

Secret Intelligence Service

Reports in Brief

Ansar Bangla (ABT)

(23/09/2015ORroom150800) Archive

The Ansarullah Bangla Team (ABT) - Ansar Bangla is an Islamic extremist group based in Bangladesh. The group/organization is implicated in crimes including vicious attacks and murders of atheist bloggers between 2013 and 2015, and a bank heist 04/2015. The group is outlawed - Ministry of Home Affairs (25/05/2015). The group has been claimed by police to be linked to Islami Chhatra Shibir, - the student wing of Jamaat-e-Islami party, in Bangladesh.

Ansar Bangla has released a hit list of secular bloggers and activists.

Recall - killing by the group of blogger Niloy Chakrabarti, who used the pen-name Niloy Neel, in Dhaka on 14//08 2015.

Ansar Bangla has published a list of secular bloggers, writers and activists across the world, - threatening to assassinate them unless certain demands are agreed and met.

The targets include; nine bloggers from the U.K., seven in Germany, two in the U.S.A., one in Canada, and one in Sweden. Some are Bangladeshi citizens living abroad, while others are dual citizens, or Western nationals.

Ansar Bangla statement:

"Cancel the Bangladeshi citizenship of enemies of Islam and [Muslim religious] education, atheists, apostates, unbelievers, anti-Islamic bloggers, agents of India, otherwise they will be killed wherever they can be found in the Almighty's world."

(আমার রব আল্লাহ)যতদিন তুমি আমাকে রাখবে এই দুনিয়ায় আমি চালিয়ে যাব জিহাদ তোমার শত্রুদের সাথে আর তাদের বিরুদ্ধে জিহাদ করে যাওয়ায় হবে আমার পেশা ! ((আমার রব আল্লাহ)

(My Lord God), as long as you keep me in this world, I will continue to fight in the jihad against your enemies, and they shall be my job. ((Allah is my Lord)

The ABT's acting leader, Mohammad Abul Bashar, and his two associates, were arrested early 09/2015 in Dhaka, for their involvement in the killing of Bangladeshi-American secular blogger and science writer Avijit Roy. The death of the 42-year-old 09/2015 had prompted an international outcry.

The individuals on the hit list have stated that they will not stop their activities in the wake of the threat.

"Our weapon is the pen, and we can use it without hurting anybody. We just want to make people conscious about their rights. So that nobody can use them to fulfill bad intentions," Ananya Azad, a Bangladeshi blogger in exile; "Targeted bloggers based in Britain have also reportedly approached police officials and have taken precautions to minimize the risk of attack."

Writers in Bangladesh, especially those critical of Islam, have often been targeted by groups seeking to convert the Muslim-majority country's secular system of law into a Shariah-based state.

During 09/2015, Niloy Neel was murdered in Dhaka, and two people were taken into custody in relation to the attack. In May, Ananta Bijoy Das was hacked to death by masked assailants with machetes in the city of Sylhet, northeast of Dhaka. Das wrote blog posts for Mukto-Mona (Free-mind), a website founded by Roy. In March, Washiqur Rahman, a blogger who decried religious fundamentalism, was killed in a similar attack near his Dhaka home.

In a video posted on jihadist forums on 20/09/2014, AQIS leader Asim Umar stated that his group carried out the attacks on Avijit and "other blasphemers" in Bangladesh and Pakistan.

Bangladesh-born US citizen Avijit Roy, was hacked to death on the Dhaka University campus on 26/02/2015 while returning from

Ekushey Book Fair with his wife Rafida Ahmed Banna, who was also badly injured in the attack.

Hours after the killing, responsibility was claimed from a twitter profile named Ansar Bangla-7.





Expression under intimidation: **Bloggers** under attack in **South Asia**

Blogging in **South Asia** can be a dangerous enterprise.

In the last year, 4 bloggers have been killed in Bangladesh, while a number of others have been targeted across the region in various ways simply for expressing their views online. Both state and non-state actors share responsibility for this **climate of fear and intimidation**.

A collusion of **repressive laws, compromised criminal justice systems, impunity, and rising intolerance** has actively fueled this increasingly violent trend. The result has been a severe chilling effect in which **freedom of expression** is stifled both **online and offline**.

A panel of well-known South Asian bloggers will share their stories and discuss the perilous situation in the region.

Friday, 18 September 2015

10:00-11:30

Room XXIV

Palais des Nations

Geneva, Switzerland





A British IT worker - accused of masterminding the brutal murders of two secular bloggers in Bangladesh, both of whom were hacked to death in the street by gangs of men wielding machetes.

Touhidur Rahman, 58, a computer specialist who is originally from Bangladesh, but gained British nationality and lived in the UK until at least 2011, was arrested by counter-terrorism officers in Dhaka, late on 17 August. Two other men were also detained.

A spokesman for Bangladesh's Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) said all three men were believed to be "active members" of the Islamic extremist organization Ansarullah Bangla Team or ABT, which is thought to have orchestrated the killings of Avijit Roy and Ananta Bijoy Das.

Mr Roy, 42, was hacked to death in February after he and his wife Rafida were ambushed and dragged from their rickshaw on their way home from a literary festival. The writer died on the pavement while his wife, who lost a finger in the attack, pleaded to passers-by for help. Two large machetes were found at the scene.

Mr Das was killed in May near his home in the north east city of Sylhet as he headed to work at a local bank. Police said he was set upon by a gang of masked men armed with machetes. Friends of



the atheist blogger said he was on an extremist "hitlist" and had been threatened in the months before the attack.

The blogging victims :

Avijit Roy (killed in February)

The writer (below) founded the website Mukto-Mona, meaning "Free Mind", in 2000 with the aim of championing secular and humanist writing.

Washiqur Rahman (killed in March)

The 27-year-old blogger used the pen name Kucchit Hasher Channa, or "Ugly Duckling", to poke fun at Islam and other religious beliefs.

Ananta Bijoy Das (killed in May)

An atheistic blogger for Mukto-Mona, he was a critic of religious fundamentalism.

Niloy Chatterjee (killed in August)

The 40-year-old blogger used the pen name Niloy Neel to air his atheistic views and promote secularism and women's rights.



অসহায় বাংলাদেশ





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বৃহস্পতিবার রাত্তে ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের টিএসসি এলাকায় সন্ত্রাসীরা একটি হেলে ও মেয়েকে কুপিয়ে গুরুতর আহত করে -ফোকাস বাংলা নিউজ



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Counter-Terrorism Library

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Adversitate. Custodi. Per Verum