

Radical Islamists Stab Christian to Death in Sneak Attack

Suspected Islamist militants stabbed a Christian convert to death in northern Bangladesh on Tuesday, the latest in a series of attacks on minorities in the Muslim-majority nation.

The South Asian country has seen a surge in Islamist violence in which liberal activists, members of minority Muslim sects and other religious groups have been targeted.

Police said three attackers came on a motorbike and stabbed Hossain Ali, 68, while he was having his morning walk in Kurigram, north of Dhaka.

"They left the scene exploding crude bombs to create panic," Kurigram district police chief Tobarak Ullah told Reuters by telephone.

Ali converted to Christianity from Islam in 1999, he added.

"We are not sure whether Islamist militants carried out the attack," he said, adding that the pattern of killing bore the hallmarks of recent attacks by Islamist militants.

Three men were picked up for questioning, he said.

Over the last few months, Islamic State has claimed responsibility for the killings of two foreigners, attacks on members of minority Muslim sects and other religious groups, but police say domestic militant group Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen is behind the attacks.

At least five militants of Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen have been killed in shootouts since November, as security forces have

stepped up a crackdown on militants seeking to make the moderate Muslim nation of 160 million a sharia-based state.
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