

IS claims responsibility for Dhaka airport 'suicide attack'

25/03/2017 21:19 by admin

Dhaka: The Islamic State has taken responsibility for a blast in front of a police box at the entrance to Dhaka's Shahjalal International Airport, describing it as a "suicide attack".

Terrorism monitoring group SITE Intelligence tweeted that the militant group's mouthpiece Amaq news agency reported the "suicide bombing" in the Bangladesh capital near the airport on Friday night, in which the bomber was killed.

"For the 2nd time in one week, #ISIS claimed a suicide bombing in the #Bangladesh capital #Dhaka, the latest targeting a police checkpoint," SITE said in another Twitter message.

An airport police officer had initially said it was a "suicide attack", but Dhaka Metropolitan Police later ruled it out as an attack of that nature, Bdnews24 reported.

DMP Commissioner Asaduzzaman Mia said that it is suspected that the man was carrying a bomb in the bag.

He declined to comment on whether militants were involved in the blast, which occurred a week after what the law-enforcing agencies said was a suicide attack on a RAB camp in nearby Ashkona.

Meanwhile, the security forces on Saturday launched a final assault on a suspected militant hideout in Sylhet city, after a 30-hour siege, that began in the early hours of Friday. Over 50 persons were evacuated from a building on the outskirts of the city.

Commandos launched the assault "Operation Twilight" at a complex housing two buildings in Shibbarhi area. The area was cordoned off by the security forces.

Police said the militants were holed up in a flat on the ground floor of one of the buildings. They said that at least two militants -- a male and a female -- were believed to be in the flat.

According to the report, gunfire was heard twice in the area. No other details were available.

Heavily armed members of the law-enforcing agencies surrounded the complex.

An Army officer said that the soldiers were leading the assault and "the SWAT was only helping them".

A police official said a search operation in Sylhet was carried out after getting information that militants have taken shelter in the district.

After finding the hideout at Shibbarhi on Thursday, police locked the flat from outside and cordoned off the complex early on Friday.

Police came under attack later in the morning. The suspects shouted "Allahu Akbar" while hurling grenades at the law enforcers. Police officials retaliated by opening fire, and the cordon was extended to the entire area, Sylhet Metropolitan Police Additional Commissioner Rokan Uddin said.

Reports said 17 families from one of the buildings at the complex were evacuated on Friday. They were kept in a school in the area throughout the day. The families stranded in the flats of another building were told to keep their doors and windows shut.

- (With IANS inputs)