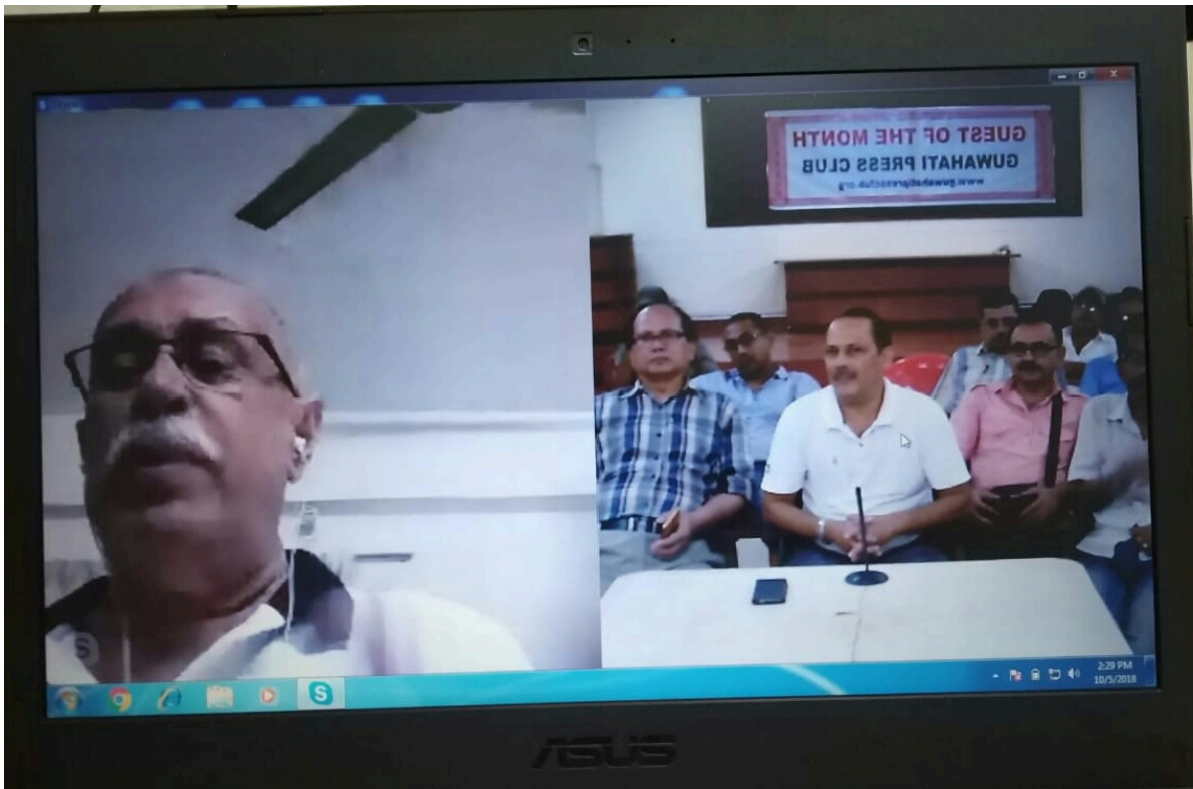


## LATEST NEWS

### 'Islamist fundamentalists in Bangladesh a threat to northeast India'



Nava Thakuria · 08:36, 6 Oct 2018 · 11025 views · 3 min read



**Guwahati:** Rise of Islamist extremism in Bangladesh ([/taxonomy/term/2420](#)) is not only posing a serious threat to the Muslim ([/taxonomy/term/2482](#)) dominated country, but also to its neighbouring north-eastern States of India ([/taxonomy/term/2367](#)) along with West Bengal. Speaking to a group ([/taxonomy/term/2415](#)) of scribes at Guwahati Press Club from Dhaka through internet on Friday, prominent Bangladeshi journalist Saleem Samad made this comment.

An Ashoka Fellow and Hellman-Hammett Award recipient journalist also added that an upsurge of fundamentalist forces in Bangladesh (/taxonomy/term/2420) poses serious threats not only to the religious minority communities there, but also to the secularists, intellectuals and other sects within the Muslim (/taxonomy/term/2482) community.

Samad narrated how atheist & secularist bloggers are increasingly becoming the target of the Islamist forces in Bangladesh (/taxonomy/term/2420), which has otherwise slowly (but steadily) marched on the path of becoming a country of one nationality (Bangladeshi), one language (Bengali) and one religion (Islam, more precisely Sunni Muslim (/taxonomy/term/2482)).

The outspoken journalist made an observation that due to overwhelming majority of Sunni Muslims (/taxonomy/term/2128) in the country, among whom considerable rise of extremism is observed, other minority sects within the Muslim (/taxonomy/term/2482) community like Shia, Ahmadiya etc also face serious threat of survival.

Citing how a network of Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (/taxonomy/term/2420) was busted in West Bengal few years back, Samad urged the north-eastern States to remain alert about jihadi elements. He revealed that thousands of Bangladeshi youths had already joined various militia groups in Syria, Iraq, Palestine, Afghanistan, Pakistan etc to fight (/taxonomy/term/2073) alongside the jihadis there.

Answering queries from Guwahati scribes, the senior journalist reiterated that currently there is no northeastern militants in Bangladesh (/taxonomy/term/2420) as the Sheikh Hasina government in Dhaka continues rigorous crackdowns against the outfits. Samad made it clear that Prime Minister Hasina would leave no stone unturned to weep out militancy in the country.

A front runner for media rights (/taxonomy/term/1990), Samad painted a dismal picture of press freedom in Bangladesh (/taxonomy/term/2420), as journalists are frequently targeted by both State and non-State actors. He regretted that though 26 Bangladeshi journalists lost their lives to assailants since 1991, not a single accused has been convicted till date.

In another significant remark, Samad, who works as special correspondent at The Bangladesh (/taxonomy/term/2420) Monitor and contributes news-features to India (/taxonomy/term/2367) Today, has divulged that none of the Indian leaders (/taxonomy/term/2082) visiting Dhaka had taken up the issue of illegal Bangladeshi infiltrators in Assam (India (/taxonomy/term/2367)) with their host counterparts.

Speaking about the process of National (/taxonomy/term/1874) Register of Citizens updation in Assam, Samad asserted that for the Bangladesh (/taxonomy/term/2420) government it is an internal affair of India (/taxonomy/term/2367) only and hence it has not made any official statement over (/taxonomy/term/2166) the development. He agreed that there were little media coverage in Bangla media over (/taxonomy/term/2166) the NRC updation process and its outcome.

Strongly advocating people-to-people contact between Assam (India (/taxonomy/term/2367)) and Bangladesh (/taxonomy/term/2420), Samad lamented how the State had missed the bus despite being so closely located, while other States like West Bengal and Tripura (/taxonomy/term/1738) were taking several steps to improve connectivity with Bangladesh (/taxonomy/term/2420) via railway and roadways.

Advocating a regular bus and air services between Guwahati and Dhaka, Samad opined that trade (/taxonomy/term/1790) & commerce along with cultural ties would help in erasing many misconceptions prevailing on both sides. He also claimed that more students and patients are expected to move from here to there & vice versa for better options and would enhance the tourism in both parts of the international divide.



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