

BOOK REVIEW

Paradoxes of terrorism in Bangladesh



Kamal Ahmed is an independent journalist. His Twitter handle is @ahmedkhal

KAMAL AHMED

We have heard the word "paradox" innumerable times in relation to development in Bangladesh. Now, in a new book titled *The Politics of Terrorism and Counterterrorism in Bangladesh*, published by the British multinational publisher Routledge, its editors say that "the chapters in this volume will illustrate that Bangladesh is an exciting and

Bangladeshi politics," and concluded that "their implications are regional as well as global."

Ali Riaz, distinguished professor of political science at Illinois State University (ISU) in the US and president of the American Institute of Bangladesh Studies, who also authored *Religion and Politics in South Asia* (Routledge, 2021), details

marital bonds with male terrorists, there's a considerable number of them who are self-radicalised and have joined terrorism due to their own ideological convictions. The authors reached such conclusions based on extensive research including interviews of experts, family members and acquaintances, and reviewing police and court documents.

Saimum Parvez, a Marie Sklodowska-Curie (MSCA-COFUND) postdoctoral fellow at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel in Belgium, who has published a number of scholarly articles on terrorism, examines in his piece how Bangladeshi terrorists use the internet for recruiting, by exploring the wealth of jihadi content available online. His findings show that the internet helps both recruits and recruiters to connect with each

efficacy of counterterrorism laws in Bangladesh in his article, and suggests that these laws are often incompatible with national constitutional principles and international human rights standards. Citing a lack of sufficient and effective judicial oversight, he argues that many of the accused have been denied the right to a fair trial, especially the right to a speedy trial.

Mohammad Sajjadur Rahman, a doctoral candidate at the Strassler Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies of Clark University in the US, in his articulations, argues that the array of laws and regulations introduced over the last decade and the micro-surveillance systems put into practice in the name of counterterrorism actually indicate the intensification of

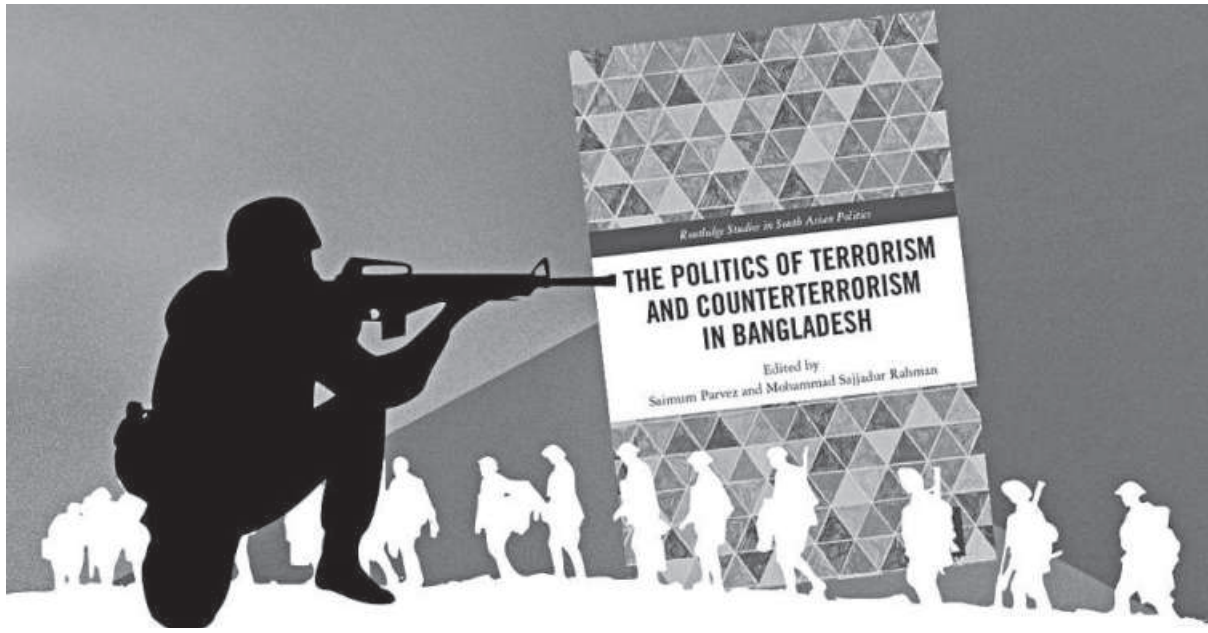
authoritarianism in Bangladesh. His critical analysis shows how two of the most talked about terror incidents from two different regimes demonstrate the state agencies' abusive tactics in the name of counterterrorism, and how such counterterror initiatives have been politicised.

Asheque Haque, a researcher and writer specialising in politics and security issues in South Asia, dissects the sermons of Jasim Uddin Rahmani, a controversial preacher, and looks at the messages he conveyed which were instrumental in organising the Ansarullah Bangla Team (ABT). Bulbul Siddiqui, associate professor of anthropology and sociology at North South University, explores the perceptions of urban youth from Dhaka

with regard to their acceptance or rejection of terrorism-related messages.

In her publication, Kajalie Shehreen Islam, associate professor at the Department of Mass Communication and Journalism in Dhaka University, scrutinises the coverage of terror-related news in the Bangladeshi press, focusing on the terror attack in Dhaka on July 1, 2016. Her findings will certainly attract the attention of Bangladeshi media as she reiterates the need for reduced reliance on official sources and more investigative journalism on terrorism.

This volume is a valuable collection of reference materials for academics and journalists interested in studying terrorism, security, politics, and strategic issues in Bangladesh.



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often paradoxical case for terrorism studies in general." One of the paradoxical elements pointed out in this book is the fact that "most of the key coordinators or leaders of the new generational groups of terrorists are educated in secular universities, either in Bangladesh or abroad" against a typical perception that religious seminaries, known as madrasas, are the breeding ground of Islamic terrorism. This book is published as a part of the *Routledge Studies in South Asian Politics* series.

It contains nine insightful and critical analyses by some prominent academics and researchers known for their scholarly work on politics, terrorism, governance, law, and a number of social issues in Bangladesh. Saimum Parvez and Mohammad Sajjadur Rahman, co-editors of the book, have explored the global academia at a great length in search of a consensus definition of terrorism, and examined its evolution in Bangladesh. They argued that "terrorism and counterterrorism are currently among the most contested issues within contemporary

in his contribution the origins of Islamist militancy in Bangladesh and suggests that it has undergone significant changes since the 1990s. According to his observation, Bangladesh has witnessed five different generations of militants, starting with the participants of the Afghanistan War in the 1980s and how their orientation shifted towards al-Qaeda and Islamic State (IS) ideologies. He catalogues, compares and contrasts all those organisations' ideologies and goals, as well as the implications for the future of Islamist militancy in Bangladesh.

Jasmin Lorch, an Annemarie Schimmel scholar at the Willy Brandt School of Public Policy at the University of Erfurt in Germany, and M Abul Kalam Azad, a freelance journalist and founder of fact-checking organisation FactKhuji, have given a comprehensive insight into the phenomenon of female terrorism in Bangladesh in their jointly penned analysis. It again shows the paradox that, though the common belief is that women are pushed into terrorism through

other, particularly to reach previously unreachable demographics, such as women and youth from Westernised and well-off backgrounds.

Bina D'Costa, professor at the Department of International Relations in the Coral Bell School, Australian National University and a member of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) Commission, and Hana Shams Ahmed, a PhD candidate of social anthropology at York University in Canada, in their jointly written piece discuss how Bangladesh has historically utilised the discourses of terrorism and counterterrorism to deal with ethnic tensions within the CHT region. The authors contend that by carefully framing and maintaining a narrative that depicts Indigenous political activists and, oftentimes, human rights defenders as the nation's internal terrorists and security threats, the government legitimises the presence of military and other security forces in the CHT.

Professor Ridwanul Hoque, an independent legal scholar who has previously held visiting research and teaching positions at a number of leading universities, analyses the

IN MEMORIAM: ABDUR ROUF CHOWDHURY

Old soldiers never die

DH Choudhury is a former banker and currently an independent director of Bank Asia Ltd.

DH CHOWDHURY

An acclaimed entrepreneur and banking legend is no more. Abdur Rouf Chowdhury, former chairman of Bank Asia and visionary of Rangs Group passed away around midday on February 18, 2023.

He was only three years my senior and several years ahead of me in terms of knowledge, acumen, and composure. We first connected in 2004 when I was advising at the MCB Bank Dhaka, which eventually merged with Bank Asia. This connection was reaffirmed further when I joined the Bank Asia board of directors as an independent director. It was interesting to see Mr Chowdhury being both a discerning entrepreneur and an insightful banker. Generally, bankers are protective and conformist, while an entrepreneur is driven by profit and the interests of his own enterprise. But he had an exceptional skill of balancing both these faculties.

He excelled in connecting people. He used to spend time understanding people's mindsets and sentiments. Given his sharp emotional intelligence, he could

engage in prolonged dialogue with people, carefully assessing their suitability and emotional needs for support. Having this rare aptitude, I have seen him resolving many complex issues. He single-handedly dealt with the Covid-induced challenges of 2020 through

extended far beyond conventional thoughts. He built a multi-industrial group from scratch. In the industries of construction and deep sea fishing, he introduced new dimensions. His forward-thinking perspective allowed him to set up some of these businesses



Abdur Rouf Chowdhury (1937-2023).

compassion and empathy. Not a single employee of Bank Asia was laid off, nor was there any reduction of salary and benefits. There was no impact on the bank's performance either.


On the business front, he faced adversities many times. He had the wisdom to realise that troubles are transitional and trust in oneself is perpetual. When he lost the Rangs Bhaban, he had the courage and composure to build another.

Mr Chowdhury's creativity

when not many people were willing to take such risks.

Mr Chowdhury will remain absent from the Bank Asia board of directors' meeting, but his footsteps will be present and prominent. His legacy and examples will enliven others for days to come.

He fought many battles in his life against adversities, and won. The last battle he fought with valour and dignity was against a disease and lost. But, as they say, "Old soldiers never die, they only fade away."



Pabna University of Science and Technology

Office of the University Engineer


Memo No : PUST/Engg Office/e-GP/OTM/2022-23 Date: 22/02/2023

e-Tender Notice (FY/2022-2023)

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the Procurement of following works of under "Pabna University of Science & Technology", PUST, Pabna.


Sl No	Tender ID	APP ID	Package No & Invitation Ref. No	Name of Works	Tender Publication Date & Time	Tender Closing Date & Time	Method
1	793893	190335	PUST/Engg Office/e-GP/Civil/22-23/12	Repairing, maintenance and other ancillary works of Dormitory (Ichamati) building at PUST. FY 2022-2023.	22-Feb-2023 11:30	09-Mar-2023 16:30	OTM
2	793896	190335	PUST/Engg Office/e-GP/Civil/22-23/13	Repairing, maintenance and other ancillary works of Dormitory (Jamuna) building at PUST. FY 2022-2023	22-Feb-2023 12:00	09-Mar-2023 16:30	OTM
3	793873	190335	PUST/Engg Office/e-GP/Lift/22-23/08(1)	Supplying, Installation and Commissioning of 2000 kg Passenger lift, 800 kg Capsule lift (Observation lift) including Civil Works such as RCC shear wall, pit construction, Dismantling, I section, Angle truss, Machine room etc.	22-Feb-2023 12:00	09-Mar-2023 16:30	OTM

This is an online Tender where only e-tender will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender Documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered Banks branches. Further information and guideline are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).



Engr. Farid Ahmed
University Engineer(Acting)
Pabna University of Science & Technology
Mail: chiefengineer@pust.ac.bd
Telephone: +8802588845405

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Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Principal's Office

Bandarban Government College

Bandarban Hill District.

Telephone No: 0233330201
Mobile No: 01704447375
E-mail: bandarbancollege@gmail.com
Web site: bandarban.govtcollege.edu.bd

Memo No. BGC/CEDP/2022-23/15 Date: 22/02/2023

e-Tender Notice: 03/2022-2023

e-Tender is invite in the National e-Gp System portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of following package;

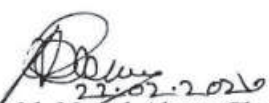
Sl. No.	Tender ID. No.	Name of Package	Last Date and Time of Tender Security Submission	Tender Closing Date & Time
01	789257	G-2: Sound System for classroom and conference room for Bandarban Govt. College, Bandarban Hill District	13- March-2023 01:00 PM	13- March-2023 02:00 PM

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-Gp portal and no offline/hard copy will be accepted.

To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-Gp portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.

The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-Gp system portal have to be deposited online through any registered Banks Branches up to 13-March-2023, 1:00 PM

Further information and guideline are available in the National e-Gp System portal and from e-Gp Help Desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).



(Professor Md. Nurul Absar Chowdhury)
Principal
Bandarban Govt. College,
Bandarban
Mobile: 01704447375
e-Mail: bandarbancollege@gmail.com

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