

Those who couldn't recite from Quran were tortured, say rescued hostages in Dhaka terror attack

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Dhaka: The attackers involved in Bangladesh's worst hostage crisis had asked their victims to recite from the Quran in order to decide on whom to spare, a leading Bangladeshi daily said today on its website.

“Those who could recite a verse from the Quran were spared, others were tortured,” a rescued hostage was quoted by the Daily Star as saying.

Twenty foreigners, including an Indian girl, were killed by ISIS militants in a terror attack at a popular bakery in Dhaka's high-security diplomatic zone on Saturday.

The deceased foreigners, most of them being Italian or Japanese were brutally murdered with sharp weapons by ISIS militants before elite commandos stormed the cafe and killed the militants, ending Bangladesh's worst hostage crisis.

While six militants were gunned down, the security forces captured one of their associates.

Rezaul Karim, father of Hasnat Karim who was held hostage for over 10 hours, told that those who could not recite from the Quran were tortured and beaten by the Islamic State militants.

“They (gunmen) did not behave rough with the Bangladesh nationals. Rather they provided night meals for all Bangladeshis,” he report quoted another rescued hostage as saying.

“The gunmen were doing a background check on religion by asking everyone to recite from the Quran. Those who could recite a verse or two were spared. The others were tortured,” he further added.

Though the Islamic State claimed responsibility for the attack, according to CNN, senior US officials believe that the attack has been probably carried out by al-Qaeda in the Indian Sub-continent, which was declared as a terrorist organisation by the US only a day earlier.

The Muslim-majority Bangladesh has witnessed a wave of deadly attacks on religious minorities and secular bloggers by suspected Islamist militants.

A 48-year-old Hindu priest was today stabbed and critically injured by unidentified assailants in Bangladesh's Satkhira district.

Earlier yesterday, a Hindu priest and a Buddhist leader were brutally hacked to death by machete-wielding Islamic State militants while another Hindu man survived a bid on his life.

- (With PTI inputs)