



Bangladesh – Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 30 October 2015

Any information on Jamaat-UI Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) from four years ago to the present.

A 2011 article from the English-language newspaper Daily Star refers to Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) as follows:

“Law enforcers believe outlawed Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh, which came to the limelight for its synchronised bombing across the country six years ago, has almost no strength left to carry out any subversive activities. The network of the militant outfit has totally collapsed with the arrests of its members of all tiers in massive crackdowns and its strength has almost waned, say officials of police and Rapid Action Battalion. They however add JMB still has its roots, but there is hardly any chance of rearing their heads since they are under strong vigilance.” (Daily Star (17 August 2011) *JMB neutralised*)

The 2009 US Department of State report on terrorism in Bangladesh states:

“Jamaatul Mujahedin Bangladesh (JMB), the banned domestic Islamist extremist group responsible for a wave of bombings and suicide attacks in late 2005, remained a threat. During the first three months of 2009, authorities arrested several suspected JMB members and uncovered weapons caches that included grenades and chemicals that could be used to make explosives.” (US Department of State (5 August 2010) *2009 Country Reports on Terrorism – Bangladesh*)

Please note that JMB is not referred to in subsequent terrorism reports from the US Department of State.

A report published by the International Crisis Group, in a section headed “Relations with the Jamaat”, states:

“Emboldened by the Jamaat-BNP government partnership, Islamist groups attacked the Hindu minority as well as Ahmadis. Instead ‘of clamping down on the perpetrators’, the government ‘succumbed to their pressure and on 8 January 2004 banned all Ahmadiyya publications’. Facing domestic and international criticism, the government banned some radical Islamist groups, such as the Jamaat-ul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) and Hizb-ut-Tahrir, and arrested scores of JMB operatives, especially after the JMB’s countrywide terror attacks on 17 August 2005. The police reportedly found Jamaat literature exhorting jihad with arrested JMB members. Many JMB cadres and top leadership were also found to have belonged to or enjoy close links with the Jamaat or its student wing.” (International Crisis Group (9 February 2015) *Mapping Bangladesh’s Political Crisis*, p.11)

In a section headed “Religious extremism” this report states:

“According to a well-informed observer, with their leadership decimated and no central command, JMB members join smaller groups: ‘Day by day, new groups are emerging’. On 17 August 2014, the ninth anniversary of the JMB’s countrywide terrorist attacks, the home affairs state minister acknowledged that JMB was attempting to rebuild links with transnational terrorist groups such as al-Qaeda. In January 2015, police arrested four suspected sympathisers, including an apparent ‘local coordinator’ of the Islamic State in Dhaka, aiming to “attack important officers of the government.138 Other groups such as the Ansarullah Bangla Team are also reportedly reviving and recruiting.” (ibid, p.23)

See also footnote 132 in this report which states:

“The Ansarullah Bangla Team is a JMB-allied extremist group that recruits relatively well educated people from universities and enterprises, such as small IT and telecommunication firms. Many JMB members joined after their organisation was banned.” (ibid, p.22)

A report published by the Jamestown Foundation states:

“Bangladesh has witnessed two waves of religious radicalism in recent decades (RSIS, October 8, 2013). The first (1999-2005) was led by Bangladeshis who fought alongside the Afghan mujahideen in the 1980s and was dominated by groups like Harkat ul-Jihad al-Islami-Bangladesh (HUJI-B) and Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB); this wave included hundreds of Bangladeshi youth waging jihad in countries like Afghanistan and Iraq. Upon returning home, they radicalized others and joined local extremist outfits. At the domestic level, a fundamentalist-friendly coalition led by the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), which included the JI and the Islamic Oikya Jote came to power in 2001. It was only in 2005 that the Bangladesh government, acting under international pressure, began banning various extremist and jihadist outfits. The crackdown caused a lull in extremist activity, although various banned outfits continued to function quietly under new names or front organizations.” (Jamestown Foundation (7 August 2015) *A Profile of Bangladesh’s Ansarullah Bangla Team*)

A report from the Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies states:

“Terrorist organizations in Bangladesh both local (e.g. Jagrata Muslim Janata) and regional (HUJI, JMB) followed, by and large, the activity patterns of their international comrades. In early 21st century Bangladesh faced several terrorist attacks including blast at the Ramna park in Dhaka during Bengali new year celebrations and attack on a rally of the Communist Party of Bangladesh in Paltan in 2001; serial bomb blasts in four cinema halls of Mymensingh in 2002; grenade attacks on an AL rally on August 21, 2004; and the simultaneous series bomb attacks at 511 places in 63 districts on August 17, 2005. In the aftermath of these deadly terrorist activities, the government of Bangladesh banned Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), Harkat- ul Jihad al-Islami (HUJI), Hizbut-Tahrir, Shahadat-e-al Hikma, Jagrata Muslim Janata and other listed Islamic terrorist organizations.” (Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies (September 2013) *Splinter Terrorist Groups: Emerging Trends of Terrorism in Bangladesh*)

In a section titled “Profile-Splinter Terrorist Groups” (paragraph headed “Quran Learning Course (Quran Shikkha Course)”), this report states:

“This is an effort to reorganize the banned Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami (HUJI) and Jama’tul Mujahedin Bangladesh (JMB) in different parts of the country under the banner of Quran Learning Course. They have extreme hatred for the secular Awami League and the incumbent Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina whom they consider anti-Islamic. They also possess a global Jihadi tone and express their perception of Muslim sufferings in the hand of the westerners in their own way. Police found evidence of their recent linkage to ex HUJI and ex JMB operatives. Their activities were recorded in places like Jhalakathi, Nilphamari etc places.” (ibid)

An article published by the South Asia Terrorism Portal states:

“A space yielded to the extremists by the Government has the potential to derail the success story against Islamist radicalism and terror in Bangladesh, and could provide fertile grounds for an extremist resurgence. Indeed, while the Government had succeeded in minimizing the threat from strong terrorist and extremist formations such as Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), Harkat-ul-Jihad-al Islami Bangladesh (HuJI-B), Hizb-ut-Tahrir (HuT) and Hizb-ut-Towhid (HT), the subsequent failure to rein in fundamentalist elements has led to the growth of groups like ABT and Ansar-Al-Islam, and the spate of murders and wider intimidation these groups have unleashed. Indeed, on August 17, 2015, Tangail Superintendent of Police (SP) Mahfuzur Rahman, observing that, since the August 17, 2005, countrywide synchronized bombings by JMB, a new generation of terrorists had spawned, but there had been no change in Government tactics to deal with them. He noted, ‘The JMB doesn't have the organizational strength like that in 2005 following the arrest and execution of its top leaders. But it doesn't mean the organization has become very weak. The outfit is still active in different areas under different names. We need to monitor the elements whether they are in jails or outside, and fight them institutionally under a coordinated mechanism.’” (South Asia Terrorism Portal (7 September 2015) *Censorship by Murder*)

An article from the magazine khabar South Asia states:

“The re-arrest of Jam'at ul Mujahideen (JMB) leader Abdullah Al Tasnim (alias Nahid) – just six months after he was released from eight years in prison – exposes challenges facing Bangladesh in its war on violent extremism. Tasnim, 29, had served a sentence after being convicted in an explosives case. He was re-arrested September 18th after going straight back to terrorism, officials say. He comes from a family of militants. His father-in-law is Sayedur Rahman, the jailed JMB leader who succeeded the group's founder, Sheikh Abdur Rahman, after his execution in 2007 for the murders of two judges. Tasnim's older brother, Abdullah al Sohail, sits on death row for his role in the 2005 bombing of Gazipur Court. ‘Elder brother is counting days to be executed; father-in-law is in jail; he himself was released recently after serving eight years in jail,’ Tahsin Akhter Moni, an assistant professor of social science at Dhaka University, told Khabar South Asia. ‘Still, they seem unreformed and prepared to carry forward their jihadi activities. This is truly worrisome.’” (Khabar South Asia (3 October 2014) *Neutralising lifelong extremists a challenge for Bangladesh*)

A report from the English-language Bangladeshi newspaper Dhaka Tribune states:

“The police have arrested five suspected JMB members for their alleged involvement with the recent murder attempt on a church priest in Pabna. Police said detained JMB members had already admitted to trying to kill 52-year-old priest Luke Sarker in an attempt to destabilise the country and create international pressure on the government.” (Dhaka Tribune (13 October 2015) *Five JMB men held for murder attempt on Pabna priest*)

See also Dhaka Tribune report which states:

“Members of banned militant outfit Jama’atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), who were unpopular for systematic attacks on secular groups and individuals a decade ago, have now resorted to targeted killings, detectives said yesterday. In the last two years, they killed at least 13 religious scholars, pirs and shrine followers across the country by forming a number of small units of sleeper cells, a high official of the Detective Branch of police told the Dhaka Tribune. JMB leader Faruq is the leader of the wing that carry out the attacks. He also led the snatching of three JMB men from a police van last year. Detectives said that Faruq might have left the country with absconding JMB leaders Boma Mizan and Salehin. Involvement of the militant leader in the recent killings have been found during interrogation of its detained organiser Tariqul Islam Mithu. He was held in connection with the murder of former Power Development Board chairman Khijir Khan. Mithu told the investigators that he and six other JMB members had taken part in the killing of Khijir, a spiritual leader.” (Dhaka Tribune (19 October 2015) *JMB killed a dozen religious scholars in two years*)

A report from the Malaysian newspaper Benar News states:

“Bangladeshi police Tuesday arrested eight alleged members of the outlawed militant group Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) during a pre-dawn raid on the outskirts of Dhaka. Acting JMB leader Abu Talha Mohammad Fahim (also known as Pakhi) was among the suspects taken into custody after the operation in the suburb of Uttara, police said. The suspects were planning to attack several key installations in the Bangladeshi capital and surrounding areas, as well as assassinate some important people, police alleged during a remand hearing that took place later in the day.” (Benar News (28 July 2015) *Bangladesh Arrests 8 Suspected JMB Militants*)

A report published by the South Asia Terrorism Portal states:

“Three unidentified assailants tried to slit the throat of Luke Sarkar (52), Pastor of the Faith Bible Church, at his house in the Ishwardi upazila (sub-District) of Pabna District. He survived the attack with minor injuries. Later, on October 12, 2015, five Jama’atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) terrorists, including its Pabna ‘regional chief’ Rakibul Islam Rabbi aka Rakib were arrested over this murder attempt. On October 5, 2015, Muhammad Khijir Khan (66), the former chairman of the Power Development Board (PDB), a freedom fighter and a pir (revered religious instructor, usually of Sufi orientation) was killed by seven unidentified armed men by slitting his throat at his Madhya Badda house in the national capital, Dhaka. On October 15,

Tariqul Islam Tarer alias Mithu, an organizer of JMB arrested from Delduar upazila in Tangail District, in his confession to killing Khijir Khan, stated, 'As Khijir Khan was a so-called *pir* and his activities were contradictory to religious ideology, it was our (JMB) responsibility as believers to kill him.'" (South Asia Terrorism Portal (5 October 2015) *Lethal Remnants*)

This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research and Information Unit within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

References:

Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies (September 2013) *Splinter Terrorist Groups: Emerging Trends of Terrorism in Bangladesh*
<http://mercury.ethz.ch/serviceengine/Files/ISN/171215/ipublicationdocument/singledocument/ed1bd26f-8597-445d-acf1-22c5f8266631/en/p1a.pdf>
(Accessed 30 October 2015)

Benar News (28 July 2015) *Bangladesh Arrests 8 Suspected JMB Militants*
<http://www.benarnews.org/english/news/bengali/jmb-07282015175752.html>
(Accessed 30 October 2015)

Daily Star (17 August 2011) *JMB neutralised*
http://archive.thedailystar.net/newDesign/print_news.php?nid=198983
(Accessed 30 October 2015)

Dhaka Tribune (19 October 2015) *JMB killed a dozen religious scholars in two years*
<http://www.dhakatribune.com/crime/2015/oct/18/jmb-killed-dozen-religious-scholars-two-years>

Dhaka Tribune (13 October 2015) *Five JMB men held for murder attempt on Pabna priest*
<http://www.dhakatribune.com/crime/2015/oct/13/five-jmb-men-held-murder-attempt-pabna-priest>
(Accessed 30 October 2015)

International Crisis Group (9 February 2015) *Mapping Bangladesh's Political Crisis*
[http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/asia/south-asia/bangladesh/264-mapping-bangladesh-s-political-crisis.pdf](http://www.crisisgroup.org/~/media/Files/asia/south-asia/bangladesh/264-mapping-bangladesh-s-political-crisis.pdf)
(Accessed 30 October 2015)

Jamestown Foundation (7 August 2015) *A Profile of Bangladesh's Ansarullah Bangla Team*
<http://www.refworld.org/docid/55c9ae374.html>
(Accessed 30 October 2015)

Khabar South Asia (3 October 2014) *Neutralising lifelong extremists a challenge for Bangladesh*
<http://www.ein.org.uk/members/country-report/neutralising-lifelong-extremists-challenge-bangladesh>

(Accessed 30 October 2015)

This is a subscription database

South Asia Terrorism Portal (5 October 2015) *Lethal Remnants*

http://www.satp.org/satporqtp/sair/Archives/sair14/14_16.htm#assessment2

(Accessed 30 October 2015)

South Asia Terrorism Portal (7 September 2015) *Censorship by Murder*

http://www.satp.org/satporqtp/sair/Archives/sair14/14_10.htm#assessment1

US Department of State (5 August 2010) *2009 Country Reports on Terrorism – Bangladesh*

<http://www.refworld.org/docid/4c63b6561e.html>

(Accessed 30 October 2015)

Sources Consulted:

Electronic Immigration Network

European Country of Origin Information Network

Google

Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

International Crisis Group

Refugee Documentation Centre Query Database

South Asia Terrorism Portal

UNHCR Refworld

US Department of State