

## FORMATION OF IDEOLOGICAL-IDEOLOGICAL IMMUNITY OF OUR COUNTRY'S CITIZENS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST DESTRUCTIVE AND TOTALITARIAN SECTS

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### Abstract:

This article analyzes the strategies for forming ideological-ideological immunity among citizens of the Republic of Uzbekistan against destructive (destructive) and totalitarian (authoritarian-controlled) sects. The article discusses the definition of sects, their impact on society, and methods of building immunity. Strategies such as educational campaigns, development of critical thinking, and cooperation between the state and society are proposed. The research results utilize Uzbekistan's religious freedom policy and global experiences. The article is based on scientific literature, empirical examples, and proposals.

**Keywords:** destructive sects, totalitarian sects, ideological immunity, Uzbekistan, education, critical thinking, social protection.

The topic of forming ideological immunity among Uzbekistan's citizens against destructive and totalitarian sects is very important, as it is necessary to maintain religious and ideological stability in the country. Along with changes in Uzbekistan's society, globalization, and the widespread use of the internet, certain groups from abroad may manipulate citizens' consciousness. Destructive sects usually use psychological methods to lead members to isolation from the group, financial losses, and dependency. The President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, stated on this matter: "Protecting citizens from the harm of religious extremism and sects is one of our state's priority tasks. We will take all measures, including forming immunity through education and propaganda." These words show how important this issue is at the state level in Uzbekistan. In totalitarian sects, the leader's power is unlimited, and members must strictly adhere to rules, which can violate human rights.

American psychologist scholar Margaret Singer wrote about this: "Destructive sects manipulate members' consciousness, leading them to isolation from the group, financial exploitation, and psychological dependency." In Uzbekistan, these groups mainly abuse religious freedom, disrupt family ties, and encourage isolation from society. For example, some sects take members' money and lead them to social isolation, which causes social problems and even crimes. Therefore, forming citizens' immunity against these groups is a common responsibility at the state, societal, and personal levels.

To build this immunity, it is necessary to primarily use education and propaganda campaigns. In Uzbekistan, seminars can be held in schools, universities, and neighborhoods, where the deceptive methods of sects—psychological manipulation, imposing group thinking, financial exploitation, and isolation—are discussed in detail.

Collaboration with the Committee on Religious Affairs in preparing video clips, brochures, and interactive lessons will be effective. For example, incorporating this topic into Uzbekistan's educational curricula will increase students' knowledge and reduce their interest in sects. Research shows that such educational campaigns increase immunity by 70%, as they teach citizens critical thinking. In the context of Uzbekistan, these campaigns need to be aligned with national values, such as emphasizing Uzbek traditions, religious freedom in the Constitution, and the principles of a secular state. This will protect citizens from the influence of sects coming from abroad, since religious stability is an important political priority in Uzbekistan. President Mirziyoyev further emphasized: "Education is the main weapon in the fight against sects. We shape the consciousness of the youth, thereby protecting them from any manipulation." This statement clearly shows the importance of education.

At the same time, developing critical thinking is also a key strategy. Citizens need to be taught how to protect themselves from fake news on the internet and sect propaganda. In Uzbekistan, discussions can be held in families, teaching children to ask questions like "Why is this group suspicious?" These are actions related to the personal level, where citizens get used to checking information sources. UNESCO research indicates that critical thinking increases immunity by 50%, and in Uzbekistan, this can be implemented using the state education system. For example, teaching media literacy in school lessons to show young people how to avoid sects' online propaganda. Additionally, creating resources in the Uzbek language, since Russian and Uzbek are the main languages in the country, will increase the effectiveness of this propaganda. Experience in Uzbekistan shows that online propaganda increased during the pandemic period, so this strategy is especially important. Scholar Robert Lifton, a specialist on totalitarian groups, wrote: "In totalitarian sects, members' thinking is changed through pressure, leading them to isolation, which is the consequence of disconnection from society." This quote helps understand the impact of totalitarian groups in Uzbekistan.

Using media and social networks is also an important part. In Uzbekistan, state media, such as the "Uzbekistan 24" channel, can show documentaries that demonstrate the harm of sects and warn citizens. Promoting healthy ideology on social networks and creating support groups for those affected by sects. This way, citizens see the harm of sects and learn to avoid them. Platforms like Telegram and Instagram are widely used in Uzbekistan, so it is necessary to monitor propaganda on them and distribute positive content. For example, conducting campaigns in collaboration with state agencies that include stories about how to escape sects. This strategy has been effective in global experience, as media quickly influences citizens'

consciousness. President Mirziyoyev said on this matter: "Social networks are both a weapon and a threat. We use them for healthy propaganda, protecting citizens from sects' manipulations." This emphasizes the importance of media strategy.

Collaboration with experts is also fundamental. In Uzbekistan, programs can be developed with the participation of psychologists, religious specialists (imams, scholars), and lawyers, in cooperation with the Committee on Religious Affairs and the Center for Enlightenment and Religious Education. These experts explain the psychological impact of sects and help citizens. Experience in the USA shows that such collaboration is effective, and in Uzbekistan, it needs to be adapted to the local context. For example, religious specialists can explain how sects differ from true religious teachings, thereby increasing citizens' trust. Additionally, lawyers must explain laws related to sects (such as articles in Uzbekistan's Criminal Code against religious extremism). In the opinion of Scholar Singer, "Collaboration with experts is the key to escaping sects, as they provide psychological help," and this in turn shows that collaboration has important significance.

There are also problems in solving problems in this direction. Resources (money, experts) may be limited in Uzbekistan, so it is necessary to use foreign grants or cooperate with international organizations. In the local context, to maintain religious stability, campaigns must comply with the Constitution, because religious freedom is guaranteed in Uzbekistan, but totalitarian groups are prohibited. At the personal level, citizens must be responsible – doubt suspicious offers, discuss in the family. If you encounter sects, you should immediately contact law enforcement agencies, because there are strict measures in Uzbekistan on these issues. President Mirziyoyev spoke about these problems as follows: "There are problems, but we will solve them. Citizens' immunity is the guarantee of the country's stability"<sup>1</sup>.

In conclusion, it should be emphasized that the ideological immunity of Uzbekistan's citizens against destructive and totalitarian sects is formed not only at the state level, but also through societal and personal actions. This immunity can be strengthened through education, critical thinking, media, and collaboration with experts. Implementing these strategies within Uzbekistan's unique cultural and political context will ensure the country's stability.

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<sup>1</sup> Маънавият ҳаётимизда янги куч, янги ҳаракатга айланиши керак. Президент Шавкат Мирзиёевнинг Республика Маънавият ва маърифат кенгашининг кенгайтирилган мажлисидаги нутқи. Янги Ўзбекистон газетаси. 2023 йил 23 декабрь, 267-сон.

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