

Dhaka doesn't harbour any int'l terrorist

Babar tells US security adviser

UNB, Dhaka

The US government will continue to provide all forms of assistance and remain engaged with Bangladesh at all levels to promote understanding and fight international terrorism, says an American security adviser.

Juan Zarate, deputy national security advisor to the Bush administration, offered the cooperation during talks with Bangladesh Minister of State for Home Affairs, Lutfuzzaman Babar at the White House on Tuesday.

According to a message received in Dhaka from Bangladesh Embassy in Washington, the state minister assured the US security adviser that the government would continue vigilance so that "no terrorist elements can find safe haven in Bangladesh."

In this context, Babar sought US cooperation in enhancing the capacity of law-enforcement agencies of the country.

The minister, now visiting Washington, DC, on an invitation from the US government, made it clear that "Bangladesh does not harbour any international terrorist and that so far no Bangladeshi national has been found involved in any act of terrorism".

Juan Zarate recognised Bangladesh as "a leading country in promoting moderation in Islam" and as an example where "Islam and democracy coexist" in complete harmony. He also termed Bangladesh a leader in the global community on women empowerment.

The US security adviser expressed the satisfaction of his government over the very bold and far-reaching action taken by the government of Bangladesh in the fight against terrorism, the message said.

Earlier in the day, the minister had met the Acting Attorney General James Comey at the Department of

Justice. The attorney general expressed satisfaction over the prevailing excellent level of cooperation between the two countries.

It was agreed that details on further cooperation would be worked out between relevant agencies of the two governments as follow-up to the visit.

Later, the state minister for home affairs met Director of the newly formed Directorate of National Intelligence John Negroponte, who described Bangladesh as a "major voice of moderation".

He also called on Republican Senator John Sununu at the US Senate and apprised him of various measures taken by the government in bringing to justice the perpetrators of all political violence in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh Ambassador to the United States Shamsher M Chowdhury and other high government officials accompanied the state minister.

Rab changes tactics, arrests three

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

On the second day of its new strategic drive, the Rapid action Battalion nabbed three criminals from the capital and Tongi yesterday.

Rab-1 arrested Masud alias Chora Masud, a bodyguard of slain criminal Shahabuddin and an accused in the killing of guard Motaleb in Karwan Bazar, from Cargo administration building at Zia International Airport at 2:30pm yesterday.

Rab-4 nabbed Panna alias Kabir alias Russel, an accomplice of Mirpur top-criminal Taj, and Mohammad Shah Alam, both listed criminals accused of killing, extortion and robbery in Kafrul, Pallabi and Ibrahimpur areas, from Tongi at the zero-hours Wednesday.

Rab's new strategy, introduced on Tuesday, started functioning in the major cities of the country.

"We are changing our strategies and intensifying our activities to curb criminal activities in the country,"

Abdul Aziz Sarker, Director General (DG) of the elite force, told The Daily Star.

Mobile teams, both in uniform and civil dresses, have started raiding different spots in the cities and 120 teams comprising around 1,500 Rab members are working in the capital, Rab sources said.

"We will deploy such teams in most of the cities in the country," the Rab DG added.

The teams will be equipped with modern vehicular movement detection devices, thermal imaging cameras, secret video cameras and bugging devices.

The teams will be deployed in slums, diplomatic zones, entry points in the city, major bus and truck stands, important intersections, and other sensitive spots, sources said.

Rab on the first day of its drive captured bullet-hit Jalil in Rupganj in Narayanganj district while he was allegedly robbing a village.

20 more illegal structures demolished in DND area

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Authorities yesterday evicted some 20 illegal structures from the drainage canals in Dhaka-Narayanganj-Demra (DND) embankment area.

Officials of Narayanganj district administration and Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) continued the eviction drive for the second consecutive day. The decision to remove illegal structures was taken in Sunday's inter-ministerial meeting.

Sirajul Haq, sub-divisional engineer, (DND irrigation) of BWDB said, "We have evicted some 20 illegal structures today from Jalkuri, Borobanga and Zia Sarani-Shonir Akhra drainage canals."

When asked about excluding giant encroachers and evicting only small ones, he denied the allegation and said, "We are giving two days' time to the business centres, which have heavy machinery to shift."

He said that apart from evicting encroachers they are excavating the drainage canals at Pagla in Narayanganj and Zia Sarani-Shonir Akhra drainage canal in Demra.

Waterlogging has brought misery to thousands of people in the DND area following heavy rain last month and early this month.

Despite pumping out water with the help of the DND pump house at Shimrail and 13 more small pump machines installed at various points,

a large part of the DND area is still waterlogged.

Awami League leaders visit DND Area

Senior Awami League (AL) leaders yesterday visited the waterlogged DND area. They alleged that the ministers and ruling lawmakers are mainly responsible for the prolonged waterlogging there, as they have constructed many illegal structures filling up the drainage canals.

AL General Secretary Abdul Jalil and Presidium Member Abdur Razzaq firmly expressed their views that without evicting the constructions owned by the ruling party members, waterlogging problem cannot be solved.

Ainjibi Samannay Parishad rally tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Sammilita Ainjibi Samannay Parishad, an organisation of pro-opposition lawyers, will hold a grand rally on the Supreme Court Bar Association premises in the city tomorrow morning.

At the rally, the Parishad will press for its various demands, including implementation of the 12-point directive of the Appellate Division regarding the separation of the judiciary, appointment of judges on the basis of merit, and a corruption-free judicial system.

Modern device installed to detect lung diseases

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

For the first time in Bangladesh, a private diagnostic centre has installed a new device to detect all kinds of lung diseases.

The LabAid has installed the Pulmonary Function Test (PFT) machine that would detect the lung diseases.

"It is an important addition to the medical service and the patients need not go abroad for lung check-up," said Dr AKM Mosharraf Hossain, assistant professor of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU), at a press conference in the city.

LabAid bought the PFT equipment from an Italian company, COSMED.

Prof Dr Motiur Rahman, chief cardiologist of LabAid, and Dr FM Siddique were present at the press conference.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Special Branch (SB) of police yesterday detained four foreigners from Kakrail in the capital in the act of distributing copies of a religious book.

The SB handed the detainees – two young women, a youth and a middle-aged man – to Paltan Police Station.

Paltan police said they do not know the foreigners' identities as no-one of them can speak Bangla or English.

Deputy Commissioner (East Division) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police Mahbub Alam said the foreigners were detained as they could not show documents of their visit to Bangladesh.

They were distributing complimentary copies of a Bangla book titled Soja Path to preach Christianity in front of the Scout Building at around 1:30pm, he added.

Mahbub said police will release the detainees once they submit their documents.

He asked the Chinese embassy in Dhaka to send an interpreter as the detainees speak a language similar to Chinese, but the embassy did not send anyone.

A total of 25 participants from 13 organisations of Bangladesh and India took part at the inaugural session.

Communication ministry to sue land grabbers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The National Road Transport Advisory Council at a meeting yesterday decided to file criminal cases against the illegal occupants and encroachers of lands under Roads and Highways Department and Bangladesh Railway.

Communications Minister Nazmul Huda, who chaired the meeting at his ministry, said a committee formed by the prime minister has finalised its report with suggestions for specific actions for stoppage of toll collection in the road transport sector.

He, however, observed that many decisions taken at the previous meetings of the committee were not implemented.

It was reported in the meeting that the roads and highways department so far evicted 1,213 illegal structures.

The minister asked the highway police to immediately stop the locally made shallow tube-well engine run unsafe vehicles Nasimon, Karimon and Votvoty on

the highways.

Communications Secretary Shafiqul Islam, divisional commissioners, additional commissioners, director general of railway, leaders of different road transport associations, police officials, representatives of the home ministry, LGRD ministry, labour and employment ministry attended the meeting.

The meeting also decided that highway police will have internet access to the BRTA's computerised data for checking of transport documents such as tax token, registration, and license that will help to minimise road accidents, robbery and mismanagement on the roads.

The meeting decided to buy 19 weighing machines to check overloading of trucks that create pressure on the roads and culverts.

The Sharak Paribahan Samity leaders present at the meeting demanded stoppage of toll collection by different sections including police and BRTA officials and removal of brokers from the BRTA offices.

The British Council organises a seminar on 'How to apply through universities and colleges admission services in the

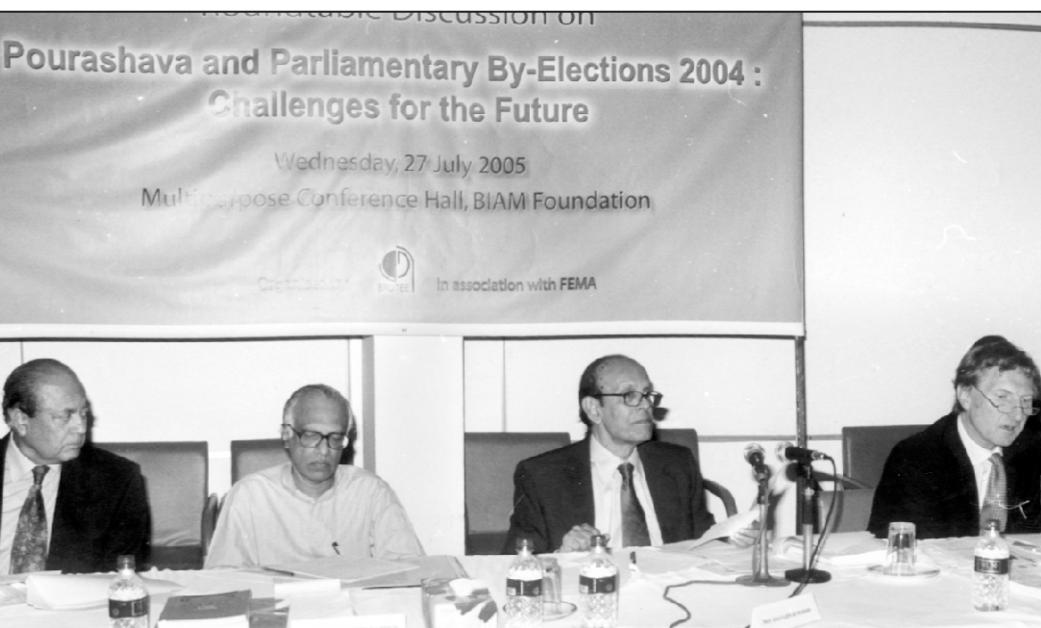


PHOTO: STAR

Professor Khan Sarwar Murshid speaks at a roundtable discussion on 'Pourashava and Parliamentary By-Elections 2004: Challenges for the Future' at the Biam conference centre in the city yesterday. On his right are Professor Wahiduddin Mahmud and Adviser to the BNP MM Rezaul Karim and on his left is Dutch ambassador Kees Beemsterboer.

DU authorities urged not to allow Dr Aftab to join pol science deptt

DU CORRESPONDENT

The Coordination and Development (C&D) Committee of the political science department of Dhaka University yesterday recommended the university authorities not to allow Dr Aftab Ahmed, former vice-chancellor of the National University (NU), to join the department for the greater interest of the academic activities and the students.

Dr Aftab, a teacher of the department, had been appointed the VC of NU on July 5, 2003, but he was removed from the post recently following allegations of his involvement in sexual scandal, corruption and irregularities in appointment at NU.

These allegations have tainted the image of the teachers and the reputation of the political science department, said the C&D committee members at a meeting yesterday.

The committee also said that his rejoining the department before a fair and complete investigation would lead to disruption in academic and congenial atmosphere.

Dr Aftab also taught two courses in the department while he was the VC of NU.

2 gold robbers arrested in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday arrested two robbers for looting gold ornaments from a jewellery shop in the city.

The two -- Farook Hossain, 28, and Mohammad Shakil, 22 -- along with four others, equipped with firearms, looted seven tolas of gold and 25 tolas of silver from Al Madina Jewellers at Adabor in the afternoon, police said.

When the employees of shop raised an alarm, local people rushed to the spot but managed to catch the two robbers.

The mob then beat up the two. Later, police rescued them from the wrath of the mob and took them to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

Adabor police said they recovered one tola of gold ornaments and 14 tolas of silver.

Driver gets 31 years' RI for killing helper

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sentenced a driver to 31 years' rigorous imprisonment for killing his helper Lal Miah in 1998.

Judge Shamsul Alam Khan of the First Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court handed down the verdict in the presence of the convict Mohammad Ali Hossain.

After cross-examination of 13 prosecution witnesses, the court gave the judgement.

According to the prosecution, truck driver Ali Hossain beat his helper to death following an enmity on December 12, 1998.

Later, a murder case was filed with Kotwali Police Station against Ali Hossain.

CASE AGAINST RAB ROBBERS Arguments on August 3

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday completed the cross-examination of witnesses in a robbery case against four Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) members and their two sources.

The case was filed against them for robbing Tk 7.8 lakh from a cattle trader in the city's Mirpur area on March 23.

Metropolitan Magistrate Towfiqul Alam recorded statements of 18 prosecution witnesses and fixed August 3 for arguments of the case.

The accused are Sergeant Atiqur Rahman, Sergeant Waliullah, Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) Rafiqul Islam, Constable Khorsheed Alam and sources Mofizur Rahman alias Babul and Masud Mridha.

Of them, Masud Mridha is still at large while five others are now in custody.

Sramik League Demand Day on July 31

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jatiya Sramik League, labour front of the main opposition Awami League, yesterday warned the government against manipulative interference in the election of collective bargaining agent (CBA) at different organisations.

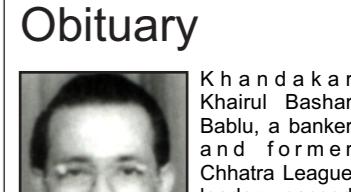
At a press conference at its Bangabandhu Avenue office, the Sramik League leaders said the government-sponsored elements might manipulate the election scheduled to be held at the Water Development Board (WDB) today to elect a CBA of their choice.

In the wake of repression on the Sramik League-supported CBA men at different places, the WDB election may turn into a farce, said league leader Abdul Matin Master while reading out a statement.

Labour movement in the country cannot gain momentum as a very insignificant number of workers are organised, said Sramik League General Secretary Roy Ramesh Chandra.

The league leaders said they would observe Demand Day on July 31 holding rallies in the capital, industrial areas and district towns to press home their demands.

Obituary



Khandakar Khairul Bashar Babul, a banker and former Chhatra League leader, passed away due to cancer at the Conscious Clinic in the city on Tuesday at the age of 59, says a press release.

He left behind his wife, one daughter, one son and a host of relatives and friends to mourn his death.

His namaz-e-janaza will be held at the Dhaka University central mosque at 9:00am today.

He will be buried at the Alipur graveyard after namaz-e-janaza at the Jatra Bank crossing in Faridpur town after Asr prayers today.

His Qukhawni will be held at his home at 'Nisarga Nir' at Khabashpur in Faridpur town after Asr prayers tomorrow.

Chehulum



Chuhulum of Hena Chowdhury, former director of Lioness Club of Dhaka Motijheel, will be held at her residence at 76, East Rampura in the city after Juma prayers tomorrow, says a press release.

She passed away due to cardiac arrest on June 17 at her residence.