

# Students, teachers across country rally against extremism

**Staff Correspondent**

STUDENTS and teachers of public and private universities and affiliated colleges and madrassahs across the country on Monday called for waging a social movement against religious extremism.

Forming human chains on more than 3,650 campuses and adjacent places, they also vowed not to take part in any subversive activities and maintain peace in the country.

Many secondary level schools and colleges spontaneously joined the one-hour programme from 11:00am organised by higher educational institutions at the instigation of the University Grants Commission.

The protestors carried placards and festoons inscribed with anti-extremism slogans and message of peace.

The programmes were held marking one month of the extremist attack on a Gulshan café in the capital.

Religious extremists killed at least 22 people, including two police officers, and the military rescue operation killed six extremists on July 1.

There are 134 public and private universities and 2,254 colleges under National University and 1,270 madrassahs under Islamic Arabic University, said UGC sources.

Five colleges under National University formed human chain together in front of Central Shaheed Minar in Dhaka. Education minister Nurul Islam Nahid and UGC chairman Abdul Mannan attended the human chain.

Nahid said a united social movement was essential to eliminate religious extremism.

It is not possible to resist

such activities only by law,' he said.

'We have sent instructions to all universities for including topics on the Bangla language, history and culture of Bangladesh into their syllabuses,' he said, adding that the students should know their culture.

'Steps would be taken against those (universities) that would flout the instructions and their licences would be cancelled as well,' he said.

The UGC chairman said none should be misguided by the wrong explanation of Islam.

The UGC would conduct investigation against any university if any allegation related to extremism surfaced and submit report to the education ministry, he said.

In another human chain, Dhaka University vice-chancellor AAMS Arefin Siddique said Bangladesh was a non-communal country and there was no room for extremism here.

Dhaka University formed the human chain on its campus.

Arefin condemned the incident of Gulshan attack and said the cohorts of anti-liberation force did the massacre.

Mass resistance must be forged against those involved in extremism and their instigators, he said.

Bangladesh University of Science and Technology, Jahangirnagar University, Jagannath University, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University, Chittagong University, Khulna University, Shahjalal University of Science and Technology, Islamic University, and colleges under National University, among others universities, held human chains on their respective campuses.

Several thousand teach-

ers, students and staff of Rajshahi University formed an anti-militancy human chain on the university campus, where they remembered their slain professor Rezaul Karim Siddiquee, who was hacked to death by the militants.

Several thousand students, teachers and staff formed a human chain at Jahangirnagar University.

Students and teachers of North South University, which drew much criticism for its students' link to militancy, formed a human chain on its campus.

Some 200 students and teachers joined the human chain chanting slogans and carrying placards and banners against religious extremism.

East West University, BRAC University, University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh, Southeast University, Atish Dipankar University of Science and Technology, Stamford University, among others, also formed human chains on their campuses in the capital.