

IN OUR HEARTS, IN SILENCE

BANGLADESHIS



FARAAZ AYAAZ HOSSAIN, 20
He was the grandson of Latifur Rahman, chairman of Transcom Group and Shahnaz Rahman, and son of Simeen Hossain, managing director, Eskayef Bangladesh Limited, and Muhammad Waquer Bin Hossain. He was completing his undergraduate studies at the Emory University in Atlanta, USA, and came to Dhaka on May 18 to spend his summer holidays.



ISHRAT AKHOND, 45
She worked as a human resources director at ZXY International FZCO and Arts Provocateur at Institute of Asian Creatives, Dhaka. According to her relatives and friends, she was always jolly, cheerful and loving. On June 26, 2016, Ishrat updated her Facebook status: "Key to happiness is to stay away from negative people, even if you know them for long. Stay blessed."



ABINTA KABIR, 19
A US citizen of Bangladeshi origin, she was a student of Oxford College of Emory University in the US. She came to Dhaka on June 27 to visit her family and friends on summer vacation. She is the daughter of the chairperson of Elegant Group that owns Lavender Superstore in Gulshan.



RABIUL KARIM, 34
Rabiul Karim, assistant commissioner, DB, is one of the two officers who got killed as they responded to the hostage crisis immediately. He established a kindergarten named "Kabi Nazrul Bidyasiri" and a school named "Blooms" for physically-challenged children at his village. He used to bear all the cost of the schools. Splinters hit him in his chest during the attack.



SALAUDDIN KHAN, 49
The officer-in-charge of Banani Police Station suffered splinter wounds in his throat. He bled excessively, which led to his death. He left behind his wife Remkim, two children and a host of well-wishers. Born in Bankpara village of Gopalganj Sadar in 1967, Salauddin joined the police as a sub-inspector in August 1991. He was posted to Banani Police Station in 2015.

INDIAN



TARISHI JAIN, 19
She was an Indian citizen in Bangladesh. She was studying Economics at the University of California, Berkeley. She was in Dhaka on summer vacation and was among those trapped inside the café.



MARCO TONDAT, 39
He was a young businessman in textile sector of Cordovado (Pordenone) and worked for StudioTex Ltd. He was the father of a six-year-old daughter.



VINCENZO D'ALLESTRO, 46
A native of Caserta, Piedmonte Matese, he moved to Acerra (Naples) in October 2015. He was born in Wetzikon, Switzerland.



NADIA BENEDETTI, 52
Benedetti, managing director of StudioTex, a company with headquarters in London and a branch office in Dhaka, had been living in Bangladesh for 25 years. She had previously lived in Italy and Kenya.



MARIA RIVOLI, 33
Rivoli of Lombard lived in Solza with her husband and three-year-old daughter. She worked in textile sector and was on a business trip. She was in Bangladesh for several months before the attack.

ITALIANS



ADELE PUGLISI, 50
Adele, from Catania worked at Artsana as the quality control manager. She was planning to travel back home on July 2 (the day after the attack).



CLAUDIO CAPPELLI, 45
For over five years, Italian worked in Bangladesh with his textile company, which produced T-shirts, clothing and bedding. He lived in Vedano al Lambro in the province of Monza.



CRISTIAN ROSSI, 47
The Italian lived in Bangladesh for 15 years before going back to Italy. He was on one of his occasional business trips. He had intended to return home the day before the attack, but had to delay his departure to finalise a business contract.



CLAUDIA MARIA D'ANTONA, 56
She was the managing director of Fedo Trading Ltd, an Italian textile company operating in Bangladesh. She lived in Dhaka for over 20 years with her husband, Gian Galeazzo Boschetti, the sole Italian survivor of the attack.



SIMONA MONTI, 33
Monti, who worked in a textile firm, was seven months pregnant. She was supposed to return home soon from a long vacation. She lived in the town of Magliano Sabino in Rome.

JAPANESE

KOYO OGASAWARA, 56
Ogasawara of Katahira & Engineers International was an environmental impact assessment expert. He was scheduled to return home on July 5.

MAKOTO OKAMURA, 32
He was a transportation systems expert. He worked for ALMEC Corporation, a consulting company in Shinjuku Ward, Tokyo.

YUKO SAKAI, 42
The Japanese was an engineer of ALMEC Corporation, a consulting company in Shinjuku Ward, Tokyo.

RUI SHIMODAIRA, 27
He was an engineer of ALMEC Corporation, a consulting company in Shinjuku Ward, Tokyo.

NOBUHIRO KUROSAKI, 48
He used to work for Oriental Consultants Global, a Tokyo-based construction consulting company.

HIROSHI TANAKA, 80
He worked for Oriental Consultants Global. He was a former research engineer for the Japan National Railways. He was in Dhaka to do a traffic congestion survey.

HIDEKI HASHIMOTO, 65
He used to work at a Tokyo-based construction consulting company.

[The seven Japanese were involved in the work to improve the traffic situation in Dhaka, according to NHK, Japan's national public broadcasting organisation]

Darkness befalls Road 79

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Italians and another group of Japanese.

Around 8:45pm, the diners heard a loud sound like that of a firecracker. Shouting "Allahu Akbar", five youths carrying weapons including semi-automatic rifles, grenades and machetes burst into the eatery and started firing indiscriminately.

Shrieks and screams pierced through the air. Panicked and bewildered, the diners ducked under tables, scurrying for safety.

Holding the diners hostage, they sorted out non-Muslim targets by a grim test of reciting verses from the Holy Quran.

The worst-ever hostage crisis then unfolded before the nation. It wasn't until the next morning, around 12 hours later, that para commandos broke the siege, killing six attackers.

What the commandos found was traces of mindless butchery. Twenty hostages, including 17 foreigners, were brutally murdered with the restaurant's floor strewn with bodies and blood. Two police officials and a chef of the restaurant were also killed during the standoff.

Amidst the terror and bloodbath that shook the country to its core, a young man -- aged only 20 -- stood out as an example of courage, friendship and humanity.

Faraaz Ayaz Hossain, who went to the restaurant to meet his friends, could have walked free but refused to abandon his friends, choosing to stay with them even in the face of terror and death.

Faraaz, a student of Emory

University in Atlanta, Georgia in the US, and his friends Abinta Kabir, a US citizen of Bangladeshi origin and of the same university, and Tarishi Jain, an Indian and a student of the University of California, Berkeley, were among those killed.

The Gulshan attack, carried out by IS-inspired outfit known as Neo JMB, formed by a faction of Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), served as a wake-up call for the government and triggered a massive hunt for militants and a crackdown on terror networks.

Law enforcers succeeded in busting a number of militant dens through counterterrorism operations. The mastermind of the attack -- Tamim Ahmed Chowdhury, a Bangladeshi-origin Canadian -- was killed during one such drive a month later on August 27, 2016.

Tamim spearheaded Neo JMB after coming to Bangladesh in 2013 and took charge as its chief in 2015. On July 11 that year, his group joined mainstream JMB leader Sarwar Jahan Manik's group. Sarwar was also killed in a drive on October 8, 2016.

Since the Holey Artisan massacre, law enforcers have carried out 20 high-risk anti-militancy operations where 63 militants were killed, as of last month. As many as 535 other militants have been arrested during the same period of time, added Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) unit officials.

NEW LEADER, NEW TACTICS
Five years after the mindless massacre, containing future activities of Neo JMB remains a big challenge as it is

attempting to re-emerge with new tactics.

The militant outfit is now focusing on rearranging its military wing. It is forming teams using Islamic scholars to recruit people, according to an intelligence report.

The outfit declared Abul Abbas Al Bangali alias Mahadi Hasan Jon as its new ameer last year. Mahadi is now running the outfit's activities from Turkey, according to intelligence sources.



However, Neo JMB is mulling appointing a new ameer as Mahadi is facing difficulty operating in Bangladesh from abroad, they said.

According to the intelligence report, obtained by The Daily Star, the outfit's future plan is to conduct "drone attacks" at important establishments

HC may begin hearing soon in Gulshan attack case

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

The High Court is expected to start its hearing soon on the death reference and appeals of the Holey Artisan attack case, as the case paper book has already been prepared by the office concerned of the court.

A paper book contains all the case details, trial proceedings, statements, evidence, orders, verdict, and other relevant documents. The book is necessary for the HC for holding the hearing and disposing of a death reference or an appeal.

According to the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), if a lower court orders the death penalty, the verdict is to be examined by the HC for confirmation of the punishment.

Now the HC is supposed to examine the lower court judgment in the case by holding a hearing of the death reference.

The officials and staff concerned of the HC were delayed by a few months to prepare the paper book of the case for the ongoing pandemic, court sources said.

Supreme Court Spokesperson Mohammad Saifur Rahman told The Daily Star on June 23 that the paper book has been prepared.

"After the relevant procedures are completed, Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain will assign an HC bench for hearing and disposing of the death reference of the case," he said.

He, however, could not say whether the convicts have filed an

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Living in the memories of loved ones



Rabiul's widow and kids.

PHOTO: STAR

MUNTAKIM SAAD and ZAHANGIR SHAH

Sami lost his father a year ago.

Thinking of his father, the eight-year-old often cuddles his uncle Shamsuzzaman Shams while he sleeps.

Mohammad Rabiul Karim, an assistant commissioner of the Detective Branch of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, was killed by terrorists during the July 1 hostage-taking at the Holey Artisan Bakery last year.

Rabiul's daughter Raina, aged eleven months, was not even born when he passed away. The little girl kisses her father's photographs as if she would feel the warmth of his love.

His wife Umme Salma and other family members miss every little thing about him. The family now lives at a rented home in Ambagan area near Jahangirnagar University.

Salma said Rabiul was a good husband, father, brother and a responsible son.

"People knew him as an amiable and selfless man. I hope my children would follow their father's ideals."

The DB official managed some time from his busy schedule to take his son with him on pleasure trips.

Shams said his elder brother was not only an honest police official, but also a patriot and dedicated social worker.

In 2011, he founded a school, Beaconing Light Organisation of Mankind and Society (BLOOMS), for special children in Katigram village of Manikganj. It has 41 students now.

The DMP official used to bear all the school expenses, including for uniform, tiffin, books, stationery and a school van.

The school is now run with financial support from his well-wishers. However, guardians, teachers and students are worried about its future.

Shams said the school managing committee and his family members

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TIMELINE

JULY 1

- Five terrorists storm the Holey Artisan café at 8:45pm
- 19 hostages, including 16 foreigners, killed within 30 mins
- One more foreigner killed a couple of hours later
- 31 police officials injured in grenade attacks around 10:30pm
- Rab DG urges TV channels to stop live coverage at 11:20pm

JULY 2

- Banani OC Salauddin declared dead at 12:14am
- DB AC Rabiul Islam pronounced dead at 1:08am
- SITE Intelligence reports at 1:26am that 15 claimed responsibility
- Meeting held at the Gono Bhaban among the PM, chiefs of the three services and top officials of law enforcement agencies around 3:00am
- Army, navy, police, BGB, Rab and SWAT prepare for commando operation around 5:00am
- Army-led "Operation Thunderbolt" begins at 7:40am
- The operation ends at 8:30am; 5 militants, one chef killed

WHAT FOLLOWS

Eight firearms, including three AK-22 rifles, seven magazines, and 129 bullets recovered

Police file case with Gulshan Police Station on July 4, 2016

Investigation finds 21 people involved; five of them were killed on the spot and eight in anti-militancy drives later. The other eight are in jail.



Police pressed charges against the eight on July 23, 2018; six of them gave confessional statements

211 shown as prosecution witnesses; number of seizure list 13

Court framed charges against the eight on November 26, 2018

Trial proceedings began on December 3 last year and ended on October 27, 2019

Verdict on November 27, 2019; seven sentenced to death; one acquitted



FILE PHOTO

and its members are now trying to collect funds for this.

It has planned to hack cable TV networks in the country to recruit others to join their militant outfit. It has formed a team to buy arms from home and abroad, sources said.

Rahmatullah Chowdhury, chief of the bomb disposal unit of CTTC, said Neo JMB operatives are now trying to collect drones and explosives to make drone IEDs (improvised explosive devices).

about how to make IEDs through video tutorials. "Every member of the outfit now knows how to make an IED and it will be a challenge to control Neo JMB in upcoming days," he said.

Intelligence officials said Neo JMB's present strategy is now to bring all outfit members under a single platform and form a separate cell to conduct sabotage activities.

The outfit is also trying to get its arrested members out of jail and attack law enforcers as revenge, states the report.

According to intelligence officials, main targets of the IS-inspired outfit are police, religious institutes, mazars, NGO staff, and ruling Awami League members.

While it recruits members and communicates internally through online platforms like Telegram and Facebook, the military wing's activities are totally offline, the report also stated.

Md Asaduzzaman, chief of the CTTC unit, told The Daily Star that the activities of the militant outfit are largely under control because of the operations of CTTC and other law enforcement agencies.

"Their activities are based only in cyber space -- motivating and recruiting new members, doing publicity of their content to radicalise people -- which is under our watch," he said.

ROAD TO JUSTICE

Following the massacre, a case was filed with Gulshan police under the Anti-Terrorism Act.

On July 23, 2018 the CTTC unit submitted a charge sheet against eight

militants to a Dhaka court.

Thirteen other militants were also found to be involved in the attack. Their names were not included in the charge sheet as they had been killed in different anti-militant drives across the country.

The court recorded testimonies of 113 witnesses -- including survivors, victims' family members, police personnel, and restaurant staffers -- and closing arguments from both the prosecution and defense counsels. It delivered a verdict on November 27, 2019.

The court sentenced seven militants to death for their involvement in the attack, terming it a disgraceful attack aimed at assassinating the country's "non-communal character".

The seven death-row convicts are Jahangir Hossain, Aslam Hossain Rash, Hadisur Rahman, Rakibul Hasan Regan, Md Abdus Sabur Khan, Shariful Islam Khaled, and Mamunur Rashid Ripon.

The Anti-Terrorism Special Tribunal acquitted one of the accused, finding him not guilty of the atrocity.

"Through this disgraceful attack, an attempt was made to assassinate the non-communal character of Bangladesh. Foreigners here suffered from a sense of insecurity. The positive image of Bangladesh, known for peace and harmony, was tarnished a bit," said the court in its verdict.

Now the High Court will examine the lower court judgement through holding hearings on the death reference. The HC is expected to start hearings soon, according to court sources.