

Address root causes of terrorism

Speakers tell seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a seminar yesterday called for addressing the root causes of terrorism on a priority basis, saying that equipping the law enforcing and intelligence agencies properly is not enough to eliminate the menace.

To effectively combat terrorism, there should be a fixed political direction, which will not change with the change of government, and proper coordination among the intelligence agencies, they said.

They also called for properly training the media to deal with the

issue.

Bangladesh Enterprise Institute (BEI) and the British High Commission jointly organised the two-day seminar on 'A Strategy for combating terrorism in Bangladesh' at BEI conference room in the city.

Inaugurating the seminar, Information Adviser to the caretaker government Mahbubul Alam said terrorism breeds on complex political, social and economic problems and it cannot be fully defeated without national consensus.

In his welcome address, BEI President Farooq Sobhan said, "Although top leaders of Jama'atul

Mujahideen Bangladesh and Harkatul Jihad have been captured, much work remains to be done to stamp out terrorism in all its forms.

However, no systemic study has so far been undertaken to understand the causes of terrorism nor has there been any initiative to develop a strategy for combating terrorism in Bangladesh."

Asking the future governments not to lapse back into denial of the existence of terrorism and extremism, British High Commissioner Anwar Choudhury suggested that the next elected government should finalise the draft of anti-

terrorism law and place in parliament at the earliest.

"Some of the roots of extremism are structural and can surface in numerous ways. It's not just about catching the terrorists. There is a need for economic, social and democratic institutions, enhancing educational and employment opportunities, access to justice and police reform," he said in a written speech read out by high commission officer Jason Grimes in the high commissioner's absence.

The British envoy also called for a holistic approach to curbing terrorism.

Former executive director of Bangladesh Bank Nazmul Hasan presented a keynote paper on 'Effective use of anti-money laundering law in curbing terrorism' in the first working session, with former BB governor Dr Fakhruddin Ahmed in the chair.

Brig Gen (Retd) M Sakhawat Hossain was the keynote speaker on 'Capacity building of law enforcement and intelligence agencies in countering terrorism'.

Brig Gen (Retd) Shahedul Anam Khan presented a keynote paper on 'The role of media in countering terrorism' while Maj Gen (Retd) Azizur Rahman presented another paper on 'Border management and cross-border cooperation in countering terrorism'.

Former army chiefs Gen Muhammad Mustafizur Rahman and Lt Gen M Harun-Ar-Rashid, former ambassador Muhammad Zamir, Citigroup Country Officer Mamun Rashid, lead consultant of Bank Consult Mehboobur Rehman and Assistant Editor of The Daily Star Zafar Sobhan took part in the discussion.



BEI President Farooq Sobhan speaks at a seminar on 'A strategy for combating terrorism in Bangladesh' at the BEI conference room in the city yesterday. On his right are Dr Fakhruddin Ahmed and Nazmul Hasan and on his left is Mehboobur Rehman.



PHOTO: STAR

Nabin Projonna-2006 accorded a reception to the sector commanders of the War of Liberation at the Central Shaheed Minar in the city yesterday. From left are Lt Col (retd) Abu Osman Chowdhury, Maj Gen (retd) CR Dutt, Air Vice Marshal (retd) AK Khandker, Maj Gen (retd) KM Shaifullah, Lt Gen (retd) Mir Shawkat Ali and Maj (retd) Rafiqul Islam.

Vow to build secular, democratic, poverty-free Bangladesh

Sector commanders advise children

Bss, Dhaka

Six living sector commanders of the liberation war yesterday urged the new generation to take a vow to build a secular, democratic and poverty-free Bangladesh.

"You will have to shoulder the future leadership of the country and as such build yourselves as worthy citizens," the Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Liberation War, Air Vice Marshal (retd) AK Khandker, Bir Uttam, said while recalling his war-time memories at the Central Shaheed Minar here.

Projonna-2006 organised the function marking the Victory Day.

Sector Commanders Lt General (retd) Mir Shawkat Ali, Bir Uttam, Major General (retd) KM Shaifullah, Bir Uttam, Major General (retd) CR Dutt, Bir Uttam, Lt Colonel (retd) Abu Osman Chowdhury, Bir Uttam and Major (retd) Rafiqul Islam, Bir Uttam, recalled their war-time memories and replied to various questions of the juveniles.

Another Sector Commander Lt Colonel Kazi Nuruzzaman, Bir Uttam, was absent from the function due to illness.

Mir Shawkat urged the government to take initiatives for setting up 'hate plaques' at all educational institutions in the country so that the future generations can express their hatred on the collaborators by spitting on the plaques on the Victory Day.

He urged all mothers to tell the history of the Liberation War to their children so that they can learn the true history of independence.

KM Shaifullah said the young generation has to take oath for building a secular democratic country defeating the anti-liberation forces.

Replying to a query about the participation of women in the Liberation War, CR Dutt said the victory would not have been possible in the liberation war without the help and cooperation of the women's community.

Abu Osman Chowdhury said the present and the future generations have to take a vow to build a Razakar-free Bangladesh.

Major Rafiqul Islam said those who were against the liberation of the country should be tried by courts of law.

He said the young generation of the country has to be vigilant so that the anti-liberation forces, who killed millions of people during the war, cannot come to state power again.

"It is unfortunate for us that the 'Razakars' who were against the country's liberation are now installed in state power and moving around the country hoisting the national flags atop their cars," he said.

He urged the "little stars" to build a social movement against the anti-liberation forces for resisting them politically.

AK Khandker administered an oath to the children in the name of freedom fighters, who sacrificed their lives in the war, to build Bangladesh as a secular democratic country.

Earlier, the children of the organisation received the sector commanders by presenting them bouquets.

'Save Vobodaho from waterlogging'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Some university students yesterday formed a human chain in the city demanding proper steps to resolve the perennial waterlogging problem in Vobodaho area in the southwestern part of the country.

Moved by the untold sufferings of around four lakh people in the waterlogged area, Virginia chapter of human rights organisation Drishtipat organised the hour-long human chain on the premises of Central Shaheed Minar in the city, organisers said.

Students of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), Dhaka University, North South University and Brac University participated in the programme.

"I was moved reading articles on Vobodaho and came all the way from Virginia, USA to organise the human chain," said Arifat Islam Khan of Virginia Tech University.

The suffering of Vobodaho people started in the 1960s following construction of polders and sluice gates in the region. Following the construction, sedimentation took place only in river channels that ultimately raised the riverbeds compared to the adjacent wetlands. On the other hand, the wetlands subsided due to non-deposition of sediment and in the course of time, a vast area of the region became permanently waterlogged.

'United efforts a must to resist violence against women, children'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Society for the Enforcement of Human Rights (BSEHR) yesterday called for united efforts to resist violence against women and children.

"Doctors, police, judiciary, journalists and human rights defenders must play a participatory role to help bring the culprits to book," said Advocate Alena Khan, executive director of BSEHR, at its third experience-sharing workshop at LGED auditorium in the city.

Forensic specialist, magistrate, public prosecutor, deputy attorney general and journalists exchanged their views at the workshop.

Speaking as chief guest, Justice Fazlul Karim called for a strong commitment to do away with the unbroken crimes across the country.

Indian clothes

worth Tk 1cr seized in Comilla

UNB, Comilla

BDR members seized huge Indian clothes worth Tk 1 crore from a rickshaw van at Jamura in Chittagong upazila of the district early yesterday.

Acting on a tip-off, a BDR team from Kotbari raided the area at about 3:00am and recovered 2,121 sarees and 652 three-pieces smuggled into Bangladesh from India.

Police arrested Md Alamgir, 30 for suspected involvement with the smuggling.

The seized clothes were deposited to local customs office and a case was filed.

'Southasian' launched

Broadcast Worldwide Limited in collaboration with participants from all over South Asia recently announced the formation of a new body styled 'Southasian', says a press release.

Among other initiatives, Southasian will launch a programme to be aired from Kolkata aiming at rediscovering and reinforcing a Southasian identity based on a shared history, civilisation and culture.

Hosted by media partners from the region, the programme featuring news, special features, profiles and interviews from South Asia will be aired initially once a week.

Rathikant Basu, chairman of Broadcast Worldwide Limited, announced the decision to form this Southasian platform.

He referred to the spirit of Saarc and reiterated the working group's commitment to South Asian peace, progress, diversity and opposition to divisiveness in any form or force.

"Establishing a Southasian identity in the subcontinent" is the focus of the entity, he added.

Media personalities like Shahid Nadeem from Pakistan, Kiran Shrestha and Rajendra B Singh from Nepal, and Sara Zaker, Aly Zaker and Lubna Marium from Bangladesh form part of the team.

Members of the Southasian, which was launched recently.

Advocate MA Ansari made the keynote speech.

Prof Dr Mohamad Habibuzzaman of forensic department at Dhaka Medical College stressed on proper training of doctors at the district level.

"Apart from the doctors at 14 medical colleges, hundreds of doctors from other institutions remain out of the training across the country," he regretted.

He said due to delay in forensic test, doctors have no other option but to write. 'The findings are not consistent with forceful intercourse'.

Aminul Islam, special public prosecutor (PP) at the speedy trial tribunal-4, defended the accusation that the PP's take bribes from both the complainants and defendants and mentioned a number of issues that weaken the case, like insincerity of the investigation officers, magistrates and doctors.

They also admitted widespread corruption and lack of efficiency among the bodies concerned.

Many of the investigation offi-

cers do not properly record the testimonies of the complainants, some magistrates are not aware of specific laws while some doctors give haphazard forensic report," he said.

Dr Nur Alam, registrar of medicine department at Sir Salimullah Medical College, finds the influence of political leaders as the main obstacle to people's rights to justice.

Citing his own experience, Alam said in certain districts he got instructions from the lawmaker not to give any report on 'grievous incidence' without consultation.

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