

Anti-militancy drive to be strengthened: Asaduzzaman Khan

BSS, Dhaka

The law-enforcement agencies have been asked to remain alert against militancy and its network as the Awami League-led grand alliance is celebrating landslide victory in the national election, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan told the news agency yesterday.

The nationwide anti-militancy drive will be strengthened further in line with the government's election pledges as well as "zero tolerance policy" against any sort of terrorism, he said.

The home minister said the present government, under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, has been working for the welfare of the people during the last ten years.

The law enforcement agencies have been playing a supportive role in successful implementation of the present government's charter of change and Vision-2021 as the success of a government largely depends on the law and order situation in the country, Asaduzzaman said.

He said a vested quarter has been trying to hamper the country's progress and prosperity by carrying out militant activities but the government adopted a "zero tolerance policy against terrorism".

Talking to the news agency, Director General of RAB Benazir Ahmed said the law enforcement agencies have been conducting drives against militancy, terrorism and drugs.

According to the ministry information, the government conducted 93 anti-militancy drives from 2013 to January 2018, aimed at eliminating militants and terrorists from the country.

During the anti-militancy drive, 58 militants were killed and 265 terrorists were arrested, and the government launched a special service "999" for police help in any emergency, it said.

The ministry also revealed that during the BNP-Jamaat regime, militancy was being sponsored and its network spread across the country. With patronisation of the BNP-Jamaat government, the heinous grenade attack on an

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The city of Chattogram returned to its familiar scenes of traffic congestion yesterday, getting back into the hustle and bustle following an extended weekend because of the December 30 general election. The photo was taken at Fakirhat area.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

Old uniforms! So what?

Misunderstanding led to 2 Sylhet children getting new textbooks a day late

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Khadiza Begum and Golam Mostafa were all smiles yesterday.

The class-4 students of Umarshah Teraratan Government Primary School in Sylhet city were handed new sets of textbooks in the morning as part of the "Textbook Festival Day".

Though they were wearing old uniforms, those shoes even brighter than new ones.

The textbook festival was held on Tuesday, the first day of new year, when students of primary and secondary grades were given a new set of textbook. But for Khadiza and Golam, the day did not turn out joyous.

They had to return home empty-handed for apparently wearing their old uniforms, since the school authorities had instructed all the students to wear new clothes as part of the festivity.

As shocking as it may sound, the incident apparently took place due to a misunderstanding, according to students and the school authorities.

On January 1 morning, the duo, who lived at a nearby slum, went to the school like all other children. They were wearing old uniforms as their parents, who work as day labourers, were unable to buy them new ones.

When they stood in line for the textbooks, some of their classmates informed them that the school authorities had instructed all to wear new clothes to attend the festival and they might not get textbooks for not following the instruction.

Disheartened, the two left the school ground.

"The incident happened due to a misunderstanding," Ruksana Begum, headteacher of the school, told this correspondent yesterday.

The school authorities had requested students to wear new uniforms during the festival, but they

provided textbooks to all that day, including those who could not afford new ones, she said.

This correspondent also spoke to Khadiza and Golam yesterday when they were being given the new textbooks.

"I came to the school wearing my old uniform and some other students told me that the teacher won't give me new textbooks without a new uniform, so I left with Khadiza," said Golam Mostafa.

Khadiza nodded smilingly as she held the textbooks tight against her chest.

The headteacher continued, "The primary education department is promoting school uniforms for all, and we are following that policy. As the book festival is a joyous occasion, our teachers requested the students to wear new clothes."

"Most of our students are from nearby slums and we understand they might face problem buying new uniforms, so we provided textbooks to all who were present that day," she added.

"Khadiza and Golam were misinformed by other students and they left without asking any teacher whether they will get textbooks or not," the headteacher said.

Mohammad Ustar Miah, president of the school management committee, said more than 60 percent students of the school are from poor families and they provide new clothes to many of them.

Roman Miah and Dipika Roy, assistant education officers of Sylhet Sadar upazila, visited the school yesterday and spoke to the two students and teachers. They also said misunderstanding led to the situation.

Abdul Muntakim, additional deputy primary education officer of Sylhet, said the department is trying to promote school uniforms for all but that does not mean students will be deprived of new textbooks for not having new clothes on Textbook Festival Day.

While visiting the school yesterday, he said, "A misunderstanding took place, which was unexpected. Teachers should remain more aware as this type of mix-up could mar the festival."



Fourth graders Khadiza Begum and Golam Mostafa with a new set of textbooks yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Outgoing envoys of Italy, Brunei call on president



Italian Ambassador Mario Palma with President Abdul Hamid at Bangabhaban yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

BSS, Dhaka

The outgoing envoys of Italy and Brunei Darussalam yesterday called on President M Abdul Hamid at Bangabhaban.

The president, at the meetings with Ambassador Mario Palma of Italy and High Commissioner Hajah Masurai Binti Hajj Masri of Brunei, termed Bangladesh's existing relations with the two countries as excellent.

He also recalled the contributions of the two countries to the Rohingya issue, president's press secretary Joynal Abedin told the news agency.

Hamid noted that trade and investment relations had enhanced between Bangladesh and the two countries.

During the meeting with the Italian envoy, the president praised the liberal attitude of the government of Italy and its people towards the Bangladeshi nationals working there.

He sought continued Italian support to end the Rohingya crisis in Bangladesh.

The president recalled the tolerant attitude of the Italian government after the grisly Gulshan attack that killed a number of Italian nationals.

The envoy also lauded the Bangladesh government's

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Krishna Kaberi murder case verdict today

BSS, Dhaka

A fast track court is all set to pronounce judgement today in the case filed over the murder of college teacher Krishna Kaberi Biswas in 2015.

Judge Shahed Nuruddin of Dhaka Speedy Trial Tribunal-1 set the date after concluding all case proceedings on December 23, 2018.

Confirming the date, Special Public Prosecutor Abu Abdullah Bhuiyan said Zahirul Islam Palash, the lone accused in the case, went into hiding after getting out of jail on bail.

Kaberi was a teacher at Mission International College in the capital's Adabor area. The accused was a friend of her family.

Kaberi's daughters -- Shovna and Aditi -- and her husband Sitangshu Shekhar Biswas, a BRTA official, were also injured during the attack on her.

Sudhangshu Shekhar Biswas, brother-in-law of Kaberi, filed a case against Palash, an official at brokerage house Hajji Ahmed Brothers Securities.

Police filed charge sheet against Palash on May 30, 2016.

Palash later surrendered and confessed to committing the murder before a Dhaka court.

The court during hearing recorded depositions of 22 witnesses.

SC upholds former BNP state minister Milan's bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday upheld the High Court orders that granted bail to former BNP state minister Milan's bail.

The court in eight criminal cases filed in Chandpur in 2006.

Chamber judge of the Appellate Division of SC, Justice Hasan Foez Siddique, passed a "no order" on eight petitions filed by the government seeking a stay on the HC orders.

The "no order" by the chamber judge means that the HC orders granting bail to Milan will remain in force, said Deputy Attorney General Dr Md Bashir Ullah.

Milan is yet to get bail in another case filed over a murder attempt.

Milan was arrested on November 23 last year in one of the cases.

Cops foil human chain demanding re-election

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police drove protesters away when they formed a human chain before Jatiya Press Club in Dhaka yesterday, rejecting the 11th parliamentary election.

Under the banner of "Votadhikar o Sushasoney Jatiya Oikya" (National Unity for Ensuring Right to Vote and Good Governance), around 40 to 50 activists gathered there, demanding re-election under a non-partisan caretaker government.

They had formed the human chain around 11:00am. Ten minutes later, police personnel rushed in and snatched their banner.

ABM Mostofa Ameen, convener of the platform, said although they arranged a peaceful programme, police foiled it.

"We cannot accept such rigging by Awami League that took place during the 11th parliamentary election. We demand a constitutional amendment to restore the caretaker government system for holding a free and fair

election immediately," he said.

Afterwards, the platform held a discussion at its Dhanmondi office, protesting the role of police in foiling the human chain.

"Under the leadership of Bangabandhu, the country's people fought against the Pakistani forces to ensure their political and economic rights. But the Awami League's activities during the 11th general election went beyond the repression of Pakistan in the pre-independence period," said Dr Abdul Baten, member secretary of the platform, at the discussion.

He said AL deceived the country's people through holding such a farcical election and patriots should come forward to protest it.

"We all should force the government to hold a re-election under a caretaker government," he added.

With ABM Mostofa Ameen in the chair, the platform leaders Dr Shah Noor, Advocate Ziaur Rahman, Kabir Hossain and Yunus Ali Akhand, among others, spoke on the occasion.



A policeman snatches the banner of Votadhikar o Shushasoney Jatiya Oikya soon after the platform formed a human chain, inset, in front of Jatiya Press Club yesterday, rejecting the December 30 general polls and demanding re-election under a non-partisan government.

PHOTO: COLLECTED