

ASK condemns anti-Ahmadiyya activities by bigots in Bogra

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK) in a statement yesterday condemned the fixing of a signboard on the wall of Ahmadiyya mosque in Bogra by the anti-Ahmadiyya bigots backed by police.

ASK severely criticised the role of police and administration during the anti-Ahmadiyya programme of International Khatme Nabuwat Movement to lay siege to an Ahmadiyya Mosque on Friday.

Repression on Ahmadiyyas, threat to them and occupation of their mosques by the anti-Ahmadiyya bigots have become a regular phenomenon nowadays, the statement said. The situation has deteriorated due to government's inaction and its direct or indirect patronisation in some cases, it added.

"Failure to act by the law enforcers is ultimately a kind of support to the religious bigotry," the release said. Different organisations alerted the administration through media on the March 11 event without any positive result, it added.

The law enforcers could have taken pre-emptive measures to ensure security of the Ahmadiyyas, the statement said.

The ASK also criticised the Additional Superintendent of Police's (ASP) for his comment about the incident in Bogra. The ASK statement said that the Khatme Nabuwat Movement activists could not reach the Ahmadiyya Mosque Complex if the police had minimum good will to resist them.

'BSF kills one Bangladeshi every five days'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

One Bangladeshi was killed every five days in an average by the BSF, said an Odhikar report said yesterday.

A total of 377 Bangladeshi nationals were killed by Border Security Forces (BSF) in the last five years, the report said adding that BSF violated human rights of some 1838 Bangladeshi nationals in the border areas during the

period.

BSF members often killed and kidnapped Bangladeshi farmers without any reason.

A total of 466 people were injured, 467 arrested, 491 kidnapped, 39, including eight children, missing and five women raped by BSF during this time, the report said.

BSF killed 20, injured 13 and kidnapped 29 Bangladeshis till March 12 in the current year, it pointed out.

A total of 76 people in 2004, 43 in 2003, 105 in 2002, 94 in 2001 and 39 in 2000 were killed by BSF, it said adding, 'human rights violation and destruction took place in the recent push-in incidents by BSF'.

Demanding exemplary punishment of the responsible BSF members, Odhikar urged the Indian government to take effective measures to stop such incidents of push-in and human rights violation.

Agri sector still at subsistence level Study says

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Lack of awareness, suitable varieties and shortage of fund are the main impediments to reach the optimal level of production in agricultural sector from its subsistence level, said a study.

It said contract farming, crop diversification and donor assistance are needed for the development of farming sector.

The findings of the study on 'Crop Sector Development and Diversification' were placed at a workshop in the city yesterday.

The Survey Research Group of Bangladesh (SRGB) conducted the study from June 2004 to March this year in seven fields of agricultural sector with the assistance of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (Jica).

On the development of agro-industries, the study said it needs

policy support, coordination among the involved ministries and government agencies, and financial credit on easy terms and conditions.

On the improvement of agricultural marketing system, the study recommended more infrastructural facilities for perishables and strengthening of agricultural marketing department.

On soil degradation, the research findings said due to extensive mono-cropping, deforestation, increase of salinity, unbalanced use of fertilizers and Jhum cultivation, the soil is losing its fertility.

Japanese Ambassador Matsushiro Horiguchi at the inaugural session said to curb poverty in Bangladesh, effective linkage between agriculture and rural development is extremely important as a large percentage of rural people still live below poverty line.

A favourable environment for

agricultural production is needed to raise its existing subsistence level to a more diversified commercial level, he added.

Syed Ataur Rahman, additional secretary of the agriculture ministry, said the country's agricultural sector is still at subsistence level.

Farmers are deprived of real price of their products due to lack of proper market infrastructure, he added. He sought further Japanese assistance in this sector.

Akio Aria, resident representative of Jica Bangladesh, also spoke.

Prof Shah Mohammad Farouk, team leader of the study, presented the report.

Later, a technical session was held on the findings with Prof Muzaffer Ahmad in the chair.

Experts from about 40 government and non-government organisations took part in the discussion.