

Bangladesh: At least 11 Islamist militants killed in three separate raids

08/10/2016 19:57 by admin

Dhaka: In an ongoing crackdown against Islamic extremism in the South Asian nations, at least 11 suspected Islamist militants were killed in Bangladesh in three separate raids outside the capital Dhaka on Saturday, a top government official said.

The suspects were the members of the banned group Jumatul Mujahedeen Bangladesh, or JMB, which the government has blamed for a deadly attack in July at a restaurant in Dhaka, said Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan.

The men were killed in operations in the Dhaka suburb of Gazipur and the central district of Tangail, Khan said.

Officials said the raids began Saturday morning based on information that the militants were in the area.

Some firearms, bullets and meat cleavers were found during the raids, said Mufti Mahmud Khan, a spokesman for the Rapid Action Battalion, which was involved in the raids.

Bangladesh has recently been hit by Islamist extremists, with the July 1 restaurant attack leaving 20 hostages dead, including 17 foreigners. Since that attack, the government has intensified its crackdown on suspected militant groups and killed some top JMB leaders.

The Islamic State group claimed responsibility for the restaurant attack, but authorities have denied that, saying it was the act of JMB, and that the IS has no presence in the Muslim-majority country.

- (With input from AP)