

Foreigner resembling prime suspect in Thai bombing arrested

29/08/2015 19:20 by admin

Bangkok: A suspected Turkish national resembling the prime suspect in the Brahma Temple bombing was today arrested and several bomb-making tools and materials seized in the first detention in Thailand's worst attack that killed 20 people and injured over 100 others.

"We have detained one person," deputy national police chief General Chaktip Chaijinda told reporters but police would not confirm the nationality of the detained person who local media said was Turkish.

"We have found components of bomb-making materials in his apartment and I am confident that he is likely involved with the bomb attack," he said.

National police spokesman Prawut Thavornsiri said in a televised statement that police had also found detonators, metal pipe with lids at the suspect's apartment during the raid this afternoon.

The 28-year-old man, who was not identified and was arrested from his rented apartment in Nong Chok district in a suburb in eastern Bangkok, was also found in possession of multiple passports.

The materials included 0.5mm-diameter ball bearings that were similar to the type used with the bombs that exploded at the shrine and at the Sathorn Bridge a day later. Colonel Banphot Phunphien, spokesman of the Internal Security Operations Command (ISOC), was quoted by a media report as saying that the arrested man "is a Turkish national".

"He carries many passports. It's unusual how he carries so many passports," Banphot added. His arrest was made after about 100 police and troops surrounded the apartment acting on a tip-off in which the suspect was renting two rooms. They surrounded the building on Soi Chuamsamphan 11 for about two hours before making the raid.

Thai police had released a sketch of a young bespectacled "foreign man" as prime suspect in the August 17 bombing who was captured on CCTV wearing a yellow T-shirt and placing a backpack on a bench inside the Erawan Brahma temple's compound and walking out just before the explosions. He is believed to be part of an over 10-member network and authorities had announced a reward of 1 million baht for information leading to his arrest.

The man arrested "looks like the one we are looking for," Prawut said, adding officers had found "several passports belonging to one country" but did not specify which one. However while he was speaking, photo passport page of a Turkish national named Adem Karadag and pictures of a number of Turkish passports wrapped in rubber bands were broadcast. Prawut said the investigators would question him to find out his links to the two blasts.

Twenty people were killed and 127 others injured in the bombing which took place during the evening rush hour at the popular tourist destination. The second blast on August 18 near Sathorn canal did not cause any injuries.

- PTI