

Bangladesh scholars suspect Pakistan's hand behind attack on bloggers

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Dhaka: With the recent killings of three secular bloggers in Bangladesh by fundamentalists, the country's intellectuals here are suspecting Pakistan's hand behind the brutal attacks and feel that an international intervention is required to ensure their safety.

“These attacks may be executed by radical elements here but the brain behind those attack is Pakistani establishment who have been vehemently opposing trials and sentences of war criminals,” said Imran H Sarkar, a leading blogger of the country, and one of the main architects behind the 2013 Shahbag protests.

Bloggers, who have been constantly living under the threat of being killed by the fundamentalists, feel that Bangladesh government should be more proactive in stopping the attacks on bloggers and intellectuals of Bangladesh.

“Those attacks on bloggers and threats to liberal minded intellectuals are a handiwork of Jamaat-e-Islami and other radical fundamentalist elements,” Sarkar said.

In the last six months, three bloggers were brutally hacked to death for being vocal against religious fundamentalism and demanding severe punishment for the war criminals of 1971 Bangladesh Liberation war.

The brutal killings of bloggers started in February this year with the killing of American-Bangladeshi writer Avijit Roy, 42, in February followed by another blogger Washiqur Rahman, 27, in March and Ananta Bijay Das, 33, in May.

All of them were critical of the rise of fundamentalism and demanded severe punishment for the war criminals. Several other bloggers and online activists too have been receiving threats.

“We all are living under a constant reign of fear that we might be killed any day.

In order to infuse the sense of fear all the three have been killed so brutally. Because the fundamentalist and their handlers are very well aware of the power and the movement that bloggers and online activists can organise. The Shahbag movement has proved it.

The bloggers are easy targets as they don't belong to any political party,” Sarkar told PTI. Sarkar's view was shared by another blogger and intellectual Kamal Pasa Chowdhury, who feels that attack on bloggers can only stop if there is an international intervention either by the US or UN to ensure safety and security of bloggers.

- PTI