IMPROVEMENT OF APPROACHES TO COMBATING RADICALISM BY OPERATIONAL UNITS OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS BODIE

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Abstract

This article is devoted to the issues of improving approaches to combating radicalism by the operational departments of the internal affairs bodies (IAB) of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The article analyzes the essence of radicalism, its dangers in modern conditions, the current situation in Uzbekistan, shortcomings of existing approaches, and ways to improve them. Based on international experience and scientific works of professors, proposals have been developed. The main goal is to increase the effectiveness of operational units, strengthen preventive measures, and modernize the fight against new threats, such as cybersecurity. The article concludes with practical recommendations aimed at strengthening national security and ensuring the stability of society.

Keywords: radicalism, extremism, internal affairs bodies, operational units, prevention, cybersecurity, international cooperation, artificial intelligence, social injustice, national security.

Radicalism refers to extreme ideas and actions that contradict the traditional values and laws of society. It often has a religious, political, or social basis and can lead to violence and terrorism. According to the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, "strengthening preventive measures to prevent radicalism is a top priority for states"[1]. The main causes of radicalism in Central Asia have been identified as economic hardship, youth unemployment, foreign influences (for example, the return of militants in Syria and Iraq), and propaganda via the internet. In Uzbekistan, in 2017-2021, cases of radicalism were more common among foreign migrants [2]. According to Professor A. Karimov, "the spread of radicalism is inextricably linked with social injustice and the low level of education"[3]. The dangers of radicalism lead to conflict in society, terrorist attacks, and distrust of state institutions. Psychologically, radicalism is based on factors such as young people's search for identity, group pressure, and manipulation. Professor M. Khodzhaev notes: "The psychological instability of youth is the main target for radical groups" [4]. OSCE documents state that in the fight against radicalism, not only repressive measures are important, but also social prevention [5].

On the basis of the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Law "On Combating Terrorism," the operational units of the Internal Affairs Directorate are actively working against radicalism [6]. Decree No. UP-6255, adopted in 2021, approved the Program for Combating Extremism and Terrorism for 2021-2026 [7]. Operational units of the Internal Affairs Directorate are engaged in intelligence activities, monitoring, prevention, and operations. For example, training on parallel financial investigations was conducted in cooperation with UNODC [8]. In 2019, together with TADOC, special classes were organized for mobile groups against drug trafficking and radicalism [9]. Professor Sh. According to Rakhmatov, "international cooperation will increase Uzbekistan's success in the fight against

radicalism" [10]. Currently, non-governmental organizations are also involved in this process, but the main burden falls on the Ministry of Internal Affairs. According to 2024 data, cases of radicalism have decreased, but new threats related to cybersecurity are emerging[11].

Current approaches include monitoring and intelligence, prevention, operational measures, and international cooperation. During monitoring, radical content is observed on the Internet and social networks. Prevention includes work with youth and educational activities. Operational measures include the identification and arrest of radical groups. In international cooperation, trainings are conducted with the OSCE and the UN[12]. However, these approaches have a number of shortcomings. Professor B. Turaev notes: "The lack of technological support leads to serious obstacles in the field of cybersecurity" [13]. The psychological and legal training of employees is at a low level. The culture of communication with citizens is low, which reduces the effectiveness of preventive measures. According to Professor N. Kasimov, "the dominance of the repressive approach can further exacerbate radicalism"[14].

Several directions are proposed for improving the approaches. The first direction is technological modernization. The implementation of artificial intelligence (AI) and big data systems allows for the automatic detection of radical content. According to Professor S. Abdullaev, "AI-based systems are becoming a key component of modern security systems" [15]. The second direction is professional development. Continuous training, psychological and legal education improve the professional level of employees. The UNODC's parallel investigations lessons are an example [8]. The third direction is strengthening prevention. It is necessary to develop cooperation with society and expand youth-oriented programs. The UN Joint Action Plan for Central Asia can serve as a guide in this regard [16]. The fourth direction is the improvement of the legal framework. It is necessary to update the mechanisms for detecting extremism [6]. The fifth direction is to strengthen monitoring. Special programs should be developed for foreign migrants and returning militants[2].

International experience can serve as an important example for Uzbekistan. Kyrgyzstan has adopted a special anti-extremism program, which is showing successful results [17]. Trainings on police approaches in Southeast Asia trained 550 staff members [18]. In the US counter-terrorism measures in South and Central Asia, special attention is paid to the issue of returning militants [19]. Professor R. Murodov emphasizes: "International experience is effective when adapted to local conditions" [20]. Uzbekistan can apply these experiences, for example, through the LEICA project [21].

Practical recommendations are as follows: First, operational units should learn new technologies, for example, conduct special training against the spread of RN materials [22]. Secondly, it is necessary to involve the mahalla system in working with society and organize anti-radicalism measures. Thirdly, it is necessary to develop special indicators for assessing the effectiveness of the fight. Fourthly, joint projects with non-governmental organizations and international bodies should be expanded [12]. Fifthly, regular surveys should be conducted among young people to determine the level of radicalism. According to Professor D. Usmanov, "open communication with society is the most important factor in preventing radicalism" [23].

Improving approaches to combating radicalism remains a pressing issue for the operational departments of the Internal Affairs Directorate. By eliminating existing

shortcomings, it is possible to strengthen technology, skills, and prevention. Uzbekistan's international cooperation will accelerate this process. As a result, public safety is ensured, and the spread of radicalism is prevented. Professor G. Saidova emphasizes: "Ensuring security is the joint responsibility not only of the state, but of the whole society" [24]. This approach not only strengthens national security but also contributes to regional stability.

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