

## Bangladeshi militants charged for shooting Italian missionary

Father Piero Parolari worked as a doctor at a church-run hospital Bangladeshi militants charged for shooting Italian missionary



*Father Piero Parolari sits wounded in a helicopter after being shot in Dinajpur, some 350 km north of Dhaka, on Nov. 18 last year. Islamic militants shot the Italian priest; just weeks after two foreigners were killed in similar attacks. (Photo by AFP)*

A district court in Bangladesh's northern Dinajpur district accepted a police charge sheet against seven suspected Islamic militants on July 16 for shooting an Italian Catholic priest last year.

Submission of a police charge sheet marks the formal beginning of court procedure over criminal cases in Bangladesh.

All those charged are from the banned local militant outfit Jamaatul Mujahedin Bangladesh, said investigating officer Bazlur Rashid of Dinajpur police.

"The court has accepted a charge sheet against seven militants and ordered the release of three whose involvement in the case was not proved. We have already arrested four of the suspected militants and we continue our efforts to nab the three others," Rashid told ucanews.com.

Assailants shot 64-year-old Father Piero Parolari from the Pontifical Institute for Foreign Missions on Nov. 18 in Dinajpur while he was riding a bicycle.

Bishop Sebastian Tudu of Dinajpur expressed hope that justice could be delivered.

"Legal justice is a lengthy process in Bangladesh, yet we hope to see justice as the court has accepted the charge sheet. We expect justice to be delivered in the quickest possible time," Bishop Tudu told ucanews.com.

"We would like to see the real culprits behind the attack get punishment, and don't want to see the case become a tool for scoring political points," he said.

Father Parolari, a medical doctor, lived in the town for about 30 years where he mostly served at the church-run St. Vincent Hospital. He also helped at the Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in the town.

After he was shot, the priest was treated in a local hospital and then was shifted to the Bangladeshi capital Dhaka for better treatment. Father Parolari was later moved to his home country Italy, where he remains.

A priest on behalf of the local church filed a murder case a day after the attack and police then launched an investigation.

Muslim-majority Bangladesh has seen a surge in Islamic militancy since 2013. Islamic militants have killed dozens of people, including secular bloggers, writers, academics, foreigners and those from religious minorities. In the worst attack, a group of Islamic militants, armed with assault rifles, bombs and swords, massacred 20 hostages in a Dhaka cafe on July 1

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