018.

					terrorism, mass murder	
5	June 3, 2001	Gopalgonj	HuJI	Baniarchar Church	Bomb attack	10
6	June 16, 2001	Narayangonj	HuJI	AL office	Bomb attack, mass murder	25
7	September 23, 2001	Bagerhat	HuJI	AL election rally	Bomb attack, mass murder	8
8	September 26, 2001	Sunamgonj	HuJI	AL meeting	Bomb attack, terrorism, mass murder	4
9	September 28, 2002	Satkhira	JMB	Cinema hall	Bomb attack, Terrorism, triple murder	3
10	December 6, 2002	Mymensingh	JMB	Four cinema halls	Bomb attack	21
11	January 17, 2003	Tangail	JMB	Faila Peer Shrine and Fair	Bomb attack, terrorism, mass murder	7
12	January 12, 2004	Sylhet	HuJI	Shajalal Shrine	Bomb attack	5
13	May 21, 2004	Sylhet	HuJI	British High Commissioner to Bangladesh and government officials	Bomb attack, terrorism, mass murder	3
14	August 5, 2004	Sylhet	HuJI	Two cinema halls	Bomb attack	1
15	August 7, 2004	Sylhet	HuJI	AL meeting	Bomb attack	1
16	August 21, 2004	Dhaka	HuJI	Sheikh Hasina and other AL leaders	Series grenade attack	22
17	January 27, 2005	Habiganj	JMB	AL rally	Bomb attack	5
18	August 12, 2005	Brahmanbaria	JMB	A shrine	Bomb attack	1
19	August 17, 2005	All districts except Munshiganj	HuJI, JMB	The entire country	Serious bomb attacks	3
20	October 3, 2005	Chandpur, Chattogram[2], Laxmipur	JMB	Three district courts	Bomb attack, terrorism, mass murder	3
21	October 18, 2005	Sylhet	HuJI	A district judge	Suicide bomb attack	0
22	November 14, 2005	Jhalakathi	JMB	Judges	Bomb attack	2
23	November 29, 2005	Gazipur, Chattogram	JMB	Courts	Suicide bomb attack, terrorism, mass murder	10
24	December 1, 2005	Gazipur	JMB	DC office	Suicide bomb attack	1
25	December	Sylhet	HuJI	Mayor and AL	Grenade attack	0

[2]The National Implementation Committee for Administrative Reorganisation under the Prime Minister's Office of the People's Republic of Bangladesh changes spelling of Chittagong to Chattogramresembling it to Bangla phonetics on April 02, 2018.

	2, 2005			leader	
26	December 8, 2005	Netrokona	JMB	Udichi office	Suicide bomb attack, terrorism, mass murder	6
27	December 25, 2015	Rajshahi	IS	Ahmadia mosque	Suicide bomb attack	1
28	July 1-2, 2016	Dhaka (Holy Artisan Bakery)	IS, JMB	Non-Muslim foreigners	Mass shooting, bombing, hostage-taking	29
29	October 30, 2016	Brahmanbaria (Nasirnagar)	Local Muslim extremists	Hindu community	Terrorism	0
30	March 17, 2017	Dhaka	IS	RAB camp	Suicide bomb attack	1
31	March 25, 2017	Sylhet	IS	Civilians and Police officers	Suicide bomb attack	11
					Total = 218

Source: Crisis Group, 2018; Daily Star, 2005.

As a signatory of most of the UN anti-terrorism conventions, Bangladesh used to deny the growth of terrorism pullulated from religious radicalism in its territory initially. However,like other parts of the world, terrorists hid their face but did enough chaos across the country. Once the militant upsurge came to light, the governments of Bangladesh came up with rapid and comprehensive response that attained success and secured appreciation. Bangladesh government has banned JMB, JMJB, HuJI, HT, and SAH, along with all other terrorist organizations designated as such by the UNSC committee (CRI, 2014). Top leaders of JMB was put through speedy trial and executed while stern actions continued to weaken JMB to the extent that it no longer poses any significant threat. Present AL government placed highest priority to the task of combating religious radicalism, which is reflected in formation of a 17-member *National Committee on Militancy Resistance and Prevention* in 2009; headed by the State Minister for Home Affairs and comprising of representation from relevant ministries and security agencies, the committee is responsible for tackling extremism and mobilizing public opinion against such activities (Ibid). In the same year, Bangladesh enacted the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA)to combat terrorism, which already has two amendments too–in 2012 and 2013–introducing death penalty and acceptance of audio-visual evidences from social networks restively (FIDH, 2013). In 2012, the government enacted the Money Laundering Prevention Act 2012, which is the first legislation in Bangladesh making specific provisions for money laundering and terrorism financing. The Financial Intelligence Unit of the Bangladesh Bank has already issued a circular to all state owned and private commercial banks regarding the procedure for handling money laundering and terrorism financing matters (SATP, 2012). Since religious radicalism is a transnational issue and radical groups and organizations develop nexus with smuggling syndicates, gangsters, international terrorists, Bangladesh has also engaged injoint collaboration initiatives to address it (Kamal, 2013). Bangladesh enacted the Mutual Legal Assistance Act 2012 which provides a legal framework for inter-country cooperation in carrying out enquiries, prosecutions and trial of criminal activities. On January 28, 2013, Bangladesh and India signed an extradition treaty for disrupting the regional connections and networks among terrorist outfits in South Asia. Additionally, Bangladesh and India has agreed to implement a Coordinated Border Management Plan (CBMP) and has agreed to increase the number of joint patrolling with a view to curbing criminal activities, including terrorism, along the long and porous border (Bdnews24, 2016). On October 22, 2013, Bangladesh signed an agreement with the USA which aims to enhance counterterrorism cooperation between the two countries in terms of capacity building, information sharing, and ensuring increased exchanges between law enforcement agencies (US Department of State, 2013).

Despite these prompt, systematic, and extensive undertakings, Bangladesh, like the other countries, has not gotten over the issue. Cases of apparent success have turned up to be struggling later. HT continues to carry out its organizational activities- recruitment, networking, training, preaching of ideology, and fund raising despite the actions by the LEAs,ABT managed to make their name known as an outfit having militant mission and terrorist tactics,Slaughter of Shaikh Nurul Islam Faruqi, presenter of religious programs on Channel i, killings of Rajib and Aviit,bloggers and activists, are incidents that concern us about the presence of a force hiding somewhere and pursuing their militant goals (Kamal, 2013). Hence, questions remain whether or not the national strategies to counter-religious radicalism and counterterrorism are on track or they need a revision, whether or not a trap of self-radicalization exists where individuals become radicalized on their own.According to Esposito andMogahed (2014, p.135), the fight against global terrorism is an ability to move beyond presuppositions and stereotypes in our attitudes and policies and to form partnerships that transcend an 'us' and

'them' view of the world. But it really is not an easy paradox where blood is shed in name of justice. But General Pace[3] said (in Frances, 2012), "*We can keep fighting and we can keep killing them, but if somebody's not working on draining the swamp, we're never going to be finished with this*." Hence, peacemaking criminology isapplicable.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW: WHAT WE ALREADY KNOW ABOUT PEACEMAKING CRIMINOLOGY

Acounter-terrorism approach, Stern (2010) states,seeks to undo the process of radicalization by engineering the individual's return to moderate society, usually by providing them with a stable support network, probing their original reasons for radicalizing, and divorcing them from their extreme beliefs and social contacts. Including development of prisons with de-radicalization facilities, Nigeria's national security adviser, for example, has unveiled plans for the same non-military strategy (Murdock, 2014):

My approach has been to understand the problem in order to apply the appropriate solutions. What we have learned is that there is not one particular path that leads to terrorism. Rather, there are many, often complicated, paths that lead to terrorism.

Perhaps it is time the institutional system of combating religious radicalism was examined and reviewed with particular focus on restorative approach like peacemaking criminology. Harold Pepinsky, founder of Peacemaking Criminology, state along with Richard Quinney in their edited reader titled Criminology as Peacemaking (1991), "*in recent years there have been proposals and programs that foster mediation, conflict resolution, reconciliation and community. They are part of an emerging criminology that seeks to alleviate suffering and reduce crime.*" According to Conklin (2007), "*peacemaking criminology regards crime as the product of a social structure that puts some groups at a disadvantage, sets people against one another, and generates a desire for revenge.*" Soft approach of practical counterterrorism strategies worldwide bases on this theoretical outlook of Positivist Criminology whereas criminal justice system of countries like Bangladesh is still mainly based on classical approach of criminology. Peacemaking Criminology suggests that alternative methods can be used to create peaceful solutions to crime and that it can be implemented in society to reduce the amount of violence in the criminal justice field;it improves the administration of equitable justice more so than the current approach (Moloney, 2009).

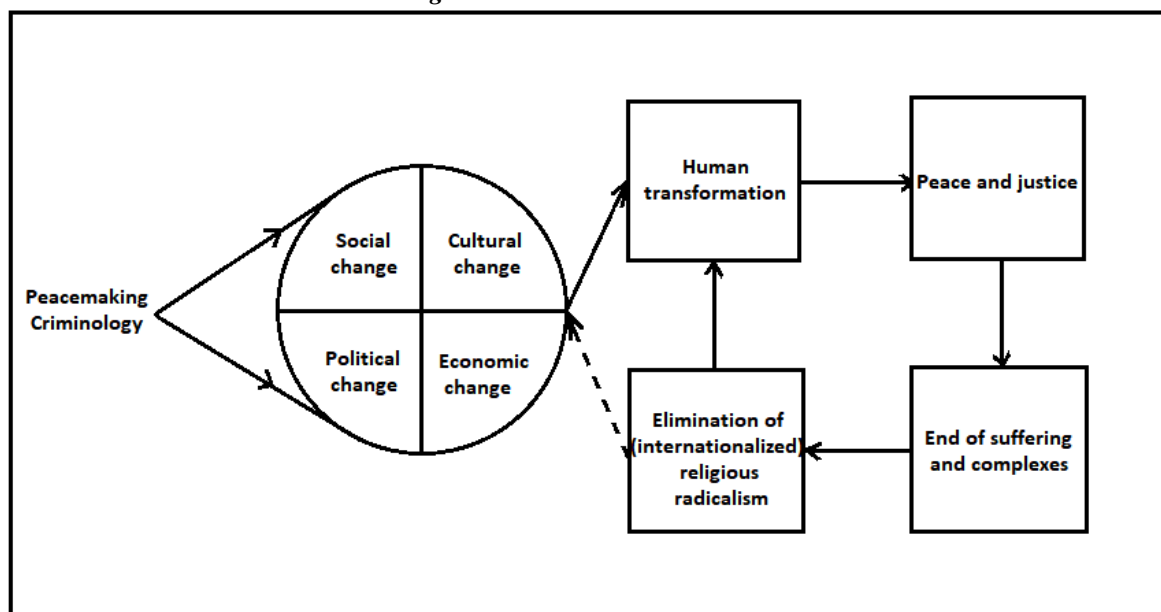## III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: HOW PEACEMAKING CRIMINOLOGY CAN WORK TO COMBAT

Internationalized Religious Radicalism

The above review suggests that the current criminal justice system is perhaps a failure because it is rooted in the same problem it wants to eliminate- violence.Peacemaking criminologists see religious radicalism as only one of many different types of violence, such as war, racism and sexism that contribute to human suffering. Peacemaking Criminology is eclectic in nature for it draws insights from anarchism, humanism, Christian socialism, liberation theology, Eastern meditative thought, penal abolitionism, feminism, Marxism, and so on (Hermida, n.d.). Positivist school and alternative perspectives of Criminology argue that people commit crime because of some sort of suffering. This suffering usually starts with an intra-personal conflict when an individual realizes that there is a gap between his/her expectation and the reality. Same is true in case of religious radicalism. According to Strain Theory of Robert Merton, most people have similar aspirations, but they get different opportunities to pursue them. When people fail to achieve expectations of the family and society through approved means such as hard work, tolerance, and mutual respect, they may attempt to achieve success through crime like applying radical means because of the strain (Adler et al., 1991, pp.111-119). Strain is also related to social disorganization for physical and social environments of a person is primarily responsible for the behavioral choices that person makes. Social Disorganization Theory of the Chicago School argues that a neighborhood that has fraying social structures with poor schools, vacant and vandalized buildings, high unemployment, and a mix of commercial and residential property is more likely to have high crime rates (Ibid, pp.120-124). Therefore, we can say that crime is suffering and crime can be eliminated by ending suffering. On the other hand, there is an outright negative relation between suffering and peace for peace is freedom from both direct and structural violence (Galtun, 1986). That means crime and suffering can be ended through the achievement of peace. Every move toward peace starts with individuals working to change themselves individually and then moving out to affect the community at large. Now, if one can reject repressive measures like neglecting and excluding and can embrace humane, progressive, community-based strategies, such as

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[3]Peter Pace was a United States Marine Corps general who served as the 16th Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

mediation, reconciliation, alternative dispute resolution and other non-penal means of making society safer, then this transformation can bring about both negative and positive peace (Ibid). Thus, Galtun's theory supports that human transformation to nonviolence achieves peace and justice. Except for natural calamities that must be accepted and faced with equanimity, all problems the world is facing–including internationalized religious radicalism–are created by misunderstanding and wrong attitude (Gyatso, 2018). Different religions, ideologies, and political systems of the world are meant for human beings to achieve peace and happiness. The issues get resolved as soon as humans transform. However, human transformation occurs when social, cultural, economic and political structures change, which is the basic purpose of Peacemaking Criminology. Restitution programs for religious radicals, for example, are considerably less violent than prisons. Another major result of Peacemaking Criminology is that it alerts politicians, the media, and criminal justice actors that there are alternatives to ceaseless wars on crime. Comprising these basic principles of Peacemaking Criminology, I propose the following framework.

Figure 1: Theoretical Framework

The figure above presents theoretical framework of the study. It portrays that Peacemaking Criminological approach leads to positive social, cultural, political, and economic changes. These changes are related to each other and generally occur sequentially, that is why they are represented by a circle. Changes in the four domains contribute to positive transformation of human attitude and behavior, which results in the establishment of peace and justice. When peace and justice prevails, human sufferings and complexes (both superiority and inferiority in case of religious radicalism) end and that leads to elimination of crime like religious radicalism. Squares represent these four steps because they indicate order and stability of a society and of a state at large. The relationship between elimination of religious radicalism and positive social, cultural, political, and economic changes is shown by a dotted arrow because the literature review does not provide sufficient information about it since it.

IV.   METHODOLOGY

Purpose of the study is to find the strategic inputs of peacemaking criminology in the existing system of combating internationalized religious radicalism in Bangladesh. Through this study, I intend to offer an assessment of existing strategies of Bangladesh government in combating religious radicalism and identify its specific areas that requires further development; to explain the nature of the realm of religious radicalism and the indigenous and general factors fueling the process of radicalization in Bangladesh; and to assess the rationale, feasibility and prospect of soft counter terrorism strategies based on peacemaking criminology. Hypotheses of the study are: existing strategies of Bangladesh government for dealing with religious radicalism are driven by hard approach based on classical outlook of criminology; and internationalized religious radicalization in Bangladesh are caused by factors that require comprehensive soft approach to well complement the coercive strategies in order to attaining a sustainable solution.Since this study is to explore the nature of internationalized religious radicalization, the way governments respond and effects of present mode of response, itbasically deals with qualitative data though the study is conducted following mixed method. Cases are selected

from those who have already been accused for militant activities through the legal process to study. Both in-depth interviews and secondary data from news reports are used. Concerned officers of LEAs and journalists are interviewed in every case. Subject's family, socio-economic condition, education and socialization related data are accommodated in the case study to explore the factors and catalysts that eased or led to the radicalization. Experts are interviewed to analyze the psycho-social issues of the subjects. In-depth interviews with family members and well-wishers are also taken with special focus on understanding the level of satisfaction about the institutional measure and the effects of LEAs' actions and judicial treatment in their mind. Data of similar categories will be organized to have a proper content analysis. In the analysis phase, collected qualitative data are accumulated in a way that can help to have answers of the following questions.

i.   How did the subjects get involved to militant activities?
ii.   What are the driving factors and catalysts that turned them from a regular person to the persons with radical motive? Do those factors and catalyst still prevail in the society? If the answer is yes, which sect or class or group of people have more chance to be radicalized in future? Which measures can best fit as proactiveones to deal with those driving issues?
iii. How did the law enforcing agency and the court treated the subjects? Did they have their rights uphold? Did they fall victim of injustice after being involved with law?

V.   DATA ANALYSIS: PEACEMAKING CRIMINOLOGY AND INTERNATIONALIZED RELIGIOUS RADICALISM IN BANGLADESH

I have divided the analysis part into two sections. In the first section, I have followed the hard approaches of Bangladesh governments to the internationalized religious radicalism. In the second section, I have discussed on the contemporary soft approaches that match the principles of Peacemaking Criminology.

6.1 Typical Hard Approaches of the Government

In December 2015, Bangladesh formed a 600-member police unit specializing in combating terrorism and violent extremism. The 'Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC)'unit has been formed to combat terrorism, cybercrimes, terrorism financing and mobile banking related crimes. Led by a DIG of Police, the unit consists of members from SWAT, bomb disposal unit, and the dog squad. The unit collects information and data on terrorists and transnational criminals at home and abroad, monitors their activities, and arrests them (DMP, 2016). Bangladesh government has stepped up efforts to apprehend those who are involved in terrorism and violent extremism. 293 suspected terrorists have been arrested from various parts of the country belonging to such banned terror outfits as JMB, HuJI, ABT and HT; for the killing of seculars, bloggers and religious minorities, charges have been brought against 52 alleged members of such banned terror outfits as JMB and ABT in 6 different cases. Previously 12 similar cases have been filed in which charge-sheets have been submitted against the accused (CRI, 2016). Moreover, Bangladesh continued to participate in the Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance program and received counterterrorism training on building unit capacity in crisis response, evidence collection, crime scene investigation, infrastructure protection, instructional development and sustainment, as well as enhancing cyber and digital investigation capabilities. Bangladesh also received Department of Justice prosecutorial skills training and community policing support and is receiving assistance from the United States in developing an Alert List of militants to better screen for persons of interests at its ports of entry (US Department of State, 2017).

6.2 Soft Approaches of the Government

Apart from the legal and institutional arrangements, the government has also integrated educational institutions, civil society, NGOs and media in strengthening the campaign against terrorism and militancy. To counterthe messages of hate, the current government has also engaged civil society sections, cultural organizations andsocial activists to raise public awareness about the dangers of radicalization, extremism and militancy. Thegovernment's National Committee on Militancy Resistance and Prevention is working with Imams and religiousscholars to build public awareness against terrorism, anti-terrorism sermons are being delivered in mosques across the country since 1 July, 2016 (CRI, 2016). In 2014, Bangladesh became a board member and pilot country for the GlobalFund for Community Engagement and Resilience (GCERF), a public-private global fund to support local,grassroots e-orts to counter violent extremism. Recently, programs under the GCERF have been rolled out in three districts,Satkhira, Cox's Bazar, and Chapainawabganj (Ibid).Bangladesh's Ministry of Information and Ministry of Culture are using newspapers, radio, and television for CVE messaging. Presently, the government is producing documentaries, short-films, and advertisements with a focused CVE message targeted at confronting extremist narratives. Additionally, television channels, including those of private media houses, have been instructed to broadcast programs against terrorism and extremism. Engaging Educational Institutions. The Ministry of Education and Ministry of Home Affairs are engaging educationalinstitutions in building awareness about extremism and terrorism among teachers, students, and

parents. The educational institutions have also instructed teachers, parents, and students to remain vigilant and report to the police if any student is involved in extremist activity or goes missing for ten days. Currently, there are 37 public- and 95 private universities in the country with a total student population of 600,000 students (Daily Star, 2016). Some madrassas have been known to preach religious intolerance and extremism. Consequently, madrassa textbooks have been revised and the government has directed the Ministry of Education to continue its scrutiny of madrassa curriculum. Additionally, the government has co-opted the Qawmi Madrassa in the country, which is one of the two major madrassas in Bangladesh. The government has recognized the Dawra-eHadith degrees issued by Qawmi Madrassa Education Boards as equivalent to a Master's Degree in Islamic Studies and Arabic (Bashar, 2017). This implies that Qawmi Madrassa graduates will now compete in the job markets with others who studied under the National Curriculum. However, it remains to be seen how differences in the syllabus of Qawmi Madrassas and the general education system are reconciled. Bangladesh has taken steps to monitor social media platforms, such as Facebook andTwitter. Efforts are underway to develop the technological capacity of the National Telecommunication Monitoring Centre (NTMC) to enhance the detection of extremist websites. The Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) is also working in this regard. Muslim clerics in Bangladesh have contributed significantly to Bangladesh government's CVE efforts. For instance, in 2016, a leading Islamic group in Bangladesh issued a fatwa (religious edict) condemning terrorism and militancy, including violent attacks on non-Muslims and secular writers and activists (Hussain, 2016).

VI. CONCLUDING REMARKS

First, everyone has to internalize that peace on terror as a strategy is always better than war on terror. No country can win the war on terror by focusing only on security-based counterterrorism measures. Preventive approaches which address its drivers are also needed. Effortsto counter radicalization and extremism are critical. Mass people in Bangladesh consider terrorists to be maligning Islam through their heinous acts in thename of religion. Using this social capital and national attitude towards terrorism, engagingreligious leaders for offering counter-narratives and finally, pursuing a 'whole-of-society' approach, the threat of religious radicalism can be tackled (Rahman, 2017). Since the problems are internationalized, Bangladesh cannotovercome this global challenge alone. It is only through the coordinated and concerted effortsof all nations that terrorism and violent extremism can be effectively fought. Lack of an effective plan for governance or development by these religious radical organizations and groups needs to be emphasized in order to clearly communicate that economic conditions would become much worse under a government headed by extremists. Future competition between Dhaka and terrorist outfits will not only involve appeals to individual understandings of religion, but also to their day-to-day concerns (Clarke, n.d.).As Prime MinisterSheikh Hasina said in the last UNGA session, *"Terrorists have no religion, caste or creed. Wemust unite in our resolve to defeat and degrade them in all forms and manifestations…Withour people's resilience and support, we will make sure that terrorists have no place in our soil*(Dhaka Tribune, 2016)."

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