

# 'Ethics' in core curricula can curb corruption

Speakers at a seminar urges govt for strict regulations

SYED TASHFIN CHOWDHURY

The introduction and inclusion 'Ethics' in the core curricula of private and public academic institutions, may aid toward curbing the current corruption predominant in the nation, said speakers at a seminar in the city last week.

"The world currently suffers critically as our current generation has lost its sense of value, respect, faith and ethics," said Professor Aminul Islam, Dhaka University's (DU) Department of Philosophy.

"Ethics should be a part of our curricula so that future generations can differentiate right from wrong and not suffer the same fate as us," he added.

Prof. Islam is also the President of Bangladesh Philosophical Association (BPA) and Chairman of the Centre for Advanced Research in Humanities.

The seminar held at North South University (NSU) was organised by the university's Ethics & Knowledge Club and focussed on the topic 'Corruption, Ethics and

Sustainable development in the context of Bangladesh' with the theme 'Epistemology of Ethics: A faith based focus'.

It was a modified inter-faith discussion that addressed ethical and moral values from the various religious perspectives by religious and philosophical scholars, lecturers of private and public universities and former senior officials of government organisations.

Problems afflicting the nation currently like terrorism, corruption, encroachment, and extortion were discussed.

"All world religions preach truth, goodness and beauty of life, but the adherence to these beliefs is so little that terrorism, violence and hardship throughout the world is increasing," said Prof Islam.

Dr. Sukomal Barua, Professor of DU's Dept. of Sanskrit and Pali, and Executive President of the Bangladesh Buddhist Foundation, discussed Buddhist beliefs refuting the rise of terrorism in the country.

"Absence of the three basic Buddhist concepts of character, concentration and wisdom in the

mind frame and daily life give rise to violence and unethical activities," he said.

"The current efforts toward controlling corruption indicate how rampant the problem has become. Science has given us all but only religion can give lessons in ethics needed in our lives," said Professor Dr. Pares Chandra Mandal, of the same department and President, Vivekananda Shikha O Sanskrit Parishad.

Hafizuddin Khan, Ex Controller, Auditor General and former Advisor to the Caretaker government said that corruption in the government departments are at a maximum.

"Absence of proper investigations and exemplary punishments are encouraging some government officers to get involved in corruption and other unethical activities," he said.

Father Benjamin Costa, Principal, Notre Dame College, Dhaka said that corruption is a direct result of greed.

"Capitalism is the root of this greed, globally. Religious groups should work against the spread of this evil," he said.

Professor Muzaffar Ahmed, Member, Board of Trustee, Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) stressed on the necessity of strict government regulations.

"Widespread encroachment and extortion can be stopped if high officials of concerned authorities resist themselves from taking part in unethical activities," said Professor Ahmed.

M Harunur Rashid, Professor, Dept. of English, NSU, and former Director General of Bangla Academy, Dr. Hafiz G.A. Siddiqui, Vice Chancellor, NSU and Dr. SAM Khairul Bashar also spoke at the event.

Professor Golam Dastagir, of Jahangirnagar University's department of philosophy, the Vice President of BPA and country representative of the International Association of Sufism presented the keynote paper.

"Philosophers now tend to set moral virtues free from religious traditions, relying on human critical thinking," he said. "But our customs and conventions are influenced and shaped by

religious morals," he said.

Md Abdur Rouf, Chief Guest and retired Judge of Appellate division, Supreme Court and former Chief Election Commissioner said that humans are superior to other creation.

"This fact should awaken us to the realisation that corruption is not our heritage and we should deny it by all means," he said.

Rouf also said that to prosper Bangladesh should shy away from foreign help and struggle to be self-sufficient. Dr AFM Ataur Rahman, Assistant Professor of Economics, NSU made the opening speech, while Dr Rafiqul Islam Molla, Professor of Economics, chaired the event.

When asked the reason for such a seminar, Mahmudul Alam, President, Ethics and Knowledge Club said: "Corruption and moral decadence is reigning everywhere. This was our effort at creating awareness on ethics among youth. Through our club, we plan to organise more seminars, conferences, and field trips in the future."

WAITING FOR WATER



AMRAN HOSSAIN

The persisting water crisis in the city has affected the poor mostly. Some of them in Mirpur Section 11 have access to water only once a day. They patiently wait in line to fill up their pots by the wayside tap every afternoon.

12x3

12x2

14x3