

Study: Militancy higher with general education than madrasa education

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Officials of law enforcement agencies at the Holey Artisan Bakery, where a group of militants carried out a barbaric attack on the night of July 1, 2016, at Gulshan, Dhaka, the attack was conducted by militants having English medium backgrounds **Mahmud Hossain Opu/Dhaka Tribune**

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Amidst widespread public opinion that people linked to madrasas are likely to be more involved in militancy, a study has shown that, in fact, more people from the general background of education are engaged in militant activities.

Some 56% of people pursuing general education are involved in militancy, compared to 22% from madrasa background, said the report in a shocking revelation.

Md Moniruzzaman, additional deputy inspector general (DIG) of police currently serving at its anti-terrorism unit, disclosed the information at a seminar titled “Preventing Terrorism and Extremism through Community Engagement” held at Brac University at Mohakhali in Dhaka yesterday.

The police headquarter conducted the study based on a sample of 250 people, arrested between 2015 and 2017 for their involvement in militancy, he said.

“Among the arrestees, 56% are from general educational background, and 22% are from madrasa background, respectively, with the remaining 22% being either uneducated or from English medium background,” he said.

On the other hand, 80% were radicalized via the internet, through various social media platforms, and the remaining 20% were indoctrinated by friends or associates, said the police official.

“So, we do not have to worry about the madrasa education system radicalizing students, since most of the militants in our custody are from general education background,” said the additional DIG.

The law enforcement agencies alone cannot stop militancy, and terrorism. In the long run, there is a need for different stakeholders’ involvement, like educational institution, Alem-Imam, and social community to prevent it. We need to introduce different types of de-radicalization programs, he added.

The speakers in the program said that law enforcement officials have been doing their job in combating militancy. But they reiterated that this is not enough, as police operation alone cannot prevent militancy, and terrorism.

Different types of de-radicalization programs through government, and other organizations should be implemented to combat militancy. Also, awareness programs in different institutions, including mosques, and educational institutions, ought to be organized to directly approach the masses, they said.

Since, 80% of the militants were radicalized via the internet, there is a need to develop a strong monitoring system.

The speakers also emphasized on the role of media, stating that the media should keep in mind that their writings should neither idolize, nor revere or provoke militancy.

Media must play a neutral role while publishing stories relating to extremism, terrorism, or militancy, and create public awareness about the menace, they said.