

Bangladesh Arrests Alleged Islamist Recruiting in Rohingya Camps

From the [Irrawaddy news](#), an independent newspaper in English and Burmese, founded by Burmese exiles living in Thailand.

Dhaka – A counterterrorism commander in Dhaka has announced the arrest of a Bangladeshi who trained as an Islamist militant in Afghanistan and was recruiting in Rohingya refugee camps.

Dhaka Metropolitan Police's counterterrorism chief Md Asaduzzaman told the media that Fakhrul Islam donated funds to attract Rohingyas towards extremism.

He said Fakhrul, a weapon trainer, was somewhat successful at recruiting in the camps. His son Saiful Islam, 24, Suruzzaman, 45, Abdullah Al Mamun, 46, Din Islam, 25, and Mohammad Abdullah Al Mamun, 46, were also arrested in Dhaka on Friday for their association with banned extremist organization Harkat-ul-Jihad al-Islami Bangladesh.



Fakhrul Islam and the other suspects are presented to the media in unexplained outfits at the counterterrorism police headquarters in Dhaka on Saturday. / DMP

The Al Qaeda-inspired group was accused by Bangladeshi security agencies of carrying out deadly attacks in the early 2000s.

Fakhrul went to work in Pakistan in 1988 and crossed the border to fight in Kandahar province before spending three years in Iran. He then returned to Bangladesh through Pakistan and India in 1998, according to the counterterrorism officer.

Officers seized nine mobile phones, which are believed to have been used for spreading extremist propaganda and bomb-making instructions.

Asaduzzaman said Fakhrul and the five others have refused to speak to the police, Dhaka's Metropolitan magistrate Mehedi Hasan on Saturday placed the men on a three-day remand.

Internal affairs minister Asaduzzaman Khan on Thursday warned that "terrorists" might lure Rohingyas refugees in Bangladesh into extremism if the community was not rapidly repatriated to Myanmar. Asaduzzaman said the Rohingya community was involved in smuggling methamphetamines into Bangladesh while others were engaged in killing community leaders in the camps where over 1 million Rohingya are held. *One of the reasons that Burma doesn't want them back, especially as they consider them to be illegal immigrants from Bangladesh, either economic migrants or encouraged for the purpose of Islamising the Burmese demographic. Not that that is reason not to treat fellow humans with basic decency, in those occasions where my western ideas of decency have not coincided with local opinion.*

Bangladesh's Rapid Action Battalion on January 23 announced the capture of two suspected members of the allegedly extremist Jamaatul Ansar Fil Hindal Sharqiya group after a shooting incident near the Kutupalong camp in Cox's Bazar.

RAB said they arrested the group's "military wing chief" Masukur Rahman Ranbir, also known as Masum, and "bomb expert"

Abul Bashar Mridha, also known as Koy.

The RAB's legal director Khandaker Al Moin accused Masukur of recruiting young people from across the country and providing military training.