

APBn to take back security duties at Dhaka Airport

- A Monitor Desk Report

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Dhaka: The Armed Police Battalion (APBn) is set to return to security duty at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, following a high-level meeting at the Chief Adviser's Office on September 17.

The move comes as part of an agreement aimed at settling a year-long tussle between APBn, a specialized police combat force, and Aviation Security (AVSEC), which operates under the Bangladesh Air Force.

According to the meeting's resolution, both forces will now perform their respective duties as assigned by law, while the BAF task force currently stationed at the airport will pull out at the earliest opportunity.

Special envoy on international affairs to the chief adviser Lutfey Siddiqi presided over the meeting, stressing the need for cooperation among

state agencies in pursuit of a common objective.

Also present were Civil Aviation Adviser SK Bashir Uddin, Civil Aviation Secretary Nasreen Jahan, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Baharul Alam, Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) Chairman Md Mostafa Mahmood Siddiq, and several senior officials from the civil aviation ministry, CAAB, and the Air Force.

Both the Civil Aviation Secretary and the CAAB Chairman gave presentations highlighting the functions of CAAB and the current security and policing setup. The IGP pointed out that, by law, crime prevention and investigation within airports fall strictly under police jurisdiction.

The meeting produced six key decisions, among them:

- All agencies working inside airports will operate under the authority of CAAB to ensure unified command and oversight.
- The IGP and CAAB chairman will hold regular discussions to address operational issues.
- Weekly security coordination meetings will be mandatory at every airport.
- The civil aviation ministry may propose long-term reforms, including restructuring CAAB to separate its operational and regulatory functions.

The conflict between APBn and AVSEC dates back nearly a year, after a government transition in August last year led to the withdrawal of many Ansar members from the airport.

In response, a BAF task force was temporarily deployed, and APBn was excluded from security responsibilities.

Tensions escalated further when APBn accused AVSEC of removing items from its office inside the airport, prompting the battalion to file a general diary at the Airport Police Station.

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