

Tk 1.5cr looted from Sonali Bank in Bandarban; manager abducted

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Online Desk: Members of the militant group Kuki-Chin National Front (KNF) looted approximately Tk 1.5 crore from Sonali Bank's branch in Ruma, Bandarban, in a brazen robbery that will surely ramp up tensions in the hills.

The incident occurred during Taraweeh prayers. The robbers looted 14 weapons from the Ansar members guarding the bank and abducted the bank manager, Nizam Uddin, from the mosque on the bank premises.

An eyewitness said that at 8 pm on Tuesday, a group of KNF men on motorcycles arrived in the Hathimatha Para area of the upazila. One group went to the bank, while another group split off and went to the mosque and the upazila officer's quarters. They broke into the bank vault and looted the cash. Bank officials believe that 1.5 to 2 crore taka was looted.

The eyewitness, who requested anonymity, said that the terrorists looted 14 weapons from the Ansar members guarding the bank and abducted Nizam Uddin, the manager of Ruma Upazila Sonali Bank, from the mosque during Taraweeh prayers. They also entered the officers' quarters in front of the bank and took hostage the upazila engineer, Md. Saiful Islam, and took away the money kept for various works.

Ruma Police Station Officer-in-Charge (OC) Muhammad Shahjahan said that the 'hilltop-based armed terrorists' looted the bank's money and weapons and abducted the bank manager. He said that he was at the scene of the incident and that members of the law enforcement forces and the army were present in the area.

Confirming the incident, Sonali Bank Bandarban District Branch Manager Rajan Kanti Das said that he was informed of the incident but had not yet been able to contact the bank manager.

He said that on Tuesday, the salaries and bonuses of the employees for Eid were taken to the bank. At night, the armed terrorist group attacked Sonali Bank. They looted the cash from the bank, along with 14 weapons and the bank manager, Md. Nizam Uddin. However, it is not yet known how much money was taken from the bank. It is believed that the terrorists looted Tk 1.5 to 2 crore.

Bandarban District Police Additional Superintendent of Police (Administration and Finance) Hossain Md. Raihan Kazemi said that the incident of bank robbery, arms looting and abduction had taken place. He said that an emergency meeting was underway with the district police and the army. He said that further details would be provided later.