A COMPARISON BETWEEN A TERRORIST LEADER AND A LONE-WOLF OPERATIVE IN BANGLADESH

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A Comparison between a Terrorist Leader and a Lone-wolf Operative in Bangladesh

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Abstract

The article compares the biography and terrorist portrait of two terrorists of Bangladesh: Mufti Abdul Hannan, a pioneer leader of the prominent terrorist organization Huji-B, and a lone wolf operative named Faizul Hasan. The study reveals the existence of the multifaceted dynamics of the leader (Mufti) and lone wolf (Faizul) encompassing organizational affiliation, operational independence, radicalization processes, motivations, objectives, and the scale of their operations. The study also finds that the pattern of operation of a terrorist leader (Mufti) and the lone wolf terrorist (Faizul) differed significantly in terms of planning, execution, and level of organizational support. While the terrorist leader planned and coordinated activities within a structured group, the lone wolf operated independently, planning and executing actions without coordination with others. Mufti was capable of planning and executing large-scale operations, utilizing the manpower and resources of the organization while Faizul was engaged in smaller-scale operations due to limited resources and the lack of organizational backing. The most important measure of countering terrorist leaders is intelligence gathering to understand the organizational structure and communication channel. In contrast, enhancing monitoring of online platforms to identify the signs of radicalization and raising awareness are the key measures for countering lone-wolf terrorists.

Keywords: Terrorist leader, lone wolf, terrorist operation, terrorist organization

INTRODUCTION

Terrorism is, “the premeditated threatened or actual use of force or violence to attain a political goal through fear, coercion, or intimidation” (Phillips, 2012). According to the Government of the USA, terrorism means “premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents” (Annual Country Reports on Terrorism, 2011). Terrorism is defined as the deliberate threats or real use of force or violence to achieve a political purpose through fear, compulsion, or intimidation (Russel et al., 2019). In the case of terrorism, the non-combatants are the targets of terrorist activities. On the other hand, through its impact on the intended audience of non-combatants, the terrorist attack is anticipated to have an indirect impact on the policymaking level (Victoroff, 2005).
Terrorism has become a major security concern for this third-largest Muslim-populated country in the world. In Bangladesh, the 1980s saw the emergence of the first wave of militant organizations with the Muslim Millat Bahini and Harkatul Jihad al Islami Bangladesh (HuJI-B) (Sultan, 2016). Nonetheless, in April 1992, HuJI-B made an official announcement about its journey during a news conference in Dhaka (Mostofa, 2021). Mufti Abdul Hannan was the chief of Huji B (Varandani, 2014). The organization shared similar objectives and motivations with other jihadist organizations such as Lashkar-e-Taiba, Jaish-e-Mohammed, Al-Qaeda, and Harkat-ul-Mujahideen. Since the Taliban and Al-Qaeda both provided significant support to Harkat-ul-Jihad al-Islami and Harkat-ul-Mujahideen, the organizations claimed to practice hardline Islam in the manner of the Taliban. The organization wants to disseminate radical Islamist doctrine to free Palestine, Afghanistan, Kashmir, and other Islamic lands from the control of Islam's enemies and impose Sharia law in regions with a majority of Muslims (Hussain, 2007).

On the other hand, in the present world, terrorism comes in a wide range of formats. One of the most significant trends of terrorism in the present world is "Lone wolf" terrorism. Since the threat of lone wolf is undetectable and Untraceable, the notion of lone-wolf terrorism is ambiguous and unexplainable. However, in today's security context, the rise of the self-radicalized lone wolf terrorist has produced a growing paradox. Lone wolf terrorism is difficult to identify before they struck and creates a significant threat to public safety. Right-wing reactionaries and jihadists who have been religiously radicalized are more and more likely to engage in this new sort of terrorism (Shaffer, 2016). A lone wolf terrorist carries out acts of terrorism by the definition of terrorism, however, she does so independently of any official command or organizational structure. The lone wolf may or may not sympathize with a specific terrorist group and may not be driven by a wholly distinct philosophy or goal (Fredholm, 2016).

This article looks for a comparison of the terrorist leader and lone wolf terrorist of Bangladesh based on the biography, motivation, ideology, radicalization, and modus operandi. In addition to that, it discusses the contrast counterterrorism measures for terrorist leaders and lone wolf operatives. The researcher analyzed the 100 news articles of five prominent newspapers of Bangladesh: The “Daily Star”, “The Prothom Alo”, “Daily Sun”, “Dhaka Tribune”, and “Daily Observer” regarding the biography, radicalization, and terrorist activities of Mufti Abdul Hannan and Faizul Hasan. In addition to that, the researcher examined the court documents and statements of both terrorists.

Biography of Mufti Abdul Hannan:

Mufti Abdul Hannan was a controversial figure who gained notoriety as the leader of Harkat-ul-Jihad al-Islami Bangladesh (HUJI-B), an extremist organization. He was known for his involvement in various militant activities in Bangladesh. Hannan and HUJI-B were accused of being responsible for several bombings and acts of violence, which led to loss of life and instability in the region.
His activities were a matter of concern for both national and international security agencies. Mufti Abdul Hannan, a figure hailing from Bangladesh, gained both religious prominence and notoriety due to his alleged involvement in extremist activities. Born in the mid-20th century, he pursued a path in Islamic scholarship, eventually becoming a mufti—a qualified Islamic jurist authorized to issue legal opinions. While initially known for his religious teachings, Hannan's name became associated with controversy, particularly in connection to the 2004 grenade attack in Bangladesh (Report, 2018).

The early life of Mufti Abdul Hannan is characterized by his immersion in Islamic studies and teachings. His journey into religious scholarship saw him gaining recognition within Islamic circles for his knowledge and ability to provide legal interpretations in line with Islamic jurisprudence. This early reputation paved the way for his eventual role as a mufti, a position of influence within the Muslim community (Shaha, 2017).

However, the trajectory of Hannan's life took a dark turn when he became embroiled in allegations related to terrorism. The 2004 grenade attack, which targeted the then-opposition leader Sheikh Hasina during a political rally, implicated Hannan as a key figure in the planning and execution of the assault. The attack resulted in casualties and injuries, raising concerns not only about the security landscape in Bangladesh but also about the potential intersection of religious teachings and violent extremism (Correspondent, 2022).

The accusations against Mufti Abdul Hannan brought to the forefront the complex relationship between religion and terrorism. Critics argued that figures like Hannan exploited their positions of authority to propagate extremist ideologies, distorting the fundamental tenets of Islam for their purposes (Shaha, 2017). This raised broader questions about the responsibility of religious leaders to prevent the misuse of their teachings and the potential role of religious institutions in countering radicalization.

The case of Mufti Abdul Hannan also triggered a broader societal reflection on the factors contributing to radicalization. It raised questions about the root causes of extremism and the role of socioeconomic, political, and cultural factors in fostering an environment conducive to the growth of radical ideologies. Understanding these underlying dynamics became crucial for developing effective strategies to prevent the radicalization of individuals and address the complex interplay between religion and violence.

**Attacks of Mufti in brief:**

Mufti Abdul Hannan was involved in several militant activities in Bangladesh, many of which were attributed to his leadership of the extremist group Harkat-ul-Jihad al-Islami (HUJI B)

Mufti Abdul Hannan planned the bombing of a Udichi Cultural event in Jessore Bangladesh in 1999. He admitted his role after his arrest and called the bombing a success. The attack took place after midnight at a cultural event of Udichi Shilpi Goshthi in Jessore, Bangladesh. Two-time bombs
exploded and five people were killed at the scene and two later in the hospital (Network, 1999). He was also involved in the 2001 Ramna Batamul bombings on the "Pohela Boishakh" celebration. The first day of the Bengali calendar is known as Pohela Boishakh or Bengali New Year. On that day, the first bomb went off at Ramna Batamul on April 14 at roughly 8:00 am (Report, 2014). While police were evacuating people and undertaking rescue efforts, there was another explosion shortly after. The second bombing injured one police officer. There were perhaps fifty injuries and ten fatalities (Corraya, 2014). Later on, police also found another defunct bomb. The show was being broadcast live from Ramna Batamul by the government-owned channel BTV. As a result, individuals throughout the country witnessed the attack. All cultural events scheduled for the New Year's celebrations were postponed after the incident (Report, 2014). One of the most infamous acts associated with Mufti Abdul Hannan was the grenade attack on an Awami League political rally marking the party’s 14th anniversary in Dhaka on August 21, 2004. The attack resulted in several deaths and numerous injuries, targeting the then-opposition leader and Awami League president Sheikh Hasina (Report, 2018). Fortunately, she survived the attack, however, the explosion resulted in widespread panic, causing numerous casualties and leaving the rally ground stained with blood. The attack claimed the lives of at least 24 people and injured hundreds more. The incident left a long-lasting impact on the nation's political landscape (Correspondent, 2022). Mufti Abdul Hannan and HUJI were implicated in a grenade explosion in Gazipur on May 6, 2004. The blast occurred during an Awami League rally and resulted in several casualties. In May 2004 he planned the attack on the UN convoy in the Muslim shrine in Sylhet (Correspondent, 2004). Hannan's group, HUJI, was known to operate militant training camps in various parts of Bangladesh. These camps were used to train recruits in militant tactics, explosives handling, and radical ideologies. HUJI, under Hannan's leadership, was accused of coordinating and carrying out multiple coordinated attacks in Bangladesh, which included bombings and assassinations aimed at destabilizing the government and promoting extremist objectives (Shaha, 2017).

It's important to note that Mufti Abdul Hannan and HUJI were involved in a range of other militant activities and conspiracies. His actions and those of his group were widely condemned, leading to a series of legal proceedings and ultimately his execution in 2017. These activities underscore the significant role he played in promoting extremism and terrorism in Bangladesh during his time as a militant leader.

**Ideology of Mufti Abdul Hannan:**

Mufti Abdul Hannan, a prominent Islamic scholar from Bangladesh, emerged as a controversial figure due to his alleged involvement in extremist activities. Understanding his ideology requires a nuanced exploration of his religious teachings, beliefs, and the factors that led to his association with controversial incidents, particularly the 2004 grenade attack in
Bangladesh. At the core of Mufti Abdul Hannan's ideology was his interpretation of Islam, shaped by a conservative and puritanical approach to religious teachings. As a mufti, Hannan held the authority to issue legal opinions within the framework of Islamic jurisprudence. His teachings often emphasized a strict adherence to traditional Islamic practices, reflecting a worldview that sought to preserve what he perceived as the authentic teachings of Islam. However, it is essential to distinguish between Hannan's mainstream religious teachings and the extremist ideologies he was accused of promoting. While his early career as a religious scholar garnered respect within Islamic circles, his later association with groups allegedly involved in violent activities raised questions about the evolution of his ideological stance. Critics argue that figures like Hannan exploit religious doctrines to justify acts of terrorism, distorting the peaceful message of Islam for their agendas (Shaha, 2017). The 2004 grenade attack in Bangladesh served as a turning point in the public perception of Mufti Abdul Hannan's ideology. The attack, targeting a political rally, was seen as a violent expression of political and religious motivations. The incident prompted scrutiny of Hannan's teachings and his potential role in promoting or endorsing violent actions in the name of Islam. To understand the ideological underpinnings of Mufti Abdul Hannan, it is crucial to consider the broader socio-political context in which he operated. Bangladesh, like many other countries, has experienced periods of political instability, social unrest, and economic challenges. These factors can contribute to the radicalization of individuals who may perceive extremist ideologies as a solution to complex societal problems. Hannan's alleged association with extremist groups raises questions about the role of religious leaders in countering radicalization. Religious figures carry significant influence within their communities, and their teachings can shape the beliefs and actions of their followers. The case of Hannan underscores the importance of religious responsibility and the need for religious leaders to actively work against the misuse of their teachings for violent purposes.

How Mufti joined Huji B

Mufti Abdul Hannan, a once-respected Islamic scholar, found himself at the center of controversy due to his alleged association with the extremist group Harkat-ul-Jihad al-Islami, commonly known as HUJI-B. Understanding how Mufti Abdul Hannan joined HUJI-B requires an examination of the complex factors that led to his alleged involvement with this militant organization. Hannan's early life was characterized by his dedication to Islamic studies, and he gained recognition as a mufti, a qualified Islamic jurist authorized to issue legal opinions. However, as time progressed, he reportedly became associated with more radical elements within the Islamic community. HUJI-B, founded in the early 1990s, is an Islamist militant group operating primarily in South Asia. It espouses a jihadist ideology and has been implicated in various acts of terrorism (Mostofa, 2021). The group aims to establish an Islamic state governed by its interpretation of Sharia law. Hannan's reported association with HUJI-B suggests a departure from his earlier role as a religious
Mufti Abdul Hannan, the leader of Harkatul Jihad Al Islami (HuJI), was hanged in 2017 more than a decade after he injured a top British envoy in a grenade attack (Islam, 2017). One of the key elements of Hannan’s story is the legal proceedings that followed his arrest. The trial showcased the challenges in addressing crimes with alleged religious motivations within the legal framework. The delicate balance between upholding the rule of law and respecting religious freedom became a focal point of the discussions surrounding the case. The outcome of the trial would not only determine Hannan's fate but also set a precedent for how legal systems handle cases involving individuals with religious affiliations accused of engaging in violent acts.

**Biography of Faizul Hasan:**

In his village, Faizul attended a Madrasa. He arrived in Sylhet after completing the Dakhil exam and was enrolled in the Alim Madrasa for further study. He gave up his studies after six months and began computer training. He tended to spend nights away from home, according to his relatives and neighbors. He began working at a research center for the Quran and Sunnah once his computer training was complete. He used to communicate with his Kuwait-based NRB uncle Sadikur Rahan. He heard from Sadikur about the suffering endured by Muslims in Palestine and Syria. He adopted Ahle Hadith as his religion because of Sadikur's influence. Sadikur gifted him a laptop (Report, 2018).

According to the charge sheet provided by the police, with internet research and CD-ROMs, Foyjul learned about terrorism in various countries all over the globe. Also, he

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**Prosecution:**

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A scholar focused on traditional Islamic teachings. The process by which Hannan allegedly joined HUJI-B likely involved a complex interplay of ideological alignment, personal convictions, and external factors. Radicalization often occurs in contexts of political instability, social unrest, or perceived injustices (Mostofa, 2021). It is essential to consider these factors when examining how individuals like Mufti Abdul Hannan transition from mainstream religious scholarship to affiliations with extremist groups. While specific details about Hannan's recruitment into HUJI-B might not be readily available, it is common for individuals to be drawn to militant organizations based on shared ideological beliefs, perceived grievances, or a desire to effect change. Extremist groups often exploit real or perceived injustices to recruit individuals who may feel marginalized or disenfranchised. He received training in bomb-making, and military assaults and provided recruits with these trainings. Later, He joined the Taliban fighting the Red Army in Pakistan's borders with Afghanistan, and despite a long spell of being injured, he finished his studies. When he returned home in 1993, fellow combatants from the Afghan War had already planted the seeds of radical jihad, having founded a Bangladeshi branch of the HuJI in Pakistan in 1991 (Star, 2016).

Hannan advanced quickly through a central leader's ranks. However, he started as the HuJI magazine secretary in his village of Kotalipara. In a neighboring community, he also established a cadet madrasa (Shaha, 2017).
gained knowledge of the objectives and strategies of banned terrorist groups operating in Bangladesh, including Ansar Al Islam, Ansar Ullah Bangla Team, etc. Afterward, he acquired a desktop and sold his laptop. He used to download various terrorist-related images, audio files, and videos. He was radicalized by himself after being exposed to these internet materials.

**Attack of Faizul:**

On the day of the incident, March 3, 2018, early in the morning, Faizul rode his bicycle to Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (SUST). He discovered Prof. Dr. Iqbal heading towards the main auditorium with his students. The EEE department of SUST held an event where everyone wore the same black T-shirt. Faizul's t-shirt was a different color, therefore he was unable to enter the auditorium. But, he heard that a program will be conducted on the outdoor stage in the afternoon. He returned home, changed into a black t-shirt, got a knife, and then returned to SUST (Report, 2018).

Faizul noticed that he could easily move behind the space of Prof Iqbal. As he had a black t-shirt, everyone including the on-duty police thought he was a student of the EEE department of SUST. Faizul pretended that he was enjoying the competition. Suddenly he attacked from the back of Prof Dr Iqbal's head and neck with his knife. Police arrested him on the spot, and later he admitted his guilt before a magistrate by Crpc 164 (Report, 2018).

**How Faizul was radicalized:**

According to the charge sheet given by the police, The Terrorist, Faizul, was a Madrasa Student. He used to collect jihadist books, videos, and audio from his friends. He admitted that he attempted to kill Dr. Zafar Iqbal because he wrote a book named "Voot er Bacca Solayman" (Solayman, the Son of Ghost). He said that by penning this book, Dr. Iqbal degraded the prophet Solayman. At home, Foyjul watched radical video clips on his computer till late at night. After Reading a book named "Unmukto Torbari" (Open Sword) and watching many extreme preaching videos of Jashim Uddin Rahmani (An infamous radical Preacher of Bangladesh), the idea of killing atheist bloggers and writers came to his mind first. He then read a book by Jashim Uddin Rahmani calling for the murder of atheist bloggers and their sympathizers, in which he saw images of the current Prime minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina, and the victim Prof Dr. Md. Jafar Iqbal, which outraged him. Professor Dr. Jafar Iqbal occasionally advocated for bloggers and created a children's book titled "Voot er Baccha Solayman" (Solayman, the Son of a Ghost). Foyjul thought the book was written to defame the Prophet Solayman (Rh) and planned to murder Prof Iqbal. As a part of the Murder plan, he downloaded a book from the internet containing the techniques of murdering.

While working in the center, an employee of the "Quran Sunnah Research Centre," became a friend of his. He spoke with his friend about Jashim Uddin Rahmani's aggressive, extreme preaching. In addition to that, Foyjul used to read extremist books. He visited different jihadi websites on his Android phone and involved himself with this terrorist activity. This man informed
Foyjul about the repression, oppression, and jihad of Muslims in Palestine and Syria in the interim. Foyjul became enraged with Professor Dr. Jafar Iqbal after viewing these radical videos. Over a short period, Foyjul lost his job due to repeated absences from work. He then began looking for a new job and making plans to assassinate Prof. Iqbal.

**Ideology of Faizul:**

Faizul was motivated by a distorted interpretation of Jihad, viewing violence as a means to defend or promote their version of Islam. Jihad, in its proper context, refers to the spiritual struggle against sin, but extremists may pervert this concept to justify acts of violence. He consumed extremist propaganda disseminated through online platforms. Social media, websites, and forums contributed to his radicalization, providing a distorted narrative of Islam and promoting violent actions as a way to achieve ideological goals. He harbored grievances against Western nations, viewing them as adversaries to Islam. Perceived injustices, conflicts, and geopolitical issues may contribute to a sense of anger and a desire to retaliate through violent means. He had a thought to manipulate religious teachings to legitimize their acts of terrorism. He misinterpreted Islamic scripture to justify violence against perceived enemies, including civilians.

**Prosecution:**

Faizul was awarded a life sentence in the case filed in 2008 for the attack on renowned writer Muhammad Zafar Iqbal on the Shahajalal University of Science and Technology (SUST) campus (Report, 2022).

**Comparison between Mufti Abdul Hannan and Faizul Hasan:**

This study examines the cases of two militants in Bangladesh. The research compares the various aspects of a prominent leader of a terrorist organization named Huji-B: Mufti Abdul Hannan, and a lone-wolf terrorist Faizul Hasan. For this reason, it analyzes some specific comparison factors to assess the comparison between a terrorist leader and a lone wolf.

**The specific comparison factors:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reality</td>
<td>Connection with any militant organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Childhood</td>
<td>Any childhood trauma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>At the age of he got radicalized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>The educational background of the terrorist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Any effect of educational institutes over the radicalization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beliefs</td>
<td>The political, religious, or ideological beliefs that may affect his</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>radicalization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Way of Attack</td>
<td>The weapon, and accessories used for the attack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target Group</td>
<td>Mass casualties or specific target</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Background</td>
<td>Profile of Family members</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Deprivation | Any history of deprivation in early life
---|---
Psychological Disorder | Any history of mental illness
Profession | Civil and military
Network | Types of professional and personal network
Demography/ Ethnicity | Demographic belief

**Comparison Analysis:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Terrorist Leader (Abdul Hannan)</th>
<th>Lone wolf (Faizul Hasan)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reality</td>
<td>Leader of Huji-B</td>
<td>Not actively associated with any Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Childhood</td>
<td>No childhood trauma</td>
<td>No childhood trauma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age (terrorist activity)</td>
<td>Age Unknown</td>
<td>24 (at the time of the attack in 2019)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joined Huji-B in 1993</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Student of Madrasa</td>
<td>Student of Madrasa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beliefs</td>
<td>Islam</td>
<td>Islam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Way of Attack</td>
<td>Grenade, Bomb</td>
<td>Stab with a sharp weapon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target Group</td>
<td>secularist, intellectuals, Politian</td>
<td>Progressive writer and educationalist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Background</td>
<td>Son of a farmer</td>
<td>Son of a madrasa teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Unmarried</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deprivation</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Disorder</td>
<td>Psychologically sound</td>
<td>Psychologically sound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profession</td>
<td>Central leader of Huji-B</td>
<td>Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Network</td>
<td>Took part in the Afghan war in 1988. Network with the terrorists of Pakistan and Afghanistan</td>
<td>He has no active terrorist network.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demography/ Ethnicity</td>
<td>Bangladeshi</td>
<td>Bangladeshi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DISCUSSION**

Terrorism, a persistent global threat, manifests in various forms, from organized groups to individuals acting independently. Two distinct archetypes within this spectrum are terrorist leaders and lone-wolf terrorists.

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Understanding the differences between them is crucial for formulating effective counterterrorism strategies. One fundamental distinction between Mufti Abdul Hannan and Faizul Hasan lies in organizational affiliation. The first one typically operated within a structured group, steering the organization's activities, planning operations, and providing strategic direction, on the other hand, the second terrorist operated in isolation, lacking direct ties to established extremist organizations. Mufti Abdul Hannan had the advantage of organizational support, allowing him to orchestrate coordinated attacks, pool resources, and disseminate propaganda. In contrast, Faizul Hasan acted independently, relying on his resources and decision-making capabilities. This autonomy made lone wolves like him challenging to predict and counter. The pathways to radicalization differ significantly between the two archetypes. Mufti Abdul Hannan often undertook a gradual process within the context of an extremist group, and was influenced by organizational ideologies, group dynamics, and shared objectives. In contrast, Faizul was self-radicalized, often through online platforms, consuming extremist propaganda and developing personal grievances that fueled his radicalization. Mufti aimed to advance the goals of his organization, which may include political, religious, or ideological agendas. On the other hand, Faizul was driven by his extremist ideologies, which lack a broader organizational mission, making his attack on Dr. Jafar Iqbal more unpredictable and impulsive. Mufti, as a terrorist leader, possessed the capacity to plan and execute several large-scale, sophisticated attacks, leveraging the resources of their organization. In contrast, lone Faizul typically engaged in a smaller-scale operation, characterized by spontaneity and with limited resources.

**Contrasting Counterterrorism Measures for Terrorist Leaders and Lone Wolf Operatives:**

Countering terrorism demands a nuanced approach that considers the divergent nature of threats posed by terrorist leaders operating within organized groups and lone-wolf terrorists acting independently. Understanding the differences in counterterrorism measures is essential for developing strategies that effectively mitigate these distinct challenges. Counterterrorism efforts against the terrorist leader focus on intelligence gathering within the organization, monitoring communications, and deciphering hierarchical structures. Surveillance may involve infiltrating networks and leveraging international collaboration. On the other hand, countering lone wolf operatives involves surveillance that extends to online platforms, tracking individual radicalization pathways, monitoring social media activities, and identifying signs of potential lone wolf actors. Early detection relies heavily on online intelligence. In the case of terrorist leaders, counterterrorism strategies often involve engaging communities associated with the organization. Building trust and collaboration within these communities can aid in gathering valuable information and preventing radicalization. In contrast, in the case of lone wolves, community engagement shifts towards raising awareness about online
radicalization, educating communities on identifying signs of lone wolf activity, and fostering a sense of responsibility for reporting suspicious behavior. Countering organized groups often necessitates international collaboration, sharing intelligence, and coordinating efforts to disrupt transnational networks. Combating the global reach of such organizations requires unified strategies. International cooperation remains crucial, especially in sharing information about online radicalization trends, identifying lone-wolf actors with cross-border affiliations, and implementing coordinated responses to emerging threats. Countering terrorist leaders of an organization should emphasize cybersecurity involving countering organized groups' efforts to communicate securely and disseminate propaganda, and monitoring online activities may involve decrypting communications within closed networks. Lone wolf operatives may be countered by prioritizing online monitoring including tracking radicalization on open and hidden platforms, identifying lone wolves' digital footprint, and addressing the challenges posed by encryption technologies. The Intervention efforts for terrorist leaders may involve dismantling the organizational structure through military or law enforcement actions, and the rehabilitation programs may target members who can be disengaged from extremist ideologies. On the other hand, the intervention strategies for lone wolf operatives focus on identifying individuals at risk of radicalization, providing counseling, and implementing community-based initiatives to prevent lone wolves from carrying out attacks.

CONCLUSION

Mufti Abdul Hannan was a Bangladeshi Islamist leader associated with an organized extremist group, Harkat-ul-Jihad al-Islami (HUJI). It is essential to note that Mufti Abdul Hannan's story is not representative of Islam or its followers as a whole. The diversity within the Muslim community, encompassing a wide range of beliefs and practices, emphasizes the need to avoid generalizations based on the actions of individuals. The case serves as a stark reminder of the importance of distinguishing between the vast majority of peaceful practitioners and those who may exploit religion for violent ends. He operated within a structured organization, contributing to its leadership and activities. As a leader of an organized group, Hannan was involved in planning and executing coordinated attacks, often with the support of the group's resources, including training, funding, and manpower. His actions were driven by ideological motivations aligned with the goals of the HUJI, which included establishing Islamic rule through armed struggle. On the other hand, Faizul operated independently, lacking direct ties to established extremist organizations. He was characterized by his solitary nature, with no formal affiliation to a structured group. He was motivated by radical ideologies obtained from online sources. His actions lacked a broader organizational mission, making him unpredictable. An effective countering terrorism requires tailored strategies that account for the disparate nature of terrorist leaders within organized groups and lone wolf operatives acting independently. By comprehending the differences in
counterterrorism measures, authorities can develop more targeted and adaptive approaches to mitigate these complex threats on both organizational and individual levels.

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