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The US swimmer bags 22nd Olympic gold in 200m individual medley

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The Cuban leader turns 90, surviving some 600 assassination attempts

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## Militancy saw sharp rise since last year

Number of accused shows a decline for several years after 2005 JMB rise; police prepare database of over 4,000 terror suspects, militants of different outfits

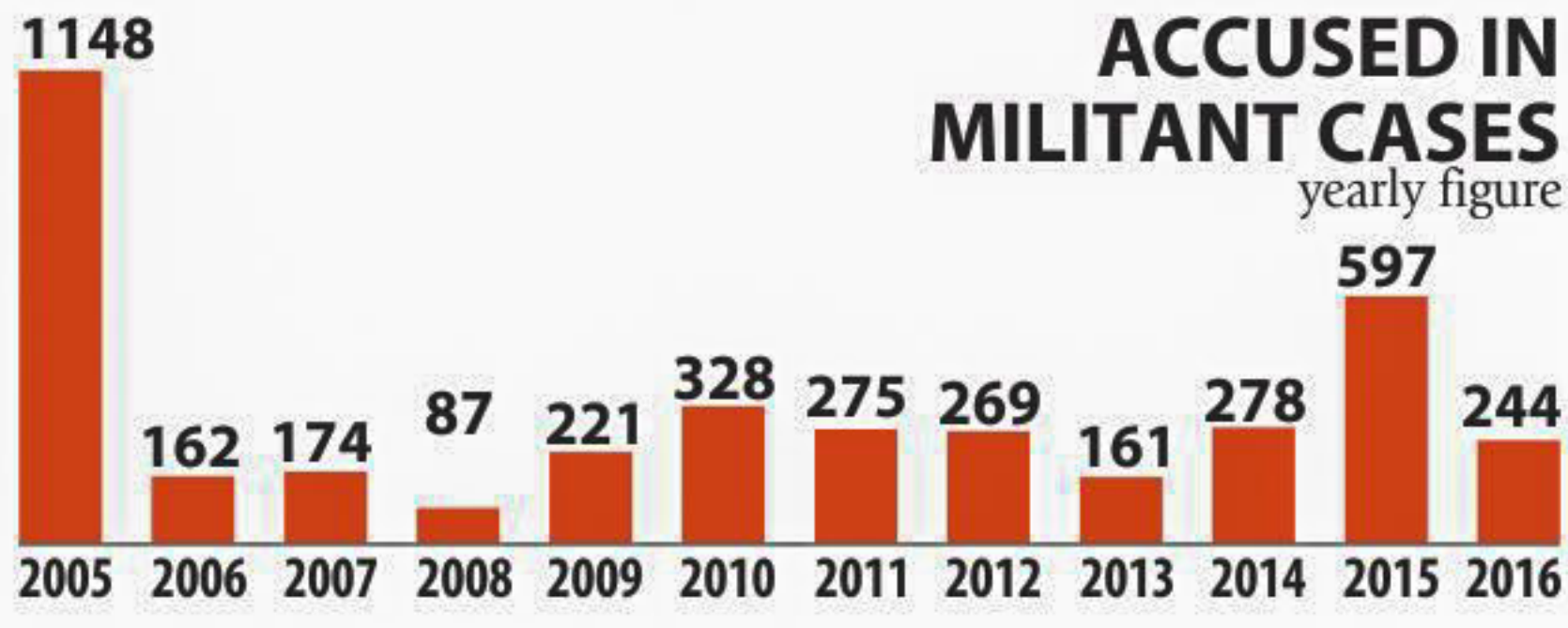
SHARIFUL ISLAM

The country saw a phenomenal rise in militancy last year when the number of accused militants was the highest after 2005, another year severely plagued by Islamist extremism.

The police record shows 597 persons were sued for terror links last year when at least 25 people were killed in 26 targeted attacks by suspected militants.

The dead include Bangladeshi-American writer Avijit Roy, bloggers Niloy Neel, Ananta Bijoy and Oyasiquar Rahman and Avijit's publisher Faisal Arefin Dipan.

2015 would go down as a dark year also for the murder of an Italian NGO worker, a Japanese citizen, an attack on an Italian priest, a blast at an Ashura procession of Shia community and a suicide attack on an Ahmadiyya



mosque, among other incidents.

Ansar Al Islam, which is said to be the Bangladesh chapter of al-Qaeda in Indian Subcontinent, and global terror group Islamic State reportedly claimed credit for the attacks, while the government said those were acts of home-grown militants, especially JMB.

This year, the number of accused militants stands at 244 so far. From 2006 to 2014, the yearly figure of such

accused hovered between 87 and 328.

From early 90s till 2005, there were only 182 accused in such cases.

On August 17, 2005, banned militant group Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) blasted at least 459 time bombs simultaneously across the country -- in 63 out of the 64 districts.

On November 29 the same year, a suicide bomber walked into the office

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The Payra seaport in Patuakhali has been decorated with colourful flags as Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will inaugurate its operations through a video conference from the Gono Bhaban today. The photo was taken yesterday. Story on page 16.

PHOTO: STAR

HASNAT, TAHMID

Investigators permitted to check photos

## Another mastermind of café attack named

Police identify him as Marzan; 5 JMB men held with explosives; they came to Dhaka 'for suicide bombing'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police have identified a "top-level militant organiser" who they claim was in charge of the Gulshan café attack and also a coordinator of the bloody siege.

The Gulshan attackers sent pictures and updates to this man, who is known as Marzan by his handlers and fellow militants, police claimed.

Marzan later sent those pictures to Tamim Chowdhury, a suspected mastermind of the café attack.

Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime unit chief Monirul Islam said this while briefing reporters yesterday on the arrest of five suspected members of Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh in Mirpur.

The five JMB members were nabbed from near the Technical intersection in Mirpur around 9:00pm on Thursday with explosives and detonators.

They are Atiqur Rahman alias Atiq, Abdul



Marzan

Karim Bulbul alias Dr Bulbul, Abul Kalam Azad, Motiur Rahman and Shaheenur Rahman Himel alias Tareq. They all left their homes several months ago, Monirul told newsmen at the DMP media centre.

Law enforcers believe the five came to the capital to carry out suicide attacks.

During primary interrogation, they admitted that they were sent to Dhaka from different northern districts to fill in the gap created following the killings of their nine associates during a raid at a Kalyanpur den, police said.

Police seized 875 grammes of explosive gel and 25 detonators from their possession. The gel was to be used as raw materials for grenades. After receiving training, they planned to make grenades and carry out major subversive activities, said Monirul, also additional commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police.

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## 3 'criminals' killed in 'shootouts'

STAR REPORT

Three alleged criminals were killed in separate incidents of "gunfights" with law enforcers in Dhaka, Khulna and Jhenidah yesterday.

In Dhaka, the "gunfight" took place between a group of seven to eight alleged drug peddlers and Rapid Action Battalion members at Postogola in Kadamtoli area around 4:15am yesterday.

Delwar Hossain Liton was found lying on the spot after the incident, said Jahangir Hossain Matubbar, commanding officer of Rab-10.

He was taken to Midford Hospital where doctors pronounced him dead, the Rab official added.

The deceased was a drug trader and an accused in several cases filed with Jatrabari Police Station.

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## Blasts rock Thailand

Four dead in 11 bombings; 10 foreigners wounded as 3 popular tourist towns targeted

AFP, Hua Hin

A string of bomb attacks hit popular tourist towns across Thailand, leaving four dead and many wounded, with authorities yesterday ruling out terrorism despite suspicions insurgents in the kingdom's deep south are responsible.

In the normally peaceful resort town of Hua Hin, blood-spattered tourists were treated by rescue workers as forensic teams

picked through the rubble, with police scrambling to reassure visitors the situation was under control.

"This is not a terrorist attack. It is just local sabotage that is restricted to limited areas and provinces," national police deputy spokesman Piyapan Pingmuang said in Bangkok.

No one has claimed responsibility for the 11 bombings, and the seemingly

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## Mixed bag for Bangladesh

ATIQUÉ ANAM from Rio de Janeiro

Bangladeshi athletes produced mixed results on Day 7 of the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro on Friday.

While sprinter Shirin Akter failed to even qualify for the first round of heats, swimmer Sonia Akter did an admirable job and bettered her previous best. Elsewhere golfer Siddikur Rahman was trying to forge a comeback after having disappointed massively on the opening day.

Shirin failed to qualify for the first round of heats after finishing the preliminary heat of 100m sprint with a time of 12.99 seconds, which is one second more than her officially recorded best time. The former BKSP student finished 17th out of 24 athletes in the preliminary heats, with eight athletes from this round eventually qualifying for the first-round heats.

Swimmer Sonia, meanwhile, finished third in her heat of 50m freestyle swimming -- and 69th among 88 competitors -- with a time of 29.99 seconds, 0.90 seconds better than her previous best set in Kazan last year.

There was some good news too from the



An improvement in the second round yesterday, when he shot a one-under-par 70, somewhat made up for Bangladesh golfer Siddikur Rahman's first-round misadventure as he sits in joint-46th position at the Olympic Golf Course in Rio de Janeiro.

PHOTO: MONIRUL BHUIYAN

## 2 children murdered brutally

Their mother missing



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two siblings were hacked to death in their home in the city's North Bashabo yesterday evening.

The dead are Mashrafe Bin Mahub Abrar, seven, a madrasa student; and Humaira Bin Mahub Takia, six, who was admitted to a local school this year.

Police and relatives suspect the two were killed by their mother Tanzin Rahman, 28, who is said to be mentally unstable.

She remains missing since the incident. Police were collecting evidence from the scene around 1:00am today.

Mahubur Rahman, a computer operator at Wasa, and Tanzin have been living at

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