



Suicide blast at Rab barrack

IS 'claimed responsibility' hours after lone attacker blew himself up; 2 Rab men hurt; home minister terms IS claim 'propaganda'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A suspected suicide bomber sneaked into a Rab barrack and blew himself up in the capital's Ashkona yesterday, in what appears to be the country's first such attack by a terror suspect inside a law enforcement agency's compound.

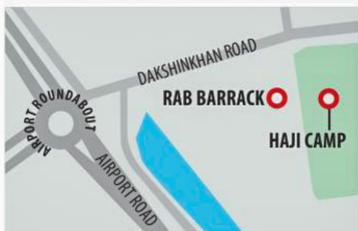
Terror group Islamic State claimed credit for the attack, reports BBC Bangla.

The attacker, who is yet to be identified, died instantly while two Rab members suffered splinter injuries.

All prisons across the country have been put on alert while security has been stepped up at all domestic and international airports and Rab offices following the attack.

Hours after the incident that happened around 1:00pm, At-Tamkin, a pro-Islamic State Bangla blog, said in a post that the attack "was carried out by an explosive belt".

US-based SITE Intelligence, which moni-



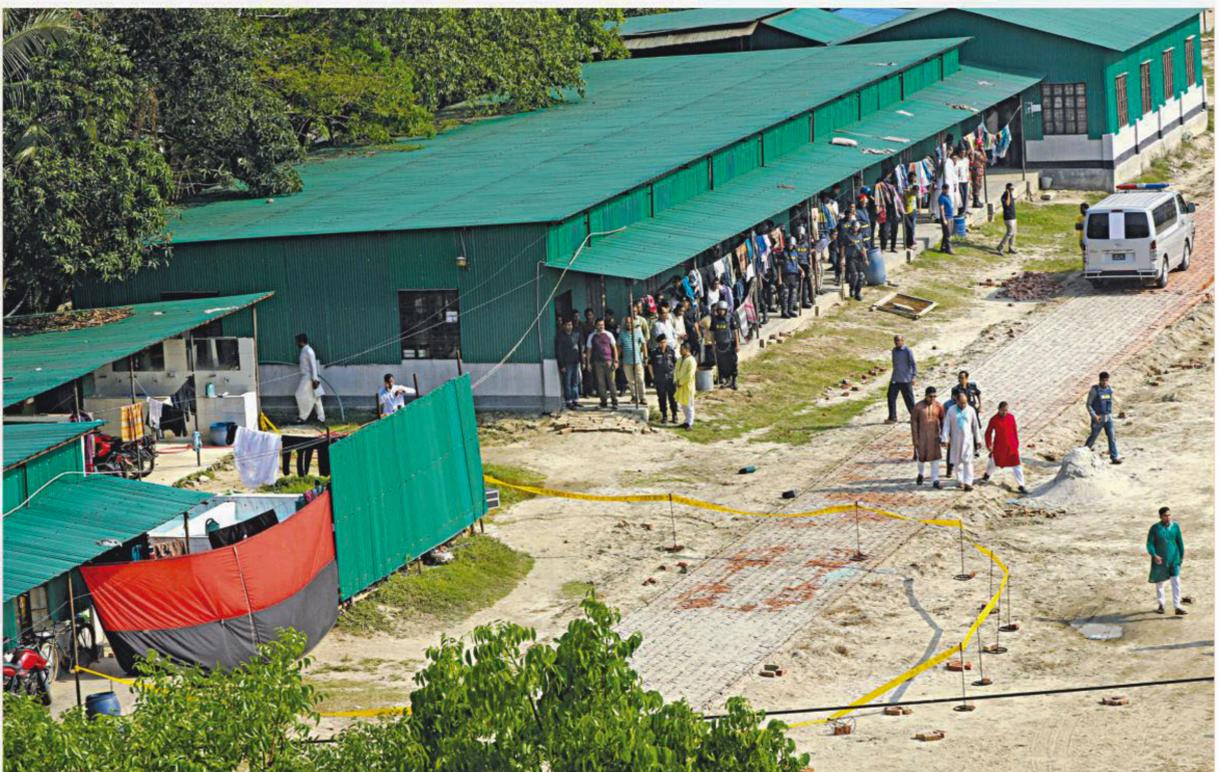
tors jihadist activities, also reported the attack.

Both At-Tamkin and SITE cited Amaq, the Islamic State's news agency, as their source.

The Bangladesh government denies IS's presence in the country.

Contacted, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal said, "It's propaganda and an attempt to force the IS brand on us.... Why would the IS come here?"

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5



The barrack of the Rapid Action Battalion in the capital's Ashkona where a man, believed to be a suicide bomber, sneaked in and blew himself up injuring two members of the elite force yesterday. The spot has been cordoned off with yellow tape.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

SIMILAR ATTACKS

NOVEMBER 14, 2005
2 judges killed in Jhalakathi, attacker injured (JMB)

NOVEMBER 29, 2005
7 killed at Gazipur Bar Association; attacker killed (JMB)

NOVEMBER 29, 2005
2 killed at Ctg Court building; attacker killed (JMB)

DECEMBER 8, 2005
8 killed at Netrakona Udichi Office; attacker killed (JMB)

DECEMBER 25, 2015
3 injured at Ahmadiyya mosque, Rajshahi; attacker killed (Neo JMB)

DECEMBER 24, 2016
1 Injured at Ashkona, Dhaka; female attacker killed (Neo JMB)

Not only Ctg, 3 nearby dists have 'Neo JMB' dens

2 militants killed in Sitakunda raid were cousins missing from Dhaka since August last

STAR REPORT

Counterterrorism officials suspect that "Neo JMB" militants have built their hideouts in Cox's Bazar, Bandarban and Rangamati districts apart from Chittagong.

"The militants have set up dens in those areas as it would help their safe movement through the sea. A plan to recruit Rohingyas could be another reason," an official of the Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) unit of the DMP told The Daily Star yesterday.

The official said he came to know this after quizzing Ahmed Azwad Imtiaz Talukder alias Omi, a "Neo JMB" leader in decision-making position of the outfit.

The capital has become very unsafe for the militants as many of their members were arrested and killed in pre-emptive operations by law enforcers, he added.

Another CTTC official, who also interrogated Omi, said the suspected militant told them that there are three dens of

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

PM for united efforts to curb militancy

BSS, Tunjipara, Gopalganj

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said people's united efforts can enable the nation to combat militancy and terrorism.

She called upon people, particularly the guardians, members of the law enforcement agencies and imams of mosques, to extend their support to the government to build Bangladesh as a peaceful nation.

The PM was addressing a children's rally marking the 98th birthday of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at Bangabandhu Mausoleum Complex.

Hasina urged all to take care of their children, monitor their presence in school and take necessary measures if they were found involved in any militant

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

Shakib puts Tigers on top



Bangladesh debutante Mosaddek Hossain (R) hugs Shakib Al Hasan after the latter's century on the third day of the second Test against Sri Lanka at the P Sara Oval in Colombo yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

SAKEB SUBHAN from Colombo

Call it resiliency or a perverse desire to prove naysayers wrong, but Bangladesh have made it a habit of turning in a stellar performance when their fans or critics least expect it. They did it on the first day of their 100th Test match at the P Sara Oval in Colombo after a 259-run thrashing less than a week ago in Galle, and they did it in even more spectacular fashion on the third day yesterday. It was apt that the player who exemplifies the aforementioned qualities, Shakib Al Hasan, was one of the main actors in Bangladesh's revival with his fifth Test century.

After ending the second day with a spell of play that



produced three wickets for six runs in seven balls, followed by batting from Shakib that could only be described as reckless as Bangladesh went to the close 124 runs behind and with five wickets in hand, the visitors ended the third day with a lead of 75, although Sri Lanka finished without loss with 52 runs on the board in 13 overs. There was time enough for Dimuth Karunaratne to be dropped by skipper Mushfiqur Rahim off Subashis Roy off a difficult chance down the leg side, but it could not take much of the gloss off a wearing pitch and their position in the match.

Before that, Shakib's century and a 75 on debut from

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



A doctor treating a girl at Kohinoor Eye Hospital in Savar on the outskirts of the capital. The hospital was established by Kohinoor Akter who is blind. Kohinoor, not in the photo, has not eaten any rice for the last five years, a vow she intends to keep until she can employ qualified doctors at her hospital.

PHOTO: AKLAKUR RAHMAN AKASH

Eye hospital for poor

Savar blind woman sets up hospital at tin-shed house, faces financial hurdles to make her initiative effective

AKLAKUR RAHMAN AKASH with ANDREW EAGLE

For the last five years Kohinoor Akter, 48, originally from Madaripur but who lives in Dhaka's Savar, has not eaten a single grain of rice. She took a vow that until she is able to staff her Kohinoor Eye Hospital with three qualified ophthalmologists, rice would stay off the menu. The blind woman, whose dream is to establish a quality hospital, yet waits.

"Only one who can't see knows the true value of sight," she says. "I decided to establish an eye hospital because many people in Savar suffer from the lack of an eye hospital. I want to provide good treatment at low cost for the poor and to employ visually-impaired people as well. If such a hospital had existed when I was young, perhaps I wouldn't be blind."



Kohinoor Akter

Kohinoor lost her eyesight at the age of seven, the result of a smallpox infection. It was only a few years thereafter that she sought hospital treatment. There was nothing to be done.

Nonetheless Kohinoor pursued education, graduating with a Bachelor of Arts from Mirpur Government Bangla College in 1994. That same year she married a Bangladeshi expatriate working in Saudi Arabia, but after only three days of marriage he left to return to the Middle East and never contacted her again.

"I am trying my best to set up a good quality hospital," she says. "Due to financial crises and other problems it isn't easy."

In 2003, the Kohinoor Eye Hospital first opened its

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

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