COUNTERING RELIGIOUS EXTREMISM AND TERRORISM IN MALAYSIA

Турдиева Дилафруз Махмуджановна
старший преподаватель кафедры «UNESCO по религиоведению и сравнительному изучению мировых религий» Международная исламская академия Узбекистана
E-mail: dilyadiamond@gmail.com

Annotation
This article examines the role of the court and Islamic religious authorities in the fight against religious extremism and terrorism in Malaysia. The judiciary has a duty to protect people, guarantee freedom and administer justice. It is the constitutional duty of the Islamic religious authorities to preserve religion, protect Muslims and isolate the teachings of Islam in Malaysia. Under the country's federal constitutional system, the civil court and the federal government do not deal with religious matters, as they fall under the jurisdiction of sharia law and state sharia courts. In order to counter terrorist threats and counter the spread of dangerous extremist ideologies, the court and Islamic religious authorities need to have mutual understanding and cooperation in achieving a common goal. Only then will the fight against religious extremism and terrorism in Malaysia be sustainable and effective.

Key words: Malaysia, extremism, Sharia court, freedom of religion, confession, religion.

Malaysia is a country that prides itself on its multi-religious, multi-ethnic and multicultural character. Freedom of religion is an important aspect of this democratic country, and freedom of religion is one of the fundamental freedoms guaranteed and protected by the Federal Constitution. Respect and understanding are vital for the preservation of peace and harmony between people of different races and religions living in the country. Former Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Muhammad, in one of his speeches, gives a good description of this situation.
"Islam is able to coexist with other religions, including those without religion. In Malaysia, we have a really incompatible mix of Hindus, Buddhists and Taoists, as well as Muslims with the addition of a small Christian minority. Strictly speaking, we can't even sit at the same table to eat. Muslims vehemently object to pork, which is loved by the Chinese, but Muslims love beef, which Hindus do not eat. But we can, and we sit at the same table to eat, because we are tolerant of the traditions of other believers" [4].
Article 11 of the Federal Constitution proclaims that everyone has the right to profess and propagate his or her religion. This right can be claimed by anyone, regardless of religion, citizenship, gender, ethnic group and others. However, the sanctity of religion has been undermined by groups of people who seem to have base intentions. These people not only diluted the truth, but also created chaos and violence, hiding behind religion. This has become a serious global problem, and has not spared Malaysia.
In this country, religious extremism originally arose from deviant teachings, according to which "religion was used as a means of spreading distrust among the population and undermining a

democratically elected government." This was the result of a misinterpretation of the Islamic faith in accordance with the ideology and interests of some groups [1].

This view is shared by Mahathir, who said: "Islam as a religion is not the cause of terrorism. Islam... It is a religion of peace. However, over the centuries, some groups have deviated from the true teachings of Islam. And so, despite the prohibition to kill, especially women, the elderly, children and innocent people, they are engaged in killing" [4]. Extremism comes from people with an uncompromising mindset about their beliefs and beliefs that pose a threat to the nation. If measures are not taken to wean these groups from extremism, they will degenerate into terrorists and strike blindly, regardless of the lives of innocent people, and disrupt peace and stability in the country [1]. There have been many incidents of this kind. On July 7, 1979, a man posing as Imam Mahdi attacked and wounded an imam in a mosque. In another case, serious acts of violence occurred on 16 October 1960, when a group of heretical followers of another man posing as Imam Mahdi attacked a police station. Clashes involving armed soldiers and civilians during the tragedy in Memali in November 1985 and the incident in Al-Maun in July 2000 resulted in deaths on both sides. These are examples of armed violence caused by the deviant teachings and radical ideology of local Islamic groups [5].

Religious extremism and terrorism are increasingly alarming and difficult to contain as terrorist movements transcend national borders, become highly organized, well-funded, more sophisticated and advanced in terms of communication, strategy and weaponry. As the former Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia, who was also the Minister of the Interior at the time, admitted, since 2013 the militants of the "Islamic State" (IS) have become the fastest growing threat to Malaysia [1]. This group is extremely dangerous because it adheres to views and teachings that promote the ideology of takfirism. "The ideology of takfirism is characterized by harsh literalist interpretations of Islam that proclaim apostasy and disbelief towards Muslims who hold different interpretations on religious issues, thereby justifying the shedding of their blood. Ideology has legitimized the killing of Muslims and other religious groups that oppose them" [8]. According to Jafar and Akhmetova, the influence of pseudo-Salafism has led to the formation of local religious extremist cells, such as "Tentera Sabiullah", "Darul Dakwah", "Kumpulan Crypto", "Kumpulan Mohd Nasir Ismail", "Kumpulan Jundullah", "Kumpulan Revolusi Islam Ibrahim Libya", "Kumpulan Mujahidin Kedah", "Kumpulan Perjuangan Islam Perak", "Al-Maunah" and "Kumpulan Mujahidin Malaysia".

These extremist groups shared a common goal, namely the overthrow of the government, and demanded the creation of an administrative body fully consistent with their own versions of Islam [7]. The goal is consistent with various statements and fatwas by some group leaders that Muslims should abstain from voting and participating in democratic political elections. They claim that these acts are forbidden (haram) for Muslims [6]. Thus, although Malaysia is a country with sharia law and courts, such extremist groups still commit acts of violence and destroy society in the country. In fact, the reality, as Anthony H. Cordesman rightly observed, is that the most extremist and terrorist violence on a global scale occurs in Muslim states. Violence in the vast majority of cases consists of attacks by Muslim extremists on fellow Muslims, and not clashes between civilizations [3].

Nevertheless, the fight against terrorism must not jeopardize the enjoyment of people's legitimate rights. The judiciary must fulfil its obligations to protect the people and at the same time guarantee freedom of conscience. It is the constitutional duty of the Islamic religious authorities to preserve religion, protect Muslims and the true teachings of Islam in Malaysia. Under the country's federal constitutional system, civil courts and the federal government do not deal with religious matters, as they fall under the jurisdiction of sharia law and individual state courts. However, in order to combat religious extremism and terrorism under the pretext of Islam, the delineation of constitutional authority and jurisdiction between the federal and state governments is obscured. The federal government, which has exclusive legislative and executive powers over criminal matters, public order, and security, must cooperate with the Islamic religious authorities of the states in combating threats posed by religious extremists and terrorist groups. While laws, policies, and agencies relating to homeland security, public order, and crime are the responsibility of the federal government, the ideological, theological, and philosophical aspects of religious extremism and terrorism must be addressed by Islamic religious authorities. The Civil Court has repeatedly faced the difficult tasks of protecting the rights of those accused of religious terrorism while maintaining public order, peace and security of the country.

References:

1. Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, "Malaysia's Policy on Counter Terrorism and Deradicalisation Strategy," Journal of Public Security and Safety 6, no. 2 (2016): 1.
2. Alimova, Makhfuza (2019) "ACTUAL DEVELOPMENT TRENDS OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES IN UZBEKISTAN," The Light of Islam: Vol. 2019 : Iss. 4 , Article 42. Available at: https://uzjournals.edu.uz/iiau/vol2019/iss4/42
3. Anthony H. Cordesman, "Islam and the Patterns in Terrorism and Violent Extremism," Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), accessed May 14, 2023, https://www.csis.org/analysis/islam-and-patterns-terrorism-and-violent-extremism.
4. Mahathir Mohamad, "Islam, Terrorism and Malaysia's Response. Remarks by Prime Minister of Malaysia," accessed May 15, 2023, https://asiasociety.org/new-york/islam-terrorism-and-malaysias-response
5. Selangor Islamic Religious Council [Selangor Islamic Religious Council]. Perverted Teachings: Unraveling Chaos & Delirium [Heresies: Unraveling the Tangles & Ignorance] (Selangor Darul Ehsan: Majlis Agama Islam Selangor (MAIS) [Selangor Islamic Religious Council], 2015), 9-58.
6. Mohamed Ali, The Roots of Religious Extremism: Understanding the Salafi Doctrine of Al-Wala' Wal Bara' (London: Imperial College Press, 2015), 7.
7. Muhammad Izzuddin Jaafar and Elmira Akhmetova, "Religious Extremism and Radicalisation of Muslims in Malaysia: The Malay Ties with the Mujahidin, Al Qaeda and ISIS," Journal of Nusantara Studies (JONUS) 5, no. 1 (January 2020): 105.
8. Naved Bakali, "Challenging Terrorism as a Form of Otherness: Exploring the Parallels between Far-Right and Muslim Religious Extremism," Islamophobia Studies Journal 5, no. 1 (Fall 2019): 100.
9. Turdiyeva, Dilafruz (2020) "FROM HISTORY OF MALAYSIEN EDUCATION SYSTEM," The Light of Islam: Vol. 2020 : Iss. 2 , Article 20. Available at: https://uzjournals.edu.uz/iiau/vol2020/iss2/20.