

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, Lutfozzaman 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 Shamsheer 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 aliad Chora Masud, a bodyguard of slain criminal Shahabuddin and an accused in the killing of guard Moteleb in Karwan Bazar, from Cargo administration building at Zia International Airport at 2:30pm yesterday.

Rab-4 nabbed Panu 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 Kafur, 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 Sarkar, 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 at a village.

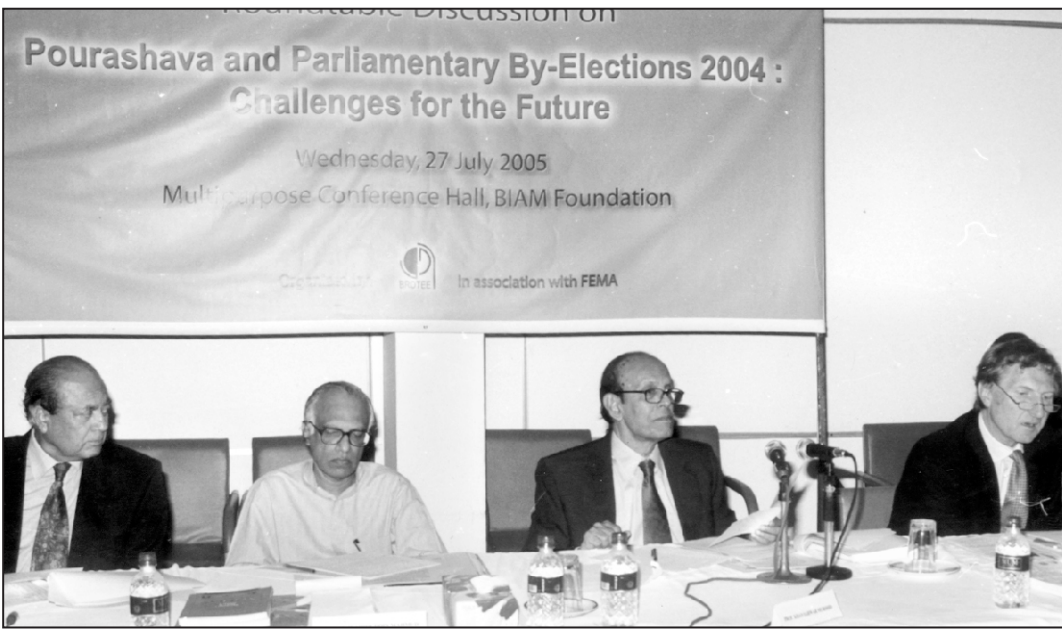


PHOTO: STAR

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 into the allegations 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.

It is alleged that he resorted to malpractice while giving marks to the BSS final year students of the department in their examination, the committee said.

Dr Aftab, prior to his joining the NU, had also served as the chairman of development studies department for two years without taking any permission from the political science department of which he is a teacher, the committee said, adding that such irregularity is not acceptable.

DU Vice-Chancellor Prof SMA Faiz told reporters yesterday that the authorities would take a decision on Dr Aftab according to the rules of the university.

The syndicate will take the final decision in this regard, he added.

Meanwhile, students of the political science department have split over the issue.

Most of the teachers of the department asked the students not to favour Dr Aftab for the greater interest of the department.

The teachers of the department met the DU VC on July 23 and told him to take necessary action so that Dr Aftab could not join the department. The VC then referred the matter to the C&D committee.

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 Adabar 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).

Adabar 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 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 three 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 body 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 President 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



Khairul Bashar Bablu, 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 Janata Bank crossing in Faridpur town after Asr prayers today.

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

Chehlum



Chuhlum 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.

Relatives and friends are requested to attend the chehlum.



PHOTO: STAR

Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh President AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury discusses a point with Jatiya Oikya Mancha Convenor Dr Kamal Hossain at a joint press conference in the city yesterday.

FAZILATUNNESA HALL Students say sorry, urge VC to meet demand

DU CORRESPONDENT

Students of Begum Fazilatunnesa Mujib Hall of Dhaka University submitted a memorandum to the Vice Chancellor Prof SMA Faiz yesterday urging him to withdraw the list of 21 students and meet their demands to bring back normalcy at the hall.

Saying sorry for the July 17 incidents that led all the house tutors to resign, the students said they are not responsible for the untoward incidents at the hall.

In the memorandum, they requested the house tutors, who resigned from the hall, not to take measures against 21 students for the incidents in the hall.



Saiful Islam awarded Bronze Wolf

The World Organisation of Scout Movement (WOSM) has conferred the Bronze Wolf, the highest award for world scouting, on Saiful Islam Khan, a former bureaucrat, poet and cultural personality, says a press release.

The 'Bronze Wolf' is awarded for outstanding services of the most exceptional character to the world scouting all over the world.

Saiful Islam Khan, widely known as Hayat Saif, is also a member of the World Committee of the International Union of Muslim Scouts and the Task Force (2006-2007) of the Asia-Pacific Region of World Scout Movement.

Upgrade healthcare for victims of trafficking Speakers say at workshop

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a workshop in the city yesterday stressed the need for upgrading healthcare facilities for the victims of trafficking.

They said the country faces a crying need for professional counselors and manuals to support the mental healthcare of the victims.

Even the victims at shelter home are at risk of mental breakdown due to lack of proper health care system, the speakers said.

They said a partnership programme between Bangladesh and India can provide necessary resource persons in counseling the victims of trafficking.

The two-day workshop titled 'Mental Health Care Support for the Survivors of Trafficking and Violence' has been organised jointly by Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM) and Don Bosco Ashalayam of West Bengal, India at Dam auditorium.

The workshop aims at formulating a syllabus and training methodology to upgrade the mental health care system for the organisations that work for the victims of trafficking and violence.

The South Asia Regional Initiative/Equity (SARIQ) is financing the programme.

Following a survey, the programme found that the nature and degree of traumatising of the survivors of trafficked and violence victims is quite higher than the training levels received by the counselors and other support staff in many caring organisations.

"As the mental assault remains unseen we don't pay heed to it and the victims have to bear the assault all through their life," said Dam President Kazi Rafiqul Alam.

He hoped that the workshop would be able to develop a manual, support system and network among the countries of the region for the rehabilitation of the ill-fated women and children.

Chairman of clinical psychology department of Dhaka University Dr Mahmudur Rahman presented a summary report on the survey.

Dam Deputy Executive Director M Ehsanur Rahman, SARIQ Project Manager Advocate Shirin Nahar and Prof Roquia Begum of Dhaka University were present on the occasion.

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

4 foreigners detained over distribution of religious books

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 Pallan Police Station.

Pallan 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 Mahub 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.

Mahub 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.

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 ply of locally made shallow tube-well engine run unsafe vehicles Nasimon, Karimon and Volvoty 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 licenses 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.

WEATHER TODAY

Moderately heavy falls likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at many places over the country till 6:00pm today.

Moderately heavy falls are also expected at places during the period, Met Office said.

Highest temperature 35.0 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sylhet and lowest 24.1 degree Celsius at Sandwip.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:44pm today and rises at 5:26am tomorrow.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	33.2	26.0	90	80
Chittagong	32.6	25.4	76	80
Rajshahi	32.4	26.6	98	77
Khulna	32.5	26.4	71	79
Barisal	32.0	26.2	86	87
Sylhet	35.0	25.2	80	77