

Punishment not enough to dissuade youths from militancy

Counter Terrorism chief says

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) Additional Commissioner Monirul Islam yesterday said punishment is not enough to dissuade youths from getting involved in extremism.

"Extremism can't be stopped by hanging or imprisoning the extremists; extremism generates in the brain," said Monirul, also chief of Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) unit of DMP.

"We want to address this and stop young minds from being corrupted," he added.

Monirul made the remarks while speaking at a workshop, held at Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy in the capital.

Darshak Shrota Pathak Foundation, in association with seven other organisations -- including Utsarga Foundation and CTTC -- arranged the workshop titled "Tarunner Bangladesh". Youths from different districts took part in the event.

Seeking cooperation from the youths, the CTTC chief said youngsters have a major role to play in eradicating extremism from the country.

Law enforcement agencies alone cannot curb militancy and extremism; everyone must shoulder the responsibility, Monirul said.

"We need support from families, civil society, teachers, religious leaders, cultural personalities and so on. If they perform their duties with conviction, youths won't be misguided and won't take the destructive path of extremism," he added.

Darshak Shrota Pathak Foundation President Ziaul Hasan said youths played a vital role during the Liberation War in 1971, which helped the country achieve independence faster.

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It has been a long day for the sisters. They not only had to attend classes, but also tuition afterwards. The rickshaw ride seemed to have offered a much-needed break for them as the little one fell asleep on her sister's shoulder while their mother took them home. This photo was taken near the High Court on Thursday afternoon.

Qulkhwani of Syed Muazzem Ali held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Qulkhwani of former foreign secretary Syed Muazzem Ali was held after Asr prayers at Gulshan Azad Mosque in the capital yesterday.

Relatives, the foreign minister, friends, colleagues, and well-wishers of Muazzem were present at the Qulkhwani to pray for the salvation and eternal peace of the departed soul.

The veteran diplomat, a former high commissioner to India, breathed his last at the Combined Military Hospital (CMH) in the city on Monday. He was 75 years of age at the time of his demise.

To reminisce memories and contributions of Muazzem, Bangladesh High Commission in India organised a meeting at its office in New Delhi.

Participants at the event recalled the late envoy as an astute diplomat, fine human being, a brave freedom fighter and

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72nd founding anniversary of BCL today

Shovon, Rabbani not invited to celebratory reunion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) is going to observe its 72nd founding anniversary today.

The student body -- formerly East Pakistan Student League -- was formed in 1948 under the leadership of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, then a student leader and law student of Dhaka University.

Since its inception, the organisation has made significant contributions to national events including the Language Movement in 1952, Mass Uprising in 1969, Liberation War in 1971, and Anti-Autocracy Movement in 1990.

Marking the founding anniversary, a reunion is scheduled to be held at Suhrawardy Udayan this afternoon with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina as the chief guest.

Meanwhile, the student body has not invited its two top former leaders -- Rezwanul Haque Chowdhury Shovon and

Golam Rabbani -- to the reunion.

"We have not invited them as per the instruction of AL high command," said the organisation's acting president Al-Nahean Khan Joy.

Shovon and Rabbani were removed from the posts of Chhatra League president and general secretary on September 14, 2019 for their controversial activities and alleged abuse of posts.

According to several media reports, the top leaders of BCL were removed after Jahangirnagar University Vice-Chancellor Prof Farzana Islam alleged that Shovon and Rabbani demanded "four to six percent" cut from a Tk 1,445-crore project at the university.

On December 17 last year, the organisation relieved 21 central executive committee members of their duties amid allegations that some members of the committee were involved in irregularities and misdeeds -- including not being enrolled

in educational institutions, and engaging in extortion, drug dealing. Eleven other members of the central executive committee submitted resignation at different times.

Apart from the reunion, BCL has organised a three-day programme starting from today, according to a press release of the organisation.

Today's programme will include hoisting the national and party flags at party offices at 6:30am, placing wreaths at the portrait of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at Dhanmondi-32 at 7am, and cutting a cake at 8am in Curzon Hall on DU campus.

Other programmes include a voluntary blood donation drive on January 6 at Aparajeyo Bangla on DU campus, distribution of educational materials on January 7 at the same venue and donating winter clothes among the destitute in front of Shoparjito Swadhinata sculpture on the campus at 4pm the same day.

'Safe veggies for good health'

National Vegetable Fair kicks off

Bss, Dhaka

A three-day "National Vegetable Fair" began yesterday in the capital with an aim to motivate people to eat vegetables aplenty.

The main theme of this year's fair is "Safe Vegetables for Good Health and Nutrition". The event is being organised by the Ministry of Agriculture at Krishibid Institution, which will conclude on Sunday.

On the eve of the fair, President Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina issued separate messages. They said the theme of this year's fair is time-befitting as vegetables are essential for one's good health and nutrition.

President Hamid, in his message, said Bangladesh has earned massive success in the agriculture sector as the government has taken various initiatives for its development.

Currently, the country is ranked third across the globe for producing vegetables, he said. Besides achieving self-

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Vehicles squeeze through whatever vacant space is left on Phoenix Road, as lagunas have converted both sides of the road into a makeshift parking spot. This photo was taken recently near Nagar Bhaban.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

'Police threatening BNP leaders ahead of city polls'

Ruhul Kabir Rizvi claims

UNB, Dhaka

BNP yesterday accused law enforcement agencies of raiding houses of its leaders and activists and intimidating them ahead of elections to Dhaka south and north city corporations.

"The government is trying to cause problems [for us] over the city polls. Our Bangshal unit president and councillor candidate [Tajuddin Ahmed] Taj was arrested yesterday [Thursday]," said BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi.

"Police has started arresting our popular candidates to keep them away from campaigning," he added. Rizvi claimed the law enforcers were going to the houses of BNP leaders and activists and were intimidating them.

"Many of our councillor candidates told me that police have threatened to arrest them or create trouble for them if they contest the polls," Rizvi said.

The BNP leader came up with the

allegations at a press conference at the party's Nayapaltan headquarters.

Rizvi said they are joining the election braving all odds and enduring repression to expose the "despotic" attitude of the government.

Taj, who submitted his nomination paper to vie for Ward 32 councillor post in DSCC polls with BNP's support, was arrested on Thursday from Tikatuli intersection.

Rizvi said they have almost finalised their councillor candidates for the two city corporation elections.

They will complete the process by January 9, he added.

He also accused the jail authorities of barring the relatives of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia from meeting her for the last 19 days.

"It's a violation of the jail code," he said. He urged the government to take steps to allow Khaleda's family members to meet her.

ARSON CASE

BNP councillor candidate sent to jail

Bss, Dhaka

A Dhaka court yesterday sent BNP-backed councillor candidate Tajuddin Ahmed Taj to jail over a case lodged against him for torching vehicles. Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Ashek Imam passed the order.

Taju was set to stand in the forthcoming Dhaka South City Corporation election as a councillor for ward-32. He is the president of Bangshal Thana unit of BNP.

Earlier, Bangshal police produced him before the court on two cases including torching of motor vehicles.

Talking to the agency, OC of Bangshal Police Station Shaheen Fakir said Taju was an accused in several cases.

DHAKA TODAY

REPORT LAUNCHING
On Dhaka city's environment and liveability
Organiser: Bangladesh Institute of Planners
Venue: Planners Tower, Banglamotor
Time: 11am

DISCUSSION
Transgender Inclusive SRHR for Youth: Role of Media
Organiser: Right Here Right Now Bangladesh and BSWS
Venue: The Daily Star Centre
Time: 1pm

DEBATE
Theme: Sex education to address misogynistic view
Organiser: Debate for Democracy
Venue: BFDC, Tejgaon
Time: 11am

REPORT LAUNCHING
On road accident
Organiser: Nirapad Sarak Chai
Venue: Jatiya Press Club
Time: 11am

PET EXPOSITION
International Cat Show
Organiser: Bangladesh Cat Fanciers Society
Venue: Jamuna Future Park
Time: 11am

READING SESSION
Literary Encounter
Venue: Goethe-Institut Bangladesh
Time: 4pm

LITERARY ENCOUNTER
with The Missing Circle
Organiser: The Missing Circle
Venue: The Missing Circle
Time: 4pm

Strict security measures for ijtema: minister

Bss, Gazipur

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal on Thursday said the government has taken adequate security measures ahead of the first phase of Biswa Ijtema, which will begin on Friday on the bank of Turag river.

"We have taken fool-proof security measures for Muslim devotees in and around the Ijtema ground," he told a preparatory meeting of the ijtema on its premises in Gazipur.

He said law enforcers -- including police, Rab, BGB and Ansar -- will be deployed on the ground and entry points of the venue.

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'An ideal politician'

Syed Ashraf's first death anniversary observed

STAR REPORT

The first death anniversary of former general secretary of Awami League and public administration minister Syed Ashraful Islam was observed with due solemnity yesterday.

Marking the day, Awami League, its front and associate organisations paid rich tributes to Syed Ashraf by placing wreaths at his grave in Banani in the morning, reports BSS.

On behalf of Awami League President Sheikh Hasina, party General Secretary Obaidul Quader paid homage to Ashraf. Flanked by senior leaders, Quader also placed another wreath at Ashraf's grave on behalf of AL.

He said Ashraf was an idol for the country's politicians and his sacrifice and contributions will be remembered forever.

Syed Ashraf was an ideal politician. He was elected [AL] general secretary two times in a row, Quader said. "He will remain an example [for politicians] to follow."

Quader was accompanied by AL Joint General Secretary Mahbubul Alam Hanif, Cultural Affairs Secretary Asim Kumar Ukil, Information and Research Secretary Dr Selim Mahmud, Education and Human Resources Secretary

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Accompanied by party leaders, Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader places a wreath at Syed Ashraful Islam's grave in Banani yesterday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED