Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale

Bilagsnr.:	**313**
Land:	Bangladesh
Kilde:	US Departement of State
Titel:	Country Report On Terrorism 2017
Udgivet:	19. september 2018
Optaget på baggrundsmaterialet:	05. februar 2019

USDOS – US Department of State

COUNTRY REPORT ON TERRORISM 2017 - CHAPTER 1 - BANGLADESH

Overview: Bangladesh experienced three terrorist attacks in March 2017. Since then, Bangladesh security forces have foiled dozens of plots by terrorist groups. The Government of Bangladesh continued to articulate a “zero-tolerance” policy towards terrorism and the use of its territory as a terrorist safe haven. While the Government of Bangladesh often attributed terrorist violence to local militants, al-Qa’ida in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS) and ISIS together have claimed responsibility for nearly 40 attacks in Bangladesh since 2015. Terrorist organizations used social media to spread their ideologies and solicit followers from Bangladesh. Bangladeshi militants have been featured in multiple publications, videos, and websites associated with ISIS and AQIS.

2017 Terrorist Incidents: ISIS claimed responsibility for three attacks in March.

- On March 17, a suspected suicide bomber snuck into a temporary facility belonging to the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB), a counterterrorism-focused Special Mission Unit, detonating a suicide vest, killing himself and injuring two RAB officers.
- On March 24, an unidentified adult male self-detonated at a police checkpoint near Dhaka’s Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, killing only himself.
- On March 25, eight people were killed and more than 40 injured in two blasts during a raid on a suspected ISIS safehouse in Sylhet.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: Bangladesh’s criminal justice system is in the process of fully implementing the Antiterrorism Act of 2009 as amended in 2012 and 2013. Although Bangladesh’s Antiterrorism Act does not outlaw recruitment and travel in the furtherance of terrorism, the broad language of the Act provides several mechanisms by which Bangladesh can implement UN Security Council resolution (UNSCR) 2178 (2014) on addressing foreign terrorist fighters. Despite lacking laws specific to foreign terrorist fighters, Bangladesh arrested suspected foreign terrorist fighters or facilitators of such fighters on other charges under existing law.

Bangladesh cooperated with the United States to further strengthen control of its borders and ports of entry, as called for by UNSCR 2178 (2014). The international community remains concerned about security procedures at Dhaka’s Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, although the International Civil Aviation Organization certified this airport as 77.46 percent effective in “implementation of aviation safety standard compliance,” more than 26 percentage points higher than a previous audit in 2012. Bangladesh shared law enforcement information with INTERPOL but does not have a dedicated terrorist watchlist. Bangladesh also does not have an interactive Advanced Passenger Information system.

The Rapid Action Battalion and the Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime Unit of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police, as well as other elements of the Bangladesh Police, continued a campaign of arrests and raids against suspected militants. Many suspects died in these operations, oftentimes described as the result of a “cross-fire,” a euphemism for extrajudicial killings by the police. Observers also believe at least some of the raids were staged by law enforcement.

In early November, a pilot with Bangladesh’s Biman Airlines pled guilty to a conspiracy to crash a passenger jet into the Prime Minister’s residence. The suspect’s father was allegedly part of a group of terrorists that killed themselves by detonating explosives when confronted by Bangladesh security forces in early September. Throughout 2017, Bangladesh security forces claimed credit for foiling dozens of terrorist plots, many of which were reportedly in the final stages of planning.

Bangladesh continued to participate in the Department of State’s Antiterrorism Assistance program and received counterterrorism training on building unit capacity in crisis response, evidence collection, crime scene investigation, infrastructure protection, instructional development and sustainment, as well as enhancing cyber and digital investigation capabilities. Bangladesh also received Department of Justice prosecutorial skills training and community policing support. Bangladesh is receiving assistance from the United States in developing an Alert List of militants to better screen for persons of interests at its ports of entry.

The Department of Defense's PACOM Augmentation Team worked to monitor and counter terrorist messaging through television and online media, as well as in workshops with students in various cities.

Countering the Financing of Terrorism: Bangladesh is a member of the Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering. The Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit (BFIU) is a member of the Egmont Group. The Bangladesh central bank and the BFIU lead the government's efforts to comply with the international anti-money laundering/countering the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) standards and international sanctions regimes.

The terrorist finance provisions of Bangladesh's Antiterrorism Act make illegal the receipt and collection of money, services, and material support where "there are reasonable grounds to believe that the same has been used or may be used for any purpose by a terrorist entity." The Act prohibits membership in and support of prohibited organizations, i.e., organizations engaged or involved in terrorist activities, including the organizations listed in the UN Security Council ISIL (Da'esh) and al-Qa'ida sanctions regime. The Bangladesh Bank also publishes lists of domestically designated and UN-sanctioned individuals and groups on its website. The Act includes a broad provision providing for mutual legal cooperation on terrorism matters with other nations and a comprehensive forfeiture provision for assets involved in terrorism activities, although there was an absence of significant terrorist financing and money laundering cases.

The judicial sector is under-resourced for carrying out prosecutions and obtaining convictions in complex financial and material support cases. The Evidence and Criminal Procedure Codes date back to the nineteenth century and there is no provision for plea bargaining. Government of Bangladesh counterparts agree that the lack of a career civil service prosecution unit remains a serious problem. Civilian attorneys are appointed *ad hoc* to prosecute cases. There is little coordination between law enforcement and prosecutors. Consequently, the overall conviction rate is approximately 10 percent and a case can take as long as seven years from the filing of charges to sentencing.

For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, see the *2018 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume II, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes.*

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): Bangladesh organizations continued cooperative activities through the Country Support Mechanism under the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF), a public-private global fund to support local, grassroots CVE efforts in at-risk communities. The Bangladeshi cities of Dhaka North, Dhaka South, and Narayanganj are members of the Strong Cities Network. The Ministry of Religious Affairs and the National Committee on Militancy, Resistance, and Prevention work with imams and religious scholars to build public awareness against terrorism. The police are engaging religious leaders to counter terrorist propaganda with appropriate scripture-based messages and engaging imams to speak to surrendered militants to explain that the Quran does not support terrorist violence.

The police also are continuing community policing efforts. Law enforcement authorities are working with local universities to identify missing students and curb radicalization to violence among university students. Local research institutions, including private think tanks and both public and private universities, continued to engage in CVE-related research. However, Bangladesh's lack of a publicly available strategy to counter violent extremism hindered sustained engagement with the United States and the international community.