Peace and Security Review

Volume 9 ■ Number 22 ■ Third Quarter, 2020

B**I**PSS
Towards a Secure World

Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies
www.bipss.org.bd

BIPSS
Towards a Secure World

Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies
www.bipss.org.bd

Contents

Editor's Note

This issue of the Peace and Security Review contains a variety of thought-provoking subjects. These discussions start from the role of the United Nations in bringing peace in Mali to how gender affects terrorism and how it has become a major security threat to Bangladesh. Different issues have been discussed in great detail by the experts in their respective fields. Arguments have been set in place and findings have been made to create further prospective research. Mali is a conflict hotspot where conflict seems to have been raging on for years. Different groups with their own identities and agenda as well as regional politics dominated the conflict scenario. The conflict had a definite impact on the region. Women's participation and growing involvement in religious extremism is an unprecedented phenomenon in the world, which is on a definite rise in Bangladesh. Women known for being pacifist are now becoming active perpetrators of violent extremism and terrorism in Bangladesh. The discussion of what leads women to take such decision is a multifaceted concern that needs to be studied well.

The First article is titled 'Crisis in Mali: Role of United Nations and French Forces in Bringing Peace in Western Sahara Region' by Md Mamunur Rashid, MPhil, deals with ethnic conflict Terrorist Armed Groups (TAG) that ravaged the region. Mali is a landlocked country of Western Sahara Desert. Rivalry between ethnic groups has weakened the peace and stability in the northern and central region of Mali. Four ethnic groups are predominant in Mali and they are the predominant (in case of language) Bambara (Bamana) ethnic group, commonly known as Mande people, the Fulani (Fulbe), Dogon and Tuareg. Religion influenced Northern Region, especially Timbuktu and Kidal Area have bypassed the Malian State in the case of foreign aid received from Libya, Algeria, and Middle East countries by the rebels. Armed groups were part of the civil war that shaped the political landscape of Mali. After gaining independence in 1960, Mali endured decades of instability and the country's first democratic election was held in 1992. The United Nations Security Council initiated the United Nations Peacekeeping Operation to keep

the fighting sides separate. The country descended into chaos as the civil war continued to wreak havoc. The Libyan War has triggered a geopolitical chain of reaction which caused a complex and divided domestic environment in Mali. The United Nations had played a critical part in this conflict.

The second article is titled 'Rohingyas (Myanmar nationals) in Bangladesh: A Critical Analysis of the Impacts on the Host Communities' by Abu Mohammad Siddique Alam. The Rohingya community has been living in Myanmar for centuries. Recently though, the ethnic conflict has triggered an ethno-religious conflict that drove the Rohingya population into Bangladesh. Rohingyas are living in the vast camps near the Bangladesh-Myanmar border which have become a major issue of concern for Bangladesh, particularly, in Cox's Bazaar district. There is a constant state of misunderstanding and grievances between the host community and the refugee community. This article was done by drawing on data from a recent study on 35 Rohingyas and 28 local Bangladeshis in the two camps of Teknaf and Ukhia upazila in Cox's Bazaar district. Throughout the history, many ethnic communities have crossed into Bangladesh due to several push and pull factors. Many Rohingyas were poor and destitutes and came to Bangladesh with their experiences of horror and persecution. Unfortunately, a significant part of the Rohingya community is involved in crimes and illegal dealings. Some of the local crime syndicates provide illegal services such as transporting migrant workers, and even deal in small arms and drug trade involving the Rohingya people. There is also the added fear of insurgency and radicalisation. Migration had always motivated the Rohingyas who seek other means to change their fortune in this foreign land. The crimes and illegal migration nexus seem to go hand in hand in the quest of Rohingyas seeking a better future in host lands like Bangladesh.

The third article is titled "The Gendered Face of Terrorism in Bangladesh-Part I: What Drives Women into Extremism?" by Ms. Marjuka Binte Afzal. The article primarily deals with the concept of female radicalisation in Bangladesh and widely discusses the drivers behind female extremism. This is part one of a bigger study on female radicalisation. In this article, the author elaborates the causes, motivation and the social relationships that act as the drivers, or factors that force or lead women into choosing the path of violent extremism and terrorism in Bangladesh. Different drivers are at play in the radicalisation process, motivating to follow an ideology that slowly overwhelms the followers. The author pulled up the gendered lens to talk about how these drivers affect the two dominant genders differently. In Bangladesh the phenomenon of female radicalisation has become a severe security threat. Female radicalisation indicates that it is possible to bring women in active positions of foot soldiers

and propagators, train them as expert recruiters and give them leadership positions. At times, the female radicalisation has led to creating of family as a terror unit. In Bangladeshi society, the roles of females are perceived as mothers, sisters, wives and caregivers. The female radicalisation among the female in Bengali society is far from traditional values deeply rooted in the society by social constructs. Different cases have been studied to understand the way female radicalisation is being done in Bangladesh. Different terror groups have been using women for years. Women have been taking up tactical operation in Bangladesh, that also involve young women and their children as players. This is a sharp contrast in terms of ideological perception and is seen in many radical terror outfits.

The fourth article is titled 'COVID-19 and Evolving World Order: Implications for Terrorism and Counter Terrorism' by Ms. Soumya Awasthi. In this article, the author delves deep into the security issues during the COVID pandemic. The pandemic had an unprecedented impact on the world economy. The closure of businesses contributed to the job losses and triggered many unforeseen problems. One such problem is the rise of terrorist outfits using COVID-19 as a pretext to recruit new members, plan their next attacks and finance the new recruits. Due to the pandemic, there are grievances among the people that are being amplified by the terror outfits as thousands of people across the world are going through economic hardship and social unrest. The ongoing pandemic is also responsible for the secondary problems such as social unrest, food shortage and lack of basic medical facilities. History has shown how terror outfits had exploited the grievances of the common to drive home their agenda.

The Journal offers a holistic view on a variety of security issues. Different security issues and threats have been responsible for poverty and underdevelopment for decades across the world. The world has experienced upheavals in social and political spheres in the recent years. The genocides committed in different parts of the world, on-going ethno-religious conflicts, rising female extremism, uncertainty in the post-COVID period and the prolonged Rohingya crisis are triggering different security issues that will not only dominate the socio-political landscape of today but also in the days to come.

Major General ANM Muniruzzaman, ndc, psc (Retd.)
Editor

Crisis in Mali: Role of United Nations and French Forces in Bringing Peace in Western Sahara Region

Md Mamunur Rashid[1], MPhil

Abstract

Mali, one of the leading democratic countries of West Africa, faced the greatest challenge in its history when the Tuaregs, 5% of total population and Terrorist Armed Groups (TAG) declared independent Azawad state in April 2012 defeating Mali Armed Forces (FAMA) in the Northern region. This was the fourth time that this tribe stood against Malian Government revolting against deprivation from development of the Northern Region. Due to military coup, elected president had to stand down in 2012 and interim government faced the difficulties of TAG moving towards the capital Bamako. Interim Government asked for help from France to save Mali from a catastrophic defeat. French Forces landed on Mali in 2013 and within three and a half months they recaptured all important provinces of Northern Regions from Tuareg rebels and TAGs taking help from other European, Western Sahara (Sahel) countries and the USA. French Forces continued their operations with a mandate of eradicating terrorism from the Western Sahara. UN Troops were deployed in 2013 with a separate mandate of protecting civilians and bringing peace in Mali. UN Peacekeeping Mission in Mali has turned into the most dangerous mission because the highest numbers of peacekeepers have been killed in the hands of TAGs as of now. The Mali Government and the Platform, a coalition of pro-government armed groups had signed the peace deal in May 2015 at Algiers,

---

1   Group Captain Md Mamunur Rashid, BUP, afwc, psc, M Phil, Officer Commanding CRU, BAF Cox's Bazar.

Algeria. Coordination of Movement for Azawad (CMA), the main rebel coalition in Northern Mali officially signed Peace Agreement in Bamako on 20 June 2015. CMA, an alliance of Tuareg and Arab-led rebels and Platform did not want to be an enemy of peace like the Al-Qaeda and Islamic State linked fighters who overpowered the Tuareg rebels in Northern Mali in 2012. All the protagonists involved in peace talk in Algiers and Bamako have officially endorsed the peace agreement. But traditional peacekeeping has failed in Mali as the rebels have not been sincere in their demobilization, disarmament and reintegration (DDR) process. There are many rebel groups in the east, west and south who did not sign the Peace Agreement. Foreign TAGs are taking this opportunity motivating them for fighting against tribes, French troops and UN peacekeepers. Algeria-Mali border has become a trading place for arms, drugs, vehicles, gold and all foreign and local TAGs are involved in it. As the French Forces attack and kill TAGs to eradicate terrorism from this region, the TAGs are also aiming UN Forces in weak cantonments to take revenge. Bringing sustainable peace in Mali will ensure stability in Sahel Region and failure will have spillover effect over Western Sahara Region. Developing infrastructure and communication network, establishing functional local government, deploying effective law enforcement agencies, developing political and legal institutions and securing borders in TAG dominated areas may reduce conflict and ensure peace and security in that region not the autonomy or independence of Northern Mali.

Introduction

Mali, a landlocked country in Western Sahara region where 18,429,893 people (July 2018) live in an area of 1,240,192 sq km of land (world's 24th largest country).[1] Mali has borders with Algeria (1359 Km) in the North and Northeast, Mauritania (2236 Km) in the North and Northwest, Senegal (489 Km) in the West, Guinea (1062 Km), Ivory Coast (599 Km) and Burkina Faso (1325 Km) in the South and Niger (838 Km) in the East and Southeast.[2] The country has experienced the most devastating consequences since independence (in 1960), specially after Terrorist Armed Groups (TAG) led by Islamic Militants and Tuareg rebels defeated Malian Armed Forces in Northern Mali Region in January 2012. The crisis in Northern part of Mali led 137,975 Malian to take shelter in neighbouring states of Mauritania, Burkina Faso and Niger as refugees and 99,039 people within Mali as internally displaced.[3] The situation got worse when a group of Malian Army staged a military coup in the capital Bamako led by Captain Amadou Sanogo in March 2012 and ousted President

Amadou Toumani Toure from power. Meanwhile, Tuareg rebels declared Independent "Azawad" State in April 2012. At the same time, Tuareg rebels started fighting with other religious armed rebels who wanted to implement "Sharia Law" in Mali which made the situation worse.[4] Map 1 and 2 below show the location of Mali in African Continent and Mali with neighbouring States.

Map 1 & 2: Location of Mali in African Continent and Mali with Neighbouring States

After the fall of President Muammar Gaddafi in Libya, Tuaregs, the maternal ethnic group of Gaddafi, left Libya and took shelter in the Northern Region of Mali with money, weapons and ammunitions. They had political will to change the status quo in the country.[5] When TAG started moving towards capital, to gain control of the lost territory especially the whole Northern Region, interim President of Mali, Dioncounda Traore requested France to help and without any delay French Armed Forces were deployed in Mali on 10 January 2013.[6] French Forces conducted "OPERATION SERVAL" to regain the lost territory in the North and to oust Islamic militants from there, who had begun a push into the center of Mali. French troops and Mali Forces could successfully recapture Kidal, Gao and Timbuktu, the lost territories of Mali.[7]

Meanwhile, United Nations Security Council formed United Nations Peacekeeping Operation (UNPKO) titted United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) on 25 April 2013. MINUSMA officially started their mission on 01 July 2013 and it has become the most dangerous UNPKO of the world where 177 peacekeepers have died out of 13,167 troops as of now in the hands of TAG.[8] Map below shows that the area of operations for peacekeepers in Mali was limited to scarce road networks (as of 01 March 2013).
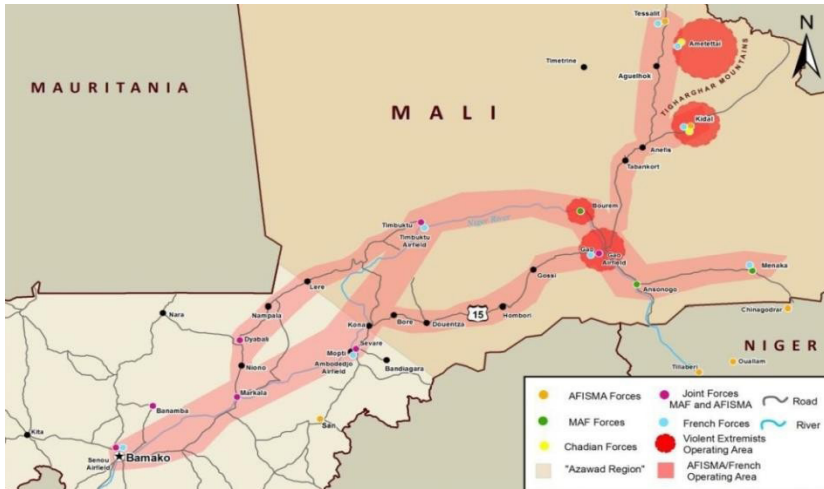
Map 3: Mali showing that the area of operations for peacekeepers was limited to scarce road networks (as of 1 March 2013).

Though French Forces defeated TAG in important cities of Mali Region, they could not eradicate them completely. TAGs have been conducting asymmetric warfare through clandestine and insurgent operations against UN and French Forces and through hiding themselves inside civil population and in some cases in bordering states. UN and French Forces are conducting combined operation in most of the important cities and regions of Mali. French Forces are conducting counter insurgency operation to eliminate terrorist activities in Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso and Chad commonly known as G-5 Sahel. This operation of French Forces known as "OPERATION BARKHANE", started on 01 August 2014 with 3000 troops after "OPERATION SERVAL".[9] Though UN and French Forces have different mandates and their operations and purposes are different, both forces are equally targeted by TAG which has become a great concern for all. Success of UN and French Forces is very important to bring peace and stability in Sahel Region. To protect innocent civilians from militants and to bring back normalcy in the Northern Region of Mali, there is no alternative to driving out TAGs from Western Sahara Area.

History of Mali

Caravan routes in West African Region connecting states located in the west and east have passed through Mali since 300AD. Map below shows the Saharan Trading Route Network. The Malinke Empire reigned over areas of Mali

Map 4: The Saharan Trading Route Network

from 12th to 16th century. The Songhai Empire governed over the Timbuktu-Gao region in the 15th century. Morocco occupied Timbuktu in 1591 and governed over it for two centuries. The land became a colony of France in 1904 (named French Sudan in 1920) and it became part of the French Union in 1946. On 20 June 1960, Mali became independent in the name of Sudanese Republic and Mali Federation was formed with Republic of Senegal. Senegal separated from the federation on 20 Aug 1960 and the Sudanese Republic then changed its name to Republic of Mali on 22 September 1960.[10] The name Mali is taken from the name of the Mali Empire. The name was originally derived from the Mandinka or Bambara word *mali,* meaning "hippopotamus", but it eventually came to mean "the place where the king lives". The word carries the connotation of strength.[11]

Modibo Keita was the first president of Mali who imposed communism in Mali. He was in power until 1968, before being ousted in a bloodless coup organized by a group of young army officers led by Lieutenant Moussa Traore. Traore ruled Mali from 1969 to 1979 through an appointed Military Committee of National Liberation. In 1979 elections were organized and Traore was elected president in the election and he was being reelected in 1985. Traore tried to diversify the economy and maintained non-aligned position in international affairs. But he was toppled after the pro-democracy riots in 1991 and sentenced to death in 1993 for his handling of 106 people being killed in that demonstration.[12]

In 1991, there was an internal conflict with the Tuareg[13] in the north of the country. In 1994 peace agreements were signed with some of the Tuareg rebel

groups and the dispute was mostly resolved by 1996. Former fighters of the various Tuareg Liberation movements were absorbed into Mali's regular army. In 2002, Amadou Toumani Toure, a retired general was elected president who had been the leader of the military aspect of the 1991 democratic uprising. During this democratic period, Mali was regarded as one of the most politically and socially stable countries in Africa.

A group of Malian Army committed a military coup in the capital Bamako led by Captain Amadou Sanogo in March 2012 and ousted the President Amadou Toumani Toure from power. Tuareg rebels declared Independent "Azawad" State in April 2012. At the same time, Tuareg rebels started fighting with other religious armed rebels who wanted to implement "Sharia Law" in Mali which made the situation worst. Ex-Malian Transition President Dioncounda Traoré requested France to stop the advance of TAG towards Bamako. French troops were deployed in Mali in January 2013. Mali and French Forces fought against Tuareg rebels resulting in an exodus of approximately 412,000 persons. They became refugees and took shelter in camps in Algeria, Burkina Faso, Mauritania and Niger.[14] French Forces along with Malian Army and few Western African countries combinedly defeated TAGs in Gao, Timbuktu and Kidal within three and a half months with the assistance of few European Countries and USA. MINUSMA was officially deployed on 01 July 2013.

President election was held in 2013 and Ibrahim Boubacar Keita became the president of Mali. Peace Agreement was signed between Malian Government and Compliant Armed Group (CMA) and Platform in Bamako and Algeria in 2014. Ibrahim Boubacar Keita was reelected again in 2018 National Election.[15]

Background of Conflict

Mali was the most democratic country in Africa in the past 20 years.[16] But the country faced the greatest crisis when the Tuareg, who dominated Northern Region, declared independent Azawad State in 2012. There are many reasons involved in the crisis of Mali. However, the most significant ones are given below:

a. Mali has experienced crisis inside the country four times after independence when secessionist rebellion Tuareg and Arab Groups in the sparsely populated north, rebelled against the Government attempting to gain autonomy in 1963, 1990 and 2006, and finally to gain independence of their region, which they named Azawad in 2012.[17] The North, dominated by Tuareg people, considered themselves being abandoned by the Malian Government located in the South since independence. There was limited

development in the Northern Regions compared to the South. Economic inequality between North and South was an important issue. Divide and rule strategy of the Government was also a reason. Favoritism and Patronage in Government Mechanism became bone of contention between Mali Government and Tuareg dominated areas of the north namely Kidal, Tessalit, Aguelhok and Timbuktu. The primacy of military means to enforce national unity was a wrong strategy played by Malian Government in the northern region of Mali.[18]

b. Rivalry between ethnic groups has weakened the stability in the northern and central region of Mali. Four ethnic groups are predominant in Mali. They are the Bambara (Bamana) ethnic group (language predominant) commonly known as Mande People, the Fulani (Fulbe), Dogon, and Tuareg. Map 5 and 6 below show the ethnic groups in Mali and Tuareg populated area in Western Sahara Desert.[19]
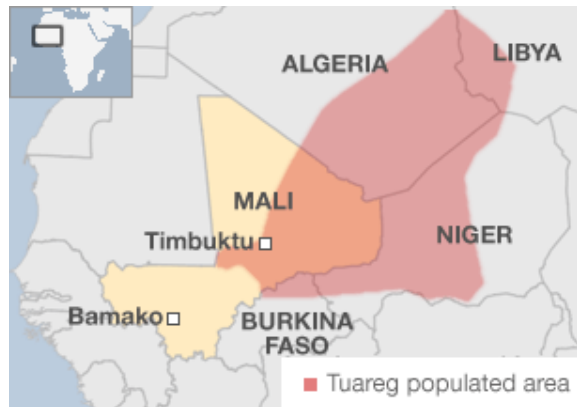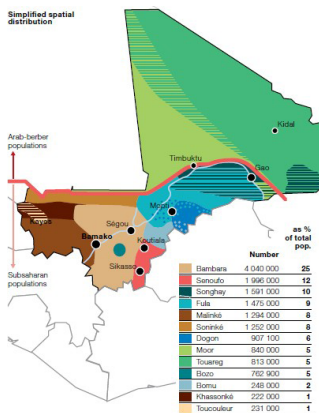
Map 5 & 6: Ethnic Groups in Mali and Tuareg populated area in Western Sahara Desert

(Map 5 Source: 'Atlas Jeune Afrique 2010', in Bossard, L., op. cit., OECD, Sahel and West Africa Club, 2015, 191, Map 6 Source:BBC).

c. There was a political and constitutional crisis occasioned by the military overthrow of the democratically elected government by the army.[20]The political problem is directly linked to the close regional impacts with the Sahel region providing a huge ungovernable space for organized crime among state and non- state actors. The smuggling of humans, drugs, weapons, cars, golds and cigarettes prospers as much as kidnapping industry.[21]

d. The conflict was also an attempt by Islamist Jihadists to take over Mali and to establish a terrorist state based on Sharia Law.[22]

e. Religiously influenced Northern Region especially Timbuktu and Kidal Area have bypassed the Malian State especially in the case of foreign aid received from Libya, Algeria and Middle East countries by the rebels. This was also taken very seriously by Malian Government.[23]

f. The progressive decline in the power and affluence of the Tuareg people; the marginalization of northern Mali based on economic inequality and unequal political representation between the north and the south and poverty of northern Mali which include other ethnic communities are root causes of the conflict.[24]

g. The rules of good governance including transparency in the management of public affairs, absence of local governance and decentralization, national reconciliation, absence of social cohesion in peaceful coexistence, respect for human rights, justice and fight against impunity are the other causes of conflict in the northern region.[25] Fragile democratic transition and weak state institution contributed equally towards the crisis.[26]

h. The Libyan War triggered a geopolitical chain reaction which created a complex and divided domestic environment in Mali. The Libyan revolution had direct impact on the Saharan/Sahelian regional security environment. Fall of Libyan President Muammar Gaddafi led Tuaregs to fall back to Northern Region of Mali with good number of arms and ammunitions, leading to the declaration of independence of the Azawad followed by the "narco-Jihadism".[27]

i. International Islamic TAGs want to establish Islamic Laws in Mali and fulfill their international agenda which other rebel groups do not agree. Trade of weapon, ammunition, natural resources, humans and drugs in the bordering areas are the organized crimes committed by TAG.[28]

j. In regards to social and economic aspects, North and South show huge differences, North has limited access to education and healthcare.[29] Poor education system, poverty in the Northern Region are predominant. There is no good communication system that has been developed as of now in the region. Due to very limited jobs, young people remain unemployed, and eventually getting involved into crimes such as smuggling or abducting foreigners etc.[30]

Peace Accord Signed to Resolve Crisis in Mali.

There are a number of peace agreements which have been signed between the Mali Government and Tuaregs of Northern Region to resolve the crisis since 1960. Previous Peace Accords of Mali are mentioned below.

a. The Tamanrasset Accords 1991.

b. The National Pact 1992.

c. The Algerian Accord, 2006.

d. The Ouagadougou Agreement, 2012.

e. The Algiers Peace Accord, June 2015.

f. The Bamako Agreement, 2015.[31]

Groups Involved in the Crisis

The main groups involved in the crisis are

a **National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA)**. MNLA is a secular Tuareg group which seeks independence for a homeland they call "Azawad". Many of MNLA's Tuareg combatants fought alongside Colonel Gaddafi's troops. They were the former allies of Islamist groups like Harakat Ansar Al-Dine and Mujao, but they opposed to Islamist militant groups for not implementing Sharia Law in the North. MNLA agreed to cooperate with the Government and signed peace agreement. They are also involved in DDR process.[32] Map 7 below shows the cities or areas under control of TAG in April 2012.

Map 7: Cities or areas under the control of TAG in April 2012.

b.   **Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM)**. AQIM is a regional Jihadist group in the Sahel, a branch of Al-Qaeda. The aim of AQIM is to spread Islamic Law and liberate Malians from French Colonial legacy. They are involved in fulfilling international Islamist agenda. It emerged in early 2007. The group has since attracted members from Mauritania, Morocco, Mali, Niger and Senegal. Map 8 below shows Islamist Militant Groups and their areas of influence in Africa.
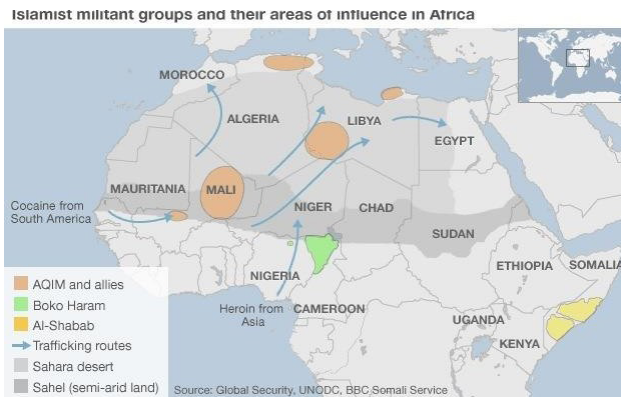
Map 8: Islamist Militant Groups and their areas of Influence in Africa.

c.   **Harakat Ansar al-Dine (HAAD)**. HAAD is a local Terrorist Armed Group (TAG) very much active in Northern Mali. Their objective is to impose Islamic Law across Mali. HAAD is founded and led by Tuareg rebel leader Iyad ag Ghali. HAAD's influence was mainly in the north-west, where it captured the historic city of Timbuktu in May 2012.[33]

d.   **Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJWA)/Movement for Oneness for Jihad in West Africa (MOJWA)**. MUJWA/MOJWA (French Acronym: MUJAO) is a splinter group of AQIM formed in Mauritania in mid-2011. Their aim is to spread jihad to the whole West Africa. They advocate Islamic Law and have waged a campaign of violence against Tuareg separatists. Before France launched the military offensive on 11 January 2013 to drive out the militants, MUJWA's sphere of influence was mainly in north-eastern Mali, where it controlled key towns such as Kidal and Gao, regarded as the drug center of Mali.[34]

e.   **Al-Mourabitoun**. Al-Mourabitoun (meaning "The Sentinels") is an African Militant jihadist organization active since August 2013.This TAG has originated from MOJWA. They are conducting insurgency operations in Algeria, Mali, Burkina Faso, Libya and Ivory Coast. Their ideology is

Salafist Jihadism and they seek to implement Sharia Law in Mali, Algeria, southwestern Libya, and Niger. Al-Mourabitoun conducted 4 deadly attacks on UN peacekeepers and civilians in Mali killing 117 and injuring 20 personnel. They also conducted terrorist attacks twice in Burkina Faso and once in Ivory Coast, killing 51 and injuring 50 personnel.[35]

f   **Islamic Movement for Azawad (IMA)**. IMA split from HAAD in late January 2013 as it opposes "terrorism and extremism". This group advocates dialogue with the government to resolve grievances of the people of northern part of Mali. The IMA fought for the cause of the people of northern Mali, who say they have been marginalized by the government based in far-off Bamako since independence in 1960. The IMA is led and was formed by Alghabass Ag Intalla, an influential figure in Kidal. Mr. Intalla was a high-ranking member of the Ansar Dine team who negotiated with Mali's government until late 2012.[36] Map 9 below shows people killed in conflicts involving jihadists in Africa.
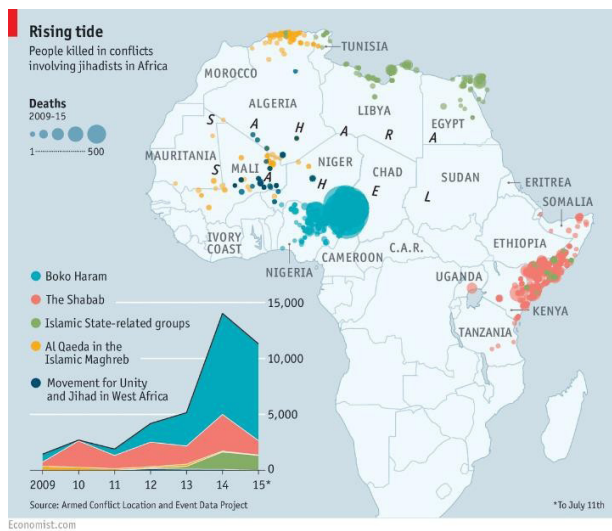
Map 9: People killed in conflicts involving jihadists in Africa.

g   **Ganda Iso**. Ganda Iso, meaning "Sons of Land", is a paramilitary group which emerged in Northern Mali in the early 21st century and had been active during the 2012 Northern Mali Conflict. The Ganda Koy movement was founded in May 1994, by Seydou Cissé, as a response to rising tensions between Tuaregs and sedentary black tribes of the Gao Region. Ganda Koy fighters were recruited from Songhai, Bambara, Fulani, Bozo and Tuareg-Bella tribesmen. Ganda Koy later transformed into Ganda Iso. In 1994, Ganda Koy actions resulted in 60-300 deaths. Ganda Koy military leader

Sergeant Amadou Diallo was reportedly killed in Ansongo, in a battle against MNLA rebels on 25 March 2012. On 01 September 2012, the town of Douentza, in the Mopti Region, was taken over by the MOJWA without violence from Ganda Iso.[37]

h   **Jama'a Nusrat ul-Islam wa al-Muslimin' (JNIM)**. On 02 March 2017, Iyad Ag Ghaly, Hassan Al Ansari, Yahya Abu Hammam, Amadou Kouffa, and Abu Abderaham al-Sanhaji appeared in a video and declared the creation of Nusrat ul-Islam, and their allegiance to AQIM. On 19 March, Al-Qaeda issued a statement approving the new group and accepting their oath of allegiance. Nusrat ul-Islam, officially known as Jama'a Nusrat ul-Islam waal-Muslimin' (JNIM) is a militant jihadist organization in the Maghreb of West Africa formed by the merger of Ansar Dine, the Macina Liberation Front, Al-Mourabitoun and the Saharan branch of AQIM with approximately 800 militants. It is the official branch of Al-Qaeda in Mali, after its leaders swore allegiance to Ayman al-Zawahiri.[38]

j.   **Islamic State of Iraq and ash-sham networks in the Greater Sahara (ISGS).** The aim of this international TAG is to replace regional governments with an Islamic state area(s) of operation. They are mostly concentrated along the Mali-Niger border region. Their targets are primarily security forces of those countries where they operate (April 2018).[39]

Operation Serval

France has economic and security interests in Mali. Mali's eastern neighbor Niger is the world's fourth largest uranium exporter. The mines at Arlit and Akoka, near the border with Mali are exploited by French Uranium Exploration Company Areva. Niger's uranium provides 20 percent of the fuel for France's 58 nuclear reactors, which are responsible for generating nearly 75 percent of France's electricity. France wants to secure collection of her energy raw material from Niger. If political and security problems exist in Mali, France might face difficulties in collecting uranium from Niger. This has guided France to be involved in operation with Mali. [40]

With the request of the Interim Government of Mali, France deployed her Armed Force to recapture the lost territories of North, East and Western Provinces occupied by rebel forces to stop a terrorist state from growing at the doorstep of France and Europe. Following United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 2085 of 20 December 2012, "OPERATION SERVAL" named after the medium cat species Serval, started from 11 January 2013 and

ended on 15 July 2015 with an aim to oust Islamic militants from the north, east and west of Mali who had begun a push into the center of the country.[41] Map 10 below shows area held by all rebel groups in January 2013.

Map 10: Area Held by TAGs in January 2013.

In the north, Chadian Forces and a small part of the Malian Forces were also involved. French Paratroopers and French Mechanized Infantry went very quickly to the north taking Chadian Army with them. TAG could not believe that French Forces would be able to fight in the Adrar des Ifoghas Mountains in such a hot weather condition in March 2013. So, they were totally surprised when they were surrounded by the French Brigade.[42]

Result of the Operation

At the end of the operation, French and Malian Forces achieved victory and took control of all major cities and towns that were lost in 2012. French Forces lost 1 Gazelle Helicopter. Nine French soldiers were killed during the operation. From Mali Armed Forces 82 soldiers were killed, from Chad 38 soldiers were killed and from MNLA 17 soldiers were killed and 60 others wounded. From Togo, Nigeria, Senegal 2 soldiers were killed from each country and from Burkina Faso, 1 soldier was killed during the operation. On the other hand, from TAG, 625 killed, 109-300 militants captured, 50 vehicles destroyed, 150 tons of ammunition and 200 weapons were seized and 60 IEDs were defused.[43]

Operation Barkhane

Operation Barkhane started on 01 August 2014 and continues till today. The operation was named after a crescent-shape dune in the Sahara Desert. The objective of this operation is to stop insurgency in the Maghreb and fight against terrorism. Former French President, François Hollande, had said that the French Force would have a rapid and efficient intervention in the event of a crisis in the region. The operation would target Islamist extremists in Mali, Chad and Niger, and would have a mandate to operate across borders.[44] The mission is a matter of "cutting the lawn", that is containing terrorist threat that cannot be totally eradicated and always comes back. This operation is also having military aspect of European strategy to manage the flow of illegal immigrants and illicit trafficking (drugs, narcotics, weapons etc) coming from the Sahel which could destabilise Europe.[45]

Aim

The operation aims to become the French pillar of counter-terrorism in the Sahel region. The aim is to prevent all forms of jihadist activities between Libya and the Atlantic Ocean which would lead to serious consequences for the security of the region.[46]

Map 11: The deployment of French Forces in Operation Barkhane.

Deployment

The deployment of French Forces for Operation Barkhane is shown in Map 11 above. Operation Barkhane is made up of 3500 French soldiers, approximately 20 helicopters, 200 light vehicles, and 200 armoured vehicles, 6 to 10 support aircraft, 4-6 fighters and 5 drones, all deployed over two permanent bases in Gao and N'Djamena. Soon the drones will be armed.[47] Map 12 above shows French Military Assets in Mali.

Map 12: French Military Assets in Mali.

Result of the Operation

As of now, 13 soldiers killed and 26 wounded from France against 450 killed or captured from TAG.[48] French Forces are doing a great job in Mali in their War against Terror and they are successful in asymmetric warfare at Mali.[49]

UN in Mali

The United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) is a United Nations peacekeeping mission established on 25 April 2013 by United Nations Security Council Resolution 2100 to stabilize the country after the Tuareg rebellion of 2012. In March 2013, the African Union's Peace and Security Council (SC) requested the SC to transform African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA) into a United Nations peacekeeping force.[50] In response, the SC passed Resolution 2100 (2013) on 25

April 2013, creating the MINUSMA, composed of 11,200 military personnel and 1,440 police personnel. MINUSMA was officially deployed on 01 July 2013, and has become the UN's most dangerous peacekeeping mission, with 177 peacekeepers killed within five years.[51]

Mandate

The resolution was unique, as it gave MINUSMA a rare "peace enforcement" role, authorising peacekeepers to use "all necessary means" to enforce its mandate, which include the protection of civilians and the promotion and protection of human rights. Under Resolution 2100, MINUSMA is responsible for the protection of civilians "under imminent threat of physical violence"; with "specific protection for women and children" and addressing "the needs of victims of sexual and gender-based violence in armed conflict"; must monitor, investigate and report to the SC on any violations of human rights of international humanitarian law.[52]

Security and Protection

From 01 July 2013 to 28 February 2019, MINUSMA military and police conducted 183,769 and 72,755 patrols respectively. 341 tons of obsolete and non- usable weapons and ammunitions were confiscated and destroyed by Armed Forces of Mali (FAMa) with support from MINUSMA. 4,655 members of the Malian Security Forces were trained in counter IED measures including 130 women. 34,553 members of the Malian Security Forces were trained by UN Police which included 3,638 women.[53]

Deployment

As of 28 February 2019, UN deployed 13,010 Military personnel and 1,759 Police personnel in 14 locations of Mali. In Sector North, UN troops are deployed in
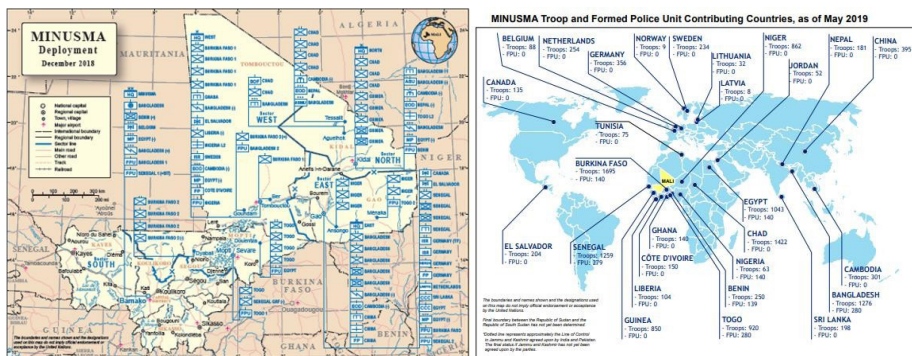
Map 13 & 14: Deployment of MINUSMA & MINUSMA TCC and FPUCC Countries

Kidal, Tessalit and Aguelhoc. In Sector East, UN troops are deployed in Gao, Menaka and Ansongo. In Sector West, UN troops are deployed in Tombouctu, Ber, Diabaly and Goundam. In Sector Center, UN troops are deployed in Doenza, Bankas, Madhugo, Mopti and Sevare. Sector South, is in the capital Bamako with Force Headquarters (FHQ) and few deployments around FHQ close to Senou International Airport. The SC has authorised 13,289 military personnel and 1,920 police personnel for MINUSMA until 30 June 2019.[54] The deployment of MINUSMA and MINUSMA TCC and FPUCC Countries are shown in map 13 and 14 above. Graphs below show Military and Police top 10 troop contributing countries in MINUSMA.
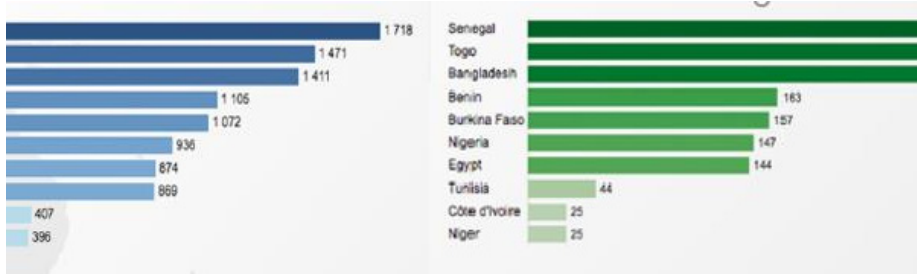
Figure 1 and 2: Top 10 Military and Police Contributing Country in MINUSMA.

Operation of MINUSMA

MINUSMA conducts operations firstly to ensure peace agreement is being complied by all signatory rebel groups. MINUSMA Force also conducts routine patrols to ensure security of area of operation, protect civil population from TAG attacks, control key points of the terrain and support DDR actions, search and detect IED and neutralize those, support stabilization and recovery (S & R) team action and enlarge the force area of influence, escort and support civilian pillars of UN in infrastructure, local government and political development and show presence of force. MINUSMA Force acts proactive, stays vigilant and shows robust posture against TAG.[55]

MINSUMA has become most dangerous mission because of sporadic attack by TAGs who did not sign peace agreement. Most of the peacekeepers were killed by mine laid in the road while going for patrol. MINUSMA carry and distribute food and logistics in a convoy where MINUSMA does not have means to send those by air. These convoys are also being attacked by mine/IED. In many occasions, TAGs orchestrated comprehensive attack on MINUSMA and French Camps with mortar/rocket fire followed by SVIED attack over guard posts and entrance of camps. On 20 January 2019, TAGs attacked Aguelhuk

Camp of Sector North and killed 10 Chadian soldiers and severely injured 17 of them.[57] Again, they threw 9 mortar shell over Kidal Camp of Sector North on 03 April 2019. As all the mortar hit in the heliport area, only two helicopters had very minor damage in their hull. One Togo soldier died during that time due to heart failure.[58] As the peacekeepers of MINUSMA are staying inside same camp of French Forces, TAGs treat both UN and French Force equally and they attack both whenever they get opportunity, though the mandates are totally different.[59]

Air operation in MINUSMA plays a vital role in UNPKO in Mali. The road communication in Mali is very poor as such UN aircraft and helicopter became lifeline in transporting troops and equipment in most of the locations where MINUSMA troops are deployed. Helicopters are being used for reconnaissance, casualty and medical evacuation. It is also used for carrying troops, passenger, food and cargo, especially in those places where runway is not available or not operational. In MINUSMA a good number of UASs are deployed from Germany and Sweden which play a significant role in intelligence gathering, reconnaissance and surveillance of TAGs movement. Moreover, Mirage F1CR, Rafael and Mirage-2000 of France are deployed in Chad for close air support and air interdiction missions. In Mali, 7 fixed wing aircraft, 25 helicopters and 42 UAS are deployed. In 2017, only 11 helicopters were operational; MINUSMA"s authorities consider the lack of helicopters and of tactical air transport capacity to be one of the mission"s major weaknesses. This gap exists because military helicopters and strategic or tactical airlift capabilities are expensive and rare, and countries tend to keep them for themselves before putting them of the disposal of the UN. Moreover, MINUSMA Aviation is operating in a challenging security environment and harsh climate; its military air assets had been damaged in attacks in Kidal and Gao over the past years, and 2 attack helicopters (one Dutch Apache and one German Tiger) had crashed since 2015.[60] Figure 3 below shows the number of helicopter in current UN Peacekeeping Mission.
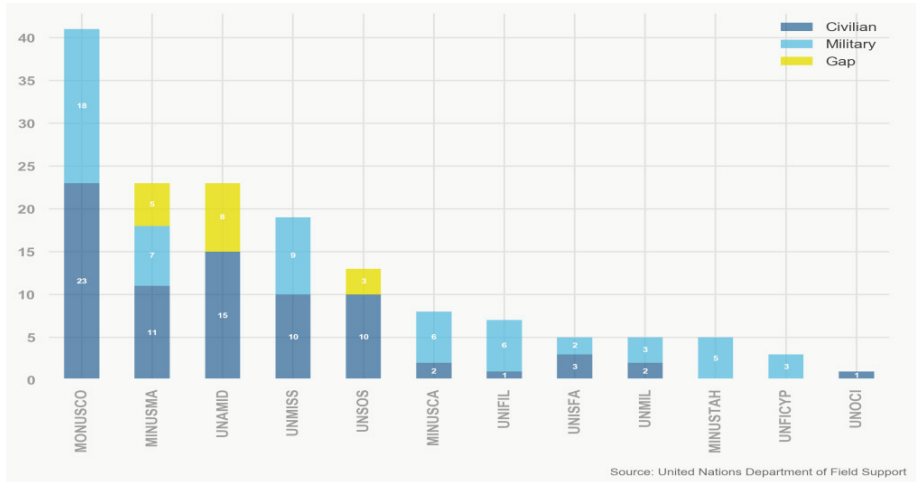
Figure 3: Number of Helicopter in Current UN Peacekeeping Mission

MINUSMA along with the armed forces of France and regional actors are reaching its goal very slowly in bringing peace to the country, guaranteeing security of its people by removing the terrorist groups. MINUSMA is also helping in bringing stabilization to Mali by restoring government control in northern territories, assisting in political stabilization and confirming the human rights. Notwithstanding the achievement, there are many challenges still existent such as security issues regarding terrorist attacks, illegal weapons and drugs, restoration of territorial integrity, security of the people which is undermining the MINUSMA.[61]

Contribution of Bangladesh in MINUSMA

Bangladesh is the third highest troops and police contributing country in MINUSMA (Figure 1 & 2 above). Bangladesh Army (BA) deployed one infantry battalion, one engineering company, one transport company and two signal units in March 2015[62] but transport company was withdrawn in 2019. Bangladesh Navy (BN) deployed ship in Mali initially but later on withdrew. Bangladesh Air Force (BAF) deployed one Utility Aviation Unit with three MI-171 SH Helicopters and one Airfield Services and Management Unit but Utility Aviation Unit withdrew from Mali in 2017. A good number of Military Staff Officers and Military Observers are serving now in Mali from Bangladesh Armed Forces. Bangladesh Police deployed two Formed Police Unit[63] in Bamako and Timbuktu and still both the units are continuing their missions in Mali. Contingents of BA provide safety and security of local population and MINUSMA Camp in Sector East (Gao), construct new Kidal Airfield and provide communication in three SHQ including FHQ. Contingent of BAF

provide airfield services and airspace management of Air Region 5 (Kidal) and Air Region 6 (Tessalit). The airfield services provided to total number of aircrafts and helicopters operate without any flight and ground safety issues. Two contingents of Bangladesh Police ensure law and order situation in Bamako and Timbuktu. 12 Peacekeepers from Bangladesh Armed Forces have made supreme sacrifice by giving their valuable lives for bringing peace in Mali as of now.[64] Peacekeepers of Bangladesh are well known in Mali for their professionalism, ethical values, commitment, discipline, dedication and humanity.

Challenges of MINUSMA.

There are few challenges of MINUSMA which needs to be addressed in Mali and at DPKO, UNHQ for bringing sustainable peace in Sahel Region. Those are mentioned below.

a. The Islamic militants and extremists did not give up their arms and their countless attacks marked their presence. On the one hand there are internal problems in the country like the diversity of ethnicities and the deep economic disparity. On the other hand, there is regional instability with increasing extremism. The success of the MINUSMA mission is largely inhibited by the increased strength of TAGs in the region. MINUSMA works in close cooperation with the French troops because of the fragile security situation in the country. The French forces will continue military actions against the TAGs. MINUSMA will have to face complex attack, insurgency and asymmetric challenges against peacekeepers in Mali.[66]

b. To take pivotal role by MINUSMA in arranging national dialogue to counteract the existing social segmentation and the deep-rooted distrust against the government in Bamako.

c. To face asymmetric war against TAGs in counter insurgency operations without adequate equipment and trained personnel.

d. Developing current intelligence capability into a system that is accessible to all TCCs so that most exposed soldiers get benefit from the mission's intelligence capability of All Sources Information Fusion Unit (ASIFU).[67]

e. MINUSMA is running with shortage of air assets required for UNPKO. Providing adequate air support by air assets for operations has become a great challenge.

f.   To reduce fragmentation of actors, violent extremism, organized crime both transnational and local, establish rule of law in the northern region and bring all rebel and armed groups in the Peace Agreement and DDR process has become great concern for MINUSMA.

g.   MINUSMA operated in Mali for last 5 years but could not win the hearts and minds of local population. AQIM adopted a "seduction strategy" aimed at stimulating the virtually non-existent local economy and providing social service to the local population. The strategy includes

   i.   The recruitment of combatants and auxiliaries (e.g. guides, drivers, informers and paramedics);

   ii. The supply of foodstuffs (e.g. cereals, sugar and tea), fuel, tyres, spare parts and weapons; and

   iii. Subcontracting hostage taking and keeping

It has resulted in whole families deriving their livelihoods from activities generated by AQIM. In addition, AQIM has developed family ties through marriage between its men and young local girls. Thus, AQIM has been able to take advantage of the weak public services and income-generating opportunities in the north and to gain support from selected parts of the population, while traditional chiefs have had difficulties in maintaining their authority. The organized crime started not from greed but for survival. There is an urgent need to invest in alternate livelihood opportunities for groups vulnerable to organized crime.[68] It has become the greatest challenge for MINUSMA to push Mali Government to establish local government in the north, develop proper educational facilities, put law enforcement agencies, protect border and start economic activities so that poverty is reduced and people do not remain unemployed.

Peace Agreement

The Mali Government, the self defence group and movement called Platform, a coalition of pro-government armed groups had signed the peace deal in May 2015. Coordination of Movement for Azawad (CMA), the main rebel coalition in northern Mali, officially signed Peace Agreement in Bamako on 20 June 2015. CMA is an alliance of Tuareg and Arab-led rebels who do not want to be an enemy of peace like the Al- Qaida linked fighters who overpowered the Tuareg rebels in northern Mali in 2012. All the protagonists involved in peace talk in Algiers have officially endorsed the peace agreement.[69]

The challenges of Peace Process ahead are as follows.

a.   There are few disgruntled CMA members who still are in favour of Independent Azawad. Domestic non-state actor (TAG) HAAD was excluded which is a violent religious extremist group. AQIM and MUJAO were also excluded as those two are transnational TAG though they have presence in Mali. Violent extremism by HAAD and transnational criminal activities orchestrated by AQIM and MUJAO, challenges and threaten Mali's sustainable peace process which has peripheral effect on regional and international peace and security to a great extent.[70]

b.   Agreement focused on short-term security through DDR. Demobilization will need more than disarming rebels. In addition, more steps should be taken to build solid foundation for a sustainable peace.

c.   Decentralization, development of political institutions that would allow peaceful resolution of local conflict must be built as well national reconciliation, social cohesion and peaceful coexistence; local governance and decentralization; and the issue of an accelerated development programme for the northern regions must be addressed to make the peace process work.[71]

d.   Agreement Monitoring Committee in which Algeria and MINUSMA play a leading role, have bigger responsibilities in resolving grey areas in the peace agreement. Committee must take initiative in resolving issues like how many combatants from CMA and Platforms will be integrated in Security Forces of Mali. CAM Current Organization in Sector North is shown in figure 4 below.
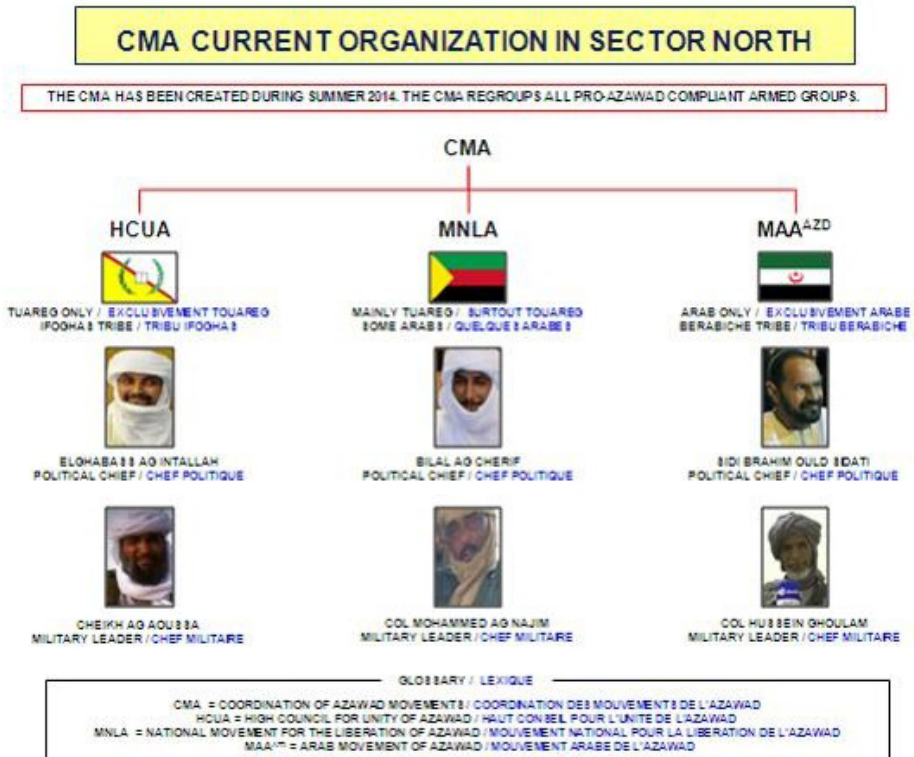
Figure 4: CMA Current Organization in Sector North.[72]

e. There are many rebels from East and Center (from Fulani and Dogan tribes) who did not sign Peace Accord. They are highly involved in armed conflicts and ethnic cleansing in those areas. They may be included in Peace Agreement gradually so that arm conflicts in those areas could be stopped through DDR [73]

The danger is that Mali could become a house of cards that seems stable on the outside, but risks of collapsing is imminent if international interests shift to other hot spots. There are signs of a growing realization among all Malians that there is no military solution to the crisis in the north and peace agreement is still the best chance to stabilize that part of the country.[74]

Analysis of MINUSMA Activities

The recent mandates for northern Mali represent a new trend of peacekeeping, with new tools, technologies and capabilities that have never been used so much in other UN peacekeeping missions, such as the use of UAS (In DR

Congo, UN also use UAV but in a very limited scale) and ISR equipment to gather information etc. Critical human intelligence that could be provided to the mission from the local population is inherently limited as TCCs of EU do not speak the local language. ASIFU has actual intelligence-gathering capabilities of the mission but elements of ASIFU is absent in the northern region of Kidal, the hotspot of the mission. MINUSMA in Mali present a threat to peacekeeping principles. The involvement of the African Union, and French Military Forces could undermine the impartiality of these missions and consequently the consent of parties involved. Furthermore, MINUSMA Forces got involved in substantial fighting in Mali in order to ensure self-defense of its troops.

UN Forces are being targeted by TAGs because of coexistence of forces in same camp with French, despite having totally different mandate. French Forces conduct anti- terrorism operation killing TAGs based on intelligence information. This creates vengeance among TAGs and local people related to TAGs. So, they retaliate by attacking soft and isolated garrison of MINUSMA. They also target patrol, convoy and camps of MINUSMA in order to achieve success in their endeavor. Most of the TAGs conduct their operation in North and East of Mali and after operation they disappear within local population or in neighbouring states of Algeria, Burkina Faso and Niger. If operation of MINUSMA and Operation Barkhane continues simultaneously, UN peacekeepers will continue dying in the hands of TAGs.

Supply of arms and ammunition to TAGs are to be stopped. Border of Mali needs to be protected especially in the north east and southern side so that arms trafficking can be stopped. MINUSMA and EUTG are providing training to Malian Armed Forces and law enforcing agencies but they are reluctant to be deployed in the northern region and border areas. Sensitization and motivation of local Tuareg is a must so that they do not help foreign TAGs operating from Libya, Algeria, Niger and Burkina Faso. Media can sensitize local Tuaregs through many innovative ideas so that local innocent Tuaregs do not help TAGs for any action against civil population and peacekeepers. Independence in the northern region of Mali will break the unity of Mali and create a safe heaven for foreign and local TAGS in Sahel Region. Development work in those areas is a prerequisite to reduce differences with south and bring back normalcy in that region. Local government, law enforcement agencies, armed forces and rule of law must be established in northern and eastern part of Mali. Representation of northern region in Central Government must be ensured so that people of Northern Mali do not feel that they are being marginalized. Local TAGs are to be endorsed in peace accord and DDR process.

Election of local government must be done so that the leadership at root level is developed in the underdeveloped rural areas of Mali. Ethnic differences must be mitigated for greater cause of peace in the Sahel Region. Leadership of MINUSMA have to play pivotal role in driving Malian Government to reduce differences among the regions in Mali.

Organizing G5 Sahel Force for War on Terror

The campaign against militants has resulted in the spread of militancy to countries across the Sahel. In February 2017, France and the Group of Five for the Sahel (G5) countries, Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger announced the creation of the G5 Sahel Force, a five thousand troop strong counterterrorism force aimed at fighting militant groups with an expanded mandate to move across borders in the Sahel region; the multinational force began operations in October 2017.

Recommendation

Following recommendations are made.

a. Border of Mali needs to be protected especially the north east, east and southern borders so that entry of foreign TAGs is controlled totally and weapon, drug, human trafficking can be stopped.

b. Sensitization and motivation of local Tuareg people living in the northern region must be done so that they do not help foreign TAGs operating from neighbouring countries. Ethnic differences must be mitigated for greater cause of unity of Mali and peace in the Sahel Region.

c. Development work in the northern region of Mali (Kidal, Tessalit, Aguelhuk Timbuktu etc) is a prerequisite to reduce differences with south and bring back normalcy in that region. Establishment of local government, law enforcement agencies, armed forces, rule of law with the help of local people in northern, western and eastern part of Mali can help in reducing differences between north and south. MINUSMA can help in training and developing those organisations for establishing rule of law. Representation of these regions in the central government of Mali is very much required.

d. Local TAGs are to be endorsed in peace and DDR process including local rebels from east, west and center regions. Election of local government must be done so that leadership at root level is developed

in the underdeveloped rural areas of Mali. Limited autonomy may be considered instead of total independence in the northern region.

e. Success of MINUSMA will depend on the effective implementation of Peace Agreement. Government of Mali has to play a role in implementing all the terms and conditions endorsed in the peace agreement and bring sustainable peace in Mali.

Conclusion

Mali, once the most stable and democratic state of West Africa became a hot spot of the world in 2012 after the Northern Region declared Independent Azawad State. Destabilization of Mali poses the risk of spreading instability to the neighbouring countries. France has contributed well in regaining the lost territories in the north and eradicating terrorist activities in Mali. Operation Serval was very successful in driving out all foreign terrorist groups from Mali and restore it's territorial integrity. UN and France are operating simultaneously in Mali having different agenda and mandate. MINUSMA is the most dangerous UN Peace Keeping Mission in the world now where UN has lost the highest number of peacekeepers in a single mission. As Islamic militants and extremists did not give up their weapon, they will keep on attacking MINUSMA and French Forces. MINUSMA forces must have training in asymmetric warfare so that they can contribute equally in counter-insurgency operations. To achieve the objective, MINUSMA forces need to be proactive, vigilant and robust in order to reduce casualties and increase dominance over TAGs. The differences between the Mali Government and people of northern region and ethnic differences between different ethnic groups in other regions are creating great difficulties for MINUSMA to bring peace in Mali. MINUSMA is one of the pioneering UNPKO where ISR has been done by UAS and other sources. ASIFU is primarily responsible for intelligence gathering and disseminating to concern agencies till today. TCCs exposed to the attack of TAGs did not get the benefits of ISR reports. Challenges of MINUSMA needs to be addressed by senior leadership of MINUSMA to bring success in conflict resolution and towards building sustainable peace in Mali.

The mediators and signatories of Peace Agreement have very important role to play in bringing lasting peace in Mali. There are few weaknesses in the peace agreement. There are CMA members who still want independent Azawad state comprised of northern region of Mali. As local TAG HAAD and transnational TAGs AQIM, MUJAO and JINIM were not included in the peace process, they are trying all the way to make the peace process fail. Rebels

from east and south were not included in the peace process. Peace process focused on short term but did not highlight on long term goals. Agreement Monitoring Committee must try to sensitize all rebels to join the DDR process and resolve issues of integrating CMA and Platform in security forces of Mali. However, MINUSMA as a mediator will have to take effective role in keeping continuous contact with CMA and Platforms, complete DDR process, integrate the rebels in security forces of Mali, bring security situation to normalcy and assist Mali Government in conducting local election so that local government can function for the development of remote underdeveloped areas. Unless political wheel of local government starts rolling and law enforcing agencies start functioning in the northern region, normalcy in life will not be achieved. Local Government must create more job opportunities for young people so that they do not get involved in crimes like drugs, human and weapon trafficking, abducting foreigners, killing and looting etc. Education institutions must start functioning gradually so that people gain capability to lead their own area with knowledge and wisdom. Rule of law need to be established in the north which is totally absent now.

The citizens of Mali must take major responsibility in bringing peace to their country. They must reduce differences among different ethnic groups, stop killing each other, secure their border from entering foreign TAGs, stop smuggling of weapon, drugs, human and for restoring rule of law in all parts of Mali. MINUSMA can assist in training and developing law enforcement agencies, armed forces and political institutions in local government so that rule of law can be established in northern, eastern and western region of Mali. For that, willingness of political leaders is a prerequisite but as of now political leaders are having difficulties to do that. International players have more role to play in focusing the crisis of Mali and help Malian people to come out of this crisis with money, training, developing political and law enforcement agencies etc. A strong, professional and committed Armed Forces need to be developed in Mali so that they can face international and local TAGs, secure the border from weapon, drugs and human trafficking. At the end, the success of MINUSMA and French Forces will depend on the effective implementation of Peace Agreement. International Community, UN, AU, ECOWAS, Non-Government Organisations and most importantly, Malian Government must play greater role in resolving the crisis in Mali once and for all and build sustainable peace. This will bring peace and tranquility in Western Sahara and Sahel Region as a whole.

References:

[1]https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ml.html

[2] [2]https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ml.html

[3] https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/malisituation

[4]https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mali

[5] Cristiani Dario and Fabiani Riccardo, From Dysfunctionality to Disagreement and Back? The Malian Crisis, Local Players and European Interests, Institute Affari Internationali (IAI) Working Paper, 08 March 2013 (ISSN: 2280-4331), pp-4-5.

[6] Onuoha Freedom C and Thurston Alex, Franco-African Military Intervention in the Mali Crisis and Evolving Security Concern, Aljazeera Center for Studies, NDC, Nigeria (Abuja), 19 February 2013, p-5.

[7]https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Serval

[8]https://www.reuters.com/article/us-britain-mali-peacekeeping/uk-to-send-250-troops-to-mali-for-

peacekeeping-operations-idUSKCN1UH0ZO.

[9]https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Barkhane.

[10]https://www.infoplease.com/world/countries/mali.

[11]https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mali.

[12] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Mali.

[13] Tuareg are the nomads of Barber people and Arab descents wondering in the desert of the Sahara. They live in northern Mali, Niger, Algeria and Mauritania. After the French Colonization, the Western powers established borders without regards for the ethnic groups. The newly drawn borders are the reason for many conflicts all over Africa because they fragmented the tribes and ethnic groups. They inhabit in the northern desert region in Mali and have little in common with Mali black African Majority.

[14] Karlsrud John, Mali, The Oxford Handbook of the Responsibility to Protect, June 2016, p-1.

[15] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Mali.

[16] Noemi Ritter, Mali: A New Challenge for Peacekeeping, p-3.

[17] Besenyo Janos, Thoughts on the Crisis in Mali, pp415-419.

[18] Chauzal Gregory, Damme Thibault Van, The Root of Mali's Conflict, Moving Beyond the 2012 Crisis, CRU Report, Institute of International Relations, The Netherlands (Clingendael), March 2015, pp17-26.

[19] Christophe Sivillon, Head of Office, MINUSMA, Sector North, Kidal, Mali, interviewed on 19 March 2019.

[20] Matic Zrinka, LLM, The Response of the International Community to the Crisis in Mali, International Legal Studies, Seminar on Crisis management and Conflict Settlement, June 2014 (Prof Nenhold), pp3-4.

[21] Frercksen Nadja, Foreign Interventionism, The Case of Mali, Counterinsurgency or Neo-Colonial Invasion? University of Southern Denmark, Somderborg, 20 May 2015, P-19.

22 Ibid, pp3-4.

23 Chauzal Gregory, Damme Thibault Van, The Root of Mali's Conflict, Moving Beyond the 2012 Crisis, CRU Report, Institute of International Relations, The Netherlands (Clingendael), March 2015, pp22-24.

24 Skons Elisabeth, The Implementation of the Peace Process in Mali: a Complex Case of Peace building, SIPRI Yearbook 2016: Armament, Disarmament and International Security (www.sipriyearbook.org), p-9. 25 Ibid, p-23.

26 Oluwandare Col Abiodun Joseph, PhD, The African Union and the Conflict in Mali: Extra-Regional Influence and the Limitation of a Regional Actor, National Open University of Nigeria, pp7-8 (omoijewi@yahoo.com).

27 Cristiani Dario and Fabiani Riccardo, From Disfunctionality to Disagreement and Back? The Malian Crisis, Local Players and European Interests, Institute Affari Internationali (IAI) Working Paper, 08 March 2013, pp2-3 (ISSN: 2280-4331).

28 Besenyo Janos, Thoughts on the Crisis in Mali, p-16.

29 Frercksen Nadja, Foreign Interventionism, The Case of Mali, Counterinsurgency or Neo-Colonial Invasion? University of Southern Denmark, Somderborg, 20 May 2015, P-19.

30 Christophe Sivillon, Head of Office, MINUSMA, Sector North, Kidal, Mali, interviewed on 19 March 2019.

31 Wing Susana D., French Intervention in Mali: Strategic Alliances, Long-term Regional Presence? Department of Political Science, Haverford College, USA (Haverford, PA), 05 February 2016 (ISSN: 0959-2318, http://www.tandfonline.com/foi/fswizo), P-74.

32 Frercksen Nadja, Foreign Interventionism, The Case of Mali, Counterinsurgency or Neo-Colonial Invasion? University of Southern Denmark, Somderborg, 20 May 2015, pp18-20, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Movement_for_the_Liberation_of_Azawad.

33 Frercksen Nadja, Foreign Interventionism, The Case of Mali, Counterinsurgency or Neo-Colonial Invasion? University of Southern Denmark, Somderborg, 20 May 2015, pp21-22,http://en/wikipedia.org/wiki/Ansar_ul_Islam. 34 Frercksen Nadja, Foreign Interventionism, The Case of Mali, Counterinsurgency or Neo-Colonial Invasion? UniversityofSouthernDenmark,Somderborg,20May2015, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Movement_for_Oneness_and_Jihad_in_West_Africa

35 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Al-Mourabitoun_(militant_group). 36 https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-17582909.

37 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ganda_Iso.

38 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jama%27at_Nasr_al-Islam_wal_Muslimin.

39 https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ml.html.

40 Boeke Sergei and Schunrman Bart, Operation "Serval": A Strategic Analysis of the French Intervention in Mali, 2013-2014, Rontledge Publishers, Centre for Terrorism and Counter terrorism, Leiden University, The Netherlands, 24 July 2015, pp6-7.

(http://www.tandfonline.com/lou/fizzo, http://dk.doi.org/10.1080/01402390.2015.1045 494).

[41] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Serval.

[42] Colonel SANTONI Pierre (FA), Deputy Sector Commander, Sector North, MINUSMA, Kidal, Mali, Interviewed on 22 April 2019 and https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Northern_Mali_conflict.

[43] Boeke Sergei and Schunrman Bart, Operation "Serval": A Strategic Analysis of the French Intervention in Mali, 2013-2014, Rontledge Publishers, Centre for Terrorism and Counter terrorism, Leiden University, pp15-18, The Netherlands, 24 July 2015 (http://www.tandfonline.com/lou/fizzo, http://dk.doi.org/10.1080/01402390.2015.1045 494), https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Northern_Mali_conflict and https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Serval.

[44] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Barkhane.

[45] Charbonneau Bruno, The Dilemmas of International Intervention in Mali, A Stabilizing Mali Project Report, Canada (Montreal/Quebec), Centre Franco Paix, October 2017, P-18, (ISBN: 978-2-922844-79- 5).

[46] Ibid.

[47] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Barkhane.

[48] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Barkhane.

[49] Christophe Sivillon, Head of Office, MINUSMA, Sector North, Kidal, Mali, interviewed on 19 March 2019. [50] Bergamaschi Isaline, MINUSMA: Initial Steps, Achievements and Challenges, Norwegian Peace building Resource Centre (www.peacebuilding.ng), P-1.

[51] https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/mission/minusma.

[52] http://responsibilitytoprotect.org/index.php/crises/crisis-in-mali.

[53] MINUSMA (Resolution 2423), Fast Facts-Uniformed Personnel, Dated March 2019.

[54] MINUSMA (Resolution 2423), Fast Facts-Uniformed Personnel, Dated March 2019.

[55] Erdenemnkh Amarlin, MINUSMA, United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali, 07 January 2015, P-2.

[56] Charbonneau Bruno, The Dilemmas of International Intervention in Mali, A Stabilizing Mali Project Report, Canada (Montreal/Quebec), Centre Franco Paix, October 2017, pp16-17, (ISBN: 978-2-922844- 79-5).

[57] Flash Report, SNHQ, Kidal, MINUSMA, Mali Dated 20 January 2019.

[58] Attack Report, SNHQ, Kidal, MINUSMA, Mali Dated 03 April 2019.

[59] http: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Nation_Multidimentional_Integrated_Stabilization_Mission_ In_Mali.

[60] Novosseloff Alexandra, Keeping Peace from Above: Air assets in United Nations Peace Operations, International Peace Institute, October 2017, pp04-21, (www.ipinst.org).

[61] Erdenemunkh Amarlin, MINUSMA, United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization mission in Mali, 07 January 2015.

[62] https://www.thedailystar.net/bangladesh-army-deploys-new-contingents-in-mali-18245.

[63] https://www.police.gov.bd/en/at_a_glance_deployment_and_completed_un_missions.

[64] https://afd.gov.bd/un-peacekeeping/sacrifices-made-by-bangladesh.

[66] Noemi Ritter, Mali: A New Challenge for Peacekeeping, pp7-8.

[67] Inequality in MINUSMA, African Soldiers are in the Firing Line in Mali, DIIS, Policy Brief, December 2016, P-2.

[65] Ops Record, Flight Following Section, BANASMU-5, MINUSMA, Kidal, Mali.

[68] Skons Elisabeth, The Implementation of the Peace Process in Mali: a Complex Case of Peace building, SIPRI Yearbook 2016: Armament, Disarmament and International Security, PP16-17, (www.sipriyearbook.org).

[69] Skons Elisabeth, The Implementation of the Peace Process in Mali: a Complex Case of Peace building, SIPRI Yearbook 2016: Armament, Disarmament and International Security, pp19-21, (www.sipriyearbook.org).

[70] Ibid, P-23.

[71] Ibid, P-23.

[72] Obare Major Justine O., Presentation Given on Orientation Training of Bangladesh Airfield Services and Management Unit (BANASMU) on "History of Mali Conflict and Current Situation", G-2 Training, Sector North HQ, Kidal, Mali, January 2019.

[73] https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2015/jul/01/mali-peace-deal-a-welcome- development-but-will-it-work-this-time

[74] Arthur Boutellis and Marie-Joëlle Zahar, June 22, 2017, https://theglobalobservatory.org/2017/06/mali- bamako-agreement-agiers-process-minusma

Rohingyas (Myanmar nationals) in Bangladesh: A Critical Analysis of the Impacts on the Host Communities
Abu Mohammad Siddique Alam[1]

Abstract

Rohingyas living in huge number of camps near the Bangladesh-Myanmar border is a major issue of concern for Bangladesh, particularly in the greater Cox's Bazar district. Delving into data from a recently completed study of 35 Rohingyas and 28 local Bangladeshis in two camps in Teknaf and Ukhia upazilas in Cox's Bazar district, the paper highlights that the Rohingyas' presence creates non-traditional and societal security threats to Bangladesh through their involvement in irregular migration and human trafficking, cross-border drug smuggling and social conflicts and violence against the host communities. The paper also suggests initiative to develop an inclusive policy on border control and refugees' management as a sustainable solution to safeguard Bangladesh's national security.

Introduction

As of 2017, 68.5 million people around the world have been forced out of their homeland. For the fourth consecutive year, Turkey has hosted the largest

[1] Abu Mohammad Siddique Alam, psc was born on 14th September 1976 in Dhaka district. Mr. Alam passed both SSC and HSC from Sylhet Cadet College. He joined Bangladesh Military Academy with 37th BMA Long Course and was commissioned in the Corps of Army Service Corps on 11 December, 1997. On being commissioned he joined 31 Supply and Transport Battalion. He served as Instructor at School of Military Intelligent and School of Infantry & Tactless. He served General Staff Officer Coordination at Army Service Corps Center & School. He also Commanded supply and Transport Battalion at Ramu and worked closely with Rohingyas (Displaced Myanmar Nationals) management. He also participated in the United Nations peace keeping mission in Ivory Coast as a logistic Officer. At present he is serving at Bogra cantonment as assistant director of supply & transport.

number of refugees worldwide (3.5 million people), followed by Pakistan (1.4 million), Uganda (1.4 million), Lebanon (989,900), the Islamic Republic of Iran (979,400), Germany (970,400), Bangladesh (932,200) and Sudan (906,600).[2] Bangladesh is in the seventh position worldwide in terms of hosting the largest number of refugees. Over time, there has been long experience of in-migration and the settlement of the Arakanese people of Myanmar[3] in the Cox's Bazar region. The geographical proximity, porosity of the border, shared religious beliefs and cultural practices, pre-existing social networks and exchanges, access to each other's market and informal exchanges in the form of commodities have all facilitated regular, long-term interactions with members of the communities that live across the border.[456] These voluntary movements increased by forced migration, as Myanmar state continued its policies of excluding Rohingya Muslims by denying them citizenship rights and freedom of movement, eviction campaigns, excessive taxation, forced labour, and the confiscation of houses, land, farm animals etc. On occasions when exclusionary policies were accompanied by violence, riots, rapes and killings, large numbers of Rohingyas crossed the border into Bangladesh, as evident in 1978, 1991-92, June, August and October 2012, April 2013 and August 2017. Since the 1970s, more than 1.5 million people have fled Myanmar. Of those in exiles, more than 909,000 Rohingyas fled to Bangladesh since 25 August 2017, as of 9 January 2019.[7] However, the Bangladesh Army, who are in charge of handling the crisis situation and relief distribution for Myanmar people, reports that, as of 13 January 2019, a total of 906,787 Rohingyas had come to Bangladesh since 25 August 2017 (see also table-1). In addition, the

---

2   United Nation High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), *Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2017*, Geneva: UNHCR, the UN Agency, 2018, available at: https://www.unhcr.org/5b-27be547.pdf, accessed on 25 March 2019.

3   The official English name was changed by the country's ruling military junta from the 'Union of Burma' to the 'Union of Myanmar' in 1989, and later to the 'Republic of the Union of Myanmar'.

4   C.R. Abrar and M.J.U. Sikder, "Cross-border movement of the Rohingyas from Burma: Exclusion, vulnerability and coping mechanisms", Dhaka: Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit (RMMRU) and Sussex: Migration out of Poverty (RPC), University of Sussex, 2014, p, 1. (Mimeo)

5   K.M. Lay, "Burma Fuels the Rohingya Tragedy", *Far Eastern Economic Review*, Vol. 17, No. 2, 2009, p. 57

6   C. Lewa, "Trafficked from Hell to Hades, The plight of the Rohingya women from Burma trafficked to Pakistan" available athttp://www.ibiblio.org/obl/docs3/Trafficked%20from%20Hell%20to%20Hades.htm, accesed on 15 November 2018.

7   ISCG, *Situation Report Rohingya Refugee Crisis*, Cox's Bazar: Inter Sector Cooperation Group (ISCG), Available at: https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/iscg_situation_report_10_jan_2018_0.pdf , accessed on 19 January 2019.

Bangladeshi authorities claim that more than 300,000 Rohingyas are already living in Bangladesh, who arrived prior to 2017 but never returned to Myanmar. All of the Rohingyas are currently located in the Ukhia and Teknaf Upazila of the Cox's Bazar district and Bandarbhan district. A large number of Rohingyas have been forced to shelter in Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Malaysia and India. There is also a small number living in the United Arab Emirates, Thailand and Indonesia. Various European countries, Japan, Canada and Australia also host small number of Rohingyas.[8][9][10]Therefore, Rohingyas within the Rakhine state of Myanmar have been categorised by the United Nations (UN) as the most persecuted minority in the world.[11]

Table 1

Myanmar Nationals'in the Cox's Bazar District (Up to 13 January 2019)

		Myanmar Nationals
Male		299,908
Female		286,318
Children	Boys	164,172
	Girls	155,010
Total Rohingyas from India as of 13 January 2019		1,379
Total Population		9,06,787

Source: Data generated from 10 Artillery Brigade, 65 and 2 Infantry Brigade, 16 Cavalry and 6 Engineering, Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh.

Rohingyas living in vast camps near the Bangladesh-Myanmar border have become a major issue of concern for Bangladesh, particularly in Cox's Bazar

---

8   Aljazeera, "Who are the Rohingyas?" *Aljazeera*, Doha, 18 April 2018,

        available at: https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2017/08/rohingya-muslims-170831065142812.html, accessed on 20 July 2018.

9   S. Furcoi, "One Year On: Rohingya Refugees in Bangladesh" *Aljazeera*, Doha, 23 August 2018, available at https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/inpictures/year-rohingya-refugees-bangladesh-180823074512290.html, accessed on 29 September 2018.

10   S. Asrar, "How Myanmar Expelled the Majority of the Rohingyas", *Aljazeera*, Doha, 28 September 2017, available at: https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/interactive/2017/09/myanmar-expelled-majority-rohingya-170926114753901.html, accessed on 20 July 2018.

11   United Nation Human Rights Council (UNHRC), *Human Rights Council Opens Special Session on the Situation of Human Rights of the Rohingya and other Minorities in Rakhine State*, New York: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 5 December 2017, available at: https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=22491&LangID=E, accessed on 29 September 2018.

district. Bangladesh has very limited resources, and many of its own socio-economic and environmental problems and pressures are caused by over population and poverty. Rohingyas have created many challenges and much stress, especially during the initial influx phase due to their long-term presence. Their presence increases tension and conflicts between the host community and Rohingyas over education, health services, and infrastructure such as the water supply, sanitation and transportation. Their presence is causing pressure on natural resources, such as bamboo and firewood. In many cases, they have provoked political violence against the host communities, caused changes in the demographic pattern mostly through marrying and having children with members of the host communities. Besides they are also provoking irregular migration through the Bay of Bengal and India, engaged in drug smuggling and terrorism, etc.[12][13][14][15] Therefore, Bangladesh has been experiencing long-term economic, social, political and environmental impacts due to hosting Rohingyas. Serenity challenge has also cropped up.

Nevertheless, the impact of the Rohingyas' presence on the host societies is very complex and varied, involving several factors and contexts. So it requires an in-depth understanding of the societal security and political economy of the host society. The impact of refugees or displaced people on their host societies is widely debated and it is difficult to determine what can specifically be attributed to the refugees. In fact, the effects are often mixed because there are many studies, particularly in African countries, where refugees bring different resources with them, which also positively affect the host societies.[16][17]

---

12   M. Anam, "Rohingya Issues and Concern for Bangladesh", *The Daily Star*, Dhaka, 19 September 2017, available at: https://www.thedailystar.net/round-tables/rohingya-issue-and-concerns-bangladesh-1464043, accessed on 29 September 2018.

13   BIPSS, *Rohingya Refugee Crisis in Bangladesh: A Security Perspective*, Dhaka: Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies (BIPSS), available at: http://bipss.org.bd/pdf/Rohingya_Refugee_Crisis_in_Bangladesh.pdf, accessed on 20 July 2018.

14   G. Sen, "Fallout of Rohingya Issue on Bangladesh's Domestic Politics",

available at: https://idsa.in/idsacomments/fallout-of-the-rohingya-issue-on-bangladesh-domestic-politics_gsen_031017, accessed on 20 July 2018.

15   M. Cage, "How the Rohingya Crisis is affecting Bangladesh-and Why it is Matter", *The Washington Post*, Washington, D.C., available at: https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2018/02/12/how-the-rohingya-crisis-is-affecting-bangladesh-and-why-it-matters/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.e1ef1f2d5ed1, accessed on 20 July 2018.

16   K. Jacobsen, "Livelihoods in Conflict: The Pursuit of Livelihoods by Refugees and the Impact on the Human Security of Host Communities", *International Migration*, Vol. 40, No. 5, 2002, p. 95.

17   O. Bakewell, "Repatriation and Self-settled Refugees in Zambia: Brining Solutions to the Wrong Problems", *Journal of Refugees Studies*, Vol. 13, No. 4, 2000, p.357.

Little empirical research has been done on the Rohingya issue in Bangladesh by examining the impact of this group's presence on the host society and population. There are a handful of studies on Rohingyas in Bangladesh that mainly focus on situational analysis of the migration patterns as well as social, economic, state security and policy issues, but these do not allow an in-depth understanding of the complex and conflicting security relationship between the Rohingyas and their host community. The aim of this paper is to explore and analyse the key impacts of hosting Rohingyas on the lives and security of the people of Ukhia and Teknaf Upazilas of Cox's Bazar district. Specifically, the paper investigates the degree as to how hosting Rohingyas is a burden on the social and economic security systems of the host communities. The paper does not attempt to analyse all impacts but explore the main long-term impacts on the host society.

Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

The theoretical framework adopted for this study is the non-traditional security (NTS) and societal security, which best understands and explains the complex relationship and impacts between refugees and their host societies.

The 'security of a state' was defined as the protection of the state and its vital interests from other states' military attack. This concept had a traditional focus on security and thus was generally understood through a narrow discourse. At the end of the cold war, when the world moved from a bi-polar to a uni-polar and later a multi-polar system, the concept of security became diverse as well as complex. While the traditional approach was insufficient to explore and investigate the real security threats, a broader understanding of security was necessary in order to redefine it with an emphasis on multiple types of military and non-military threats. Authors like Mohammad Ayoob,[18] Bary Buzan, Ole Wæver and Jaap de Wilde[19] and Thomas F. Homer-Dixon[20] pointed out that the security threats to a state originate not only from outside but can also come from within the state itself. They emphasised the concept of non-traditional security, where the focus shifted from the state as the referent object

---

18   M. Ayoob, "Defining security: a Subaltern realist perspective", In K. Krause and M. C. Williams (eds.), *Critical security studies*, Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1997, p.121-122. Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Japp De Wilde (eds.), *Ibid.* 1998

19   B. Buzan, O. Wæver and J. de. Wilde, "Security: a new framework for analysis", Boulder: Lynne Rienner Press, 1998, p. 7.

20   T. F. Homer-Dixon, "On the Threshold: Environmental Changes as Causes of Acute Conflict", *International Security*, Vol.16, No.2, 1991, p. 77.

to humans to individuals. The state's survival can be equally challenged by the internal vulnerabilities and instabilities, such as ethnic conflicts, religious riots, terrorism, economic collapse, failure of political institutions, human rights violations, spread of disease and drugs, etc., where the damage to individuals can put the state at risk and so, in turn, undermine the state security.[212223]

Various non-traditional security issues can pose threats not only within the state and induce intra-state but also even inter-state conflicts. Ole Wæver and Jaap de Wilde[24] argued that non-military issues, like population movements, particularly cross borders, can be security issues that threaten the dominant pattern of ethnicity, religion and other factors and generate conflict (both inter-and intra-state), thereby facilitating terrorism and international criminal activities, and hence undermining the societal security. The social security concern is about threats to a society's identity, when the 'we' identity is put in danger. Therefore, migration can be an important source of threat and risk to the host states, as it can violate the cultural norms and values of the society, thereby ultimately threaten national security.[25] In the present discussion, the concepts of non-traditional security and societal security are employed to explore how refugees, who migrated due to state prosecution that seek shelter in other countries, can become a national threat to these host countries.

Methodology

The present study adopts a micro-socio-economic security impact analysis of Rohingyas in the host societies of Ukhia and Tekhnaf upazilas of Cox's Bazar district, Bangladesh. Accordingly, the qualitative methodology used in this study aims to provide a rich, detailed understanding of the security impacts

21   C. L. Glaser, "Realism: Not Expanding, but still Evolving", In G. Schlag, J. Junk and C. Daase (eds.), *Transformations of Security Studies: Dialogues, Diversity and Discipline*, Oxon and New York: Routledge, 2015, p. 35-50.

22   J. Stigen and O. K. Fauchald, "Environmental security and the UN Security Council", In C. Bailliet (ed.), *Security: A Multidisciplinary Normative Approach*, The Netherlands: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2009, p. 313-344.

23   D.A. Baldwin, "The concept of security", *Review of International Studies*,Vol. 23, No. 1, 1997, p. 22.

24   B. Buzan, O. Wæver and J. de. Wilde, *ibid*, 1998, p. 8-9.

25   M. Weiner, *Security Stability and International Migration*, Working Paper, Cambridge,Massachusetts: Defense and Arms Control Studies Program, Center for International Studies,Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1990, p. 20.

of Rohingyas on the host society.[26][27]

The research for this study unfolded in two stages. The work in the preparatory stage included holding of an in-house seminar, meeting several key stakeholders, and identifying the key research issues and questions. Information on the socio-economic reality of the study areas was compiled from various secondary sources, including books, research papers and newspapers. The upazila level statistical data were collected from the publications of the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics and various government bodies, such as local upazilas and union parishad offices.

The second stage involved conducting fieldwork in two phases. In the first phase, meetings were held with the local government administration and stakeholders. Two Rohingya camps, namely Kutupalong camp in Ukhia upazila and Nayapar camp in Teknaf upazila, plus local Bangladeshis who live beside these camps, were identified for the study (see image-1). Based on their suggestions, initial contact was made with the Rohingyas and local Bangladeshis, and the risks associated with future field visits were assessed. On completion of the first round of the fieldwork, the research questions were further sharpened, taking on board the perspective gained from attending these meetings on the ground. In the second stage of the field work, the data were collected through employing methods such as informal discussions with Rohingyas and local Bangladeshi villagers. These key informants were of central importance to the present study, as their insights were vital in developing a more detailed understanding of the issues of security, livelihood, social relations, etc.[28][29]

26   M. Hammersley "What's Wrong with Ethnography? Methodological Explorations", New York: Routledge, 1992, p.8.

27   P. Atkinson, M. Hammersley "Ethnography and Participant Observation", In N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln (eds.) *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1994, p. 257.

28   C. A. Davies "Reflexive Ethnography: A Guide to Researching Selves and Others", New York: Routledge, 1998, p. 88.

29   P. Atkinson, A. Coffey, S. Delamont, "Key Themes in Qualitative Research: Continuities and Changes", California: AltaMira Press, 2003, p. 13.

BANGLADESH: Cox's Bazar Refugee Population as of 28 February 2019

Kutupalong Balukhali Expansion Site
630,490

Camp 14 / Hakimpara
31,910

Camp 15 / Jamtoli
49,450

Camp 21 / Chakmarkul
12,270

Camp 16 / Bagghona / Potibonia
21,790

Camp 22 / Unchiprang
22,220

Camp 23 / Shamlapur
10,960

Camp 25 / Alikhali
9,500

Camp 24 / Leda
33,540

Nayapara RC
26,920

Camp 26 / Nayapara
41,010

Camp 27 / Jadimura
14,270

Study Sites for Conducting the Research

Discussions with the local authorities and community leaders helped the researchers to identify two local guides, one a Rohingya and the other a local Bangladeshi, at each of the two study sites who could understand both the local accent and the Rohingya language. The researcher held detailed discussions with these local guides to gain further insights into the life and livelihood of their community members in the geographical area in question. In total, 30 Rohingya households were interviewed (15 in each of the two upazilas). Of these households, 15 were male- and 15 female-headed households. The selection process was based on the head of the household, the years of migration experience in the Cox's Bazar region, educational and marital status, the livelihood pattern in Myanmar, international and internal migrants, etc. To gain a thorough understanding of the security-related issues, in-depth interviews were conducted with five Rohingyas who had been arrested by Border Guards Bangladesh (BGB), Rapid Action Battalion

(RAB) or the Bangladesh Police or Coast Guard for their direct involvement in smuggling drugs and/or humans and local conflicts. In addition, 20 local Bangladeshis were included in the study (ten from each upazila) to understand the other perspective of hosting Rohingyas and its impact. Of these, six were from female-headed households to understand the gender-related insecurities. Moreover, five Bangladeshis were interviewed who lived, not in the Cox's Bazar district, but in Narsingdi and Comilla district but who had been arrested by the security forces for engaging in irregular migration through the Bay of Bengal to Malaysia and was carrying huge amounts of drugs. Three Bangladeshis were also interviewed who lived in the South-Western district of Bangladesh but who had been the victims of human smugglers before being rescued by Bangladesh Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) in Cox's Bazar.

The field interviews took place during the period between January and August 2018 and covered two seasons: summer and monsoon. This helped the researcher to capture the seasonal variations within the living and overall security conditions and livelihood options. On an average, each interview lasted for more than 60 minutes. Along with the above respondent groups, the researcher also interviewed local public functionaries, including Upazila Nirbahi Officers (Chief Executive Officers of the Upazila), officials from the police stations, officials of the BGB, RAB, Coast Guard, doctors from government medical centres, teachers from government schools and colleges, representatives from the social welfare department and camps' management, etc. The team also met local journalists, representatives from national Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) such as the Society for Environment and Human Development (SHED), Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC), Mukti (Freedom), Young Power in Social Action (YPSA), a financial institution (Grameen Bank), as well as local civil society organisations (CSOs). Discussions with this diverse range of stakeholders provided valuable perspectives on the daily life and livelihood of the concerned categories.

It is not uncommon for social researchers to acknowledge that their personal biographies have played a role in constructing their research.[30][31] My interest in conducting Rohingya-related research originated while I was working as an Army personnel and my posting was in Cox's Bazar since September 2017 to control and manage the incoming Rohingyas. This helped me to understand

30   D. Atkinson, Shakespeare, "Introduction", In P. Shakespeare, D. Atkinson and S. French (eds.), *Reflecting on Research Practice: Issues in Health and Social Welfare,* Berkshire: Open University Press, 1993, p. 8.

31   R. K. Yin, "Life Histories of Innovations: How New Practices Become Routinized", *Public Administration Review, Vol 41, Issue* 1, 1989, p. 23.

and gain a practical knowledge of the nature and pattern of the Rohingya influx, and I was involved in this activity until February, 2019. This experience instilled in me a desire to learn more about how the Rohingyas may affect the host society in the long run.

This study relied on transcriptions of audio-taped accounts of the respondents as well as other stakeholders. The field notes, video recordings and photographs contributed to the task of understanding the situation and circumstances of the participants. The transcribed interviews and qualitative sections of the interviews identified the key themes for analysing the data. The thematic analysis aimed to identify the key themes related to the study as well as the sub-themes to gain a comprehensive view of the practices of the informants.[32] As stated earlier, in-depth interviews with five Rohingyas and eight Bangladeshi respondents were conducted. Case profiles based on those interviews helped the researcher to examine the live experience of individual Rohingyas and local Bangladeshis. The case studies expand in detail the phenomena of micro-level security, risk and vulnerability in the real life context.

Irregular Migration and Human Trafficking

Irregular migration by land, air and sea has become a global concern due to the increasing involvement of organised criminals at every stage of the migration process– in the country of origin, while in transit and in the destination country (Graph-2). Migrants become vulnerable throughout this journey and their fate and the well-being of the families at home are placed in the hands of professional smugglers, who form part of strong, cross-border criminal networks that can lead to kidnapping, ransom demands, extortion, physical violence, sexual abuse, forced labour, human trafficking, etc. In most cases, when migrants finally reach their destination, they may remain prone to further trafficking and be vulnerable to falling victim to the new forms of slavery.[33]

---

32   R. E. Boyatzis, "Transforming Qualitative Information-Thematic Analysis and Code Development ", Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1998, p. 4.

33   IOM, *Combating Trafficking in Persons and Contemporary Forms of Slavery*, Geneva: Global Compact Thematic Paper-Trafficking in Persons, International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2016, available at: https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/our_work/ODG/GCM/IOM-Thematic-Paper-Trafficking-in-persons.pdf, accessed on 1 January 2019.

Bangladesh is one of the major migrant-sending countries worldwide. In 2018, a total of 734,181 workers (including 101,695 females) migrated overseas through legal channels from Bangladesh.[35] Alongside regular migration, there is serious concern about the increasing number of irregular Bangladeshi migrants via air, sea, and land routes. The European Border and Coast Guard Agency, also known as Frontext, estimates that, from 2012 to 2016, a total of 32,620 Bangladeshis were detected who had illegally crossed the border by sea, land and/or air, and entered Europe.[36] It is also reported by the United Nation High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) that, since 2012, approximately 170,000 Rohingya refugees and Bangladeshi migrants are believed to have sailed from Bangladesh or Myanmar.[37]These journeys lead to cases of severe vulnerability at every stage of the journey, human rights violations, exploitation and murder, often perpetrated by agents, *dalal* (middlemen), professional smugglers and their criminal networks. For example, it is reported by the

---

34   National Geographic Cartographer, *The World Congested Human Migration Routes*, Washington, D.C., 2017,

available at: https://news.nationalgeographic.com/2015/09/150919-data-points-refugees-migrants-maps-human-migrations-syria-world/, accessed on 30 December 2018.

35   BMET, *Country Wise Overseas Employment 1976-2018,* Dhaka: Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training (BMET), Government of Bangladesh, 2019, available at: http://www.old.bmet.gov.bd/BMET/viewStatReport.action?reportnumber=34, accessed on 1 January 2019.

36   Frontext, *FRAN Quarterly: Quarter 4 October – December 2016*, Warsaw: European Border and Coast Guard Agency, 2016, available at: http://frontex.europa.eu/assets/Publications/Risk_Analysis/FRAN_Q4_2016.pdf, accessed on 1 January 2019.

37   UNHCR, *Mixed Movements in South-East Asia,* Bangkok: UNHCR Regional Office for South-East Asia, 2016, Available at: https://unhcr.atavist.com/mm2016, accessed on 1 January 2019.

UNHCR that at least 1800 Rohingya refugees and Bangladeshi migrants are believed to have died while crossing the Bay of Bengal and Andaman Sea due to smugglers' abuse and deprivation.[38]The Malaysian and Thai authorities, at their coastal borders and in the jungles, have uncovered many suspected human trafficking camps in which they have found mass graves that have triggered regional concerns about migrant smuggling and human trafficking. Both Bangladeshis and the forced displaced citizens of Myanmar fell victim to the machinations of these traffickers.[39]

A strong, well-organised group of agents, who are very well known in their locality, encourage individuals to migrate to Malaysia and European countries. In the Malaysian context, it is known through in-depth interviews with Rohingyas that migration to Malaysia through the Bay of Bengal was the first discovered route by Rohingyas, probably in 2001 or 2002. That journey was very risky and few Rohingyas used that route initially, using small trawlers, to migrate in order to avoid persecution by the Myanmar state government, which meant that they had no future in their homeland. This journey then began to attract Bangladeshis, particularly after 2007 and 2008. There are a couple of layers of agents who work in Bangladesh area. For example, one group first convinces and recruits potential Bangladeshi migrants who may have limited knowledge about the sea and may never have seen a ship in their life, so they have no idea about the risks associated with sea voyages. By offering false information about how safe it is to migrate by sea, this group convinces the potential migrants that a large ship will transport them across the sea to Malaysia. These prospective migrants are further convinced by the agents because they are offered the chance to reach Malaysia by sea at a very low fare.

The interviews with the Rohingya and Bangladeshi human smugglers who were arrested by the BGB, revealed that it is unprofitable to smuggle Rohingyas alone because they could not provide any money; in fact, in most cases, they had no money at all. The criminal network wished to make a profit and so targeted Bangladeshis, particularly people living in the districts of Narsingdi, Jessore, Jhenaidah, Rangpur, Kurigram, etc., who had no idea about sea travel and so were easier to convince. In fact, they were ready to pay the migration

38   UNHCR, 2016, ibid

39   B. L. Yi, "Malaysia Migrant Mass Graves: Police Reveal 139 Sites, Some with Multiple Corpses". *The Guardian*, London, 25 May 2015, available at: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/may/25/malaysia-migrant-mass-graves-police-reveal-139-sites-some-with-multiple-corpses, accessed on 10 January 2019.

cost, which was a minimum of Taka 100000 (USD 1235). Once convinced, the migrant were passed onto agents at the district level, then agents in Dhaka, then to agents in the Cox's Bazar district, where they finally set out on their sea voyage. During this process, the agents won the local authorities. The Bangladesh-based Rohingya and Bangladeshi agents had good connections with the smugglers who are sailors. These smugglers would hand the migrants over to the agents based in Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia. These agents were not only citizens of those countries but also Rohingyas and Bangladeshis who had lived there for a long time, and all financial transactions were made through mobile phone networks, using their different financial transfer facilities.[40][41]

The research team came across two youths from the south-western district of Jessore who initially came to the area to go to Malaysia by sea. Their arrangement with the informal intermediary was that they would be taken on to a container ship in the high seas by boat from Cox's Bazar for Malaysia. Immediately before their departure for Malaysia, the two youths, along with 60 others, were apprehended by members of the law enforcement agencies for attempting to migrate through illegal channel. Following their release after spending seven days in custody, through the intervention of their influential parents, the pair decided to stay in the area. They told the researcher that they felt unable to return to their place of origin because everybody has assumed that they were migrating legally to Malaysia so, if they were to return to their localities, their neighbors would regard them as criminals. Hence, they had no option but to tell people that they were now in Malaysia. Having been advised by their local friends and well-wishers, and recognising the prospects in the tourism sector, they both registered to a tourism training course in the city, and their educational background and access to information helped them to overcome the setback.

Such irregular migration to Malaysia seriously affects every sector of Cox's Bazar region. The Upazila Government Education Officer informed the researcher that the education level was rather low in the region as a whole, which had a demonstrably negative effect on the Rohingyas as well. In addition, the desire of the local people and the Rohingyas to go to Malaysia also distracted young people from concentrating on their studies. The researcher came across the case of Rafique, a 14-year old Bangladeshi from Ukhia upazilla.

---

40   M.J.U. Sikder, *Migrant Smuggling, Trafficking and Contemporary Forms of Slavery, including Appropriate Identification, Protection and Assistance to Migrants and Victims of Human Trafficking*, IOM Policy Brief 6, Dhaka: International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2017, (mimeo).

41   See also C. R. Abrar and M. J.U. Sikder, 2014, *ibid*.

Rafique's father, who worked for an international NGO in Dhaka, stated that Rafique was a Quran e Hafez, even at this tender age, and a great source of hope for the family. One day, Rafique went missing. His family did everything possible to secure information about his disappearance, including registering a general complaint with the police. After about a week, the family received a call from abroad and was connected to Rafique, who informed them that they needed to pay Tk.200,000 (US$2500) to the representative of the *dalal* in Teknaf to secure his release. The family complied with that and Rafique has been living in Malaysia since then. The interviews with the locals revealed that, traditionally, people there have little interest in education. They are more interested in going to the Gulf countries and Malaysia. One member of the community stated, "After birth, the newborn's head is placed facing the west, with the hope that one day he will go to Saudi Arabia or Malaysia for work".

Due to the fact that the Bangladesh Army is deployed in the refugee camps that are also tightly monitored by the BGB and police, the flow of illegal migration through sea route to Malaysia has decreased. Once the army is withdrawn, it is unclear how the illegal migration will be stopped or how the overall security in the region will be overseen. The Bangladesh authorities are struggling to keep control on huge number of Rohingyas, so there is a high possibility that illegal migration will rife in the absence of the Army and Law enforcing agencies. Already, several international and national newspapers have reported the capture of boats carrying Bangladeshis and Rohingyas to Malaysia. Since the legal out-flow of international migration to the Gulf and Malaysia has been slowing down and there is rising unemployment in Bangladesh, with 2.2 million entering the job market every year, Bangladeshis may desperately attempt to engage in illegal migration to Malaysia through the Bay of Bengal.

Multiple incidents of trafficking have also been reported by various national and international news agencies, along with United Nations reports, since the Rohingyas took refuge in Bangladesh. Women and children suffer worst from such trafficking incidents. Rohingya women are often being enticed by the local trafficking agency pimps with offers of jobs in the cities. They search through the refugee camps to find vulnerable single women or families without any male support. These women often accept such offers to go outside the camps for work to earn some much needed money to help their families. As soon as they accept such an offer, they are taken from the camps by the pimps and sent to different places. The interviews with the local Bangladeshis revealed that, since the Rohingyas receive food and shelter without having to work, they remain devoid of a sense of normal life inside the camps. This means

that thousands of able-bodied men and women are simply whiling away their lives in the refugee camps without participating in any form of productive work that might provide monetary assistance to themselves and their families. Groups of local trafficking gangs are taking a keen interest in these helpless people in the camps to exploit them.

The interviews with the local Bangladeshis and stakeholders revealed that such trafficking incidents in the Rohingyas' camps have created panic among the local Bangladeshis. It was rumored in the locality that the local Bangladeshi women and children are victims to such incidents. Although the local government authorities have not identified any such cases, they agreed that Bangladeshi women and children can also become victims to this, if not monitored properly. The local school teachers also reported that students, particularly female students, and their parents fear the trafficking of their children, to such an extent that they feel reluctant to send their wards to school. Since the Rohingyas and local Bangladeshis speak the same language and share the same body structure, it is difficult to distinguish them from the locals, so trafficking has become a security threat in the Cox's Bazar region.

Cross-border Drug Smuggling

Drug smuggling from Myanmar to Bangladesh has become a national threat to the latter. National and international criminals engage in drug smuggling and spreading drugs throughout Bangladesh. Today, world drug smuggling across borders is considered the most lucrative business, where the profits far exceed those of oil industry and are second only to those from the arms trade.[42]The most commonly smuggled drug is *yaba*, a highly-addictive stimulant that is a mixture of methamphetamine and caffeine. It usually comes in the form of colorful, candy-style tablets. The spread of drugs is damaging Bangladeshi society as the increased drug use is leading to extra-marital relationships, divorce, killings and social violence. The demand for these drugs is increasing day by day. Table-2 shows the amount of *yaba* pills seized by the different security forces in the Cox's Bazar region of Bangladesh in one year. It should be noted that *yaba* pills enter Bangladesh from India as well.

---

42   T. Maqbool, *Drug Trafficking: A Non-Traditional Security Threat to National Security of Pakistan*, Islamabad, Institute for Strategic Studies, Research and Analysis (ISSRA), National Defense University, 2014.

Table 2

Seized YABA pills (Pieces) by the Bangladeshi Security Authorities

(January 2018-January 2019)

Months	BGB	Police	Coast Guard	RAB	Others	Total
Jan-March, 2018	51,78,850	247,030	24,74,500	6,07,760	24,722	85,32,862
April-June, 2018	19,31,128	13,32,302	41,30,234	1,62,950	6,925	75,63,539
July-September 2018	15,92,932	10,15,521	5,41,750	88,7480	33,230	34,58,779
October, 2018	8,10,331	6,51,654	1,80,000	3,37,999	53,676	20,33,660
November, 2018	11,50,215	1,04,550	1,60,000	1,71,525	7,400	15,93,690
December, 2018	6,33,876	1,33,720	3,62,000	26,725	12,550	11,68,871
January, 2019	1,98,181	38,734	70,000	1,07,872	10,235	4,25,022
Total	13,850,401	3,945,109	8,629,684	3,425,330	210,619	24,776,423

Source: Data generated from the offices of the BGB, RAB, Police and others, Cox's Bazar District

It is well-known that Myanmar's security forces and also separatist groups, who are fighting for independence, manufacture and oversee the illicit trading of *yaba*.[43] Bangladesh government has raised this issue, accompanied by valid documents and proof, bilaterally with the Myanmar government with the request to stop this illegal trade. However, the issue has been ignored by the Myanmar authorities. Recently, the Bangladeshi government cracked down on drug smugglers all over Bangladesh but, unfortunately, the problem of drug smuggling persists. The main threat associated with cross-border drug-smuggling is that a huge number of Rohingyas have been used by the Myanmar security forces to carry *yaba* tablets through the *Naf* river. The number of Rohingyas involved in drug smuggling has increased day by day. The drug gangs, both national and international, regard the Rohingyas as drug-mules, as they rush into Bangladesh in huge numbers. Border Guard Bangladesh is unable to check these desperate Rohingyas, used by drug gangs. Rohingya women, under-age females and young children pass undetected over Bangladesh's border, which has helped the drug gangs to ship their products. They have devised new techniques to avoid arousing the suspicion of the BGB. They do not carry drugs in groups, but rather separately, as individuals. A Rohingya smuggler was asked about the logistics used to smuggle drugs into the Bangladeshi border and he said that they knew which checkpoints would

---

43   M. A. Khan, "The Myanmar Connection", *The Dhaka Tribune*, Dhaka, 6 December 2016, Available at: https://www.dhakatribune.com/bangladesh/crime/2016/12/06/the-myanmar-connection/, accessed on 20 July 2018.

be searched by the police. They move separately, on foot, by motorcycle or by bicycle, aware that anyone travelling on a minibus or three-wheeled rickshaw would be checked.

The ordinary Rohingyas and arrested Rohingya drug smugglers stated the reasons of why they are engaged in drug smuggling. There was no single reason but multiple push-pull factors that worked to increase this drug smuggling. Many Rohingyas stated that Rohingyas carry *yaba* because they need to survive. They reported that they receive relief but that is insufficient to meet their needs. The criminals offer them a large sum of money if they agree to pass the drugs directly to other drug dealers. The drug dealers can be Rohingyas or local Bangladeshis. They found it relatively easy to pass on *yaba* because this drug is in such demand that they need not need to carry it far; in fact, the dealers, mainly Bangladeshis, are stationed very close to the refugee camps. The profit depends on who can carry *yaba* to a long distance, like taking it to Chittagong or Dhaka city. The carriers need to know the right place and have good contacts; otherwise, they are very likely to be caught by the security forces. There are agents and informers throughout the country and it is an impossible task for the Bangladesh Police Force to catch them all. Another group of Rohingyas reported that it was easy for them to smuggle *yaba* pills from Myanmar, that was easily accessible, and they could buy *yaba* from Myanmar and sell at high price. *Yaba* can also be made in Bangladesh. It also comes from India. But every drug addict wants *yaba* from Myanmar, which is why it is highly profitable.

The Rohingya camps are used as an open source for drugs. Rohingya community leaders stated that many Rohingyas are involved in drug smuggling because they have nothing to do in the camps. They have no job and no future, so they do smuggling to become rich. Often Bangladeshi dealers visit the camps to take *yaba* there. The researcher found that many chairmen and members of Ukhia and Teknaf upazillas are directly or indirectly, involved in *Yaba* distribution. Interviews with the local stakeholders and school and college teachers revealed that many youths act as carrier, buyer or seller of the drug. They consider it an easy way to become rich. The consequences of drug smuggling have become worse, as many killings have been reported, particularly of drug smugglers and carriers, because of their internal conflicts. The government of Bangladesh is struggling to prevent entry of *yaba* pills from Myanmar.

Conflicts over Local Livelihoods and the Breakdown of Social Integration

Hosting refuges not only increases local crime, violence, drug smuggling and human trafficking but also causes conflict between the host societies and refuges on to controlling the local resources and livelihoods.[44][45] During interviews with Rohingyas, local Bangladeshis and stakeholders, it was noted that most local laborer jobs are controlled by the Rohingyas. Local Bangladeshis reported that they do not get a job because the Rohingyas are willing to take that job at a very low wage; for example, one local Bangladeshi can earn Taka 300 (US$3.66) daily as a laborer, whereas a Rohingya will do the same job for Taka 50 or Taka 100 (US$0.61 to 1.22). This situation causes huge concern and anger among local Bangladeshis, who criticize the Rohingyas for overtaking their jobs, which forces them to travel to other districts for job. Local Bangladeshis who were interviewed stated that, they have now become internal migrants working in other districts. Now that they work in another district, they are always worried about their family back home. Already, many Rohingyas are engaged in crime and social violence.

The Rohingyas who were interviewed said that they were able to find job as Bangladeshi employers came looking for day laborers in this location. They could know the location of the market place from the local people. Several of the Rohingya interviewees stated that they had heard about work prospect through friends, neighbors and contacts established through mobile phone. When interviewed in Ukhia and Teknaf, the brickfield and salt pan operators stated that, during the peak season, when they need additional workers, their contractors collect Rohingya laborers. The local community leaders stated that a group of intermediaries had emerged locally who helped to link the the contractors to local laborers, particularly Rohingya laborers, and relatively low wage of Rohingya laborers make them attractive to these intermediaries. The female Rohingyas who were interviewed in Chakaria and Ukhia stated that, having been abandoned by their husbands or widowed, they had no option but to look for job. They further stated that their friends and neighbors, both Rohingyas and Bangladeshis, helped them to find employment. A few female Rohingyas stated that they had secured work through intermediaries.

Rohingyas, despite their superior deep-sea fishing skills compared to their Bangladeshi counterparts, stress that, in most cases, the operators of the fishing

---

44   K. Jacobsen, *ibid*, 2002, p.96.

45   B. E. Whitaker, *Changing Opportunities: Refugees and Host Communities in Western Tanzania*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1999, P.99.

trawlers pay them less. The local NGO personnel and community leaders stated that one of the major incentives for the trawler operators to engage Rohingyas is that the latter could be paid far less than their Bangladeshi counterparts. They added that, in some instances, the operators cheat the Rohingyas withholding payments. Lack of status of any kind makes the Rohingyas vulnerable to this form of low wages and cheating. Because of this situation, social violence often erupts between the Rohingyas and the Bangladeshi trawler operators.

Rohingyas are used by people with influence to grab community/government land along the expensive coastal area and also in the hill and forest areas. These influential people use Rohingyas as muscle power in their target locations and also allow them to settle there in exchange for protection. The recent growth in tourism in the area has led to an exponential growth in the price of land along the beaches that has led to a situation where local land grabbers have become active in occupying public land.

The researcher also found that the Rohingyas are exploited by people with local influence during the local and national elections. In the planning for the National Identity Card scheme, a high-level decision was taken to exclude individuals who were believed to be of Rohingya origin. This led to the disenfranchisement of thousands of Rohingyas, many of whom had been living in the locality for generations.[46] The local Bangladeshi political leaders exploit this situation by promising them a Bangladeshi national ID card in return for their support.

The Rohingyas' presence also creates social problems through marriages. When the researcher asked male Rohingya respondents who were married to Bangladeshi women about the rationale for such a marriage, they explained that they wanted to settle in Bangladesh. For this group of male Rohingyas, marrying a Bangladeshi woman was a coping strategy. A high-level official, who worked in the local NGO in Cox's Bazar, observed that the reason why Bangladeshi families choose a Rohingya husband for their daughters was that most of these families were very poor. They could not afford the dowry demanded by the families of well off Bengali husbands, and thus had to settle for marrying their daughters off to Rohingyas. The NGO official further noted that the rate of separation, abandonment and divorce was very high among many Bangladeshi women who marry Rohingyas, which created another social problem.

---

46   See also C. R. Abrar and M. J.U. Sikder, 2014, *ibid*.

Discussion

The international literature on the impact of refugees on the host societies presents mixed results that reflect both the positive and negative impacts. The World Refugee Council states that refugees should not be considered a burden or as posing a security risk to the host societies but, rather, the host countries and aid agencies should develop and implement policies and programmes that can foster mutually beneficial situations for refugees and their host communities.[47]A study based in Kakuma, north-west Kenya, where many refugees from South Sudan sought shelter, found that, when the refugees' presence exceeds the population of the local host, this had both positive and negative impacts. The socio-economic impacts were positive, such as the new livelihood opportunities in the camp, and the fact that the international organisations' presence improves the social services, such as health and education, also contributes to the development of the host communities. The negative impacts experienced by the hosts were mostly linked to their relationships with the refugees that create more insecurity and conflicts in the host community.[48]

Another study on Rwanda, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo in Tanzania found that refugees bring both costs and benefits to their host countries by providing cheap labour to local producers and expanding the consumers' markets for local goods. Therefore, the host should develop ways to cope with the negative impacts of the refugees' presence and also attempt to take full advantage of the positive opportunities.[49] Mystadt (2012: vi) argues that large refugee inflows from Burundi and Rwanda have improved the welfare of the host population, which was previously poor and now enjoys greater labour productivity and income diversification due to the refugees' presence.[50]A study in Ghana has also found that refugees have positive implications for their host communities with regard to business ventures and farming activities. Therefore, in the beginning, refugees' presence can be a social and economic burden but, in the long run, people who work, produce

---

47   S.D. Miller, "*Assessing the Impacts of Hosting Refugees*", World Refugee Council Research Paper No 4, Waterloo: Center for International Governance Innovation, 2018, p. 7.

48   K. A. Grindheim, *Exploring the Impacts of Refugee Camps on Host Communities: A Case Study of Kakuma Host Community in Kenya*, Kristiansand S: Department of Development Studies, Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences, University of Agder, 2013, p.3.

49   B. E. Whitaker, *ibid*, 1999, p.2.

50   J-F. Maystadt, *Poverty Reduction in a Refugee-Hosting Economy A Natural Experiment*", Discussion Paper 01132, Washington, D.C.: International Food Policy Research Institute, 2012, p. vi.

and consume become assets to an area.[51]

Nevertheless, the World Bank argues that the long term economic, social, political and environmental impacts of refugees depends on several factors, including the political economy of the host countries, the urban-rural interaction and the nature of the host-refugee relationship.[52] Chambers (1986:245) distinguished different categories of impact on the host societies, particularly in areas that are poorer are so more vulnerable and more likely to be harmed by refugee competition, as refugees' presence can increase local prices, cause wage competition and spark competition for natural resources. On the other hand, better-off families in the host societies benefit more as their businesses thrive due to the presence of refugees, so poorer hosts are the losers and better-off hosts the winners.[53] Much of the research on refugees' presence in the host societies has considered the 'risk of expanding terrorism'[54], 'health challenges'[55] and 'threats to the state boundaries, political institutions and governing regimes'.[56]

Indeed, this paper has highlighted how the Rohingyas' presence in the Cox's Bazar district creates socio-economic problems and long term security threats in the host communities. First, irregular migration through the Bay of Bengal will accelerate further because of the Rohingya and Bangladeshi criminal networks and that will again affect the image of the states. The 2018 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report by the United States Department of State states that Bangladesh's position was Tier-2 watch list, which indicates a country whose government does not fully comply with the Trafficking Victims Protection Act's (TVPA) minimum standards.[57] If the Bangladeshi government is unable

51   M.M. Kandoh, *Forced Migration: Socio-economic Implication for Host Communities in Southern and Northern Ghana*, MA Thesis, Oslo: Faculty of Social Science, Oslo University College, 2012, p. 51.

52   World Bank. "*The Impacts of Refugees on Neighbouring Countries: A Development Challenge*", Background Note, World Bank Report 2011, Washington, D.C.:The World Bank, 2010, p. 7.

53   R. Chambers, "Hidden Losers? The Impact of Rural Refugees and Refugees Programs on Poorer Hosts", *International Migration Review*, Vol. 20, No. 2, 1986, p. 245.

54   H. Gray, A.K. Frank, "Refugees as/at Risk: The Gendered and Racialized Underpinnings of Securitization in British Media Narratives", *Security Dialogue*, 2019, p. 9.

55   O. Keidar, D. S. Srivastava, E. Pkoulis, A.K. Exadaktylos, "Health of Refugees and Migrants-Where do We Stands and What Director Should We take?", *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 2019,p.2.

56   J. Milner, *Sharing the Security Burden: Towards the Convergence of Refugee Protection and State Security*, Oxford: Refugee Studies Centre, University of Oxford, 2000, p. 12.

57   bdnews24.com, "Bangladesh Unchanged in US Human Trafficking Report after Last Year's Downgrade" *bdnews24.com*, Dhaka, 29 June 2018, available at: https://bdnews24.com/bangladesh/2018/06/29/bangladesh-unchanged-in-us-human-trafficking-report-after-last-years-

to monitor the irregular migration through the Bay of Bengal, then Bangladesh may be demoted to Tier 3,which means that the US will impose sanctions against Bangladesh, limiting it access to American and international foreign assistance. Since Bangladesh has a huge demand to produce ready-made garments for the US market, this would have serious negative consequences. In addition, the Rohingyas' involvement in cross-border drug smuggling has already triggered a volatile situation that poses a long term security threat in Bangladesh.

The in-depth interviews with different stakeholders revealed that a small group of local people are benefitting from the Rohingyas' presence by supplying different products to those in the refugee camps in Cox's Bazar, such as bamboo, food items and household materials. A syndicate with a political identity controls this local business. It is true that the price of local goods has risen, that also badly affected the local Bangladeshis who, in many cases, are unable to buy the food they need. At the same time, products like areca palm and bamboo are in huge demand, so they could profit from selling these but are unable to do so because the local syndicate controls the market and their products as well. The study also found that local Bangladeshis' agricultural land and forests are also occupied by Rohingyas, which also worsened their position. Although local Bangladeshis receive aid, like rice, from international organisations and the government, that is insufficient to meet their demands. Their children fear going to school in case they are abducted and trafficked. In addition, marriages between Rohingyas and local Bangladeshis have negative consequences as well. Since Cox's Bazar is one of the poorest areas in Bangladesh, the Rohingyas' presence there has made the local Bangladeshis' life more vulnerable in all aspects.

Conclusion

This paper did not set out to capture the complex tapestry of issues associated with the impact of refugees on their host societies. Instead, it set out to present a more limited perspective of the complex relationship between refugees and their host societies by drawing on the testimonies of 35 Rohingyas and 28 local Bangladeshis in two refugees' camps at Teknaf and Ukhia upazilas in Cox's Bazar district. Notwithstanding these limitations, the Rohingyas, local Bangladeshis and stakeholders drew attention to the fact that the Rohingyas' presence will accelerate irregular migration and human trafficking, increase

downgrade, accessed on 28 April 2019.

cross-border drug smuggling (that has already spread all over Bangladesh), and cause social conflict and violence between the refugees and the home communities. The interviews with the local government stakeholders and members of civil societies illustrates that the Rohingyas' presence threatens the non-traditional security of the state, which in turn affects the societal security of the host communities.

This paper, although it highlights the risk to NTS and societal security in Bangladesh because of the presence of Rohingyas, also suggests that this issue might be solved by implementing an inclusive cross-border control and refugees' management framework to remove future security threats. Already, Bangladesh government has introduced a programme for resettling the Rohingyas in the *Bashan Char* of Noakhali for better refugee management. However, long term sustainable policies should be actively implemented by the government functionaries, national security forces and civil society organisations with the aim of successfully returning refugees to their home country and, at the same time, protecting Bangladesh's own national security.

Acknowledgments

The Gendered Face of Terrorism in Bangladesh- Part I:
What Drives Women Into Extremism

Marjuka Binte Afzal[1]

Abstract

Among the most impactful and trans-border crimes and violence, terrorism falls under our radar the most, perhaps for the way it successfully propagates fear more than any other organised crimes and the way its effects are spread throughout social classes, religions, races and yes, gender. Researchers have argued that terrorism and violent extremism are highly gendered activities. The aspects of terrorism is more gendered than it is actualised in the field of counter-terrorism. Knowing how the complexities of gender could exacerbate inequality and affect basic human rights could play a significant role in directing responses to these challenges. Recognising how, for example, the status of women and men is key to tailoring effective prevention measures in their reasons to join terrorist groups, as well as their positions in and the recruiting patterns of these groups. Yet few studies have examined the relationship between gender and violent extremism and terrorism, and even less has been done regarding studying counter-terrorism and counter-narratives set in the gendered lens. This of course does not include the extensive debate on gender in studies relating to conflict, particularly on the interrelations between the status of women, gender equality and violent conflict. Terrorism and violent extremism need to be seen through a gendered lens now more than ever, especially

---

1   Marjuka Binte Afzal is a student pursuing her Masters degree from the department of Peace and Conflict Studies in the University of Dhaka. She has done an internship in Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BIISS) last year and is currently in another internship programme at the Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies (BIPSS), where she writes and publishes contents and papers on a regular basis and does analytical and research work. Ms Afzal's field of interest is in Intelligence, Security and Strategic Studies, Diplomacy and Foreign Policy, Game Theory and more.

concerning religious extremism, which is on the rise. It is quickly becoming more evident that women's role in terrorism is no longer as a victim of extremism, or a medium of perpetuating fear and ideological constructs, as women are voluntarily choosing a path of 'jihadi' militancy, a concern that can only be combated with disciplines that are more catering to all genders as well as counter-terrorism measures that are gender-inclusive as well.

1. Introduction: Women in the Men's World of Terror

"*I am a terrorist*"- These are the four words that made Vera Ivanovna Zasulich, a revolutionary tried for the attempted assassination of Governor Fyodor F. Trepov in St. Petersburg in Russia back in 1878, a glorious flagbearer of terrorism. Zasulich, the very first person to be tried in the court of law for terrorism[2], was not only a woman and an anarchist, but also was a founding member of the first Russian Marxist organisation, the Liberation of Labour, and corresponded with Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels on a regular basis[3]. She became not just a symbol of the inception of terrorism but sparked "the age of assassination"[4]. Zasulich was found not guilty and later on carried away by a cheering crowd, only to leave behind a blazing trail of many other prominent and significant female anarchists to be tried for terror-related plots. This is to say that, Zasulich and many of the ladies following her footsteps, had started what can be known as women's involvement in political, socio-economic and human rights movements and revolutions, that have shaped and dictated the modern world shrouded in global politics that we live in today.

Women's involvement in political violence is not a recent phenomenon. History is saturated with examples of women and terrorism. Women were among the first to join terrorist movements and, Vera Zasulich's story speaks volumes about the "humble" beginnings of terrorism. Women's involvement in social movement and activism is a tale as old as time. But their involvement in religious extremism is rather a modern story of transformation and reformation. Religious movements and revolts generally did not involve the active participation of women.

Terrorism is an issue that goes transnational after gaining mobilisation and momentum. The reason why terrorism tends to affect an enormous number

2   Siljak, A. (2013). *Angel of vengeance*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

3   Encyclopedia Britannica. (2019). Vera Ivanovna Zasulich | Russian revolutionary. [online] Available at: https://www.britannica.com/biography/Vera-Ivanovna-Zasulich [Accessed 27 Dec. 2019].

4   Siljak, A. (2008). *Angel of Vengeance: The "Girl Assassin," The Governor of St. Petersburg, and Russia's Revolutionary World*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

of nation-states and thereby affect millions of lives is that unlike most other global issues that plague the world on a daily basis, terrorism rises based on an ideology. Ideologies transcend borders. Terrorism thrives on an ideology; political, social, or otherwise; that brings about like-minded people to acutely think on solely that specific ideology and perform no other acts other than those that benefit it. The main target of terrorism is to create change and bring reform. The same is done harmlessly and non-violently through demonstrations and public gatherings, in countless activism and radicalism. But terrorism, through illegal and violent means, tries to gain an edge over the government, to achieve their goals. The lives affected, whether they are targeted civilians or innocent bystanders, are the means of creating chaos and striking fear, to establish influence, ability, and power to promote violence unless their demands are met. Terrorism is harming innocents to bring the state administration into submission.

There is a varying opinion regarding the participation of women in the so-called Jihad or act of terrorism. Additional Deputy Commissioner Mahfuza Liza[5] spoke of these clashing opinions of women's participation in "Jihad" saying, "Al-Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri, rejected the idea of participation of women as he believed that women may offer temptation to male jihadists, they lack physical strength required for jihad, they are weak in decision making. The traditional jihadists view limited the activities of women in certain trades such as nursing, teaching, and providing moral support." On the contrary, Salafi jihadist ideology has been shifted toward the acceptance of women's participation. The new ideologies are now mentioning female participation in their recent literature, for example - Nusaybah bint Ka'ab has participated in the battle of Uhud[6]. ISIS has emphasised on joining of women in the organisation to play a diverse role in state-building. The mobilising argument used by the group is mainly the Islamic instructions to follow the path of jihad especially to fulfill women's responsibility to their husbands and families.

The position of a female in ISIS differs from that in Al-Qaeda. Hundreds of women have joined ISIS and different international reports estimate their members at 1000, mostly foreigners. The all-women Al-Khansa Brigade has become one of the fiercest ISIS units[7]. The brigade performs patrolling duty

---

5   Liza, M. (2019). Key Informant Interview 5 [In person]. CTTC DMP, Ramna, Dhaka.

6   Islamswomen.com. 2019. Islams Women - Umm 'Umarah - Nusaybah Bint Ka'b. [online] Available at: <https://www.islamswomen.com/articles/umm_umarah.php> [Accessed 26 December 2019].

7   Liza, M. (2019). Key Informant Interview 5 [In person]. CTTC DMP, Ramna, Dhaka.

in the city of Raqqa and also collects intelligence which acts as a symbol of women empowerment. ISIS has succeeded to attract more women than al-Qaeda because it promises them the establishment of stability and the virtuous city. Al-Qaeda on the other hand did not focus on the idea of the establishment of the state. However, Al-Qaeda now tends to employ more female suicide bombers due to some tactical advantages.

Bangladesh has a protracted record of terrorism and violent extremism. Its involvements in political and social reforms as well as terror acts have roots that go back beyond its independence. The Faraizi movement in 1819 by Haji Shariatullah,Titumir and his Rebellions in 1831, Indigo Revolt of the Bengal in 1859, Khilafat Movement of the Muslims of 1919, Non-cooperation Movement of Mahatma Gandhi in 1920, and many more in that list, were revolts and armed movements. Some were peaceful demonstrations against the British during the colonial period. But each, at one point or the other, were called acts of terrorism, their pioneers marked as enemies of state and terrorists. And this went on during the emergence of Bangladesh as well. Political and social movements, other than those that fuelled the conscience of independence, have also marked the country, some horrifyingly even. But religious terrorism took rise in the last few decades.During 2013-14, the country has witnessed a re-emergence of terrorism and violent extremism although different in many respects – targets, *modus operendi*, objectives etc. Government and the law enforcing agencies (LEA) have undertaken various measures both offensive and defensive in countering terrorism and violent extremism in the post-2016 period. The LEA have been successful in curbing terrorism in Bangladesh as there has not been any major terrorist incident since 2016 in the country.

However, it would be wrong to say that terrorism has completely been eradicated from the society. Bangladesh is now going through a phase that can be said semi-active, because there hasn't been a major terror attack since the attack in Holey Artisan. But given the fact that the terrorist groups are not completely eliminated and they are quite active and alive, although their capabilities to carry out significant terrorist attacks have been curtailed, reasons being how often the police are seen raiding places, catching terrorists and getting large caches of arms and ammunitions, indicates that they are deeply active and their network is strong. In an interview, Major General Muniruzzaman[8], the President of Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies (BIPSS), a research institute, has said, "Terrorism cannot be crushed by kinetic action, they can be temporary controlled but cannot be eliminated." The

---

8   Muniruzzaman (2019). Expert Interview 4 [In person]. DOHS Baridhara, Dhaka.

Elimination of terrorist threats takes a different set of skills, a skill Bangladesh currently has not approached at the moment.

In this part of the paper, we will address half of the discussion of our subject of interest, women in terrorism in Bangladesh. In order to answer our first concern, the Drivers of Female Extremism, we have to understand, that drivers of extremism are not a singular, linear concern. Drivers of extremism are strongly latched on to the processes of radicalisation as well as the purpose of involving women into extremism. They are correlated, interconnected and need to be discussed together one after the other. In order to understand what drives women into extremism in Bangladesh, we need to first know how they are religiously radicalised, their drivers, as well as their roles, the reasons to why they are driven into extremism and their choice to do so.

The next part of the paper, "The Gendered Face of Terrorism in Bangladesh- Part II: The Changing Roles of Women in Extremism" will deal with not just the roles of women in extremism and question why they are changing but will also have and analyse by comparing it with that of men, to draw an answer to our question.

2. Women in Islamist Terrorism: The New Trend in Bangladesh

The advent of women being taken into the basic "traditional" roles in different terror groups began when Jamatul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), Ansarullah Bangla Team, Ansar-Al-Islam (AAI), Neo-JMB, etc. began to recruit women or female family members of their militants to pose as family members to elude neighbours and LEAs and provide services as house helps and rearing children in their ideologies. When members of the terrorist cells got apprehended and questioned, it was found that the women are married off within the family and groups of the terrorists, in what can be known as a "System of Marriage"[9]. The recruitment happened within these groups through marriage, where the sister of one terrorist marries his friend, who is also a terrorist, consequentially, a remarriage to another terrorist within the cell being eminent posthumously if the terrorist friend dies. The recruitment takes place through radicalisation. Previously, a common means of radicalisation was through coercion, may it be through fear or sympathy toward the cause, by a dominant male member. All this was done and is still done by using misinterpreted religious dictions. However, as Maj Gen Md Abdur Rashid, an eminent scholar and the Executive Director, Institute of Conflict, Law and Development Studies (ICLDS) said, "They are not made religious, but radicalised by the idea of religion, in the

---

9   Rashid, M. (2019). Expert Interview 1 [In person]. Mirpur DOHS.

name of religion.". On the other hand, JMB, being a bit reluctant regarding direct participation of women, have employed women as facilitator for recruiting, disseminating propaganda i.e mainly activities of 'dawah', mentioned Mahfuza Liza in her interview.

The major violent groups active in Bangladesh include HuJI-B, Ansar-Al-Islam (AAI), Jamaat-ul-Mujahidin Bangladesh (JMB) and Neo-JMB. With regard to participation of women HuJI-B and AAI are quite strict and follow the policy that women cannot participate in extremist activities such as jihad. JMB encouraged marriage among family members of its different ranks for increasing solidarity among the group. This strategy helped them to add extra layer of security to avoid infiltration. This family and marriage connection is also considered as pre-requisite for rank upgradation.

Comparing to other groups a more 'inclusive' policy is followed by Neo-JMB which has created a specialised 'sister wing' within the organisation. Women are employed to perform various crucial assignments including financing, recruiting, working as combatant and doing different administrative tasks.

A development happened after the Holey Artisan attack in 2016, as we got to witness the influence of Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) over the population of Bangladesh. A new kind of radicalisation took place, new trends began to emerge, as now terror organisations began to recruit from well-known private college and universities, targeting students who belonged to middle to upper middle-class families. What was once a trademark of terrorists, that recruitments were done from madrasas, was no longer valid. And with that began the surfacing of women recruited as not just house helps, for posing as family members and to be married off to the militants, but as informants, recruiters, carriers as well as foot soldiers and suicide bombers. That is because, the female population of the country is about 50%. So, major threatening actions and terror activity cannot happen without the active participation of half the population of the country. So, either women are directly involved, or they are indirectly involved, but they have a definite role to play. More actively at least, since ISIS, due to whom we have seen an increased role of female radicalisation and female terrorist activities in the field. Talking about this rise of female extremism, Lt Col Mahabub[10] of RAB Intelligence Unit said, "In 2016, a women's cell was caught consisting entirely of 15-16 girls in North Bengal."

In the case of the Bangladeshi British women, or diaspora in general, we see an astounding influx of women turning into extremists. One of the highest

---

10 Mahabub (2019). Key Informant Interview 3 [In person]. RAB Intelligence Unit, Dhaka.

numbers of diaspora who travel from UK to Syria were of Bangladeshi origin of all ages[11]. The case of the Momena Soma, who was 26 at the time when she stabbed her host, an Australian white male in Victoria State, Australia[12], is just an example of how religious radicalism has seeped into the mindsets of women. So, we see that Bangladeshi women have got a direct link to active stage of terrorism, either in the country or as members of Diaspora who travel to Syria. And they are extremely vulnerable.

3. Women in Terrorism: South Asian Perspective

Women's participation in political extremism is quite a strong phenomenon in South Asia. The women fighters in LTTE are among the fiercest fighters of South Asia. "They are the pioneer of using women in terror outfit. They have 25-30% girls fighting for them in their troops," commented Brigadier General Sheikh Md Sarwar Hossain[13], the Director CTIB DGFI, saying that considering the situation in Indonesia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and even India, Bangladesh seems to be more subtle at women's participation. Compared to them we are doing quite well, at least at keeping the attacks at bay and controlling the rise of this militant again.

Rajiv Gandhi's assassination was by a woman, which worked as a pioneer of suicide bombing as well. But in case of religious terrorism, there is very rare participation in India, very rare in Pakistan, being a conservative country and in Afghanistan, there are some, yet it is very rare. AQ does not recruit much of the women. Bangladesh is a new phenomenon, particularly Neo-JMB, that follows the ideology of IS.

4. Case Studies

In this portion of our study, the case studies will be presented. In order to analyse and talk about our gathered data we will go through a few selected case studies of women, who participated directly and/or indirectly in different terrorist organisations. We will see how these women were radicalised and brought into the cells to play sedentary or active roles, how their roles developed as they became extremists and how they transformed into threatening female terrorists before being apprehended by LEA. These case

---

11 Muniruzzaman (2019). Expert Interview 4 [In person]. DOHS Baridhara, Dhaka.

12 BenarNews. (2019). Australian Court Sentences Bangladeshi Woman for IS-inspired Attack. [online] Available at: https://www.benarnews.org/english/news/bengali/attack-sentence-06052019165527.html [Accessed 27 Dec. 2019].

13 Hossain, M. S. (2019). Key Informant Interview 2 [In person]. CTIB DGFI, Dhaka Cantonment.

studies have been collected from the law enforcement agencies like CTTC of Dhaka Metropolitan Police and National Security Intelligence (NSI).

4.(a) Nusrat Jahan Ripi, an Islamic State (IS) Activist

Nusrat Jahan Ripi is a self-motivated jihadist woman and was determined to go to either Syria or Afghanistan for Jihad. She had a strong connection with IS members at home and abroad.

Nusrat is a university graduate. When she was a student of Jahangirnagar University (JU), she started studying Islam minutely online. As she was a student of Computer Science, she was efficient in computer operation and working online. Soon she managed some religious friends in social network like Facebook, and one of her friends there, Golam Sorwer Rubel, a teacher of Electrical and Electronics Engineering (EEE) of Islamic University of Technology (IUT), Gazipur, influenced her significantly to come to the path of religion. Rubel also played as a media of her first marriage with Ashikur Rahman Solaiman in 2008. Before marriage, Sulaiman, an American International University Bangladesh (AIUB) graduate who was working for Grameen Phone, Bangladesh, informed Nusrat that he was interested to do Jihad, after which Nusrat showed her interest for Jihad, informing that she wanted to go to Afghanistan with Solaiman. Sulaiman promised her that he would take her later, after which, despite getting married and wanting to go to Afghanistan several times, Suleman didn't respond to her.

Now married, Nusrat and Solaiman would attend different halaqa programmes at Banani, Gulshan and other prominent locations of the capital and attend Eid Jamaat at Samorai Convention at Kalabagan, Dhaka. She took Arabic language classes conducted by Darul Ihsan University to enrich her knowledge on religion. She was then introduced with many like her, like Nushrat Jahan Eshita, an IS activist and sister of an IS fighter Rifat Hasan Khan, who had died in Syria in 2015, Aysha Nissu, wife of an AQ fighter Maimun Hasib Munaj, who went to Afghanistan for Jihad and died there in 2015, Samia, wife of an IS supporter, Sakib bin Kamal, who was arrested and now out on bail along with many of her classmates, Tanzia, Maria, Salma, Hosna, Sohana and Hafsa from the Arabic classes of Darul Ihsan University.

Nusrat would use Tor Browser to keep secret communication with her husband Solaiman after he went to Afghanistan for Jihad on 24 March 2013, who told her to keep links with his IS friends. After his death, Nusrat got involved in IS networking at home and abroad. She had a strong connection with ISIL leader Taj Uddin, another AIUB graduate with dual citizenship of Australia.

Taj Uddin inspired her to join ISIL, later proposing marriage to her. With the condition of going to Syria first, Nusrat accepted the proposal. On May 2015, Nushrat Jahan Eshita and Nusrat decided to go to Syria together. But on October 2015, Nushrat got arrested for her involvement with IS and later got released on bail in 2016. In prison, she got introduced with AQ activist, Reza Ul Kabir, with whom she got married after getting released and began living with him as his second wife in Agargaon, Dhaka. She was appointed the director of iNFOLDER soft, a software-based company owned by Kabir. Nusrat, a mother of a daughter Nusaiba from her first marriage, now lives in the country on bail[14].

4.(b) Abedat-ul-Fatema, wife of Neo-JMB leader Tanveer Kaderi

Graduate from University of Dhaka and working at 'Save the Children', Abedat-ul-Fatema was a mother of three sons. Well educated and capable of earning a living, she was not economically dependent on her husband and was willing to continue her job. Her husband, Tanveer Kaderi, leader of the Neo-JMB, tried to convince her for Hizrat on the way of Allah. But when she denied, he threatened to leave her and her children behind and decided to go on without her. Out of fear of social stigma and wondering what other people will say, and confused on how she would live her life with her children alone, she agreed to go with her husband. Promising to let her get a job at the local kid's school, she finally agreed to join her husband in following the path of jihad and took *Baiyat* (oath). She was arrested in an operation at Azimpur, Dhaka by the CTTC of DMP.

4.(c) Momena Soma and Asmaul Husna – Sisters who got self-radicalised through online propaganda of ISIS and Al-Qaeda

Momena Soma (24), an exchange student to Australia, got self-radicalised through online propaganda of ISIS and Al-Qaeda. Momena had a history of friendship with Rohan and Nibras (terrorists who attacked Holey Artisan Restaurant). She previously tried to go to Turkey but couldn't avail visa. Soma had first moved in with a different Australian family under a program for foreign students, and immediately began planning to attack her hosts. She purchased night vision goggles and rehearsed the act by repeatedly stabbing a mattress. The family discovered the damage and immediately asked the program organisers to remove her from their home.

---

14 Collected from an Interview, CTW NSI (2019).

Roger Singaravelu, her host, was attacked in February 10, 2018, in the neck with a kitchen knife eight days after Momena arrived in Victoria state from Bangladesh on a student visa in early 2018, according to media reports from Australia. Momena stabbed Singaravelu while he was asleep in his home.

Days later, police in Bangladesh arrested her younger sister after she tried to stab an officer who sought information about Soma. Asmaul Husna alias Sumona (22), stabbed Assistant Commissioner Tohidul Islam while officers were at her apartment, shouting "Allahu akbar" – which in Arabic means "God is great". In Dhaka, a source said that Shoma and her sister were members of a faction of the banned extremist group Jamaat-ul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB). When interrogated, she informed that Momena, her sister, directed her in Dhaka to attack the police officer who visited her house for collecting information.

4.(d) Khadiza and Mou -Radicalised through peer group and online propaganda of ISIS and Al-Qaeda.

Two female terrorists, Ishrat Jahan/Moushumi/Maria/Mou (24) and Khadiza Akhter/Meghla (25) were arrested in Madhobdi Thana area after they surrendered to the Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime Unit (CTTC) after a raid there. Both the women were previously apprehended along with 5 other women by RAB in 2016 as suspected terrorists and after serving a sentence of 7-8 months in jail and getting bail, the women returned to terrorism refusing to return to their families. Mou was a student of Mirpur Ideal High School (SSC, 2010) and BCIC College (HSC, 2012) and continued studying Pharmacy in Manarat International University. But for several reasons, she failed to continue her studies and got into terrorism. Mou led a lonely and friendless childhood and had extensive knowledge on Quran and Hadith. Khadiza on the other hand stayed on the 4th floor of a building in Janata Housing with her family and got married through family to a youth named Rokonuzzaman in 2013. Khadiza's family was looking for institutions where female can attend classes separately and wanted a husband for her who is a Hafez in Quran to secure jannah. She influenced her sister to wear hijab. Mou also lived in the Janata Housing at one point. They both had a strong friendship with Aklima (dead in operation Gordian Knot). Aklima indoctrinated them resolutely in prison. The trio got released and disappeared and later they were arrested again by RAB in 2018.

The case studies above and a table of more at the appendix, show a spectrum of drivers of extremism in women in Bangladesh, along with several examples of

the processes by which they get radicalised. The reasons behind their choices, or their lack of, are evident, and hence, based on these case studies, we can move on to our discussions further.

5. How are Women in Bangladesh Radicalised?

The process of radicalisation, when we talk about religious extremism is gendered in the deeper ends. Often gender neutral, some of the processes, like self-radicalisation, where the targeted person, through being exposed to different online contents and misinterpreted Islamic narratives via social media, get indoctrinated and begin seeking methods of joining a terrorist group. Online indoctrination is same for women and men, particularly the way they are being received by the recruiters sitting at the other end of the screen. Women tend to be enticed, offered a life of religious journeys, adventure and love. Men are promised the same. Peer pressure can be equally effective. But men do not tend to get radicalised by members of the family, women do, as we can see in a large number of cases, we will discuss further on. In a collection of data from the Counter Terrorism Intelligence Bureau (CTIB) of National Security Intelligence (NSI) during an interview with their Director, Brigadier General Moinuddin, that contained an array of case studies on women who were apprehended for direct and indirect participation in extremism and terrorism in Bangladesh. A good amount of information indicate the radicalisation processes these women were subjected to. Out of 25 of these women, four were radicalised by the influences of their family members, some of whom, and in total 11, were influenced by religious and ideological commitments, or were self-radicalised[15]. Women like Rezwana Rokon Nadia, Rubeya Tumpa, Sabina Yeasmin, and Khadiza Akhter, are all influenced by members of their family into radicalism. Two of these women are in Syria, another travelled to Khorasan and gone missing, and the last one is out of prison on bail in the country.

It is found through several cases that, when interrogated, the apprehended talk about a process of "talent-spotted"[16], where the recruiters look for "qualities". It is easy to radicalise in the name of religion if the targeted person has less idea about the religion. The person who has less idea of the religion cannot contest their radicalised teachings and they cannot claim that whatever the recruiters are teaching them and whatever propaganda they are spilling isn't in the hadith or Quran. To develop a religious consciousness, they target these people who don't have a strong sense of religious consciousness. They also targeted people who are independent, and free and have no social callings to

15 Collected from an Interview, CTW NSI (2019).
16 Rashid, M. (2019). Expert Interview 1 [In person]. Mirpur DOHS.

respond to, particularly those who are lost in life and need a guidance.

When we go through the data gathered, we find four major process of radicalisation of women. These processes are:

5.(a) Coercion and Commitment

Women who are radicalised in this process tend to get coerced into radicalisation by a dominant male member of the family, particularly by the husband or the father, and in some cases, the brother. These women are often marginalised, committed to their family, or are economically dependent. Women in this category belong to a lower middle to middle class background, but there are exceptions. These exceptions began to surface particularly when female members of Neo-JMB began to get apprehended. Abedat-ul-Fatema, who is the wife of Neo-JMB leader Tanveer Kaderi[17], is a graduate from University of Dhaka. She worked at 'Save the Children' and was willing to continue her job, until her husband convinced her for hizrat. Fearing social stigma and how to live her life alone, she went on with his plans.

This coercion can be seen done in three ways; *coercion by a male member*, as seen in case of wife of Tanveer Kadri as well as wife of Major Zahid[18], by *commitment to the religion*, as seen in case of Ramita Rokon and Saima Akter Mukta, both
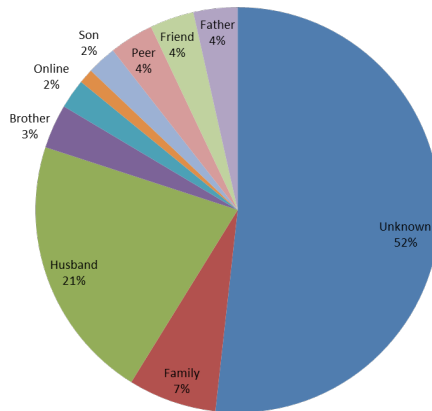
Figure 5. (a) Percentage of Coercion by Male Members and Peers among Female Radicals (Collected from an Interview, CTTC DMP, 2019)

---

17 The Independent. (2017). 10 'Neo-JMB militants' held in capital. [online] Available at: http://www.theindependentbd.com/printversion/details/75967 [Accessed 27 Dec. 2019]

18 The Independent. (2017). 10 'Neo-JMB militants' held in capital. [online] Available at: http://www.theindependentbd.com/printversion/details/75967 [Accessed 27 Dec. 2019]

Figure 4.6: Processes of Radicalisation (Source: Annotated by the Author).

of whom were radicalised by giving hope of *Jannah* in the afterlife and other religious commitment by their Neo-JMB brethrens, and by classmates and instructors/teacher's influence, as seen in case of Nusrat Jahan Ripi.

5. (b) Study Circles and Halaqa

In any religion, one of the social perks of being a member of a belief system is to come together in solidarity and discuss the words of the religion. Rel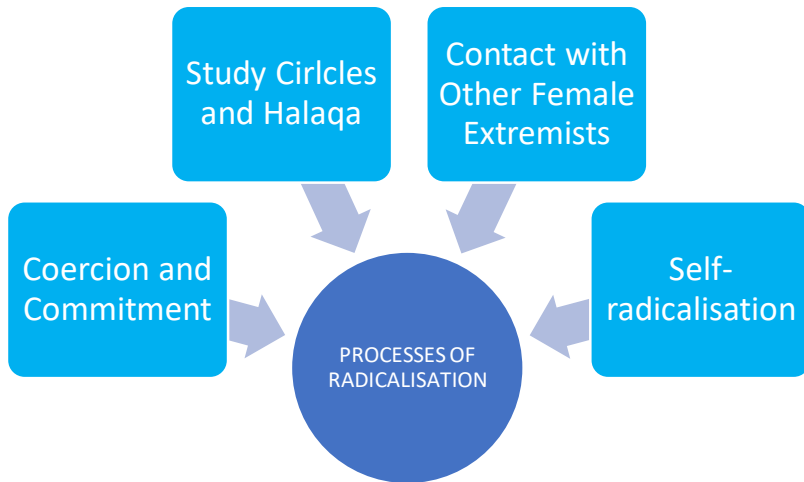igious congregations are the root-level gatherings of followers to come together and exchange the teachings of the religion and morals, establishing a network with each other, developing their own knowledge on the religion and entailing those lessons to future generations. However, more often than not these study circles and gatherings are where extremist motivators and recruiters go to talent-spot, that is, find the weaker links of social groups to target and isolate and indoctrinate. Particularly for Muslim women, who have separate study circles and halaqa on several occasions to get a sense of belonging, sisterhood, and a get means of social exchanges, this becomes a vulnerable area. There is nothing wrong with Halaqa and study circles; in fact, the sense of belonging in a social circle strengthens human ties, creating trust and support. But recruiters and even extremist leaders belonging to certain terror cells use these gatherings as platforms to spread their ideologies and spot out their next recruit[19].

---

19 Muniruzzaman (2019). Expert Interview 4 [In person]. DOHS Baridhara, Dhaka.

5. (c) Contact with Other Female Extremists

Often, women who are radicals get taken into custody and get sent into high security prisons like the one in Kashimpur. "Whenever we catch a radicalised person, or an extremist, or even an armed militant and terrorist, we send them all to the same place, to Kashimpur High security prison," said Brig Gen Sheikh Md Sarwar Hossain the Director CTIB DGFI said. "We need to send the radicalised people and even the extremist who haven't gone violent yet to radicalisation programs first,"[20] he said. The problem lies with the risk of exposure. When the radicalised women come in contact with female extremists who are imprisoned in the same prison, close quarters, similar beliefs and aspirations and further indoctrination can make those radicalised women, who were perhaps non-violent and played supportive roles in the terror cells, become hardened and turn to actual extremists with intentions to do harm. Such examples were seen in case of Khadiza and Mou in the case studies when they came into contact with Akhlima, a female extremist, in prison, and became hardened extremists that threatened LEA with explosives a year after they got released from prison[21].

5. (d) Self-radicalisation

Often, due to feeling identity crisis and feeling the need to belong somewhere, people often feel like going for a journey of self-discovery, and find a need to socialise and find companionship. This feeling of belonging, a sense of sisterhood and trying to find a deeper meaning of life through religion has often led people looking for more religious knowledge. Sadly, few internet researches can often entrap people, as recruiters of terrorist organisations lay traps of contents and online narratives that set people into believing the misinterpreted texts of religion. Online contents and social network narratives can lure women into self-radicalisation. This can be seen with Momena Soma's case as well as his sisters, and in case of Nusrat Jahan Ripi's case as well. Self-radicalisation is dangerously on the rise, especially for women of diaspora. Women in diaspora often get radicalised online and perform Hijrat, finding themselves in horrifying situations. Women tend to get thrown into sex slavery and into a seemingly endless loop of their system of marriage.

---

20 Hossain, M. S. (2019). Key Informant Interview 2 [In person]. CTIB DGFI, Dhaka Cantonment.

21 Kalerkantho. (2018). দুই নারী জঙ্গি মানারাত ভার্সিটির ছাত্রী!। কালেরকণ্ঠ. [online] Available at: https://www.kalerkantho.com/online/national/2018/10/18/693047 [Accessed 28 Dec. 2019].

Now that we have an idea on the process of radicalisation that is significantly used to radicalise women in Bangladesh, let us move on to the drivers of extremism of women.

6. What Drives Women into Radicalism?

Briefly exposed in our previous discussions, the drivers of female extremism are varied and more often than not intertwine and overlap each other. When we look at the overall drivers of extremism, we find the basic four criteria, Social Drivers, Economic Drivers, Religious Drivers and Psychological Drivers. Among them, we see many that are gender neutral that is valid for both men and women. But women are subjected to a lot of other drivers of extremism that come to them from social pressures, such as stigma, institutional oppression, history of domestic abuse. Economic factors play a role as well, like economic dependency, as well as psychological reasonings, like frustration, feeling of belongingness, and also religious reasons like lack of religious knowledge, hope of attaining Jannah, and many more.

6. (a) Social Drivers

The social drivers of extremism are deeply rooted to the basic structural violence we see every day. Structural violence such as discrimination towards women in patriarchal societies, domestic violence, neglect and ignorance of women, financial dependency and lack of education, etc. are some of the many which women face on a daily basis. Social drivers are difficult to annihilate, as evident in the recent development of Neo-JMB and ISIL recruitment of women, where the women come from a better social status still suffer from social drivers one way or the other. *Domestic violence and rape* can lead women to seek support and love from elsewhere. A promise of a better, safer life somewhere else, away from the institutional oppressions of daily life, becomes an attractive proposal. Again, *fear of losing their husbands* if they do not agree to take on their roles in the cause of the terrorist organisation. *Vulnerability* of women here is the key. And it soon becomes a rising concern that bleeds into *social stigma*. After all, social stigma made Tanveer Kaderi and Major Zahid's wives take on their roles in extremism.

Neglect and ignorance from discriminatory behaviour of family and friends, as well as society, place of work and education can be just as powerful as domestic violence to drive women into extremism. Death of a loved one, husband, father or brother in the war against the Taguti forces can drive women into extremism to seek *revenge*. It was seen in case of Nusrat Jahan Ripi after her

Figure 6.7: Nexus Tree of Drivers of Female Extremism (Source: Annotated by the Author).
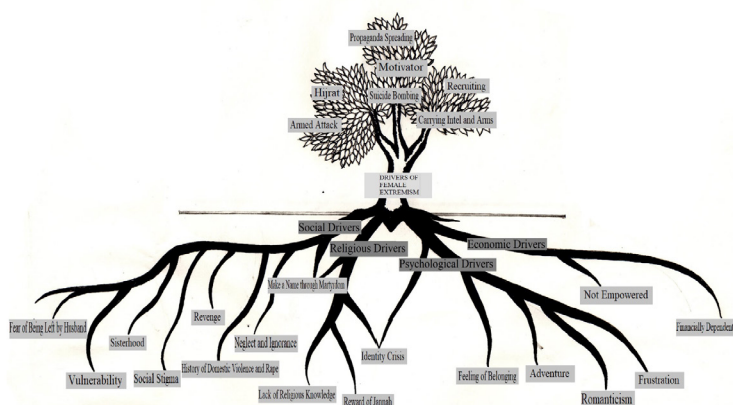
first husband died in Afghanistan, when she got hardened into extremism and began to tie stronger ties into ISIL. At the same time, wanting to connect to a conglomerate, by joining a sisterhood to feel like they belong and have a place somewhere makes a strong reason as well.

6. (b) Religious Drivers

Religious drivers are quite potent when it comes to drivers of extremism for weapon. *Lack of proper religious knowledge and education* can be deadly when it comes to women, as it is seen more often, women with lesser knowledge of religion get more subdued into radicalisation and latter extremism. "Misinterpreted idea on Jihad and Qital alone is strong enough to drive anyone into Islamist terrorism. That is where Jihad gets the name Terrorism," Maulana Husynul Banna[22], an assistant professor of the Department of Urdu and a renowned Islamic scholar, remarked in his interview, quoting the *ayaat* of Surah Ma'idah (5:32), "that whoever kills a soul unless for a soul or for corruption [done] in the land - it is as if he had slain mankind entirely. And whoever saves one - it is as if he had saved mankind entirely." *Making a name through martyrdom* and *achieving Jannah* as reward is another misconception. Maulana Husynul Banna added in this regard, "We can see that in the Holy

---

22 Banna, M. H. (2019).Expert Interview 7 [In person]. Department of Urdu, University of Dhaka, Shahbag, Dhaka.

Quran in Surah Nisa (4:93), "But whoever kills a believer intentionally - his recompense is Hell, wherein he will abide eternally.." see, any Mumin (Believer), as long as he or she has Iman, would eventually go to Heaven, but if he kills another believer unfairly, he will never get to be in heaven and would remain in Hell forever." *Identity crisis* is another factor that collided with the psychological drivers. Often, lack of feeling relatable and connected to a religion can pressure people into finding misinterpretations of Islamic teachings.

6. (c) Psychological Drivers

Identity crisis, as previously discussed, isn't just based on religious identities, but much more than that. Often diasporas, particularly first-generation movers to UK, Canada and USA etc find themselves in the middle of an identity crisis. "Women and men go abroad for education or other reasons…often go through an identity crisis. They feel as though they are neither Bengali not British," remarked Brig. General Md. Moin Khan[23]. Their cultural and religious identity as a Bengali Muslim clashes with their social identity as an immigrant trying to settle in a foreign land, where they try to belong with the Canadians, British or Americans too, say for example. So, this is a dilemma where women often suffer the most, with their religious and cultural apparels, like head scarves, make them stand out and be odd against the other people. This can lead to a want of sense of belongingness with people of their own social and religious grounds. *Frustration* sprouting from social issues, depression and identity crisis can also lead to radicalisation, and often, young women sought out for *adventure* in a foreign land with foreign lovers and husbands, a prospect made very attractive by an array of online recruiters promising women of a bright, adventurous future in the path of love and romance. The idea of Jihad is *romanticised* here.

6. (d) Economic Drivers

Economic dependency in women is quite common. Women who do not have a means of earning, a living can feel co-dependent to their male counter-parts and become hopelessly embroiled into their husband, father or brother's life as an extremist. This leaves them feeling vulnerable, and *unempowered*. Empowering women becomes a strong concern here.

---

23 Khan, M. M. (2019). Key Informant Interview 1 [In person].CTW, NSI

Lack of government regulation of *quami* madrasas, which teach around 1.4 million students in rural and other economically deprived areas, 'allows for the promotion of sectarian intolerance and, in some cases, even incitement to violence'[24].

A study by three Dhaka University professors, *Bangladesh: Facing Challenges of Radicalisation and Violent Extremism*, identified a number of factors driving violent extremism among university students. These included a **lack of proper understanding of religion**[25]. Other factors were **frustration, loneliness, and drug addiction, lack of proper vision and guidance,** and at times **affluence**, as well as wider **issues of weak governance, corruption, and absence of the rule of law**. Khan[26]echoes this, stressing that extremists were not endorsing terrorism in response to economic problems alone: 'they also exploit the public anxieties over perceived threats to their identity, values and ways of life and the sentiments towards Muslims suffering in Syria, Yemen, Palestine, Afghanistan and Indian Kashmir'.

7. Conclusion

The drivers after being sorted out, seems simple enough, but the impact of it is life-altering for millions of lives. The roles of female radicals and extremists that have developed over time manifolds, starting from household chores of terrorist cells to foot soldiers for them, women have become empowered in their own manner. As we have read in the literatures of Mia Bloom (2017) "*Women and Terrorism*" and Joseph Makanda's[27] work "*The Jihad Feminist Dynamics of Terrorism and Subordination of Women in the ISIS*", women, despite facing a downward spiral of extremism, have developed their own essence of freedom and justice. Jihad has led these women into a new wave of feminism. Let us discuss these roles further in the next part.

Throughout our discussion, we have come to know how the process of radicalisation works and how it can turn regular women radicalised and motivated and, in many cases, might escalate to extremism and even to

---

24 ICG (2018). Countering Jihadist Militancy in Bangladesh. International Crisis Group, Asia Report No. 295. https://d2071andvip0wj.cloudfront.net/295-countering-jihadist-militancy-in-bangladesh.pdf

25 Jamal, E. (2017). 'Why is youth extremism on the rise?' Daily Star, 19 December 2017. https://www.thedailystar.net/opinion/the-overton-window/why-youth-extremism-the-rise-1507012

26 Khan, S. (2017). 'Bangladesh: The Changing Dynamics of Violent Extremism and the Response of the State'. Small Wars & Insurgencies, 28:1, 191-217. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09592318.2016.1266127

27 Makanda, J. (2019). The Jihad Feminist Dynamics of Terrorism and Subordination of Women in the ISIS. Multidisciplinary Journal of Gender Studies, 8(2), pp.135-159.

terrorism. The fact that radicalisation works like a virus when it comes to terrorism and terrorists always had significant reasons enough to justify why a deep study should be focused on to figure out the methods of deradicalisation. Bangladesh, with its target of becoming a developed state by the year 2041[28], has many issues to deal with in order to achieve the vision of Honourable Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina. Issues like climate change that could lead to imminent environmental migration, the rising height of corruption, and yes, the underlying, slowly and exponentially growing threat of terrorism are just some of the issues. Radicalisation works in such depth that it penetrates the most interior psyche of human being, and the only way to remove that is by a well-structured, multi-lateral with proper curriculum deradicalisation process. These deradicalisation processes need to be constructed from a gendered perspective, just like the counter-terrorism processes to address women as more than just sedentary role-playing victims of terrorism. When we see things like terrorism from a gendered perspective, we can ensure a better chance at thwarting terrorism from our nation from all aspects.

The second part of the article will be published in the next issue.

---

28 Dhaka Tribune. (2019). PM: Bangladesh to become higher middle income country soon. [online] Available at: https://www.dhakatribune.com/bangladesh/parliament/2019/03/06/pm-bangladesh-to-become-higher-middle-income-country-soon?fbclid=IwAR3G4sfBSsEPaR1h7q RPFuQMGlpGTxBjzYlX8wFtBiyY_sdMoaNU9XzR2ekv [Accessed 29 Dec. 2019].

COVID-19 and Evolving World Order: Implications for Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism

Soumya Awasthi[1]

Abstract

Since the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic, the world is engaged in the scenario building exercise and deciding upon the nature of the new normal and world order. There has been debate over conspiracy theories of the spread of the virus to the super spreaders. Governments around the world are entangled in the crises management and race to invent the vaccine. The countries around the globe are facing numerous challenges and not leaving any stone unturned to fight the pandemic. However, despite all possible attempts, some challenges remain unattended, which is further threatening the stability of the state. Fear of rise in terrorist activities and expansion of the non-state groups is one such challenge which also needs equal attention and some solutions.

The article sheds light on how COVID-19 pandemic has become a source of the rise in terrorism and extremism due to the socio-economic challenges faced by the weaker nations. The aim is to highlight the possible approaches that any non-state groups might use to expand its operational area. Terrorist organisations provide the platform for citizens to vent their grievances against the government by resolving collective action and mobilising citizens. It ends with

---

1   Soumya Awasthi is a doctoral fellow at Jawaharlal Nehru University working on her thesis on Role of Religious Discourse in Regional and Global Geopolitics: A Case Study of Deoband Philosophy. Her previous work includes Defence Studies of India, Global Terrorism Groups and Genealogical study of Beni Israeli Jews in India. Her area of interests include Geopolitics, Terrorism, Counter Violent Extremism, Religion and Politics.

a positive note marking the opportunity for the states to counter terrorism in the post COVID world.

Introduction

The world seems to be struggling with a "China Syndrome", wherein symptoms are both pathological and political.

The entire world has locked itself into the simulation rooms prognosticating a Post COVID world order scenario and is talking about the regional and global power. There is a very little or rather no discussion over the security factors both at home and in the world.

History reminds us that these prognostications have been disastrous previously; for example, the Bush Administration predicting US-China improved co-operation on global challenges. The debate about the changing shape of the global order is the discussion of present international discourse. There is a transition in the world order and the current order is built on the idea of US supremacy. This existing world order is being challenged by a combination of power diffusion and US exhaustion and buck-passing.[1]

Ignoring the fact that the international relations are formulated by multiple variables which never change, there are analysts and International Relations pundits who are preoccupied with a "black swan" in the middle of the crises.

Some of the scenarios that have been on the top of the chart so far are:

1. Strengthening of revisionist regional powers because they are prepared to take coercive behaviour without thinking of consequences and may run into risks without any fear.

2. The definition of multilateralism is redefined,with greater emphasis on the regional co-operation and multilateral agreements. BIMSTEC, SAARC and ASEAN will resume a centre stage.

3. There is a saying that 'Regional Institutions often rise from the ashes of the crises.' China might establish alternative institutions clubbing with economically desperate countries using its debt trap tactics.

4. The world will witness a leap of faith in the technology sector. There will be more emphasis on cyberspace.

5. Health and Agriculture will become primary riders in a country's National Security Strategy.

6. There won't be any significant shift in Global power; as a result, there will be no fundamental change in the system. Following Mastrov's

argument, the future world might be a place where great powers impose different 'orders' within their regional spheres of influence—a globally disordered place rather than an ordered one.

Apart from an economic and institutional change in the global order, there is a strong belief about the potential link between pandemic and an uptick in violence.

In its statement the Secretary-General of the United Nations on April 09, 2020, said:

"… Terrorist groups may see a window of opportunity to strike while the attention of most governments is turned towards the pandemic… the non-state group could gain access to virulent strains that could pose similar devastation to societies around the globe."[2]

Some of the aspects which are having and continue to have a direct impact due to the COVID-19 pandemic are:

1. Unemployment
2. Food Scarcity
3. Lack of financial and physical access to nutritious food
4. Malnutrition and Undernourishment
5. Political conflicts
6. Economic shocks.

The pandemic phase may also be described as a gestation period for the security challenges. And unless there is a co-operation between all the stakeholders both domestically and internationally, it will be a humongous task for the security agencies to handle.

All these reasons will infuse anger and anxiety in the hearts of the citizens against their respective governments. At many places, it has been witnessed that the citizens have started accepting that their political leaders are either not prepared or not willing enough to combat the crises. The citizens seem to be losing faith in their democratic representatives, as a result, due to this lack of confidence and anger gives an opportune time to weaponise the pandemic in their favour and mobilise the masses to execute terrorist attacks.

There are possibilities of new rage in recruitment by providing them with a violent outlet for venting their frustrations. In many cases, terrorist organisations do what their governments can't or won't do: give people the food and money they badly need to survive.

Two of the worst affected regions where a pandemic has taken toll are Asia and Africa. Currently, both the continents are facing unprecedented hardships, with numerous riders involved in it. The developing countries in Africa and Asia will experience the pandemic effects beyond public health and economic activity. As the disease wreaks its havoc in countries poorly equipped to handle the COVID menace, there is a high probability for the intensification of terrorist activities.

According to the Johns Hopkins University Coronavirus Resource Centre, more than 12,081,232 people have contracted the virus, and over 550,689 people have died so far. The UN chief said the crisis had hindered international, regional and national conflict resolution efforts.[3]

The three markers in which the effect of the pandemic on the security crisis can be classified are:

1. *Good-* The terror groups are restricted in their operations which means fewer attacks and killings.
2. *Bad-* Not enough being done by the Governments to contain the virus as well as to ensure that other local needs are met.
3. *Ugly-* The failures of the government become an opportunity for terrorists to gain legitimacy and acceptability.The rise in right-wing extremism, radicalisation and political conflicts.

Effects of COVID-19

The world is facing unexpected challenges in the pandemic, and some states, in particular, are in a vulnerable situation. Cognizant of the vulnerabilities the terrorists take advantage of the circumstances to create fear and further intensify the crisis with their violent and verbal assault.

The director of research at the South Asia Democratic Front Dr Siegfried Wolf, stated- "Jihadi groups have a long tradition of exploiting crises for their terrorist activities, recruitment and propaganda campaigns in South Asia, especially in the Afghanistan-Pakistan region".[4]

Similar could be right in the case of African nations,which are facing numerous challenges for decades now. The Islamic State, Al-Qaeda-linked groups, Boko Haram, Al-Shabab and other splinter rebel groups have exploited the COVID-19 scenario to gain new footholds in Africa. Al Qaeda and IS have successfully grafted itself in Maghreb, Somalia, Lake Chad Basin, Burkina Faso, Nigeria, Tanzania and Mozambique through its affiliates. These terror groups are exploiting the crisis to propagate the narrative of evil versus good and Islam vs Satan's/crusaders.

These terror groups, and particularly ISIS, intends to prove that COVID-19 is the result of the cruelty committed by the western forces and their allies on the Muslims around the world. It is determined to show the world the duality and hypocrisy of the West towards the objectives of Human Rights violations of Sunni Muslims and argue that Allah is punishing those who have been torturing the Sunni Muslims around the world.

Another challenge for the security forces in times of COVID-19 is the restrictions on movement, retreating into the safe zone, inability to go out into the field areas and the delayed rotation of the UN Peacekeepers in the region.

Including the withdrawal of the international agencies, UN Peacekeepers, restrictions of NGO and international aid agencies the African governments have taken stringent measures like closing down centres of education and public places.

Due to withdrawal and limitation of the security forces the rebels and terror groups have found an opportunity to flutter their wings and increase their footprints on the ground claiming more territories with more and more fighters coming out to take charge of the supplies and services. In a way, due to restricted security checks, the jihadists have found a playground for themselves. The refugee camps have become a hub for the recruiters who are using the deprivation of necessities to their advantage in alluring them to pick up weapons.

These groups are controlling the incoming aid and are using their power to exploit the situation to expand their ideological goals. The groups like Boko Haram and Al- Shabab are telling people that how the Christian missionaries will use pandemic and the gesture of aid giving to colonise the land and spread western values which is against the Islamic traditions.

The food security issue in Africa is multi-dimensional. It is a problem linked to healthcare, conflicts, policies, politics, environment and agricultural production.

As per the Food Crisis Prevention Network report on Food and Nutrition Crisis 2020, some of the inevitable challenges are:[5]

1. Approximately 11.4 million people in the Sahel and West African region will require immediate assistance between March to May 2020.
2. By the June to August 2020, 17 million people are projected to be in a crisis or worse. This is more than the number which is usually affected in an average year.
3. The security crisis and the COVID-19 health crisis could tip over 51 million additional people into food and nutrition crisis.

Acute malnutrition persists throughout the region and affects nearly 2.5 million children under the age of 5 years in the Sahel region.

Further, the pandemic has aggravated human rights challenges, predominantly among the refugees and internally displaced persons (IDP). There is a rise in the hate speech, social stigma and racism due to the outbreak of the virus. Even in the advanced nations like the United States of America, there is discrimination in the health services, where whites are preferred over the dark-skinned people. In certain places, there is also right-wing extremism-based discrimination and the limitations for accessing health services.

The repercussion of COVID-19 and Lockdown

The extremist groups and terror groups have used the lockdown for their organisational interests. There are short term, medium and long term implications of the COVID-19 pandemic.The extremist and terror groups might resort to these methods to stretch their area of influence. They are discussed below:

1. *Weaponising COVID-19*

The terror groups are also using the COVID-19 virus as a weapon against their enemies.[6] Because as per the US Deputy Attorney General Jeffrey Rosen, "… coronavirus appear to meet the statutory definition of a 'biological agent'… such acts potentially could implicate the Nation's terrorism-related statues". There have been multiple cases where it has been noticed that individuals with confirmed coronavirus have intentionally coughed and spitted on other people and public places, as well as licking on the edible items and other products at the store before selling them. These cases have happened not only in Asia or Africa but also include states in Europe and the United States of America.[7]A large number of people have been arrested in the United States alone for spitting, coughing and licking intentionally and have been charged for terrorist activities.[8]

2. *Radicalisation and Recruitment*

As the COVID-19 pandemic has interrupted the economic activities impacting employments, dislocation and disruption of daily lives, several people are afraid for their future career trajectories. This has led to a psychological impact on people's minds, especially the youth who are facing anxiety, paranoia due to uncertainties in the future.

Terrorist groups, by their very nature, are exploitative and opportunistic. Crises are opportunities rather than challenges for them. Given their parasitic

nature, terrorist groups can twist facts to support their propagated narratives to radicalise and recruit.[9]

The marginalisation of communities or inequalities that will emerge in the post-COVID-19 world will leave some individuals or groups with violence as the answer to their situation.[10]

These psychological symptoms, in turn, have led to the eruption of violent and aggressive behaviour at home and in society. This creates the most fertile environment for the terror outfits to radicalise people and incite violent behaviour through extremist propaganda. For example, the ISIS has used hashtags related to COVID-19 pandemic to redirect internet users to get interested in reading their literature and views. Even during the Ramadan period, the ISIS came out with its Al Naba newsletter titled '*Battle of Ramadan'*, and another one titled '*The Crusader's Worst Nightmare'*. In these newsletters, the ISIS has used the opportunity to propagate the idea of the fight against the crusaders, calling them infidels.

Similarly, the migrants returning from Turkmenistan to Turkey have become prey for the ISIS, and they initiated the recruitment of these jobless returnees.

Similarly, in South Asia, several terror groups, including Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) are reportedly exploiting the crisis to ramp up their recruitment. The director of European Foundation for South Asian Studies Junaid Qureshi said: "It is horrific to learn about terrorists advancing their agenda during turbulent times, it is not surprising since terrorist groups have an embedded character of exploitation in their modus operandi."[11] Junaid further opined, "They exist because they exploit; religion, uneducated people, poor people, political instabilities in regions, caste, colour, and in this case, a global pandemic."

There is also the far-right extremism, with numerous attempts to scapegoat the ostensible "other" for the virus. The Far-right groups have capitalised on public fears created by COVID-19 through various online social media pages like Twitter, Facebook, Telegram and Instagram.[12] Alarmingly, the case of 36-year old Neo-Nazi member Timothy Wilson from Missouri who tried to bomb a hospital believing Jews engineered COVID-19 indicates that individuals are willing to respond to such calls. Other posts have asked infected far-right supporters to cough on local minorities, the transit system or go to the bank and withdraw currency notes in small bills, contaminate them and then go shopping.[13]

There is an exponential rise in the users of Telegram by the far right ideology. One white supremacist channel, in particular, has seen an 800% increase in

users during COVID-19. As per the Institute for Strategic Dialogue, a London based think tank there are more than 6000 users of the right-wing ideology channels.[14] Soon after the enactment of lockdown and social distancing measures in the United States, there is a 13 percent rise in the far-right online content. Along with the Far-right extremist groups, the ISIS and jihadi channels are seeing a similar enormous increase in online activity.[15] On April 27, 2020, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres acknowledged the fact that the extremist groups will intensify their social media efforts and disseminate their hateful rhetoric to recruit young people in particular.[16]

3. *Image Building Activities*

In the past, the world has witnessed that these radical groups and terrorists used religion to gain legitimacy and justified their acts of violence. Similarly, in the COVID-19 pandemic, these terror groups are using the situation to justify their existence and relevance in the pandemic hit environment.

Diverse terrorist, insurgent and criminal groups have been using potentials created by COVID 19 to increase their power and influence. Through the means of getting a sense of political legitimacy through 'humanitarian' aid to deprived people in regions and countries where governments are unable to reach. This public opinion battle for hearts and minds is taking places in countries where there are the weak governments.[17]

The possibility of the Jaish e Mohammad (JeM) and Lashkar e Taiba (LeT) executing similar measures is not implausible. During the natural calamity of 2005, 2010, and 2015 in Pakistan, LeT's parent organisation, the Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JuD), positioned itself as a significant aid provider to the citizens of Pakistan. As a result, they could publicise themselves.[18] Similarly, at present, it is certain that these groups have offered to provide essential services and assistance to citizens affected by COVID-19 in Pakistan.

Amidst the peace process, the Taliban is trying all possible ways to win over the people of Afghanistan and create an image for itself to showcase that they are ready to run the country concerning human rights. With this intention, the Taliban has been stating from time to time, promising not to attack and trouble the virus hit areas and helping the needy.[19] Similarly, in Afghanistan, the Taliban has issued a statement offering its support to the humanitarian organisations and asked the people to abide by the Islamic teachings.[20]

Likewise, in South Sudan, the National Salvation Front (NSF), an ethnic nationalist rebel movement, issued a press release urging the people of South Sudan to help mitigate pandemic and follow the measures and regulations of WHO.[21]

There are several cases like these where the domestic terror groups are offering to assist in every possible way to combat the COVID-19 pandemic.[22] Perhaps the most active efforts have been made by Shiite Hezbollah in Lebanon. It has sought to contrast itself with the dysfunction of the broader Lebanese state by allegedly deploying 1,500 doctors, 3,000 nurses and paramedics, 20,000 more activists, as well as around 100 emergency vehicles to handle COVID-19 and disinfect public spaces.[23]

Another approach that terror outfits might use is by increasing their presence and by circulating information about providing assistance to the affected people. This will help them earn trust and respect in the society as a credible aid provider. Social conduct of the groups like the Taliban and Al Qaeda affiliates includes implementation of social distancing measures and cancelling Friday prayers.[24]

In addition to medical assistance, the group could exploit secondary issues arising from the pandemic, such as malnourishment, undernourishment and loss of jobs. Recently, Pakistan's Prime Minister, Imran Khan, announced that the country could fight only one of the two issues, i.e. the pandemic or poverty, due to a lack of sufficient state services.[25] In this backdrop, it is plausible that the militant groups try to extract benefits from the pandemic (such as by increasing recruitment), which then might be used against India.

4. *Propaganda*

During COVID-19 and Post pandemic time is ripe for the terror groups to encash upon the inadequacy of the government's way of tackling the situation. Due to loss of jobs, especially for the daily wagers, education loss and unbridled spread of the virus, causing a rise in several deaths has resulted in anti-government attitude. There is an absence of trust amongst the masses and erosion of government's legitimacy itself. These give impetus to the extremist groups in driving home the propaganda against the government. As a result, there is an exacerbated level of frustration and aggression by further spreading the wrong information and engaging in conspiracy theories. This phase is also known as *infodemics* as a causal effect of the pandemic.

There are also incidents where the state instruments are being used to the extreme, especially the law and order system where the police are authorised absolute power to ensure complete lockdown and restrictive movements. In such cases, police have used the authority to its full capacity, ending up brutally hitting the public. Another such incident was when the internally

displaced people were without shelters and jobs in the alien land, and this led to the mass movement of people. However, due to lack of transportation facilities, several migrants and their families experienced harsh conditions, and many succumbed to deaths. The obvious reaction by the public gives terrorist groups opportunities to recruit new members by providing them with a violent outlet for venting their frustrations. In many cases, terrorist organisations do what their governments can't or won't do: give people the food and money they badly need to survive. For example, LeT is running several relief and welfare camps.

These are some of the cases where the government's ill-prepared plans became a reason for the extremists to spread hatred and propaganda against the state machinery. Another strategy the terrorist groups might employ would be linking their propaganda by capitalising on their grievances. Such opposition has been witnessed in the United States, Europe and some parts of Asia as well.

5. *Religious Discourse against the COVID-19 and International Bodies*

While the entire world is trying to fight the pandemic, there have been cases in which the religious leaders have used the opportunity to gain fame. These religious leaders have challenged the authorities against the lockdown measures and ban on religious congregations. From the beginning of the pandemic, several religious gatherings were held responsible for the rampant spread of the virus. There was a case of the congregation in South Korea Shincheonji Church, Iran at the Shrine of Fatima Masume and Imam Raza, Tablighi Jamaat congregation in Malaysia and India, which added to the numbers.[26]

There are some handful of the religious leaders who have invoked religious ideology to confront the virus, assuring followers and devotees that faith offers adequate protection. For instance, some Muslims leaders continued to share misinformation that Muslims are "immune" to the contagious disease and that the real salvation can be found only in religious places. Some leaders went on to say that corona is a devil, and it cannot survive in the body of the true believers.

The prophet of the Orthodox Church in Ethiopia Prophet Israel Dansa, a protestant preacher, told his followers 'An Ethiopian prophet says "Last night when I pray I saw the Spirit of God putting the coronavirus in my hand just like this water. Then when I put the word out, I saw the virus wholly burned into ashes.[27"]

Despite the government's request to avoid public gathering, the religious leaders of the events challenged the authorities and instead encouraged people to step out and gather. For example, the Tablighi Jamaat Amir Maulana Saad Kandhalvi was resolute. Speaking to his followers, he said, "there is no better place to die than in a masjid in the presence of Allah."[28]

Similarly, the head of various mosques in Pakistan rejected the order of the government during the holy month of Ramadan.[29]

In January, ISIS newsletter *Al-Naba* published that "a new disease spreads death and panic" in "communist China" for the torture done to the Uyghur Muslims. Furthermore, Iran suffered an outbreak, and the newsletter wallowed that the contagion was an exemplary punishment from God for Shiite Muslims "idolatry".[30]

Later in early March 2020, IS Issued a Sharia Directives on the pandemic based on the al- Bukhari's collection of Hadith on Plague[31] and asked the followers of Islam to have trust in God and believe that the illness strikes only on the will of Allah.

6. *Cyber Space and Terror Groups*

The internet has become the most preferred mode of communication for the terror groups to execute their operations, given its cheap accessibility, the speedy transformation of information and option to maintain anonymity. The internet has helped these extremists to recruit, propagate and raise fund for their organisations. In current times, terror groups can control the information systems and easily coordinate and execute their operations through their cyber networking. It has made it convenient for terrorists to maintain their presence in the dark web.[32]

As several schools and colleges are closed, and there is no scope for recreational and cultural activities, youth is now restricted to their homes, and are spending even more time online. Their frustration due to confinement and the stress of academic session, combined with a hasty development of online vitriol, has made them more susceptible to online radicalisation to violent extremist agendas.

According to Professor Gabriel Weimann,there are eight ways in which a terror group is using the internet. They are psychological warfare, propaganda, data mining for their probable targets, fundraising, recruitment and mobilisation, networking, sharing of information, and planning and coordination.[33]

For example, through the internet, the Islamic State has managed to intimidate its opponents and promote itself by disseminating religious discourse, photos

with lethal weapons as proof of power and distribution of their online magazine Dabiq.

Right now, as the COVID-19 pandemic is strengthening its roots in the world, similarly these terror groups are using the opportunity to strengthen their roots in the heart and mind of the dissuaded individuals from different walks of life. Currently, due to lockdown and restrictive movement, a large number of people depend upon the use of the internet to keep themselves entertained, and a thousand other individuals are working from home. Likewise, the extremists are also working from home to uptick production of propaganda literature and spread the message.

As per Gary Ackerman and Hayley Peterson, in today's data-saturated environment, this could include a wide array of electronic intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance activities. It covers from evaluating potential targets using Google Earth and combining message boards to identify gaps in a target's defences, to establish Dark Web channels by which to procure illicit materials that could be used in weapons.[34] There is also an increased rate of cybercrime during the ongoing pandemic, especially on hospitals, banks, small business, ransomware attacks, email phishing attack, online child exploitation and property crime.[35]

Conclusion: Post COVID Keys to Counter-Terrorism

Simultaneously, whatever policy and decisions the government is taking will have an impact on the post COVID world. The effect of COVID is widespread and geopolitical in nature. There is an increased level of economic pressure which has a direct impact on security issues. The terror groups are also limited towards radicalisation, image building and weaponising the COVID-19 pandemic. However, a big question that is lying ahead of the terror group is funding. There is a negative impact on their ground operations and lack of resources due to interrupted global, regional and national supply.

There could be a high chance of fake social cause scams that are running their campaigns in the name of supporting the daily wagers and poor people living off the street, and these programmes are run under the fake NGO. names. These are some of the measures being used to gather some financial support for future operations.

Another source of funding that should be looked at by the security agency is the art (movie/theatre/documentary) and literature sector where a considerable amount of financial investment will take place with an aim to set the narrative

as per the investor. Media is another sector where a due shortage of finance, and high and dry situation, the artists and writers have unconsciously become part of this nexus. The entertainment sector is a medium through which a substantial number of individuals are attracted and are influenced, especially given access to modes like Netflix, Amazon Prime and other such entertainment applications. Similarly, a lot of research works and literature is compromised by the think tanks and other agencies. While most of these fundings are usually through the registered organisations, but due to the pandemic and economic depression, these legal entities are equally hard-pressed for money. The research institutes are obligated to take the support of illegal sources of funding like money laundering, corruption, misappropriation of international aids. In return, they are expected to set forth a narrative which suits a specific kind of ideology and its audience.

Some of the measures that the security agencies can adapt to cooperate and combat the during and post COVID security challenges are:

1. Implementing the four P's, i.e., Prevent, Pursue, Protect and Prepare. It is a UK's Contest Strategies based on these four pillars.
    - Prevent: it means to stop people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. This forward-looking work comprises of rehabilitation and de-radicalisation initiatives.
    - Pursue: to stop terrorist attacks. It involves disrupting and arresting individuals involved in terrorist activity.
    - Protect: to strengthen safety mechanisms against a terrorist attack, such as building up physical defences.
    - Prepare: this means to mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack. Here, societal resilience is emphasised to ensure society can bounce back from an incident.[36]

2. Reassessment of the national risk that could take place during the pandemic, for example, the World Health Organisation and the United Nations have been warning about these pandemic threats for years. Yet, notwithstanding these repeated warnings, it is not clear if sufficient resources and expertise are allocated to mitigate the risk. President Xi Jinping had spoken about the threat in his speech to the 19th Communist Party of China (CPC) National Congress, 2017. There was always a lack of focus on the subject of health-related pandemic and its implications for security. As a result, we have no preparedness to fight the situation.

3. Finance ministries of the respective countries should seek training on how to apply anti-money laundering measures and counter Financial terrorism while dealing with the economic relief packages for the NGOs or the Small and Medium Enterprises. They should also be vigilant to detect large sum of financial transaction without clear indicators. This task should be done mainly in the cross-border business transactions performed in the name of emergency relief funds.

4. National banks should ensure regular updating of the Know Your Customer (KYC) form and the accounts that have not been active shall be frozen, or in case the dead accounts are suddenly active then the alarm should be raised.

5. Formulation of regional subgroups to counter-terrorism and information sharing on terror groups using the internet for radicalisation. For example, India-Bangladesh, Bangladesh-Myanmar, or the India-Bangladesh-Sri Lanka trio and similar small groupings to indulge in intelligence sharing. One such group that already exists is the "Shanghai Five" which was formed in 1996, to counter-terrorism and to facilitate the member states in fighting terrorism in their home country.[37]

6. Countries receiving an economic incentive by international bodies such as the International Monetary Fund or the World Bank should follow the additional guidance provided to ensure there is no misuse of funds.[38]

7. Employing the team of experts to work on counter-narrative. The internet space and the opportunity of lockdown should be used by the state security agencies to engage the youth and counter-terrorism experts to work in close co-operation towards identifying and neutralising the extremist narratives and hate speeches which target any community or individuals. There are several DIY—hackers which could be hired by the agencies and work together.

8. There should be a mechanism wherein each employee working from home should be provided with a customised code number which he/she must use to perform its official duties, in this way the telecommunication sector can identify the suspicious cyber activity. It can be useful in case of the fake organisations which are engaged in spreading the propaganda and extremists narrative.

9. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Signal and Telegram authorities should provide short training course and workshops online ensuring

privacy to those who are in the security studies so that more and more workload is shared and there are governments and private joint ownerships.

10. Risk consultancies and think tanks must be introduced to advanced software technologies to read and assess the modus operandi of the terror groups in the new average age and time. The need of the hour is to build a public-private partnership between technology companies and governments to counter extremist propaganda from the social media platform.[39]

11. Lastly, the security agencies must use drone and satellite facility to observe the movements of people in the areas where the security agencies have difficulty to get physical access. The use of the technology will be more useful in fragile states like Somalia, Sahel region, Maghreb, Afghanistan, Syria, and some crucial border areas of South Asia.

To conclude, the best way to work towards counter-terrorism in the post-COVID-19 world is to parse out the scenarios and solutions in three different phases like short term impact, medium-term impact, and the long-term impact.[40] Therefore, social media companies need to be extra vigilant and proactive to counter-terrorist agenda and propaganda. They need to run a campaign against the infodemics, fear and threat that is being disseminated by these extremist groups. The subgroups of regional players need to bring creative and cost-effective modules to continue fighting against radical ideologies. It is an imperative need to move beyond the webinar marathon and be more assertive on the field.

1   Rod Lyon, 'Can 'revisionists' rule the world?', The Strategist, https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/can-revisionists-rule-the-world/, (Accessed June 25,2020).

2   Statements, "Secretary General's remarks to the security Council on the COVID-19 Pandemic [as delivered]', United Nations Secretary General', at https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2020-04-09/secretary-generals-remarks-the-security-council-the-covid-19-pandemic-delivered (Accessed June 20, 2020).

3   John Hopkins University and Medicine,   Coronavirsu Resource Center, www.coronavirus.jhu.edu/map.html , (Accessed July 9, 2020).

4   Kunal Gaurav, 'Terror Groups Including LeT, JeM Exploiting COVID-19 For Recruitment: Report, https://www.republicworld.com/world-news/rest-of-the-world-news/terror-groups-including-let-jem-exploiting-covid-19-for-recruitment.html, (Accessed June 25,2020).

5   The Food Crisis Prevention Network, 'Food and Nutrition Crisis 2020', http://www.food-security.net/en/topic/food-and-nutrition-crisis-2020/(Accessed, May 20, 2020).

6   Elura Nanos, 'DOJ Jus Warned That International Spread of COVID-19 Could Be Terrorism-What it Means', Law and Crime, https://lawandcrime.com/covid-19-pandemic/doj-just-warned-that-intentional-spread-of-covid-19-could-be-terrorism-what-it-means/, (Accessed July 5,2002).

7   Office of the Attorney General, 'Man Charged with Terroristic Threats for Allegedly Coughing on Food Store Employee and Telling Her He Has Coronavirus', Department of Law &Public Safety, The State of New Jersey, https://www.nj.gov/oag/newsreleases20/pr20200324b.html, (Accessed July 5,2020).

8   Josh Gerstein, 'Those who intentionally spread coronavirus could be charged as terrorists', Politico, https://www.politico.com/news/2020/03/24/coronavirus-terrorism-justice-department-147821?nname=playbook&nid=0000014f-1646-d88f-a1cf-5f46b7bd0000&nrid=0000014e-f115-dd93-ad7f-f91513e50001&nlid=630318, (Accessed July 5, 2020).

9   Abdul Basit, 'Covid-19: A game changer for terrorist groups?', Today Online, https://www.todayonline.com/commentary/covid-19-game-changer-terrorist-groups, (Accessed July 5,2020).

10   RaffaelloPantucci, 'Key Questions for Counter Terrorism Post Covid-19', Counter Terrorist Trend and Analyses, S. Rajaratnam school of International Studies, Volume 12, Issue 3, April 2020, https://www.rsis.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/CTTA-April-2020.pdf, (Accessed July 10,2020).

11   Ibid. No. 3.

12   Abdul Basit, 'The COVID-19 Pandemic: An Opportunity for Terrorist Groups?', Counter Terrorist Trend and Analyses, S. Rajaratnam school of International Studies, Volume 12, Issue 3, April 2020, https://www.rsis.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/CTTA-April-2020.pdf, (Accessed July 10,2020).

13   Gabriel Weimann and Natalie Masri, 'The Virus of Hate: Far-Right Terrorism in Cyberspace', International Centre for Counter-terrorism, https://www.ict.org.il/Article/2528/The_Virus_of_Hate #gsc.tab=0, (Accessed July 2, 2020).

14   Jakob Guhl& Jacob Davey, 'A safe Space to Hate: White Supremacist Mobilisation on Telegra', Institute for Strategic Dialogue, https://www.isdglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/A-Safe-Space-to-Hate2.pdf (Accessed July 4, 2020).

15   Joseph Hincks, 'With the World Busy Fightine COVID-19, could ISIS Mounts a Resurgence?', Time, https://time.com/5828630/isis-coronavirus/, (Accessed July 6,2020).

16   United Nations Secretary-General Statement, 'Remarks to virtual Security Council meeting on the Maintenance of International Peace and Security: Youth, Peace and Security', United Nation, https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/speeches/2020-04-27/remarks-maintenance-of-international-peace-and-security-youth-peace-and-security, (Accessed June 25,2020).

17   Greg Simons and Cristina Bianca, 'The Specter of Terrorism During the Coronavirus Pandemic, E-International Relations, https://www.e-ir.info/2020/05/08/the-specter-of-terrorism-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic/, (Accessed June 25,2020).

18   Mohammaed Sinan Siyech, 'COVID-19 and the Insurgency in Kashmir', Relief Web, https://reliefweb.int/report/india/covid-19-and-insurgency-kashmir, (Accessed June 25,2020).

19   Statement, 'Helping the needy, a moral obligation', Voice of Jihad, Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, http://alemarahenglish.com/?p=34414, (Accessed June 25, 2020).

20   Statement, 'Statement of Islamic Emirate concerning fight against coronavirus', Voice of Jihad, Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, https://alemarahenglish.com/?p=33722, (Accessed June 25, 2020).

21   National Salvation Front, 'Press Release on the situation of COVID-19 Pandemic in South Sudan', https://www.genevacall.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/NAS-Latest-Press-Release-200520.pdf, (Accessed June 25,2020).

22 Geneva Call, 'Covid-19 Armed Non-State Actors Response Monitor', https://www.genevacall.org/covid-19-armed-non-state-actors-response-monitor/, (Accessed June 25,2020).

23 Andrew Hanna, 'What Islamists are doing and saying on COVID-19 crisis', Wilson Center, https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/what-islamists-are-doing-and-saying-covid-19-crisis, (Accessed June 25,2020).

24   Ibid. No. 14.

25 Mohammaed Sinan Siyech, 'COVID-19 and the Insurgency in Kashmir', Relief Web, https://reliefweb.int/report/india/covid-19-and-insurgency-kashmir, (Accessed June 25,2020).

26 Soumya Awasthi, 'Post Tablighi Jamaat Fiasco-The Way Forward', Vivekananda International Foundation, https://www.vifindia.org/article/2020/april/14/post-tablighi-jamaat-fiasco-the-way-forward, (Accessed June 25,2020).

27 Twitter Account, 'Popular Ethiopia/n Preacher to a crowded congregation about coronavirus', https://twitter.com/Kal_KidanY/status/1242096105380331525 (Accessed June 20, 2020).

28 Munish Chandra Pandey, 'Its time to stay in mosques, Allah will save us: Tablighi Jamaat chief told followers in leaked audio', India Today, https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/it-s-time-to-stay-in-mosques-allah-will-save-us-tablighi-jamaat-chief-told-followers-in-leaked-audio-1662297-2020-04-01, (Accessed July 3, 2020).

29 Soumya Awasthi, 'Ramazan Amidst Battle Against Coronavirus' Vivekananda International Foundation', https://www.vifindia.org/article/2020/april/24/ramazan-amidst-battle-against-coronavirus, (Accessed on July 5,2020).

30 Beritbart, ''Battle of Ramadan': Jihadis Kill 584, Injure 587 in Three Weeks of Holy Month', https://www.breitbart.com/national-security/2020/05/21/battle-of-ramadan-jihadis-kill-584-injure-587-in-three-weeks-of-holy-month/ (Accessed May 21, 2020)..

31 Sunnah.com, 'Chapter 76 Medicines- Chapter What has been mentioned about the plague', https://sunnah.com/bukhari/76/43 (Accessed May 27, 2020).

32   Gabriel Weimann, 'WWW.terror.net How Modern Terrorism Uses the Internet', United States Institute of Peace, Special Report, at, https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/sr116.pdf, (Accessed July 7, 2020).

33 Ibid.

34 Gary Ackerman and Hayley Peterson, 'Terrorism and COVID-19: Actual and Potential Impacts', Perspectives on Terrorism, Vol. 14, Issue 3 June 2020, https://www.universiteitleiden.nl/binaries/content/assets/customsites/perspectives-on-terrorism/2020/issue-3/vol-14-issue-3.pdf, (Accessed July 7, 2020).

35 The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) Report, 'COVID-19 related Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing: Risks and Policy Responsed, May 2020, https://www.fatf-gafi.org/media/fatf/documents/COVID-19-AML-CFT.pdf, (Accessed July 7, 2020).

36   "CONTEST: the United Kingdom's Strategy for Countering Terrorism," Home Office (UK), June 2018, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/ uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/71690 7/140618_CCS207_CCS0218929798- 1_CONTEST_3.0_WEB.pdf, (Accessed July 7,2020).

37 Wang Jin and King Dehang, 'Counter Terrorism Cooperation Between China and Central Asian States in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization', China Quarterly of International Strategic Studies, Vol. 5, No. 1, 65–79, Shanghai Institutes for International Studies, https://www.worldscientific.com/doi/pdf/10.1142/S2377740019500027, (Accessed July 7, 2020).

38 Ibid. No. 22.

39 Ibid. No. 6.

40   Ibid. no. 21.

About BIPSS

Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies (BIPSS) is a leading institute in Bangladesh for informed analysis on all aspects of broad spectrum of peace and security studies in the region and beyond. It is a non-party, nonprofit organisation and independent think tank which provides significant platform for the leading strategic thinkers, academics, members of civil society, former members of the foreign and armed services and media persons to chalk out a comprehensive framework for peace and security issues. The Institute is headed by the President of BIPSS, Major General ANM Muniruzzaman, ndc, psc (Retd). He directs and coordinates all research and administrative activities of the Institute. A team of highly qualified full-time research-ers with varied social science background conduct research activities. BIPSS also maintains a pool of affiliated experts whom we engage frequently for different assignments.

BIPSS has also established two specialised centres within its frame-work named Bangladesh Centre for Terrorism Research (BCTR) and Bangladesh Centre for China Studies (BCCS). BCTR is the first centre of its kind in Bangladesh dedicated to the study and research on terrorism related issues. The Centre is headed by Mr. Shafqat Munir who has been engaged with various specialized centres on terrorism in the Asia Pacific region as well as other parts of the world. BCTR has been working in partnership with a number of international centres on terrorism research in South Asia, South East Asia, Europe and USA. On the other hand, Bangladesh Centre for China Studies (BCCS) has been established to understand, study and analyse Chinese Foreign Policy and Chinese strategic and security posture. It also aims to study Chinese economic advancement with a view to advocating greater economic and development cooperation between Bangladesh and China as well as China and the greater South Asian region.

BIPSS maintains an interactive website to inform, share and exchange knowledge and ideas to enrich the people who have a greater stake in peace and security. You are cordially welcome to visit our website at www.bipss.org.bd. You can also write to us to express your opinion via email at info@bipss.org.bd.