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Gulshan attack 'coordinator' Marjan 'coordinator' Marjan a CU student: police

Staff Correspondent

POLICE in Pabna on Monday said that they identified the family of Nurul Islam Marjan, a Chittagong University student whom the Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime unit on Friday, branded as 'the coordinator' of the Gulshan cafe attack in Dhaka on July 1 which left at least 29 people dead.

Pabna police, however, could not say whether Marjan is missing or arrested.

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The police superintendent of Pabna, Alamgir Kabir, said that Marjan's family claimed that they had been in dark for three years about Marjan's whereabouts.

But eight months ago the man visited his village home and got married to his cousin sister, Pabna police chief said.

Another police official told New Age that they found that the needy family of Marjan lives in Apuria village of Hemayetpur union under the district headquarters.

His father Nizam Uddin told the media that his son was third among the 10 children.

The family and neighbours told the media that Marjan studied in a local primary school and in a local madrassah.

On completion of his Alim examinations from Pabna Alia Madrassah, he got admitted to Chittagong University's Arabic and Islamic studies department.

The varsity's Arabic and Islamic studies department chairman, Mohammad Ismail Chowdhury, on Monday evening said that they were trying to verify Marjan's identity.

His colleague Humayun Kabir said they have no idea about Marjan. However, one Nurul Islam, son of Nizam Uddin of Pabna, got admission three years ago, Kabir said.

'Nurul Islam dropped out for over two-and-a-half-years ago. He did not continue after his first year,' Kabir said.

Hemayetpur Union Council member Dulal Uddin said Marjan does not have bad reputation in the locality.

'We knew him as a good student,' said Dulal.

The CT unit on Friday said that they found one 'Marjan' had coordinated the Gulshan cafe attack.

Many detained suspects named Marjan during questioning. Also, investigators gathered some evidences during recent raids at 10 extremists' hideouts that led to his name.

The CT chief Monirul Islam said Marjan was not present at the crime scene but coordinated the Gulshan massacre from Kalyanpur, in the city.

Earlier, investigators had named Bangladesh origin Canadian citizen Tamim Chowdhury, who goes by the name, Shaykh Abu Ibrahim Al-Hanif, as leading a group of militants in Bangladesh, closely linked to Daesh, also known as

Islamic State, and, Bangladesh army's deserted Major Syed Muhammad Ziaul Huq, who, the authorities said had planned to topple the Awami League government in January 2012.

Police authorities on August 2 had announced Tk 20 lakh bounty for any information leading to the masterminds of the attacks on Holey Artisan Bakery, Solaikia police outpost, as well as people behind Kalyanpur hideouts where nine alleged extremists were killed in a raid.

Meanwhile, police picked up Marjan's father for interrogation in the evening and Pabna police were interrogating him, said a CT official in Dhaka, preferring anonymity.

He said the man would be taken to Dhaka, if needed, after interrogation in Pabna.